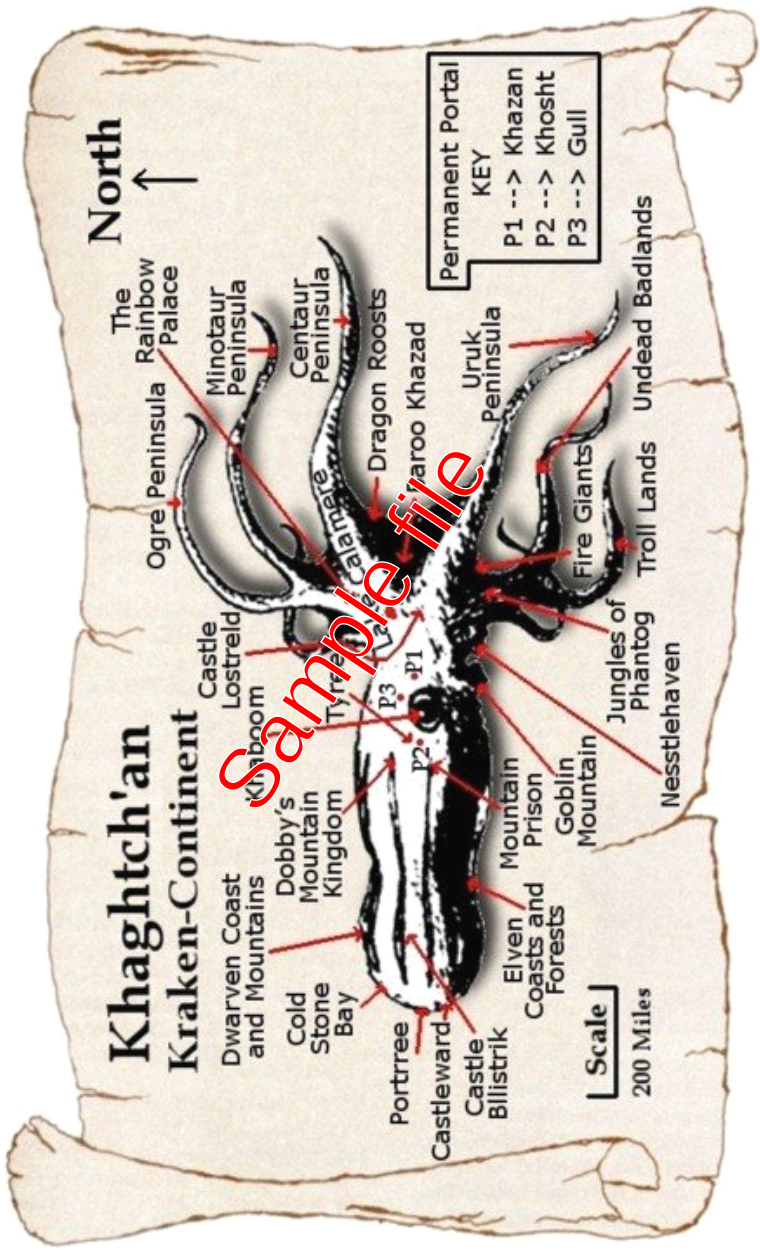
A Wizard Went A-Wooing



A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Contents

Section	*Paragraphs*	*Title*
1	Introduction + 1-36	The Huntsmaster
2	Prelude	Apys
3	37-46 and 90-136	Apida – the Harvest Queen
4	47-56 and 136A-189	Halictidia – the Jungle Queen
5	57-66 and 190-236	Stenotrida – the War Queen
6	67-76 and 237-484	Melittida – the Ambassadorial Queen
7	77-86 and 485-549	Colletida – the Star Watcher Queen
8	87-89 and 550-700	Andremida – the Hive Queen

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Appendices

1. **Character Cards for All the Wizards**
   Level 2: **Nux Fractor, Spontaneous Combustius, Perry Stroika, Ali Bongo & Sly Toffand**
   Level 3: **Ambrosia Nectar, Flusho the Wonder Nit, Argyron, Megalesius & Sklemis**
   Level 5: **Leverona, Moldevort, Yaga Baboo, Hokey & Simon Magoo**
   Level 7: **Hanzelf, Sunnyman, Ragnarok, The Wood Wizard, Catweezil**
   Level 10: **House Elf. Souza Fotescue, Rinsewell, Dr. William Weird & El Rico**
   Level 13: **Nethalkan, Limpwrist, Bumblesnore, Miranda Le Feigh & Thotlazran**

2. **Bestiary**
   Phantagonian Fiend
   Sapsucking Spinesnapper
   Wide-Nostrilled Mucus Wrangler
   Cancer Cobra
   Phantagonian Fantom
   Blister Beetle
   Gimblespack
   Colonic Gutbuster
   Two Headed Slithey Tove
   Marrow-sucking Sickophant
   Kewpie
   Widow-maker Spiteball
   Snomad
   Bee'guiling Braindrainer
   Gibbous Moonmonkey
   The Vlad
   Organ-Grinding Mantis

3. **Other Kindred Magic and Little Known Spells**
   Including Elven and Dwarven Spell Books

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Published by Khaghbboommm Press

This is a Tunnels and Trolls Solitaire Adventure for use with the 7.5 edition rules (although it is easily adapted for earlier editions).

Suitable only for wizards – there are opportunities for wizards of Level 2 expertise, L3, L5, L7, L10 and L13. There is the prospect of growing your character if you start at L2 and going all the way through to L13 but you can play the different sections with different wizards. Although this is about getting to the altar and tying the knot with a queen, female characters are perfectly eligible as these queens look beneath the surface and, in any case, they employ a *Gender Transcender* enchantment where necessary (this is a L5 spell in the Khaboom Wizards' Guild Spell Books, available free at Drive Thru RPG from Khaghbboomm Press).

This epic adventure introduces a new culture and unleashes a menagerie of never-before-mauled-by monsters as well as foreshadowing an alien invasion and giving you the sumptuous tour of Khaghtch'an, the Kraken continent. As the social fabric of these lands unfold, you can help shape its future.

There are ample invitations to new pathways for your characters should they bow out of their wooing race or just get in a bit of a pickle.

Sample file

Artwork

The cover was designed and produced by me and the interior illustrations are the work of Stanley Ditko.

Map by Mark Thornton and Stanley Ditko.

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Tunnels and Trolls is a game created by Ken St. Andre and published by Flying Buffalo, Inc. You should make a point of visiting trollhalla.com where you can cyber-meet Khenn Arrth and many more merry trolls.

Sample file

Ugh!

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Section 1 – The Huntmaster

Phantog is a disgusting place. And dangerous. Very, very dangerous.



Sample file

The smell of things rotting is everywhere. Animals rotting, plants rotting, things' decomposing. Even the finest deer velvet nostril plugs from Khaboom cannot keep that vile stench out. Worse, they seem to keep the sickly, cloying odours fast within. The vegetation is lush beyond belief in Phantog. They say that a Phantagonian tree can grow as tall as a mature uruk in one day and that there are more dead uruks feeding Phantagonian trees than there are living now on the Uruk Peninsula.

A place that has claimed so many battle-scarred uruks is no place for wand-waving wizards, certainly not without a very skilled Huntmaster to guide them through the terrors of the Jungles of Phantog.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

The Huntmaster you have hired is either the most melodramatic of scaremongers or his lore of lethal beetles, venomous scorpions, greased-lightning serpents and marrow-chilling ghuls is worth more to you now than all those years of Wizards' Guild studies. The descriptions of omnivorous, floating fungi are still keeping you counting like a good shepherd into the wee hours in your khremm-lined bivouac each blessed night.


Sample file

Blessed because the liquefying heat of the Phantagonian day finally dissipates when the sun slips below the horizon and the twin moons rise. It is only when both Sar and Sahane are mistresses of the celestial realms that the Jungles relax their death-grip and the merciless predators become comatose so they can reenergise and regather their waning life forces. For, in Phantog, it is life itself that wanes, not the moons, and it is death that waxes lyrical and laughs longest.



Sample file

The Huntmaster is a lean, wiry fellow who answers to the name of Krokett. Whether that is his true name is anyone's guess but it is enough for you that he responds and does so with assured speed when you find a new danger confronting you in the Phantagonian forests.

Although his body weight is not great, every ounce is steely-honed muscle and his reflexes match those of a Cimmerian. Krokett has no interest in small talk, no time for the social niceties that even a city such as Khazan can accommodate. The original man of few words, he moves noiselessly amongst the vines and trunks and you see that it is he who surprises serpents, he who arrives unannounced before giant mosquitoes and he who anticipates the attack of paralysing fungi even as he communes wordlessly with the sabre tooth puma that is his jungle mate.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

The silken feline has incisors designed by eons of evolutionary experience for ripping out the throats of larger monsters and has claws that allow its tightly-sprung hind legs to take it to electrifying heights, right up to the forest canopy. Its eyesight rivals that of the giant condors that circle above Phantog, seeking out the great apes that nest in the uppermost bowers of the ancient trees, whose roots draw the khremmatic forces from deep within Trollworld, an invitation to the foolhardy and the intrepid to walk the ways of Phantog in the certain knowledge that its rewards match its dangers.



Sample file

Krokett well knows why you have come to Phantog. Over the last few weeks he has escorted an alarmingly adept assortment of wizards from all over Khaghbch'an, the Kraken continent, to the city lurking in the heart of the Jungle. One by one, he has taken them, for they do not choose to share their Ulyssean sojourn; one by one, he has led them safely to the apian capital of Phantog.

Krokett is not versed in magical lore and so cannot stand before the Court as you and your fellow magicians can.

He does not care. He is free of responsibilities except when he chooses to accept them, save to himself and the sabre tooth. She has no name that he

knows – he does not need her to have one for their communication is telepathic and perfect.

Sample file

That is not so with you and he can no more understand why you would seek to bind yourself to the strange creatures of the citadel any more than you can comprehend how it is that he hears the thoughts of Phantog itself.

Your night's respite is callously cut by the thrusting blade of dawn's first light. The birds of the Jungle are not startled but their response to this intrusion into the cover of the night is startling to your ears. The screeching cacophony rises to a pitch that makes you seriously think of transferring your nostril plugs to your ears.

These birds have to be loud and proud, for to be unable to give a show of supreme confidence is an invitation to feast off your corpse in Phantog.

Krokett is already up and about – perhaps he has trained his mortal form not to require the balm of sleep – and he stands before you as you crawl from the magically-infused tent that has saved your life time and time again, for not everything that lives in the Jungle is mastered by the night.

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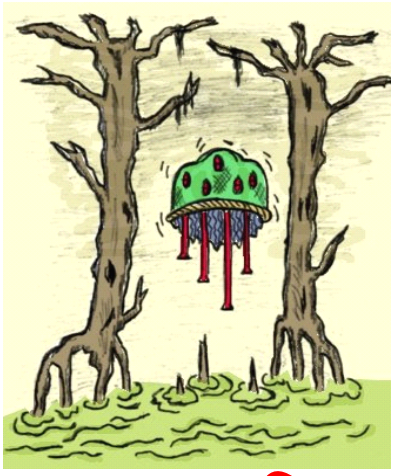


'Master Mage,' Krokett greets you, 'we are half a day's trek from Apys and that is as far as I have contracted to transport you.' He makes you sound like so much baggage. 'We must make good speed now: there is something that has picked up your trail and I have not been able to hide your scent from it. You must tell me now that you will honour our bargain.'

Sample file

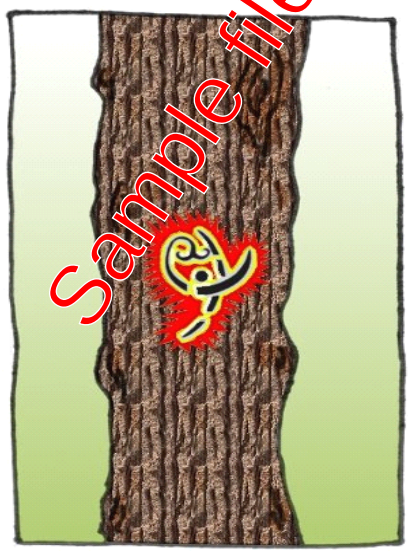
The Huntmaster searches deep into your eyes, into your soul and beyond. 'It is the same bargain I have struck with your brother wizards and sister witches and it is of one to me who is able to pay me and who is freed from the debt by death. Will you pay me exactly half of the dowry you will gain should you win the hand of a bride in Apys?'

Your answer is swift. You owe this man more than money can buy and half of any dowry you may win is a fair and easy price to pay.

The harder price will be the price of failure to win a bride; the higher cost would be to be left alone with that thing on your heels.

‘Yes,’ you say plainly and clearly, offering your hand, ‘I will pay, on my life, on my mother’s head and on my spirit’s freedom.’ Krokett grasps your hand firmly; he has no need to prove his worth by crushing your fingers in his.

The heavy oath is sufficient for he has seen you touch the silver sigil that guards the connection between your spirit and Trollworld, that keeps you from the pull of the demon plane and Ashgoleth, its Arch-Lord. ‘Then we go,’ he says easily and steps out between two tall, dark, sinuous trees, not waiting to see if you are ready to follow.



<1> Make a L1 SR on SPD – if you make it, well and good. If not, you must have been daydreaming. Of Krokett, there is no sign when you collect your wits and remember that fabulous, fatal beast he spoke of. Did he mean to leave you? Maybe he is certain enough

of his share of any dowry by virtue of the other wizards he has given safe passage to Apys.
If you failed that saving roll go to <4>, if you made it go to <6>.

<2> As the sands of your life drain away, your spell is what your continued existence depends upon. Make an INT SR for the spell if you play by that rule (I shall assume you do and leave it to your say so if you don't. The spell must wreak havoc so *Hold That Pose* or *Oh Go Away, Befuddle* or *Rock-a-Bye* are a sheer waste of wizardry.

If your spell is a *TTYF, Blasting Power, Death Spell #9, Hell Bomb Burst* or something capable of dealing instant and incandescent death, you may yet best the beast. The spell needs to do no less than 100 points of damage. If not, it is you that are fried not the Fiend, fried by its fiery breath and roasted in the furnace of its belly. If you were eaten and cremated at the same time, close the book: if you were the one to deal the deadly blow take 200 APs and go to <21>.

Sample file

<3> Fortune is said to favour the brave but here in Phantog it is the brave whose corpses nourish the roots of the ogrish trees that garrison this fortress of filthy death. You have chosen to make your stand, last though it may be.

You are a mage and so you had better ready a spell. If it is a defensive spell go to <11> while an attacking cast will take you to <13>.

<4> You don't wake up quickly enough to the extreme danger that separation from the Huntmaster has put you in. Nervously pushing your way through a tangle of vines to the trees he ghosted his way through,

working overtime to keep out the sickening decay of life all about you, you are soon lost.

Make a L1 SR on LK. If you failed that saving roll go to <8>, if you made it go to <10>.

<5> The Trollgod sometimes needs a break from writing the rules and regulations of Trollworld and he indulges himself by submitting himself to these rules on his leisure breaks – sort of like going to BashCon or some such. As it happens, he is here now in Phantog, ready to try whacking something big with his new berserker rules.

Try a L2 SR on LK. If you fail, the Trollgod gives the Phantagonian Fiend a severe thwack with his *knobbly knobwhacker*, knocking the stuffing out of the Fiend but catching you in a death-dealing backswing. Close the book. However, if you make the roll, the Trollgod sees you at the last minute and demolishes ten trees as if they were ten pins and he *Blows You* out of harm's way. Take 100 APs for the novelty value of being saved by the Trollgod and go to <21>.

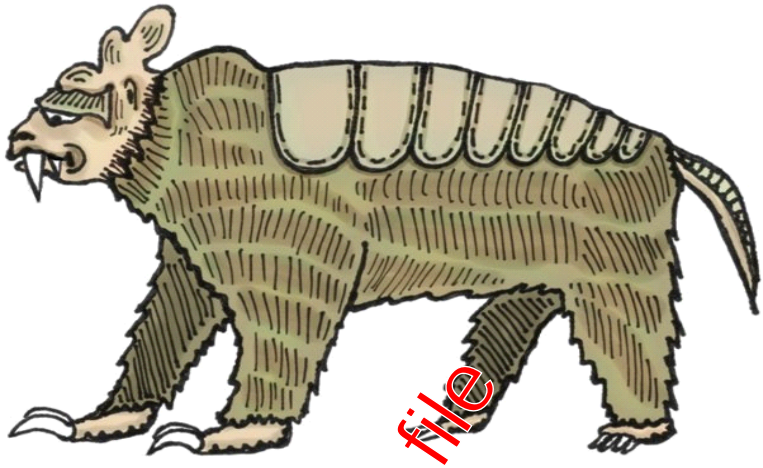
Sample file

<6> You understand there is no time to waste. Your sole aim is to reconnect with the man who offers you a slender lifeline between this world and whatever may come next, demon plane or death (tough luck if you're a vampire but I can't cover every angle). You see two paths through the snaking tree trunks. For Krokett, the way of life would be obvious…but you?

Make a L1 SR on INT. If you failed that saving roll, go to <12>; if you made it, go to <14>.

<7> There is nothing wrong with Krokett's hearing but nor is there with that of the Phantagonian Fiend. The two arrive simultaneously, the one the most wonderful

sight your eyes have ever beheld, the other too terrible for you jellified brain to take in. Go to <15>.



Sample file

<8> Slow to get up and smell the coffee and then plum out of luck, you are now in the killing zone of the Phantagonian Fiend. This (thankfully) rare monster likes its food minced and mashed. Razor sharp claws at end of hydraulic piston-like forelimbs slice and smash at your pitifully pathetic mortal shell. The Fiend does 2d6 times 20 damage in the blink of an eye. Your armour will protect you but whatever it saves your carcass from goes from its future defensive capacity.

If you live through this savage whirlwind of hatred and hunger you can try a spell. Make the required INT SR and if it is defensive magic go to <11> but if you want to fight hellfire with hellfire go to <13>.

<9> To get to the protective arms of the Huntmaster would take up at least eight of the nine lives a cat is blessed with, such is your predicament. Try a L4 SR on LK. If you make it, your cat-like kernel of karma takes you straight to where Krokett stands, waiting

patiently to outwit the fiend. It would nice to think you didn't ruin his concentration…

Sample file



Sample file

If you failed the roll then you do not find Krokett. But the Fiend finds you. Time for a desperate magical moment. You must prove if you are a mage or a mouse. Make your spell selection pronto, try the appropriate INT SR to cast it and then go to <11> if it was defensive or <13> for something punitive.

<10> Your ears pick up a subtle shift in the breathing of the Jungle. Something has added to its symphony and many things fall off the beat. Heavy breathing, growing nearer – rapidly! Do you want to call for Krokett? Do you want to run in the direction you might guess he would have headed off in? Or do you back yourself against the dire dreadnaught of the dendrai that is almost upon you? For the first option, go to <7>, for the second to <9> and for the last given, go to <3>.

<11> This Fiend of Phantog has a nose for fresh meat – invisibility is as useless as limp lettuce as a

shield; not even a Protective Pentagram spell can save you as this death-scourge will wait patiently to drink your blood when the spell ends; even flying is doomed to fail as the monster is master of the jungle airspace.

You may scream in terror and say hasty prayers to the Trollgod (go to <5>) or let rip wildly and give the nightmare everything you have – if you are willing to expend every last drop of khremm in a blaze of offensive glory go to <2>.

<12> Krokett seems to have… *disappeared*. You were in good hands but now you have strayed into the teeth of hell. If there is a next time, engaging brain before setting sail would be the wisest course. However…

You have more immediate calls upon your attention right now for you have strayed into the path of the Phantagonian Fiend, a mythical beast beyond description. Suffice to say that it is one ugly son of a sonless mother and no one would believe you if you found the words to do it justice. It slinks forward, ready to maim, mutilate and maul.

Go tearfully to <22>.

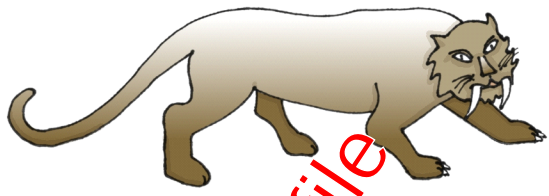
<13> You may have faced death before but not death with a face as hideous and blood-curdling as this. Your spell had better pack a punch potent enough to level a minor mountain. Write down the spell you think can save your bacon from crisping, make the appropriate INT SR and go to <17>.

<14> The breath of relief you expel tells Krokett all he needs to know as you blunder through the tangled, malodorous vegetation and back to his protective

Sample file

custody. But the Fiend has stalked you and a clash of the titans is on the cards. Go to <15>.

<15> Krokett does not take his eyes from those of the Fiend that has followed your scent and hungered for your flesh and longed for your bone marrow. The one holds the other, motionless in the steaming jungle. It is the puma's warning growl that breaks the deadlock and in the blink of an unseeing eye the Fiend is gone.



The trauma of being left and lost and then seeing the nightmare no more than a arm's length away would mangle the nerves of many a brave soul. Make a L1 SR on CHR and go to <20>.

Sample file

<16> What spell did you throw into the mix? A *TTYF* would certainly pack some firepower, as would *Blasting Power* or *Freeze Pleeze*. A fiddly spell such as *Firestorm of Protest*, *Befuddle* or even the ubiquitous *Hold That Pose* will do nothing to aid the common cause. A direct hit is all that will do it.

If you opted for magic that had real venom, you may add to Krokett's forthcoming combat rolls by 2d6 for each 100 points of damage you generated. Otherwise, you did nothing but flap your arms and waste your khremm. Go to <23>.

<17> Magic that affects the mind such as *Rock-a-Bye, Mind Pox, Hold That Pose* or *Oh Go Away* is like a red rag to a bull to the Phantagonian Fiend. If you cast such a spell, it snarls and spits before leaping upon

you and shredding you up like a cabbage. Shut that door and close the book.

Sample file

If you cast a hard core, no-mercy spell like *TTYF, Blasting Power* or *Freeze Pleeze* then it's a question of quantum physics – did you do damage of sufficient quantity before it rendered your physique formless?

You need to have mustered a minimum of 100 points of damage or you die a painful, technicolour death, in which this tome is your tomb. If you had the ammunition to back up your threat, take 200 APs and go to <21>.

<18> The Fiend has circled round, thinking to gain an advantage but the Huntmaster is no raw novice. Krokett and his puma friend crouch, waiting for the Fiend to make the first move. Perhaps you would like to intervene? If you would like to throw a magical sucker punch at this Phantagonian monstrosity, select your spell now, make the relevant INT SR and go to <16>; if you think it better to leave this work to the professionals, go to <13>.

<19> What meets your grime-encrusted eyes is the vision of an alien culture. A great hive, more than 200 metres in height and twice as broad, sits at the centre of a rocky hollow. Your companion leaves you to take in this unparalleled edifice, the wellspring of your venture into the heart of Phantog.

It is here that the Manukans live, the bee-people who pollinate the planet to give freedom of expression to its khremm. It is here that you hope to take a bride and gain power beyond the dreams of the Wizards' Guild.

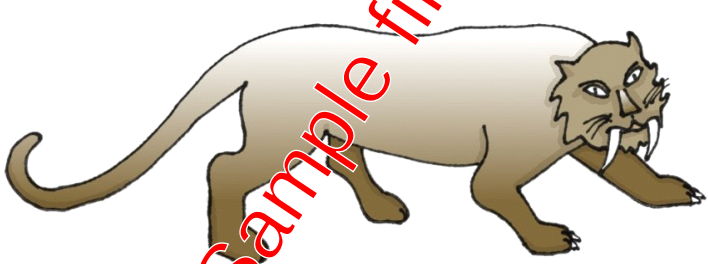
Sample file

Go to Section 2 – Apys

<20> If you made the saving roll, your Herculean spirit is untarnished by the primeval horror you bore witness to. Go now to <18> with 100 APs.

If you failed the roll, the encounter with evil-incarnate grips your mind and snaps it like candy. Your eyes glaze over and your jaw drops, never to close again with sentient purpose. Close the book.

<21> You are here either because you are indeed a mighty magician or because the Trollgod interceded on your behalf. Crom! That doesn't happen often! Krokett could not fail to miss the sounds of the skirmish and very soon he and the puma are by your side.



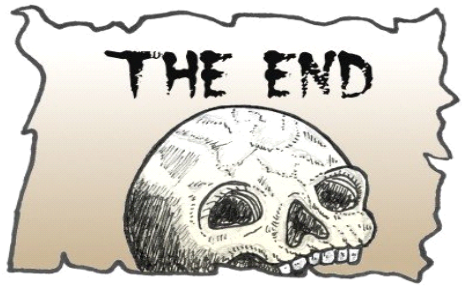
Sample file

'You were lucky,' he says. '*This time*. Let there not be a next, leastways not while you are with me. Stay close and stay alert or you will stay dead for as long as you can endure. Aye, this is no place for dreamers!'

The Huntmaster and the cat lead you on through the putrid decay that abounds in Phantog. Although this is not new to you now, you are hardly a veteran jungle burrower, forged in the furnaces of Phantog like Krokett.

Make a L1 SR on CON. If you fail, you pick up a nasty intestinal bacterium that lives in your gut as long as you live, permanently reducing your CON by 1d6+2. If

you are a fairy, this may well be fatal, in which close the book.



After the merciless plod through the sucking forest floor that seems to pull your every footfall down towards the roots of the insanely towering trees, Krokett halts you at the top of a ridge. You were too weary, too mind-numb to even take in that you were climbing. Hands on hips, your eyes drink in the stupefying spectacle ahead of you. Go to <19>.

Sample file

<22> You might think you ought to be able to cast a spell to save your bacon but no! The Fiend has a demonic and, from your point of view, unjust ability to muffle all khremm within paw strike, although the effect is very short lived. You are within paw strike.

This monster does 2d6 times 20 damage before you have to time to get your armour damp. The armour protects but, for every hit it saves you from, it loses future effectiveness. This predator is not kind to armour. If you live on there is time for a spell now that the muffling effect has faded. Make the necessary INT SR and go to <11> for a defensive spell or to <17> if you strike back with aggressive magic.

<23> This is the first time in more than one generation that a Phantogonian Huntmaster has come face to face with a Phantagonian Fiend. That is not encouraging.

However, Krokett's training from boyhood has prepared him for this moment, for a Huntmaster who can quell a Fiend of these gargantuan proportions can confidently walk the forest floors. What is more, the puma has millennia of evolution on its side, the one creature that need not cower before the monster even though, by its lonesome, it can do naught but harry and evade the creature of death made flesh.

This is a fight almost completely devoid of action. You might be forgiven for thinking that you had thrown a kind of blanket *Hold That Pose* spell or that a Medusa had caught everyone's eye but yours. The very Jungle itself stands stock still, silent as these three thespians of thanatic theatre study each other, searching for that one moment in time when the gold can be seen at the end of the rainbow.

Sample file

The Fiend has shrugged off any spell that you may have cast its way and although eternity seems to be spreading its endlessly embroidered tapestry out in front of you, in fact very little time has passed. It is a temporal illusion.

The Fiend senses (knows?) that the lot has fallen to it to declare its hand first. When it strikes, your ears are filled with thunder and your eyes burn with the fire of Vulcan. Your nostrils, plugged or not, throb with the intensity of the Fiend's Jungle-fuelled odour. In that moment between action and consequence, between cause and effect, Krokett must play from his hand. Is there an ace up his sleeve? Does he have a full deck to trump from?

You will need to roll 2d6 ten times with DARO applying. Roll in turn ten times for the Fiend and ten times for man and feline. If you hit the Fiend with at least 100 points of spell damage, remember to add in the extra

dice rolls you were told of. The winner of this fight will be the one with the highest total after the ten rolls. After the first five rolls, you may join in if you wish to and roll 1d6 for each of the last five pairs of dice rolls to add to Krokett's score.

Sample file

If you decide to enter the fray there is a real risk of injury to life and limb. Any six the Fiend rolls means that you take 1d6 damage directly to CON. Make your mind up quickly – this is no place for faint hearts.

If Krokett is the victor go to <25> but if he and his jungle-mate fell then go to <26>.

<24> If you made that morale check, you have managed to keep your pecker up and may go to <27>; if not, dark thoughts are gathering in your mind. Your fingers begin to fidget, your limbs tremble and you mumble all the spells you know at the same time, as one. Go to <31>.

Sample file

<25> The release of tension is palpable. Instead of glorying in his triumph, Krokett bids you bend your head in respect to the vanquished Fiend. He cuts out its heart and feeds it to the puma, who gulps the still beating valve down whole. Then he quickly digs a shallow grave and buries the beast, according it due respect in an esoteric ceremony seen only rarely across the millennia.

With this accomplished, Krokett steers you away from the battle site and up a steep ridge, which you have to dig in deep to climb, each step a touch and go struggle against the ever-sucking jungle floor. As you crest the ridge, the breath is sucked from you as you gaze upon the greatest mystery amongst Khaghtch'an's cities. Go to <19>.

<26> Not even a Huntmaster with a devoted puma at his side can be guaranteed to overcome the Phantagonian Fiend in a struggle for supremacy. The Fiend understands that it has passed the greatest test that the Jungles of Phantog can cast its way and eyes

you with little more than indifference. It paws the remains of man and cat into a heap, intermingling their body parts and life juices and begins to dig out a hole in the wet, fetid floor carpet of leaves.

Will you stay to pay your last respects to Krokett and his cat at their grave (go to <28>) or will you take this moment to slip away while the fiend has something higher than murder within its moral compass (go to <29>)?

<27> It is grim, of that there can be no doubt, but where there is a will there may yet be a way…

From desperate need, from time immemorial, wizards have dug deep on Trollworld and conjured up a way to channel the planet's khremm reserves to preserve their lives. How do you think *TTYF* was developed? Where did *Protective Pentagram* first come from? What enabled wizards to fly? It was not through meditation and hours spent at the drawing board! No, when life is imperilled, ingenuity goes into hyperdrive. Your life is hanging by the slenderest of threads right now.

Sample file

Perhaps you could have a moment of inspiration, a flash of genius? Go to <30>.

<28> A big mistake. Once the Fiend has buried the remains of its honoured victims, its eyes flick back to you and it licks its thick, protuberant lips, Then it is upon you, joined with relish by its constant companion, Death, You do know what hit you but you really didn't feel a thing. Close the book.

<29> It was sound judgement to get away from the fiend while it was attending to its ritual but now you are alone in the slime and filth of Phantog without a

guide and protector. The Fiend knows you are near, knows your scent – things are just about as black as they could be without you actually being in the hole with Krokett and the puma. Make a L2 SR on CHR and go to <24>.

Sample file

<30> Make a L2 SR on WIZ. If you fail, go to <34>. If you are successful, a light bulb comes on inside and out, bathing you and the skies above Phantog with a brilliant glow of pure desire to live. Go to <35>.

<31> Collapsing into a state of hysteria, you expend every drop of WIZ you possess in one frenzied combustion of khremmatic confusion. Make a L1 SR on STR. If you make it go to <32> but if you fail go to <33>.

<32> Despite the implosive effort of releasing all your stored khremm in one single moment, you gird your loins and clench your teeth, clinging on to consciousness, knowing that to fall helplessly to the forest floor will mean never to arise.

The profuse explosion of magic that burst forth from you in the instance of absolute yearning for a lifeline gives birth to a more than just your salvation. Go to <35>.

Sample file

<33> The exertion is too much. With all your WIZ wasted, your body sags and your mind caves in.

Unconscious, you lie on the jungle floor, allowing all manner of roots, shoots, spores and insects free play with your body. It is not one thing that does for you. Each contributes to clearing the plate that is the jungle floor of the dinner meat that you have provided.

Phantog burps in satisfaction and you must close the book.

<34> The spark of creativity that might save you is missing from your soul. Instead of pulling a rabbit of the hat, you subside into soft sobs of despair. No one

is there to hear your desolation, no soothes your furrowed brow as you cross the threshold to that which comes after life.

The Fiend is mercifully swift in its kill and your head cannot roll far on the spongy jungle floor as it flies from your shoulders. Close the book.

<35> You have just invented a spell that will become known as *Soular Plare*, an incantation that will summon help if help is within your WIZ times 10 miles. This spell is of your level and carries a casting cost of 10 WIZ points.

Take 200 APs for this stroke of genius – there will be many wizards down the years to come who will have reason to revere your name. Now go to <36>.

Sample file

<36> Something not so wicked this way comes, descending down from the treetops towards you. Is it a bird? Is it a planetoid? No, it is a brother wizard and, as he soon explains, he is known as *the Wood Wizard*, a man at home amongst the trees of the forest more than with his fellow man.

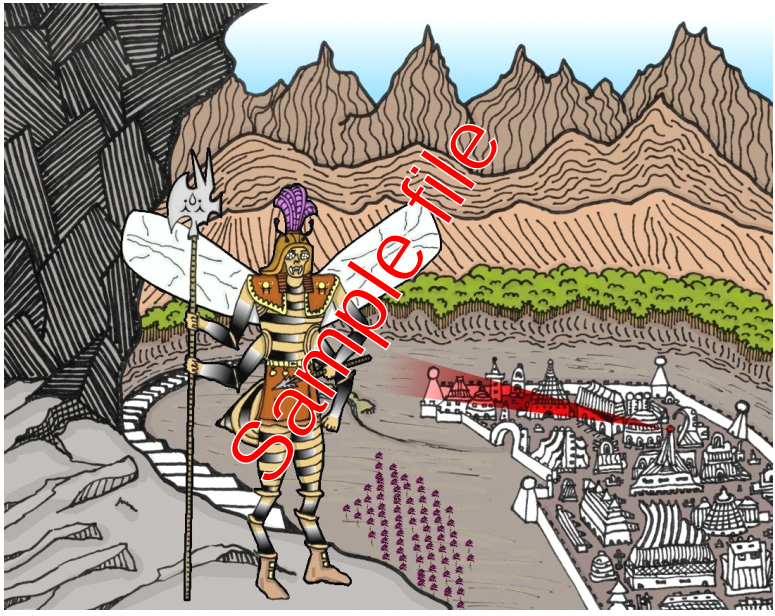
Although the trees of Phantog are no friends even to such as he, the Wood Wizard is at least able to brave a rescue mission. He comforts you with the news that you are not far from Apys and he is certain that he can get you there safely if you will give him your trust. His rustic, rumbling laughter and his bucolic, pastoral demeanour make that trust a given.

He listens carefully to your tale of the Phatagonian Fiend and the fall of Krokett and his puma and then more eagerly hears of the miraculous new magic you just manufactured. Then he tells you it is time to go to Apys, time before something else stirs in the festering

sores of the jungle to seek the nourishment of still-living flesh.

With a sweep of his arm and a stamp of his gnarled staff on to a blacked tree stump, the Wood Wizard summons a tornado to take you to your destination at long, long last. Go to <19>.

Section 2 – Apys



Manukans have lived here beyond the memory of Trollworld's sentient kindreds. They may have ancient legends of their homeworld origins but, if these live in their sagas, they do not share them with any of the other kindreds nor do they permit these other cosmic explorers to be part of the audience when their grandiloquent operatic cycles are staged.

The only time they admit barbarians, as they perceive these interstellar pirates, the other kindreds, is when their queens are given a mate, for it is not for them to wreak wonders of magic on Trollworld without the infusion of hominid genetic variation into their insectoid ichor-lines. That is why you are here, high above their great colonial home, offering your heritage in exchange for the greatest possible magical puissance.

Sample file

Looking down, you see six soldiers striding mechanically up the eastern side of the crater towards you. They walk on stiff-jointed hind legs with a pair of similarly inflexible arms on each side of their bodies. The ebony sheen of their chitinous skin is swathed with bands of shaggy brown-gold fur and they sport multi-faceted mirror eyes and stout antennae proudly rising from the tops of their heads.

Clearly they do not have to walk because they possess a majestic pair of diaphanous wings, ready to propel them swiftly to wherever they wish to go or away from any who seeks to detain them. The halberds they lightly carry indicate they are mandated to deal with disturbances.

Looking briefly over your shoulder, you take in the vast expanse of the Phantogonian Jungle and see that even it has found reason to yield to these Manukans. Their realm of influence must be substantial and penetrating to hold back the advance of Phantog.

Sample file

These people (for creatures is too harsh an epithet to drape them with) need so little from Trollworld, want so little of its inhabitants and yet they stimulate a desire for knowledge beyond the store of mortal beings, for knowledge is a commodity of peerless value, worth more than gold or mithril in the *Scales of Judgement*.

One Manukan soldier steps forward beyond the other and addresses you in clipped, guttural common tongue, yet with a buzzing burr on some of the consonants. It takes a few sentences for your ears to attune themselves to this accent but you soon understand that you are being asked to present your credentials.



If you can establish your bona fides, you will be permitted to enter the honeycombed hive of Apys, the City of Queens.



Sample file

The parchments with the introductions and recommendations of the Wizards' Guild of your home city, the commendations of companions of past dungeon jaunts, the confirmations of good conduct from the Citizens' Council are all packed securely in an impermeable mer-skin tube, safe from the degradations of the inhospitable jungle climate.

The soldier scans them, clicks his mandibles with staccato authority and gestures to the hive-city with an unoccupied arm. You have been assessed as worthy not just of entry but as a suitor to Manukan royalty. You are about to compete for the four hands of a bride and a most fantastic dowry – you had better put your best wooing trousers on!



Sample file

Led up the broad sweeping ramp that rises to a redly glowing sphere of opaque crystalline luminescence, you wonder how many men have passed through this ominous doorway. To your astonishment the second soldier escort turns on his heels to you and answers succinctly – 'You are the seven thousand five hundred and sixtieth.'

This communication conveys the exacting standards that this kindred must have. The number seems surprisingly high but then you reflect on the innumerable years that must have passed since Apys was built.

Not as reticent as you might have supposed, the soldier continues. 'This portal is a means of destruction should our queens decree. The photonic forces it subjugates may be released in any direction they desire. The effect is stark: existence is negated.'

Perhaps this information is given to every visitor so that they can be'e on their best behaviour in the hive.

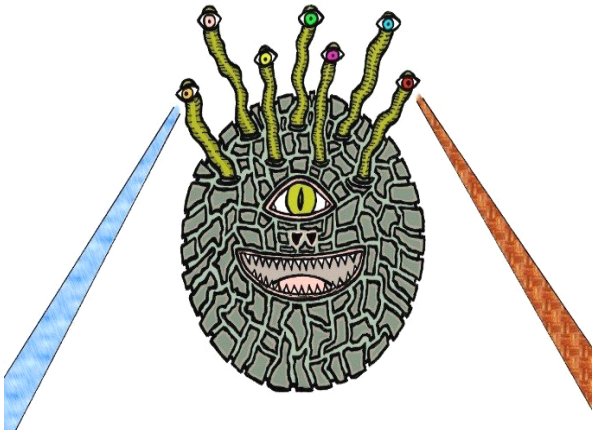
The red light-energy tickles your body cells as you pass through the portentous portal and you cannot help but wriggle in discomfort. It soon passes. Once inside, you see tunnels leading from this first atrium at all heights and at all angles. The chamber is bathed in the light of a thousand beeswax candles and the honey-sweet atmosphere is both soporiphic and cloying. You shake your head vigorously to fend off thoughts of sleep, something you have not enjoyed without fear since you entered Phantog.

The atrium is flanked with more of these soldier Manukans, all armed, all alert, poised to obey orders without hesitation. A larger, bulkier bee-man crawls from a passage above you to your left and greets you with a buzzing of his wings.

'You are the thirty-sixth and last of this cycle's contenders for royal marriage,' he drones acidly. 'I repeat, you are the last.

This signifies that the wooing is to begin on the morrow. This is the two hundred and tenth cycle since Manukans unravelled the riddle of this planet's khremm-core. You must decide tonight what level you will at least initially try for.

Sample file



The Be'eholder will weigh your candidature and the sixes shall be settled on his weighing. 'You will be weary after your travels and so you shall eat and rest before stating your level of contesting. Follow the worker to the consumption chamber. Bee'gone!'

With that imperious command, it is apparent that while your bodily needs will be well catered for, you will have no say in how matters proceed from this point. The worker bee-man leads you along a passage which requires you to stoop and then scurry to keep step with him.

More workers await in the consumption chamber, which is also dominated by the aroma of beeswax candles, and you are served with bee'fsteak tomatoes, bee'troot salad and bee'ans. Nourishing and filling rather than refined, by the time you are replete, your eyelids are drooping. Taking an arm each, briskly but not unkindly, two workers propel you to a sleeping chamber with a round cot filled with pillows and eiderdowns where they leave you to find your own way to the Land of Nod.

Sample file



Sample file

There seems to be some sort of magic that has been cast on your eyes when you struggle to return to wakefulness. A *Glue* spell on your eyelids. But no, you can prize them apart and then gulp from the pitcher of fresh water placed thoughtfully at your bedside. Once your perceptions of this world are disentangled from those of your dreams, you remember that you have now to decide at what level to pitch your wooing.

There is also a scroll on the table by the water. Scanning it quickly, you see that there is no Level One but you can choose from Levels Two, Three, Five, Seven, Ten and Thirteen, these Levels equating very broadly with the spell levels administered by the Wizards' Guild. You also read that should you overcome the other five challengers at any given Level and be accepted by that Level's queen, you may take a shot at a higher Level.

There is a warning, written in orange ink: Do not comport yourself with conceit – if you succeed at an appropriate Level, you will be made ready for a higher challenge by the good graces of the queens of Manuka.

Well, that certainly makes it quite clear. There is a space for you to record your choice of Level and to sign your name. For Level Two, go to <37>, for Level Three, go to <47>, for Level Five, go to <57>, for Level Seven, go to <67>, for Level Ten, go to <77> and for the ultimate in courting commissions at Level Thirteen, go to <87>.

Sample file

Section 3 – Apida, the Harvest Queen

<37> The queen you must woo is the Harvest Queen. Her name is Apida and her allotted task is to ensure that the Phantogonian blooms come to no harm, that they are free from disease and protected from herbivores so that her people may be certain of manifold pollen supplies. Go to <38>.



<38> There are five other contenders for the hands of Apida, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be the Venerable Bee'de, introduces the wizards who are to vie for bee'trothal to each other. The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are Nux Fractor, Spontaneous Combustius, Perry Stroika, Ali Bongo and Sly Toffand.

All are human except for Perry, who despite his very ordinary ears is a half-elf raised deep within the embrace of the great south-western elven forests. He is talkative and quick to give his trust. 'I've lived amongst trees all my life,' he tells you all, 'and some of my best friends are trees but I will pray nightly that these Phantogonian nightmares never take root in the elven homelands.'

Now go to <39> to find out what you are up against.

<39> These wizards have all mastered the 2nd Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it is better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice!

If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status (i.e. for a L2 wizard, at least one of WIZ, INT, DEX and CHR must be 20 or higher), move the attributes up to the minimum for the level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing. No wizards are allowed batteries or any other artificial aid of this nature here in Apys.

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.

Sample file



Sample file

Spontaneous Combustius – STR – 6d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 6d6, LK – 4d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 4d6, CHR – 5d6, SPD – 4d6 (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled in the arts of fighting – this is a house rule I rather like but it is entirely up to you if you run with it or not; I also give warriors an extra d6 rather than just an add for each level for their weapon of expertise.)

Nux Fractor – STR – 6d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 6d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 5d6, CHR – 4d6, SPD – 4d6.
Perry Stroika – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 6d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 5d6, SPD – 4d6.

Ali Bongo – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 6d6, LK – 6d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 4d6, CHR – 6d6, SPD – 4d6.



Sample file

Sly Toffand – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 5d6, INT – 5d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 5d6, CHR – 4d6, SPD – 5d6.

See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them; watch out for Perry who has a second kukri and likes to slash vigorously.
Now go to <40>.

<40> The Venerable Bee'de buzzes about in evident excitement – his queen is going to make her match! You wizards are probably anxious to meet Apida: after all, this union is not one to make lightly as there are no easy grounds for divorce; annulment can only be awarded when attempts at consummation end in failure after arduous effort can be testified to. You are all ushered through a film of gauze, hanging from the curved wall behind him.

Once through, you behold a sumptuous chamber, bedecked with blooms of gorgeous colours. On a divan in the centre, draped languorously and, possibly, enticingly, is Apida. Go to <41>.

<41> The young queen's eyes sparkle with sharp interest as you enter her boudoir. As Manukan queens go, she has been dealt a fist full of trumps – a full and firm thorax, cute stripes of ochre and burnt umber, antennae quivering cutely and bee'guiling multi-faceted eyes.

She is besotted with you all! Apida claps her four hands and dismisses the Venerable Bee'de, clearly wanting to have you all to herself, the greedy minx. It is a little known fact that Manukan queens love crooning. If there was a balcony for her to lean down from, she would have you below with a lute or a zither, no doubt. She indicates that you are all to form an umbrella formation in front of her and, one by one, step forward and let your heart sing to her.

Sample file

As Apida snaps a finger, Bee'de rushes in with scrolls upon which are written the words and music to some of the finest Manukan melodies. He hands one to each of you. Let's see who gets which tune to croon. Go to <42>.

<42> The six songs that Apida wishes to have sung to her are as follows:

1 - Honey From My Honey – 3
2 - Let It Be'e -2
3 - Be'e My Baby -3
4 - The Buzz Of It All -2
5 - Just Can't Help Bee'lievin' -3
6 - Be'e Good To Me -2

Roll 1d6 to allocate a song to each wizard (it's ok for a song to come up more than once because Apida has some particular favourites!); the number after the song indicates the level of INT SR required to read the music; if a wizard can read the music, s/he gets to sing the song!

Wooing Points (WPs) are awarded based on the level of CHR SR the wizard manages: CHR SR level x 100. Hope you a ready to warble, trill and hold those long, loving notes! Once you are done, make a scorecard for each wizard to record the WPs. Now go to <43>.

<43> Apida's features are, of course, quite rigid so it is anyone's guess as to what she thought of these vocal performances. Bee'de now steps forward with a tray of golden goblets, each brimming with a thick, rich brown brew with a heady aroma.

'It is bee'dka,' he tells you with a broad bee'am. 'It is very good but very potent!' You may drink with full good manners or you may decline, protesting that you need a clear head for courtly love. Write down your decision and go to <45>.

Sample file

<44> Apida is an attentive girl – you can see she will not miss a trick. Perhaps this is why it is the rather bizarrely dressed Sly Toffand she summons first to present himself before her. Mage Toffand sports muttonchop sideburns and wears a baggy pinstripe suit with a large carnation in the buttonhole.

As he takes one of Apida's claw hands and presses it to his rather thick, moist lips, his other darts out to place a similar bloom behind where he thinks she should have an ear. Despite his snake-like move, the queen catches his wrist and twists it, almost hard enough to snap it.

‘Aggghh!’ cries the wretched suitor.

You may roll 1d6 and assign damage to this ill-judged rival, also docking him 1d6 times 10 WPs. When he has stopped gasping and flapping, Apida insists that he tells her what adjective comes to his mind as he looks into her fractured eyes.

You will all have to come up with a word. Write yours down and go to <46>.

<45> If you refused your bride-to-bee’s warm hospitality, you must deduct 1d6 x 10 WPs from your score. Roll a L1 SR on INT for the other wizards – if anyone got a critical fumble, then they to suffer this penalty. Go now to <44>.

<46> Manukans do not care for buttery or flattery (take special note of the former please).

If your word was of this nature and not sincere (and you must be the judge unless you want to Trollmail Khaghbboommm via Trollhalla.com) then you must deduct 100 WPs.

If this was not so – say it ain’t so, Joe! – you must make the best SR on LK that you can, and then do so for your rivals.

Deduct 2 from the level made for each candidate. If you have a positive result after the adjustment, then your word was judged to be well chosen. You may take the result times 100 in WPs, as do your fellow wooers. If anyone had a negative then they get a times one hundred (x 100) deduction from WPs (and a wizard can have a negative total any given time).

Now go to <90>.

Sample file

Section 4 – Halictidia, the Jungle Queen

<47> The queen you must woo is the Jungle Queen. Her name is Halictidia and her assigned duty is to be custodian of the area surrounding Apys, the great crater, is safe from the intrusions of Phantog, which jealously seeks to reclaim what once was its territory, just like the rest of the jungle expanse. Go to <48>.

<48> There are five other contenders for the hands of Halictidia, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be Mr. Sea'an, introduces the wizards who are to vie for betrothal to each other.

The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are Ambrosia Nectar, Flusho the Wonder Nit, Argyron, Megalesia and Skelmis. The first two are human but the last three are all elves, all from the forests of the south-western coast. It would seem that Zela-vehar-Zorah, the High Elven Lord, has some special interest in this matter.

Sample file

The female, Ambrosia Nectar is here because she has sworn her willingness to submit to a *Transgender Bender* spell should she win a bride. This is something all female applicants must irrevocably undertake before they may enter the lists.

Now go to <49> to find out what you are up against.

<49> These wizards have all mastered the 3rd Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it is better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice!

If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status, move the attributes up to the minimum level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing.

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.

Ambrosia Nectar – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 9d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 6d6, SPD – 4d6. (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled to the arts of fighting.)

Flusho the Wonder Nit – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 9d6, INT – 7d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 5d6, CHR – 5d6, SPD – 4d6.

Argyron – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 9d6, INT – 7d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 5d6, SPD – 4d6.

Megalesius – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 6d6, INT – 6d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 4d6.

Sample file



Skelmis – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 7d6, INT – 9d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 5d6, CHR – 5d6, SPD – 5d6.

See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them.

Now go to <50>.

<50> The facially handicapped Mr Bee'an (his face has a habit of contorting itself into grimaces better suited to a gargoyle than a Manukan) mutters and tuts under his breath before holding up a sign written in thick red crayon telling you that you may only use 3rd Level spells during this wooing contest. To use a lower level spell will mean instant disqualification with a large measure of pain thrown in for good measure.

OK, so that rules out invisibility and physicians healing themselves. *Hidey Holes* and *Poor Babies* are part of the Wonder Nit's staple diet so Flusho's florid cheeks blanche like a pan of parsnips.

Sample file

Flusho starts to protest but Mr Bee'an pulls a face and the wizard gives way without a murmur. The elves do not look best pleased either for what they know that others may not, through the woodcraft of their home forests, is that *Fly Me* is more often an invitation to a free lunch than it is salvation in the forest world because it is better to creep close to the ground that show oneself out in the open. No, they know full well that *Hidey Hole* and *Poor Baby* are the great losses from the standard Wizards' Guild arsenal. Still, enough of that – there is a bride to be wooed!

Halictidia is tall for a Manukan and her limbs are thicker, her mandibles evidently more powerful. She is a queen used to the trials of battle and she wishes to test the mettle of her suitors in the heat of the contest now.

As she silences you all with a curt nod of her waspish head, Mr Bee'an steps forward to announce that you must all arm-wrestle with Halictidia. From a tall closet, he brings forth a tall box which, it transpires, is brimful with prosthetic limbs.

'Twould appear that accidents do happen in such testings as you are about to undergo. Away to <51> with you all!

<51> Halictidia lies on her stomach on an angled couch that is the perfect height for the arm-wrestling table, with its twin indentations to ensure the prescribed posture is maintained throughout the bout. We shall keep this simple and exclude level bonuses in saving rolls since the wizards would all get the same boost and the queen would have what I know she would agree to be an unfair and unnecessary advantage.

Sample file

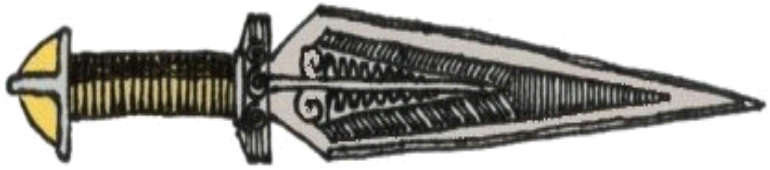
The saving roll – no surprise here – is on STR and it is just a matter of rolling and re-rolling until a victor emerges. Halictidia's STR can be found by rolling 6d6. You may choose the batting order and then get down to business.

The reward for beating the queen is 100 Wooing Points (WPs) times the level the victory is by. But – if anyone rolls a critical fumble, the dreaded 1-2 combination means a broken arm has been suffered. Then roll for a L1 SR on LK – if that roll is failed, the limb was ripped off at the shoulder.

The victim gets patched up so that CON is not an issue but the loss of a limb is a permanent handicap and Halictidia does not care a fig for the idea of marrying a cripple. If that fate befouls your life, dear player, it is the equivalent of not one but three strikes so you are out! Do the dice rolling business and then go to <52>.

Sample file

<52> The Manukan people call Halictidia the 'Prodigal Daughter'. When she was barely more than a hatchling, an unfortunate and short-lived nurse left her unattended for a brief moment on her first trip outside Apys on the fringes of Phantog when that ill-starred servant heeded a call of nature.





That call proved to be at too great a volume and it was heard by ears that never should have picked up the possibilities for interference or worse. The first ears to be taken to the unwarded bee-stroller were those of the Sapsucking Spinesnapper, a low-slung, twenty-legged monster with foreclaws custom-designed for breaking the backs of even the most stout of Phantog's vertebrates and with a proboscis able to probe the hardest skins or shells of the Jungles' inhabitants.

The Spinesnapper was first but not by enough of a margin to allow it to taste royal Manukan blood. This Mr Bee'an tells you, claws grasping one another with

the tension of the tale; his features have writ large upon them what it would have cost Apys to have lost a pre-ordained queen.

Continuing with this now legendary tale of the tortuous twists fate sometimes takes, the seneschal sits cross-legged and imitates these sinuous movements of fate facially. You hear next of how the dreaded and dreadful Spinesnapper soon had company in that still serene clearing, that the creature joining there had a crucial advantage over its larger interloper and how that trump card was played as a sophisticated stratagem.

The Gibbous Moonmonkey is a solitary primate to such a degree that its propensity for naught but its own company has left the species perched precariously on the precipice of extinction. Some do hanker after a child to raise in their own image but hermaphrodite they are not. This one clearly had a powerful yen to bounce a young 'un on its knee.

Sample file

As the Spinesnapper approached the bee'dler in her stroller, so the Moonmonkey summersaulted with unparalleled agility to interpose itself between predator and prey. Yet this was no act of self-sacrificial suicide.

This child of the twin moons of Trollworld simply stared down the Spinesnapper, its gibbous eyes widening to an alarming extent, one taking on the aspect of Sar, the other that of its larger sister, Sahane.

Like so many who had looked into those twin-moon eyes before it, the Spinesnapper shut down completely frozen in time, as the monkey reached behind its back and took the infant Halictidia into its enveloping arms, before bounding away to its desolate nest, leaving the

salivating Spinesnapper to gape stupidly at the empty stroller. The irate monster did not have to wait long for something to snack on though, as the ill-omened nurse chose this moment to return to duty.

Sample file

She never did know that Halictidia was still alive as her backbone gave way with a crack that re-echoed all the way back to Apys.

The story stops here, for now, because Halictidia is an outdoor-girl and cannot abide to stay copped up for long. As you are bustled outside to be kitted out for a Phantogonian daytrip, she suddenly turns and tests the attention and interest of each one of you with a series of questions about the section of her biography that Me Bee'an has just shared.

Surely you were listening with avid interest? Surely your short-term memory is up to scratch?

Everyone has to make a L4 SR on INT. Failure indicates a breakdown in cerebral connections and the loss of 1d6 x 20 WPs while success shows that you were listening with rapt attention and you gain 1d6 x 20 WPs. I hope you are making a good impression on your jungle date to win a mate.

Now away with you to <53>.

Sample file

<53> Like all queens, mainly because they can get away with it, Halictidia is a capricious young woman. Just as you are being fitted for your Phantogonian survival suit, she demands a spell to prove your wizardly bona fides. Not just any old spell, mark you. No, she is well versed in magical lore, this one, and she wants a spell from the Codex Incantatem no less.

While she taps her booted foot and drums her fingers on the top of a soldier's head, Mr Bee'an slips each one of you a ring. He does not want to lose all the suitors here and now and have to start again – he is not keen to have toiled in vain. The ring will allow you

to perform and absorb any one L3 spell from the Codex.

Sample file

If you do not have this slightly loopy book of magical lore, dear player, you must by, beg, borrow but not steal a copy or at least phone a friend. Choose your spell, write it down and then roll dice to select one at random for the other spellcasters. When this has been done go to <55>.

<54> With that little demonstration of mystical might give her a quick thrill, Halictidia, a vertically vigorous girl, bends down and kisses each wizard who succeeded in casting an amusing incantation a investigative kiss full on the lips. For some, electricity may spark and light up her Heart Orb!



Sample file

Make a L3 SR on LK – if you make it, you gain 1d6 x 50 WPs and the infusion of romance adds 1d6 to CHR. Time to troop off to <56>.

<55> Her favourite L3 Codex spells are, in the order given:

- ***Vengeance To Boot***
- ***Say Cheese***
- ***Fiery Dragon's Breath***
- ***Danse Macabre***
- ***Black Bag***
- ***Strawberry Fields Forever***

Anyone casting one of these six spells successfully (L3 SR on INT required) gains 30 WPs x their spell's place in the list above (i.e. 180 points for *Vengeance To Boot* but only 30 for *Strawberry Fields Forever*.

If anyone had the temerity to cast *Miasmal Stench* they lose 1d6 x 30 WPs unless they can make a L3 SR on CHR to pass it off as a vulgar joke. Now go to <54>.

<56> Patrolling the perimeter is not for the faint hearted. Manukans perish all too regularly as they strive to protect their bee'loved city: there are many of them and, harsh though it may seem to advocates of the primacy of the individual over the group, they breed soldiers fast enough to spare a fair few. But, alas! There is but one of you!

Sparing no effort to preserve that status quo, Mr Bee'an sees that the Army's quartermaster measures you up for the most modern of Manukan military millinery.

These masters of manufacture have manipulated metallurgy and magical machinery to splendid effect as you are all quick to acknowledge as two Manukan tailors, Bee'gad and Bee'gorah, both clad in emerald green aprons with a sprig of shamrock fluttering from each antenna, explain what their helmets do as they place one atop each of your bonces.
These war-helmets can drop a mental force-shield in front of you at lightning speed if you have the mental acuity to operate it effectively (it takes a L2 SR on SPD to get this right); the much-vaunted headpiece is further able to deal out retribution!

There is a single antenna on top which fires lightning bolts which are capable of packing quite a punch

Sample file

(10d6) but it does take a L3 SR on DEX to direct the jagged steak of lightning, Zeus-like, at foes up to 200' distant.

You can try it out if you want. The other wizards are certainly up for it and Ambrosia Nectar bags first dibs. The Manukan guards run to a single tree, standing stiffly on the crater surface. It is broad enough about the trunk to house a door and it is this door to which the guards turn their attention.

Slipping back a stout bolt, the two soldiers release a deadly killer, the Two-Headed Slithey Tove, a creature able to shoot its barbed and sticky tongue at prodigious speed over 100' and then has the tongue-strength to reel in victims the size of elephants!



Sample file

It has a tongue CON of 100 if you ever need to hack through one, heaven forbid! The beast's own CON is 500 but it has a delicate disposition once wounded. Each time it is hit, it gets phased and pauses to lick its wounds with both tongues.



If it's CON is reduced to less than 400 it will curl up and roll away, knocking down trees as it goes. Starting with Ambrosia Nectar, you, dear player, need to make the attempt to zap it for each wizard in any order you may care to prescribe.

If, after all wizards have sought to master their new helmets, the Slithey Tove is still headed your way, the guards will intervene. As they do the job that you light wizards were meant to do, all wizards must make a L1 SR on DEX to get out of the brute's way or take 1d6 d6 direct CON damage.

It seems improbable to me that you will be snuffed out like a candle in the wind by The Brown Dirt Cowboy's favourite monster, but if this is your date with destiny, close the book; otherwise go on to <136a>.

Sample file

Section 5 – Stenotrida, the War Queen

<57> The queen you must woo is the War Queen. Her name is Stenotrida and it she that must marshal the soldiers to maintain the isolation and anonymity of Apys against the prying eyes of Trollworld. Go to <58>.

<58> There are five other contenders for the hands of Stenotrida, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be Bee'dle Jhai, introduces the wizards who are to vie for beelzothal to each other. The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are Leverona, Moidevort, Yaga Baboo, Hokey and Simon Magoo. All claim to be human but many would hazard a guess, behind his back surely, that Yaga Baboo has at least one kobold parent. All are said to have a streak of steel in their nature: those of less generous disposition might instead say they are ruthless killers.

Sample file

Now go to <59> to find out what you are up against.

<59> These wizards have all mastered the 5th Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it is better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice!

If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status, move the attributes up to the minimum level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.



Leverona – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 8d6, INT – 15d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 8d6, SPD – 4d6. (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled to the arts of fighting.)

Moldevort – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 15d6, INT – 9d6, LK – 4d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 6d6, SPD – 5d6.

Yaga Baboo – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 9d6, INT – 15d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 7d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 4d6.



Hokey – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 8d6, INT – 16d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 6d6, SPD – 4d6.

Simon Magoo – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 15d6, INT – 9d6, LK – 8d6, CON – 4d6, DEX – 6d6, CHR – 4d6, SPD – 5d6.

Sample file



See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them.

Now go to <60>.

<60> You might wonder at the need for a war queen here in Phantog; Apys sits secure in the central crater, strong enough to keep the Jungle creatures away and able to rely on Phantog to make mincemeat of anyone foolish enough to enter and leave the survival rules of the rest of Trollworld behind them. It is true that this queenship is largely ceremonial since war is something that the Manukans have only danced with once in their time here but it is regarded as an imperative that a small militia is maintained and that it is continually honed into an ever-more lethal fighting force.

It has two points of focus: the other kindreds of Trollworld, who are closely monitored with respect to both their territorial aspirations and the development of their prowess, and the creatures of Phantog itself, whose evolutionary leaps can take even the most vigilant unawares.

The one and only time that the Manukans went to war was when they first encountered Phantog. They, like all other interlopers on the Trollworld, had chanced upon the singularity in their galaxy that had sucked them into this universe; they, too, had found their space technology had been rendered redundant on this planet whose atomic structures were dictated by the Khi.

Accepting that this fate was ineluctable and having no aptitude for manipulating khremm, they were at once on the backfoot, beset by kindreds wielding magics, who had the advantage of earlier arrival or who simply were stronger, faster, more deadly than they. They were not, and remain, a kindred disposed towards easy alliances or co-habitation.

Sample file

Thus, on discovering Phantog, for all its abundant horrors, they made war on the incumbent species claiming domination, the Jungle Trolls. The Manukans were, and still are not, a kindred easily dismayed and the fiends of Phantog were simply problems to be analysed and solved; the trolls were mighty indeed but sluggish even by general troll standards in the cloying jungle heat.

The War Queen had been raised from birth to make accurate assessment, to analyse, to organise and to make timely decisions – she was a leader and the trolls had none. When they happened to come together in battle, they were formidable and wrought destruction all about them but, more often than not, they were isolated and could be turned and reduced, little by little.

Sample file

The Manukans, led by their War Queen, conquered the trolls and they vanquished Phantog. They penetrated to the great central crater and founded their stalwart city, Apys, there in the eye of the hurricane. The stoutness of their citadel allowed them to hold the Jungle at bay, cleared constantly at Cratersedge, and the few surviving trolls learnt that their star-gazing would be left to them undisturbed as long as they stayed away from Cratersedge.

A fulcrum was found and the balance re-calibrated by every succeeding War Queen. The Jungle Trolls became just one more jungle predator.

<61> The Manukans are secretive kindred, keeping their cards close to their chests, their aces tucked neatly up their sleeves. Bee'dle Jhai ushers each of the wooing contenders down polished marble steps leading down from the Grand Central Atrium that hosts most of Apys' business. Though enduring, the marble

is worn, the steps bowed in the middle by generation after generation of Manukan military boots yomping their way down, eager to get at it on the training ground below.

'You are all Masters of Fifth Level Magic – forgive me, Mistress!' he bobs obsequiously to Leverona, who dismisses his error peremptorily. 'You will soon be given opportunity to test your generalship against each other and then against the queen. Your magics you are free to cast and, indeed, you should, for otherwise there would be aught need of your services, in the matrimonial chamber or on the Campus Martial.'


Sample file

With a bee'ckoning claw, he leads you down a spiral staircase at the foot of the marble steps and opens a door to the briefing room. Go to <62>.

<62> The room is dominated by a scale model of the battlefield that awaits you and your forces, complete with mounds and dips, copses and ravines and other geological features that might waylay incomplete battle strategies. The queen, Stenotrida, looks up from pushing troops from one combat zone to another.

She has an upright bearing and wears a monocle. She speaks in crisp, precise gutturals. 'Wooers, ready for inspection! Present arms!'

From now on you must keep track of WPs (Wooing Points) for you and for your opponents – they can go negative – for they will be awarded as you go about your wooing business. These WPs will determine who scoops the wedding jackpot (there is a tidy dowry to go with each queen).

Decide how to respond to Stenotrida's demand – if you take this order literally and roll up your sleeves, go to <65>; if you show her your kukri or whatever it is you fight with, go to <66>; if you feel emboldened and show her some other sort of hardware, go to <190> (when you have finished roll 1d6 for each of your rivals to see how they responded: 1 or 2 takes them to <65>, 3 or 4 to <66> and 5 or 6 to <190>.

Sample file

<63> You will be given a squad of thirty warriors to engage opponents in six different encounters. Don't fret about wasted lives and spilt blood though because the enemies you will come up against are simulacra created the last consort of the Hive Queen – he was a L13 adept. Your peers will be set the same military agenda so all will be fair in love and in war.

Before briefing you about your troops, ground conditions and the rules of engagement, your queen would like a brief romantic moment with each of you.

Since you do not know each other well enough for the whispering of sweet nothings, Stenotrida will settle for you nuzzling her ear and murmuring what you think her favourite animal is (we are talking mammals, by the way).

Write down your choice and go to <192>.

<64> With that little entrée into the courtship to come under your belt, it's time to lead your troops to glory.

Unlike the soldiers who go into Phantog's clutches (see the L3 wizards' section), Stenotrida's infantry are equipped with standard stuff – broadsword, pilum, tower shield and honeycomb plate armour. There are six archers attached to the group as part of the thirty.

Sample file

You will command one of a group of elves, dwarves, ogres, urukks, zombies or a mixed group, including a minotaur, a centaur, a hill giant, a rock troll, a harpy and a dragonman, as well as several humans, including wizards; your colleagues will also take charge of one group each. You will fight it out against each other before taking on Stenotrida's warriors. Casualties will be replaced for the next conflict.



Bee'fore you bee'gin, Bee'dle Jhai offers you a rare opportunity to increase your stock of magical military spellware. There is a range of spells you may not know that may prove decisive in these staged conflicts. You and the others will be

given the opportunity to learn the spells under the tutelage of an ancient shaman who often visits Apys, seemingly immune to Phantog's terrors.

Go to <191> to find out more.

<65> To triumph in war against canny and capable enemies, orders must be followed unquestioningly. Stenotrida always says exactly what she means. She studies your arms, assessing their strength. Make the best SR you can on STR. You may take WPs equal to 20 times the level you make. If you happen to roll lucklessly a critical fumble, your limbs are considered scrawny and puny – you suffer a 50 WP loss. Now go to <63>.

<66> This response is too pedestrian by half! She can see how you are armed and has seen every blade imaginable and more beside. Impatiently, she slaps you across the chops. Take 1d6 CON damage and lose 50 WPs. Shame on you! Go back to <61> and try to do better this time.

Sample file

Section 6 – Melittida, the Ambassadorial Queen



<67> The queen you must woo is the Ambassadorial Queen. Her name is Melittida and she labours unceasingly on accumulating a library of all the recorded knowledge on Trollworld, for to know is to be able to protect. Go to <68>.

<68> There are five other contenders for the hands of Melittida, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be Bee'n Hurley, introduces the wizards who are to vie for betrothal to each other. The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are The Wood Wizard, Hanzalf, Sunnyman, Ragnarok and Catweezil. All are human most likely, although it is not actually that easy to be certain. All most definitely have an unquenchable thirst for knowledge.

Now go to <69> to find out what you are up against.

<69> These wizards have all mastered the 7th Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it is better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice. If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status, move the attributes up to the minimum level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing.

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.

Sample file

Hanzalf – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 15d6, INT – 21d6, LK – 8d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 8d6, CHR – 8d6, SPD – 5d6.



Sunnyman – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 21d6, INT – 16d6, LK – 7d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 7d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 6d6.



The Wood Wizard – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 13d6, INT – 21d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 10d6, CHR – 10d6, SPD – 6d6. (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled to the arts of fighting.)

Ragnarok – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 21d6, INT – 14d6, LK – 10d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 7d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 6d6.



Sample file

Catweezil – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 21d6, INT – 14d6, LK – 5d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 14d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 5d6.



See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them.

Now go to <70>.

<70> Bee'n Hurley is the court jester and wears gaudy baubles attached to every limb and to both antennae. They tinkle with merriment as he draws near, a welcome tonic to his mistress, Melittida, who has the civic duty of attending the courts of all the elevated nobles of the major cities and fiefdoms of Khaghtch'an.



It might seem that she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth but the frequent absences from the home hearth of Apys is a burden most would find intolerable and even the most ferocious nooks of Phantog are dear to this queen. The moons above the Jungle decree her travel plans for when one moon passes by the other she must press an embassy once more, away from the family and the hive-home so nurturing and so cherished.

As you all glean vital information concerning how your time will be spent, Bee'n decides it would be a splendid way to introduce you to your would be sweetheart by plucking something entertaining from your personage. Of course, it would ill behove you to decline such a spectacle – boorish and churlish behaviour like that would undoubtedly eliminate you from the wooing contest and leave you with a long and life-ending walk back home through Phantog's foulest facets (that is, you would be sent home via the 'scenic' route, as the jester plainly implies with a leap and a clap for good measure).

His plan is to produce something from behind each wizard's ear as he makes the introductions – sound straightforward enough.

Sample file

Before you can ask any questions, a there is a flourish of trumpets and the double doors with the honey bee emblems and the honeycomb handles swing open and in sweeps Melittida on an unfurling swathe of golden velvet carpet. She looks bee'vine, with her ermine collared cloak, barbed with stingers to convey the foolishness of not treating with the Manukans respectfully and adorned with hive patterns to display the advanced, orderly nature of Apyan society. This queen has a warm, engaging smile ever playing over her intelligent features and her charisma washes over everyone; it would be impossible not to weigh her every word as gold nuggets panned in an alluvial stream and, in equal measure, impossible not to yearn to have her for one's own.

Go to <71>.

<71> As she surveys her bee'vy of wooers, Bee'n Hurley bows low and begs to announce her visitors, those who will accompany her over the next six weeks of travel over the vast Kraken continent. She graciously permits this service and he burps loudly and repeatedly in gratitude.

She clearly has an uncomplicated sense of humour for she laughs musically at this puerile comedy routine. Then he presents you one by one, squeezing an air-bag under an armpit, which of course produces a noise implying you all have unsettled digestive systems. It does not do to be too straight-laced with Bee'n in play.

Go to <72>.

Sample file

<72> Have a every wizard pull a face to make the queen laugh. Whoever makes the highest SR on CHR manages the most amusing facial contortions and gains the level of the saving roll x 10 WPs. If there is a tie, divide the spoils of merriment. Now go to <73> - I hope you have given Bee'n something to live up to.

<73> Bee'n has a range of amusing items that he can whisk into his queen's sight with a skilled sleight of hand. Lined up for this first impression session he has six fun items, to wit: a large lump of earwax, a dead mouse, an ostrich egg, a diaper, a pig's bladder filled with blood and a gherkin shaped uncannily like the male member.

What Bee'n Hurley pulls out from behind your ear depends on a LK SR and whether or not Melittida finds it funny is dictated by a CHR SR. You may go first or you may let the other wizards go ahead of you; in fact, you choose the order. Once an item has gone, it will not reappear. If you fail to make a L5 SR on LK, you

get the gherkin or the earwax (flip a coin to find which one); if you make a L6 SR on LK or better, you get the enormous egg or the dead mouse (coin flip); otherwise, it's the diaper or the pig's bladder (flipping coins!).

Sample file

The gherkin and the egg need a L5 SR on CHR to make the queen laugh – if you succeed you gain 50 WPs and if you fail you lose 50 WPs (you can go negative); the diaper and the mouse require of you a L6 SR on CHR to produce merriment – success yields 75 WPs, failure costs you the same; the bladder and the earwax have been used oft times and take a L7 SR on CHR to garner mirth and 100 WPs, with failure depleting you by 100 WPs.

WPs are Wooing Points and it is these which will ultimately decide who wins fair Melittida's clawed hand. Now go to <74>.

<74> Did you make the queen giggle and titter? Ambassadors swap a lot of jokes – it's what makes the Trollworld go round. Khaghbch'an is a large continent, shaped like the fabled kraken, the tentacles occupied by the less friendly kindreds such as the Undead, the trolls and the uruks. Ogres, centaurs and minotaurs have their own peninsulas too, with humans dominating the few large cities such as Khaboom, Nesstlehaven, Porttree and Castleward; the elves have settled the great forests to the south on the main body of the continent, with dwarves far away in the mountains to the north and again in the legendary city of Baroo Khazad in the wastes known as the Dragon Roosts. Melittida's diplomatic mission is a whirlwind itinery taking in the elves in Fingledell, the cities of Khaboom, Porttree and Nesstlehaven, which is closest of all to Phantog, a visit to the High Priest of Hormuz, the dragon wizard-god, and a final trip to one of the dwarven strongholds.

You are certainly going to be well-travelled by the time Melittida comes to pluck one of you ripe, juicy cherries from the tree of romantic bliss. The jester informs you

Sample file

that the first place you will press your embassy is far Porttree where you will meet not just Alberforth, Lord of the Western Extremes, but also Baron Lanceabit, whose great stronghold of Castleward has now ceded dominion to its more northerly cousin after centuries of contention.

Sample file

Go to <75>.

<75> Bee'n Hurley has you all line up in order of height behind the queen and her diplomatic retinue. Ragnarok is the tallest of the other five, the Wood Wizard, hunched over as he always is, is the shortest. The jester touches the Rod Of Blowings to each person's coccyx and your away, with a shake of a bell at the end and a toot of a horn! But each transportation does carry a small risk of re-materialisation amidst solid objects – perhaps a mouse scurrying across the floor, a cup carelessly knocked over in the very second before someone is to occupy the space, who knows for sure when they jaunt that they will not be fatally spliced.

Everyone needs to make a L1 SR on LK before going to <76> - failure means that something has entered your body (or you have entered something else's atomic structure) and that you need to make another L1 SR on LK: succeed and you just take 1d6 of foot damage (which I am certain you can heal for yourself) while failure means that, whatever the object was, it somehow got lodged in your brain and you are now, sadly, quite definitely, dead).
<76> Bee'n Hurley would be quick to make a jest about you, or another wizard-wooer, just dying to meet Lord Alberforth if there was an unfortunate mishap so we had best hope that there is no need for such a predictable quip.

You find yourselves in a sumptuous antechamber, resplendent with burgundy carpets and tapestries flecked with gold and silver thread, depicting battles between every kindred imaginable. As you take in the splendour of your surroundings, a grey-bearded fellow in a primrose doublet and midnight blue hose steps

Sample file

forward to press one of Melitidda's claw-hands to his honey lips. You catch her greet him. 'The pleasure is equally ours, Chief Steward Phortaxus. I am pleased to see that you are enjoying an Indian summer of good health. I pray that this is no less true for Lord Alberforth?'

This Steward, Phortaxus, frowns grimly and shakes his head almost imperceptibly. 'Sadly, My Lord's health shows no season but winter. His discontent is ours. It casts a long pallid shade over our great city. Your visit is timely, Madam: to receive the blessings of your people in these troubled times is a boon indeed. But, I beg of you, please acquaint me with your staff so that I, in turn, may describe them accurately when they are brought before his Grace.'

Sample file

Bee'n Hurley becomes serious for a moment, the mask of mimicry falling from his face, and he introduces you to the Chief Steward, detailing your principle exploits by way of a potted history for Phortaxus to assimilate. It transpires, as you listen ardently, that Hanzalf, Sunnyman and Ragnarok have together, scarcely a month past, defeated a powerful liche (*see 'Where the Liche Lord Lies' by AR Holmes, published by Tavernmaster Games, available at Lulu Publishing*) who had awaked after centuries of sleep, with the intention of unleashing the entire population of Khaghtch'an's Undead Peninsula, mummies, zombies, vampires and even darker brethren, on the principal cities of the land. Phortaxus is clearly impressed, as is the queen, and these three rivals all score 100 WPs.

When the Wood Wizard's work shoring up endangered species and studying eco-systems that the sapient kindreds might learn and benefit from is revealed by the jester, both senior auditors are still further admiring in their comments – this gentle mage gains

150 WPs. That just leaves Catweezil and you. Go to <237>.

Section 8 – Colletida, the Starwatcher Queen



<77> The queen you must woo is the Starwatcher Queen. Her name is Colletida and her work is to scan the heavens for signs of interest from alien kindreds in Trollworld. Go to <78>.

<78> There are five other contenders for the hands of Colletida, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be the Bee'tleguis, introduces the wizards who are to vie for betrothal to each other.

The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are House Elf, Souza Fortescue, El Rico, Dr. William Weird and Rinsewell. All are human except for Souza, who is unmistakably a dwarf and one of a famously short temper. He and House Elf have for quite some time been 'special advisors' to the Mayor of Khaboom and some suspect they are not truly here in their individual capacities.

Now go to <79> to find out what you are up against.

<79> These wizards have all mastered the 10th Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it's better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice! If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status, move the attributes up to the minimum level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing.

Sample file

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.

House Elf – STR – 7d6, WIZ – 20d6, INT – 30d6, LK – 10d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 10d6, CHR – 10d6, SPD – 7d6. (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled to the arts of fighting.)

Souza Fortescue – STR – 8d6, WIZ – 22d6, INT – 30d6, LK – 8d6, CON – 10d6, DEX – 9d6, CHR – 7d6, SPD – 6d6.



El Rico – STR – 7d6, WIZ – 3[illegible], INT – 21d6, LK – 8d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 11d6, CHR – 11d6, SPD – 6d6.

Dr Weird – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 18d6, INT – 30d6, LK – 12d6, CON – 5d6, DEX – 12d6, CHR – 12d6, SPD – 6d6.

Sample file



Rinsewell – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 30d6, INT – 19d6, LK – 15d6, CON – 7d6, DEX – 11d6, CHR – 6d6, SPD – 7d6.

See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them.

Now go to <80>.

<80>Bee'tleguis strolls into the antechamber where you six wooing wizards are seated. Before he can begin to speak, Souza Fortescue leaps to his feet and loudly snorts 'Well, get on with, damn you! I haven't

got all day and I certainly haven't come here with hearts and flowers, queen or no queen. If she wants a husband and you Manukans want a better gene pool and practical, effective magic we can end this charade before it begins! Now, where's your marriage contract? I'll use my own pen and ink, thank you.'

Another wizard, who you soon enough learn is called Rinsewell, jumps up to protest. 'Stuff and nonsense, you old windbag! I have even washed out my smalls to show willing – I'll not have you with your grubby socks getting a foot in the door with my girlfriend.' He is not known as the Laundry Wizard for nothing.

Before the dwarf can translate his evident fury into destructive spell chucking, the one-eyed Bee'tleguis places a hand on his shoulder and bee'seeches him to quell his choler. 'Good Sir Fortescue, hang your fire! The contest has not yet begun and there can be no question of coming to contractual matters yet awhile. All of you, gentlemen, start at level pegging and I must warn you my queen is not very much inclined to end her days anything but a spinster of this parish. May I suggest you tread as if walking on eggshells and not run in where fools fear to tread?'

Sample file

House Elf shakes his head and the great eye on the back of his conical hat stares unbe'elievingly at this scene from 'Adventures in Blunderland.' 'Shall we at least pay our respects to this great lady?' he asks with statesmanlike poise. 'Shall she not at least be flattered by the attentions of such a company as this?'

It seems Bee'tleguis appreciates the value of flattery and the hunched over old stargazer, his one good eye blazing with solar intensity, turns about smartly and marches off out of the hive city, whistling tunelessly to indicate you all should follow him. So out you all go,

into the Phantog heat, humidity and stench of putrefying life.

Sample file

C'est la vie… on to <81>.

<81> As you feel the perspiration running down your back and soaking you're your robes, a wizard with a big droopy moustache offers everyone a ring as a token of friendship. This master sorcerer, El Rico of Marylebone, has bespelled each ring with the Air Conditioned Bubble spell.

'My dear chap!' the final member of your group exclaims. "I, Doctor William Weird, am in your debt and remain your humble and obedient servant, sir!'

Wow! El Rico didn't seem to cast a spell but it sounds as if he just threw Spirit Mastery over Dr. Weird. Actually, it's just one of his affected turns of phrase but you all do possess a ring magically charged to ward off even Phantog's cruel climate. Ah! The perks of Level 10 status – you don't have to put up with the humdrum inconveniences that ordinary mortals suffer.

Sample file

Also known as Old Peculiar, Dr, Weird had not been seen for a few years after he went of in search of the source of Hysnavle and El Rico has made these rings in part to celebrate his survival (he refuses to reveal anything about Hysnavle).

Count your blessings and go to <82>.

<82> Outside, the air is magically filtered, courtesy of your warmly welcomed climate change ring, and the awful ordeal of your journey with Krokett to get to Apys seems, thankfully, a distant dream. Why, with El Rico's marvellous magic ring, this could become a sought-after holiday destination!
As you reflect happily on an upturn of fortune, your thoughts are broken by House Elf asking Bee'tleguis

why he has brought you to a halt in the middle of nowhere. 'Guess!' he answers sparkily, raising his eye patch for a brief moment to give you a glimpse of the radiant nebula it conceals. 'Let's see which is the sharpest pencil in the packet!'

You need to write down why it is you think Bee'tleguis has halted proceedings here, still far from Cratersedge. When you have honestly recorded your response, go to <84>.

<83> The spell that would help you to mount an invisible tower is, not surprisingly, Oh There It Is. If you cast it, fine – you gain 50 WPs; if you didn't, shame on you! - Souza has to tell you what to do (he enjoys that!) and your lose 50 WPs and feel mortified (yes, you can lose WPs as well as gain them).

Now go to <485>.

Sample file

<84> These are the answers of the other wizards:
1) You're answering a call of nature
2) You poor little legs are tired
3) This is where we got to meet Colettida
4) This spot has special significance to you because it is here that you proposed to your wife
5) Because if we walked on any further we would bump in to a tower
You can roll 1d6 to find out which wizard gave which answer and then go to <85>.

<85> Answers 3) and 5) are acceptable. In fact, you stand before the Manukans invisible Tower of the Astronomer. Bee'tleguis taps it to prove its existence.

As you should know by now, you need to amass WPs as well as APs – the WPs will indicate who wins the wooing contest. If your answer corresponds more or

less to 3) or 5) then you, like the wizards who gave those canny answers, gain 100 WPs to get your romantic race underway.

Go to <86>.

<86> The Manukan savant now tells you to begin the ascent of the Tower, one by one. You may cast a spell to assist you on this journey to the stars.

You go first, as it happens. If you want to cast a spell, write it down and then go to <83>.

Sample file

Section 8 – Andremida, the Hive Queen

<87> The queen you must woo is the Hive Queen. Her name is Andremida and she is the High Queen of Apys, charged with the over-arching authority to ensure that Manukan society runs smoothly, evaluating new factors and ultimately deciding how to meet any sustained change to life in Phantog or on Trollworld. Go to <88>.

<88> There are five other contenders for the hands of Andremida, all wizards and all eager to prove their mettle after the torrid trip through Phantog. Before introducing you to this queen, a worker who announces himself to be Be'enthair Bee'fuhr, introduces the wizards who are to vie for betrothal to each other. The five you will have to put in the shade with your wooing ways are Nethalkan, Limpwrist, Bumblesnore, Miranda Le Feigh and Thotharran. All are human but it would be reasonable to suppose that Thotharran has not been a living member of that kindred for a good many years. The Undead Peninsula is not so very far from the Jungles of Phantog and so the journey should not have over-taxed his reserves. Now go to <89> to find out what you are up against.

<89> These wizards have all mastered the 13th Level of spells offered by the Wizards' Guild on Khaghtch'an but no more. Their aspirations have yet to be measured. Dear reader, I think it is better that the dice determine what your opponents are made of than I act unilaterally and so I shall limit my judgement to assigning a number of d6 for each attribute. It falls to you to roll those dice! If any attribute is too low for the level or no attribute is high enough to signify that status, move the attributes up to the minimum level, favouring INT to justify the overall standing.

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

I like rolling dice from time to time but if you don't relish the idea of rolling 33d6 to find a L13 wizard's best attribute, you may substitute a result of 3.5 for any number of dice you choose. This is true at all levels.

Nethalkan – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 25d6, INT – 40d6, LK – 10d6, CON – 8d6, DEX – 15d6, CHR – 10d6, SPD – 7d6. (Combat adds are halved for a wizard as they are unschooled to the arts of fighting.)

Limpwrist – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 20d6, INT – 40d6, LK – 13d6, CON – 7d6, DEX – 12d6, CHR – 16d6, SPD – 7d6.



Sample file

Bumblesnore – STR – 4d6, WIZ – 33d6, INT – 40d6, LK – 9d6, CON – 6d6, DEX – 11d6, CHR – 11d6, SPD – 6d6.



A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Miranda Le Feigh – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 24d6, INT – 40d6, LK – 8d6, CON – 9d6, DEX – 12d6, CHR – 13d6, SPD – 9d6.



Thotharran – STR – 5d6, WIZ – 20d6, INT – 40d6, LK – 12d6, CON – 10d6, DEX – 16d6, CHR – 10d6, SPD – 7d6.



Sample file

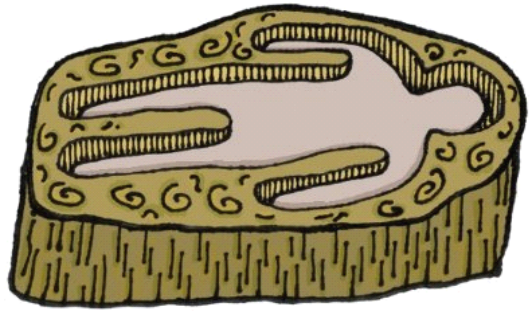
See Appendix 1 for what these wizards wear and what they carry with them.

Now that you know who you are up against, go to <550>.

<90> Thus far, you have sung and you have described, both rather gentle examinations. Apida's thoughts now turn to your physique. Her standards of bodily perfection are in stark contrast to yours but she accepts she will not receive the pleasures to be given by an apian consort from any of you.

Her anxiety – and you can tell that she is quite unsettled now by the electric buzzing of her wing tips – wells up from her fear that you may break in the exchange of genetic material that must eventually come. It has happened before and so a test has been

designed for aspirants to the hand of a Manukan queen.



Bee'de guides all six of you to a hollowed out honeycomb which serves as a replica of the nuptial bed in Apida's boudoir. Once you have all lain down and are at rest upon the waxy divan, he begins to spurt liquid honey over you from a bell-shaped receptacle on wheels, with a hose and nozzle attachment. The honey is warm and soothing. Go to <91>.

Sample file

<91> It occurs to you that you are a magician and, that whatever is in store for you, cocooned as you are in this Manukan miasma of melted molasses (well, honey really), that you should not take it lying down, as a warrior would, but that to cast a spell would better assert your sorcerous credentials. You hear Bee'de informing you all that the testing will not hurt if you do not resist but to struggle and wriggle will bring grave risk of permanent disability.

Bear in mind that any spell you know can be cast upon yourself here in Apys. Write down your choice of spell and go to <95>.

<92> You might think that the Manukans can roam Phantog without fear but you would be wrong.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Millennia have taught them what to look for and how to avoid the sinister snares of the Jungle; generations have honed their gene pool so that their bodies, every generation, become ever more inured, ever more resilient to disease and decay, barb and bite.

Sample file

Still, as Bee'de hands your wizard cohort over to the care of a group of heavily armoured soldier bees, you can see that this is one date you might not return from.

Apida herself is resplendent in a fine plumed helmet, face open but top and sides steeled against this hostile, hungering habitat. The feathery purple plumes are themselves living, bug-snapping fronds bred to save the queen from micro-biotic predators. The sizzling force-shield that encases her segmented form is designed to shock and fry without the distinction; the guards lack the head gear, because it is not easy to grow and train the fronds, but they too have the force-shield protection, with only their clawed hands left bare to grip the scythe-headed pole-arms with the weight and the razor-edged cutting power to ward off mighty monsters of this savage world.

At close quarters it is easy to imagine that they would resort to the stinger protruding behind each warrior – the thought of the toxicity of the venom should make your knees knock and your eyes stream with tears.

Sample file

The silver lining to this cloud that is a central strand of the web of courtship? They are on your side, they are here to keep you safe. Go to <93>.

<93> Once you leave the cleared area that is the crater upon which Apys is seated, the horrors of the Phantogonian Jungle insert themselves acidly into your heart. Every wizard must now make a L1 SR on CHR.

Failure indicates a failure of nerve, blind panic taking an ineluctable hold, with flatulence a real risk. Any wizard who fails, you included, runs despairingly back to Apys, metaphorical tail tucked firmly between his

legs. This results in the loss of 200 WPs and a L2 SR on LK is required if that wizard is to be counselled and given a second bite at the cherry.

If you ran away and then ran out of luck, close the book. Maybe there are still six contenders for the position of Apida's consort, maybe not. Go to <94>.

<94> The soldiers escort Apida and you wizards along a path that they clearly know well but would be unfathomable to you. If it does not look well trodden, it must be that Phantog closes off all intrusions as naturally as breathing. If you shut your eyes for even the briefest of moments and your companions kept going, you would be helplessly, hopelessly lost. Your consolation is the cooling breeze the soldiers fan over Apida and her guests with their ceaselessly beating wings.

Sample file

One of your brother wizards, probably Ali Bongo or Nux Fractor if Ali hasn't made this far, offers you a pact. 'Look, it's going to be hard to know how to win this game, friend. Let's nudge the odds a bit. If I win, I will give you a top job here and you do the same for me if you get the young missy. What do you say? Shall we shake on it?'

If you feel it is a good offer, sincerely made, and take it, make a note of your partner's name. If not, he walks off to someone else, determined to get a good reception somewhere.
Suddenly, the brisk march through Phantog ends. Merciful relief! A walk in Phantog is not a walk in the park – more like a sentence in a sauna. A significant percentage of your body weight has evaporated, to be consumed by vapour-collectors desperate for water. May that be all of you that feeds Phantogonian life!

The soldiers must appear formidable, even to the jungle lurkers because nothing has attacked you. Yet...

As to why you have come to halt, that much is evident once you look up after catching your breath: an octagonal clearing filled with luscious, lascivious, lurid blooms of epic proportion stand tall before you, guarded by a phalanx of Manukans, ever alert to the ever-present perils of Phantog. The military's presence allows a team of workers to harvest the abundant pollen from these magnificent flowers.

Apida nods gently in approbation and then one worker approaches each wizard, handing over the collection cup, within which the precious pollen is stored for the journey back to Apys. These vessels are tooled from a translucent jade-like stone and you are told that, once full, they emit a stream of particles that renders the pollen safe for transport to the hive. The Manukans are not a kindred with a propensity for fear; rather, it is that this Phantogonian fruit would be fatal to all, including the Manukans, were it not stripped of the acidity with which the jungle-spirit imbues it.

Sample file

As you take the cup, the queen watches each one of you as you begin your labour as a farmer. Make a L1 SR on DEX and a L1 SR on CON for all wizards. Now go to <97>.

<95> The spell that will help you with this ordeal is *Hold That Pose*. By casting it on yourself, you will be unable to move, will not reveal any hint of discomfort for the thirty seconds of this trial by fire.

If you wrote down any other spell, you are on the sharp end of something wickedly unpleasant – unless you can fairly adjudicate that it should have helped you, just as the *Hold That Pose* spell can. Roll a L1 SR

on INT for the other wizards: if anyone fails that roll, that wizard did not cast *Hold That Pose.*

Sample file

Everyone also needs to make the appropriate level saving roll on INT to cast the magic successfully. This is required regardless of the edition you are following since this situation is bursting at the seams with knotty tension! Now go to <96>.

<96> Underneath your blanket of honey, things begin to get pretty hot pretty quickly. Your blood actually begins to boil. If you cast a *Hold That Pose* spell on yourself, you need only make a L2 SR on CON; if you did not think to do that, the required CON SR is at L4. The hot honey treatment only takes thirty seconds and then it rapidly cools down.

You must take whatever you missed on the CON saving roll as direct damage; so must the other wizards – you roll for them.

Those who survive get 300 WPs if they were perfectly still and undamaged (i.e. the *Hold That Pose* was cast) or 200 WPs if they wriggled and squirmed but were unharmed; those who burned up a bit inside get 100 WPs either way. (Wizards can and will cast *Poor Babys* to heal themselves as soon as they can throughout their wooing adventures unless told this is forbidden.)

Bee'de sees that you are cleaned up very thoroughly as you will be going out into the jungle soon and he would not have you attracting the deadly ants that Phantog breeds. Apida probes your body, checking that you have stood up to the furnace that is her ardour, her amour. How are you doing, Romeo? Time to head on to <92>.

<97> The task of removing the pollen from the blooms is not straightforward; nor is it necessarily safe. Hence the saving rolls.

Sample file

If you failed the DEX saving roll, you damaged the pollen when you plucked it; if you failed the CON saving roll, you had, as many do, an allergic reaction. Harvesting impaired pollen is unacceptable and leads to the loss of 150 WPs (conversely, a skilled collector earns 150 WPs) but reacting badly to the pollen is quite another.

Roll 1d6 to find out what it is that your body and Phantogonian pollen in tandem do to you:

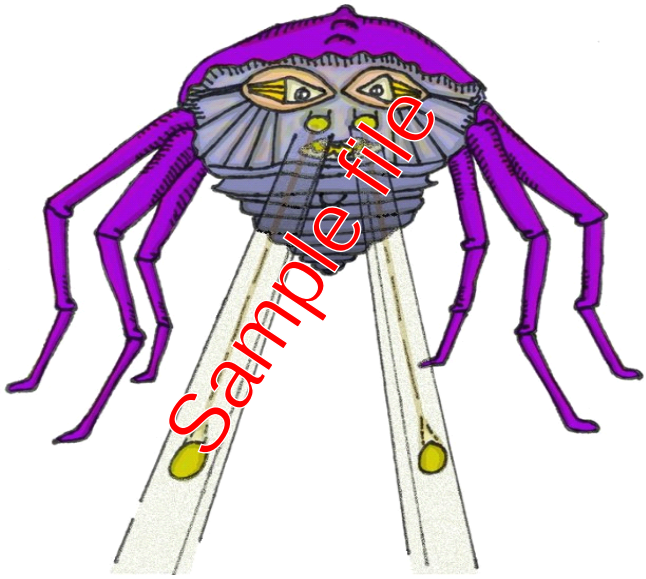
1 – Your hair falls out and will never grow again
2 – You become chronically flatulent and lose 50 WPs
3 – Your incisors grow and become very sharp – you will often be mistaken for a vampire but those gnashers get you 2d6 in a close quarters tussle
4 – You develop a pronounced stutter which means you must make an additional L1 SR on LK each time you cast a spell
5 – Your accent takes on a definite buzz, great with the Manukans but disconcerting in most circles – take 50 WPs
6 – You develop, at great body-rending speed, a stinger – this causes you 1d6 physical damage but is a weapon that can do 3d6 damage and paralyse anything failing a L2 SR on CON

Sample file

The effects of a reaction to the pollen may go unnoticed for a while since you are all actively engaged with pollen collection. If you have been guilty of munting the pollen, Apida gives you (or one of the others) a hearty whack between the shoulder blades. Ouch! That hurt. This is one lean, mean queen. If anyone was physically 'corrected', they must take 1d6 damage.

No time for complaints though – duck! Go to <98>.

<98> Rampaging into the clearing, snorting spittle and fulminating with phlegm explodes a Wide-Nostrilled Mucus Wrangler. It charges head down, nose-down, firing a shower of snot-pellets with gay abandon. It bellows ecstatically – no doubt glad to have cleared its nasal congestion. These bug-packed bogey bullets can penetrate plate armour at the velocity they leave the Wrangler's snozzle and they are lethal for the bacteria they spread.



Not having the benefit of the rightly-exulted *Protective Pentagram* spell, you wizards all need to dodge lithely, throw yourselves to the ground athletically or stand and watch the mucus missiles pass harmlessly by. A L2 SR on either DEX, SPD or LK is needed by everyone. Failure brings 2d6 loss of CON and a time bomb in your guts (death follows inevitably unless the loving hand of Apida is won).

The soldiers rush to halt its death lunge for Apida – what do you do? Choices are:

- run and hide (go to <101>)
- let rip with hostile magic (go to <102>)
- try some less direct spell casting action (go to <103>)
- join the fray with might and main (go to <104>)

You should roll 1d6 to determine what the other wizards do and amend their WPs accordingly (5 means roll again and 6 means you can choose).

<99> Casting a *Lock Tight* spell would certainly impress. If you wrote that down, you get 50 WPs; if you didn't, any other wizard who makes a L2 SR on INT has the light bulb flash and gets the points.

As you enter a hexagonal chamber, some 30' below the forest floor, enveloped by the roots of the titanic trees of Phantog, you are immediately washed with a warm wave of relief: in here, the jungle humidity is absent, the stinging blanket of moisture that cloaks you outside has been replaced by shroud of dry coolness which momentarily lifts your soggy, sagging spirits.

Make L1 SRs on LK and CHR and go to <105>.

Sample file

<100> Once the cups have been filled to the brim with pollen, the lids tamped down and the Wrangler consumed by the forest floor (for it is always hungry), your task is to carry the heavy vessels back to Apys. Phantog is far too daunting a foe for any sane creature to travel its paths without hands free for immediate action, so it is customary to deport these containers on one's head. Poise is the thing.

All wizards need to make a L1 SR on DEX to safely master movement under such a burden. Failure means a least one clanging, clumsy, crashing mishap and the loss of 30 WPs.

Suddenly, Apida points into the dense, lushness of the Jungle. 'We will take the short cut back. There is something I want to show you. Quick, find the secret door and we shall be safe and have time to play!'

The others wizards dash forward, magic crackling from their fingertips. Select your spell and go to <106>.

<101> Definitely a low risk strategy as the Manukan soldiers muscle up to the monster, halberds slicing and bludgeoning. The creature has already blown its wad and the fight is one of brawn against brawn and brain.

After a brief but titanic struggle, the Wrangler goes down for the count. You are saved but lose 50 WPs for doing a passable impersonation of Sir Robin in the Quest for the Holy Grail. Go to <100>.

<102> The effect of the spell you cast (did you make the INT saving roll?) are for you to decide. *TTYF* is a sure bet while *Oh Go Away* might be great or could be a disaster (the thing has MR400 and you should hop over to <101> if you are now under attack); *Firestorm*

Sample file

will be tricky, *Befuddle* interesting (like, *how?*, given your level), *Hold That Pose* very effective if you have high enough WIZ to overcome the Wrangler's khremm resistance (40) – so many possibilities! If your spell cut the mustard ,you can award yourself 100 WPs and go on via <101> to see what those plucky Manukans managed – assuming they didn't get caught in the crossfire.

Sample file

<103> This calls for adjudication. If you cast a *Little Feets* on a Manukan (they all have WIZ 20 for khremm resistance), that would be cool; if you cast *Cat Eyes* I would have to ask 'why?'; a *Mirage* could work to dramatic effect but do you truly know what will distract the Wrangler, let alone what make it shake in its boots? Good like in your adjudicating and when your are done, you may award up to 50 WPs as you see fit and then move on via <101> where you will see what Apida's guards got up to.

<104> But, but, but…you are a wizard not a walnut-brained warrior! What are you thinking of? Very macho but it carries a high degree of risks - plural. Number One: the Wrangler might splat you like a bug. Number Two: the Manukan military might catch you a nasty one as they swing their halberds energetically.

Roll those combat dice - if you get less than 20 (remember the house rule about half combat adds for wizards!), the monster swats you for 10d6 damage; if you die under its elephantine schnoz, close the book, buster!

Sample file

Now try a L1 SR on LK and DEX – if you fail either, a guard catches you for 6d6 damage, with limited sympathy if that brought about your demise.

If you live and are damaged, a Poor Baby spell would be judicious – and you can take 100 WPs because that act of sheer folly wowed the watching queen. You can see how the soldiers manned up to the monster at <101> before moving onwards and upwards.

<105> If you (and I hope by now you can sense when these saving rolls need to be made for your companion mages – like, now!) or any of the wooing

wizards failed the CHR SR, the jungle vapours have sapped your soul to the extent that you have lost your *joie de vivre* at least temporarily – all saving rolls are one level higher for you for the next 24 hours; if you failed the LK SR, the Phantogonian atmosphere has insinuated another virus in your system – it is a clock ticking towards your destruction and every hour you lose 1 point of CON until your immune system overcomes the intruder – this only happens if you can make a L3 SR on CON, making the attempt once every hour (this means once every paragraphs) and a Poor Baby will not restore CON lost this way.

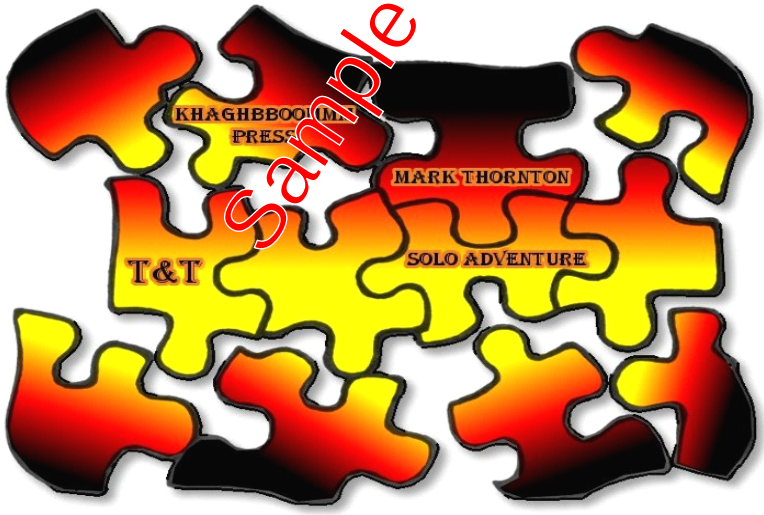
Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

The chamber Apida has taken you to has a dozen tables set in a square formation; behind these tables are what Manukans use for chairs – padded gurneys, sloped at a 45 degree angle, to comfortably support their more rigid forms.

You are all told to lie belly down on one of these gurneys. Once settled, Apida places a box on the table in front of you and explains passionately that her favourite pastime is jigsaw puzzles. She would not want a consort who did not share her beloved pursuit – why, that would be like having a spouse who didn't want to play Tunnels & Trolls!

Sample file



You must woo her with both your ability to see the big picture from broken fragments of the whole and put on a courting display of unbridled enthusiasm for this activity. Make the best SRs you can on both INT and CHR: you gain WPs x 100 for the level total you rolled

for INT and CHR combined, getting nothing, however, if you failed either roll – that would mean that you just could not put the pieces together and/or you looked as miserable as sin while doing the jigsaw.

May you heart be joyous, you fingers be nimble and your mind perspicacious! When you have given it your best shot, off you all trot to <107>.

<106> If it was anything other than *Oh There It Is*, too bad! Everyone is frenziedly searching for the secret door to security and entertainment. Make a SR on SPD for everyone who cast the appropriate spell (ok, you can have the others try a L1 SR on INT to find out if they were on the money or whether scared out of their wits and missed the obvious – and then there is an INT SR to cast the spell).
Whoever was quickest, found the door and gets 50 WPs (if there is a tie, the WPs go to all who made that level).

Next there is a sprint to cast a *Knock Knock* spell to get the big lump of steel open, Another SPD challenge with another 50 WPs at stake.

When the door is opened, in you go and off to <99>. Oh, and if you want to cast another spell as you enter, write it down before you go.

<107> The soon-to-be'e-wed-and-in-bed Apida is delighted with everyone who completed their puzzle and wore a happy grin while doing it. She buzzes in a winsome manner and pirouettes on her shapely hind legs. She claps her claw hands and gives each one of you who met the criteria for success a delicate yet stirring kiss on the lips. This gives rise to a short, sharp electric shock which zaps an extra point of WIZ,

Sample file

INT, LK and CHR into the recipient. No queuing for second helpings permitted!

Sample file

Once the thrill of connection has been assimilated, the be'enevolent Apida takes on a stern frown and sets you some homework. Are you up to inventing a spell on the spot? You wouldn't have the nous at home but here in Phantog, inspired by this young queen? Maybe'e.

The building blocks for success are there for you to manipulate mentally. Go to <108>.

<108> The innovation Apida seeks relates to these puzzles. Selfish? You could look at it in this way but that would be not to see the whole. Manukans are a fortunate society in that they are not ruled by the clock or the dollar. They are accustomed to considering matters fully and not quickly ascribing labels to others or their be'enaviours.

Apida works on the basis that, if you can do this under pressure to perform in a competitive situation, it is highly likely that you will be able to improvise new ways to help with the bee-folk's harvesting and to construct carefully conceived magical approaches to protecting and streamlining this activity, so critical for the prosperity of Apys.

Samplefile

A Wizard Went A-Wooing



Sample file

Your intended informs you all that she would like an amulet that she can wear which will allow her to change the image of her puzzles by dint of her focussed imagination. You are each given a plain silver amulet. Lying on these same gurneys from which you worked on the jigsaw puzzles, you need to embed a magical pattern that will render the amulet able to function as she has described.

No mean feat and Perry groans and slaps his forehead in dismay, while Spontaneous looks as if he might very well combust. Ali Bongo beats his breast percussively, Sly work his fingers worrisomely while Nux looks as if his own body parts are breaking. Maybe you are the coolest in the face of this Promethean proposition.



Sample file

Keep track of what the other wizards fail at in what follows.

The first thing you need to do is focus – that takes a L1 SR on CHR because it is your force of being that must drive this work; then your fingers must mimic the patterns your mind conceives of – a L1 SR on DEX please; third, your intellect must fully grasp the outline Apida has drawn and put the flesh on the bones, leaving no stone unturned in the mental minefield of magical manipulation – a L2 SR on INT; next, the forging in the khremm-heat of your heart – a L2 SR on WIZ; finally, you may not be good at this but you must heed the Trollgod's mantra and find your right relationship with fortune – a L1 SR on LK (better to be lucky than to be good).

You receive WPs for effort here, something for every element of the construction that you got right – 20 times the level of each saving roll made. But if you walked through the mental maze without getting stuck in the dead ends or sidetracked by the endless tangential pathways then you receive 300 WPs for completing this critical wooing work successfully. Your KPIs are stacking up favourably!

Sample file

If only one wizard created the enchanted amulet Apida craved, it is clear that she has a favourite amongst her suitors. If no one made her the amulet she craved, then her otherwise set face betrays her fears that married life might be unfulfilling. Go to <109>.

<109> The time has come for your heart to pound. There are two further tests to come in this contest for the hand of fair Apida. The second and final challenge will take place back under the secure dome of Apys but not so this one.

One of the Manukan soldiers presses his claw hand against a wall and a hitherto secret door is revealed. 'This is where we shall leave you,' Apida informs you brightly. 'If you are to win yourself a Manukan queen, you must be able to travel short distances in Phantog in solitary style. You must leave by the door we entered this chamber by. It is charmed so that only one of you will be released into the teeth of Phantog at a time. Another and then another will be given egress at five minute intervals. You must return to Apys as quickly as possible – do not tarry, for to tarry in Phantog is to invite death to you side! And now prepare yourselves for this baptism of fire. I wish each one of you a safe and speedy passage so that you may undertake the ultimate test of this marriage joust. Farewell, o ye men of magic!'

Sample file

No time for questions as the Manukan party slips smoothly from the puzzle parlour and the door seals and vanishes behind them. Your fellow wizards exchange glances of various shades of apprehension. Nux Fractor shrugs and flexes his fingers, while Spontaneous Combustius' features contort until they are as black as the Heart of Ashgoleth; Perry's shoulders droop, while Ali Bongo and Sly Toffand swap consoling whispers.

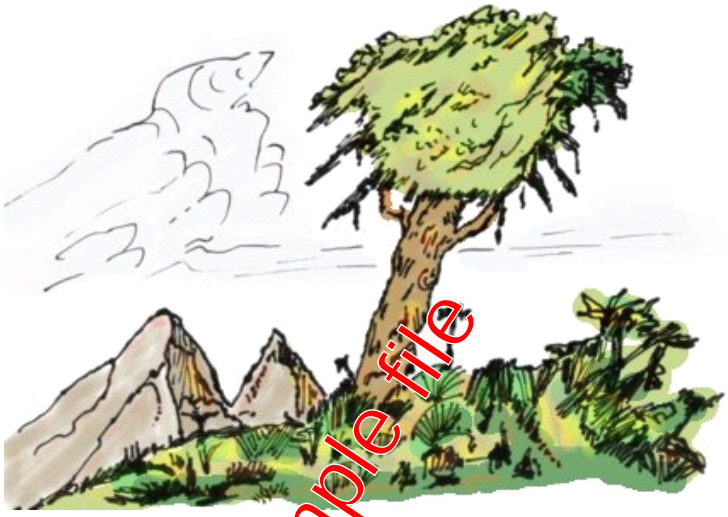
Roll 1d6 to find the order of departure, highest going first, re-rolling for ties. Now go to <110>.

<110> Your turn. The door opens and up and out you go. No sign of anyone else. In fact, the Jungle is eerily silent. It feels as if eyes are upon you; it would be easy to imagine something creeping up behind you; is there something licking its lips in anticipation of crunching your bones and sucking out your marrow? You could just stay here by the door, at least keeping your back

safe, but you need to return to the bee-people's city as fast as your legs will carry you and, so that there be no doubt whatsoever, five minutes is an eternity in Phantog when your life hangs in the balance by the slenderest of threads. Time for another character check: make a L1 SR on CHR and go to <111>.

Sample file

<111> If you failed that saving roll, all saving rolls until you get back to the haven of Apys' walls are one level higher (or what you make is one level lower if the saving roll is on the 'as high as you can' basis).



Sample file

If you made it, the friendly eyes watching you take note of your steely resolve – take 50 WPs. Now go to <112>.

<112> Want to cast a spell? I think that might be a sound proposition. Write down your choice if this is your opinion too and go to <115>.

<113> The fiendishly ferocious fingers of the Fantom grip you. An icy chill strikes at your heart. Make a L1 SR on CON. Fail and a cardiac arrest paralyses you and your killer is able to suck out your soul at its leisure for its culinary pleasure.

If I do not hear the sound of a book closing far away in Phantog, then play on! In this incorporeal fight, the

Fantom has a MR of 40. You have a khremm MR equal to you normal WIZ, LK and CHR. Spite rules apply.

Those are the lines of battle now drawn. Fight it out. Normal spite damage applies but it is your WIZ that is hurt not your CON. This applies to combat damage but you do have the chance of forming intangible mental armour about you. If you lose a round of khremm-battle, make the best saving roll on INT you can: the level of the saving roll indicates the armour protection you have generated that round.



Sample file

WIZ damage naturally heals at one point per day if you make a L1 SR on LK – that is, one saving roll each day. Fail the LK roll and the WIZ point is lost permanently.

If you do take WIZ damage, your journey back to Apys is slowed by 10 wasted minutes.

If you live, take 150 WPs and APs because these things do not go unnoticed and go to <124>, if you die, shut that book!

<114> Your mind will have to work at super-cerebral speeds to create a cloaking device and save you in the nick of time. Add your INT to your SPD and attempt a L6 SR on this combined attribute. If you have Romulan blood, add 3 to your saving roll. If you succeed, wonderful! You now know how to mask your magical

abilities and appear '*invisible*' to anyone or anything attempting to detect wizardly works or abilities. Take 150 WPs and go to <124> as the Fantom becomes confused, frustrated and sulky, much like a typical teenager. If you did not conceal your signature, go to <113> - putting up your wizardly fists is the only option.

Sample file

<115> Make the INT SR check for the spell. My notion is that *Hidey Hole* would be smart in these extenuating circumstances. Can't see that *Mirage* or *Ding-a-Ling* would help; *Unlucky Bees* would give you a bonus 50 APs for humour – I suppose *Little Feets* could be fantastic but it doesn't last that long…

Let us agree that if you are invisible you have a modicum of protection and you just might get a benefit from being fast on your feet. Go to <116>.

<116> Your task is made harder by the lack of a map! There are no footprints to follow, much less signposts. How's your sense of direction? Make a L1 SR on the average of INT and LK. Fail and it takes you 10 wasted minutes before you get your bearings (you need to record wasted minutes until (if!) you get back to Apys. Go to <117>.

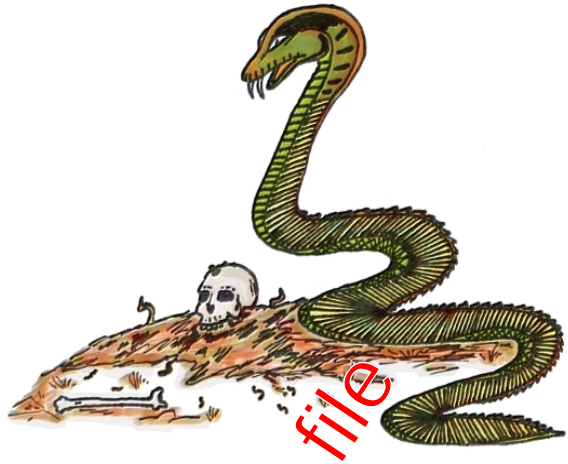
Sample file

<117> You are on track now but the stench of the rotting vegetation is close to overwhelming. It gets right up your nose. The disgusting stink of putrefying organic material penetrates your sinuses and it is worse than swallowing an ogre's two-weeks-worn socks.

Make a L1 SR on CON. If you fail you waste 10 minutes retching, your vomit sweetening the Jungle stench rather than making it worse. Now go to <118>.

<118> The first Phantogonian nightmare to latch on to your lonely plight is not large. Small consolation as it is the most venomous creature to spring from nature on the whole of Khaghtch'an. It is quick and 'ornery, it is the Cancer Cobra. Its bite does not bring instantaneous death. No, that would be too kind by a

long chalk. But for most it does nonetheless bring certain death.



Sample file

The disease its bite delivers worms its way through the central nervous systems and embeds itself with morbid tenacity into the cell walls of the victim's body. What's in it for the snake? Not much except that it serves to maintain its self-esteem.

Now – to business. Are you destined to come a cropper here? Let the dice tell the story. To avoid this lethal length of lightning, you need good reactions, plain and simple. The cobra isn't interested in a fight, it's a hit and run merchant, in and out, job done. A L1 SR on SPD will allow you to step back and escape with nothing worse than damp armour (your SPD would still be doubled after a *Little Feets* but now the spell runs out).
Daydreaming costs you 1d6 to CON for the double fang-pricks and you are stuck with a debilitating disease that will reduce your STR, INT, CON, DEX and CHR by 1d6 each month until a *Too-Bad-Toxin* is cast on you by a wizard or witch 1d6 levels higher than you are. If STR or INT reach zero or CON minus 10, you will

die in an agony of nausea and stomach-churning convulsions. Being bitten also costs you 10 wasted minutes.

Sample file

There is no chance to *TTYF* the cobra, as it shifts like a bullet from a sniper's rifle. Now go to <119>.

<119> Phantog isn't finished with you yet. Consigning the cobra to history's dustbin, you push on purposefully towards your goal. Hard to know how you are doing in this race against the clock – maybe some of the others have succumbed to cobras or worse, perhaps some are just in an all-out blue funk and their chances are custard. There's an encouraging thought!

That puts a spring in your step and your boot heels are ready to go wandering. You slash through fronds and stems alike with your blade, kicking hard at shadows. So far, so good. You are soaked with sweat and grimy with the dirt that Phantog's putrid breezes carry with them.

At once, your progress is halted – not even a pilgrim could get through here. Swinging to your left, you see the big leaves and stalks of the foul flora of Phantog are hemming you in from this side too. You swivel again and then spin through ninety degrees – no good!

Sample file

The Jungle is entombing you and the secretions of the leaves have a naggingly familiar scent…acid! Phantog is ready to eat you alive! Make a L1 SR on INT and go to <120>.
<120> Having your wits about you is vital and having your thinking cap on even more crucial. If you made the roll, your headgear is in place (go to <122>); if not, you are not going to get ahead without a hat, so go to <121>.

<121> Cluelessly, you clutch at the fronds, striving to break free of their gastronomic gluttony. The acid eats into your hands. Your fingers fall off. You faint. You

are devoured, inch by inch, by these leafy carnivores. Close the book.

Sample file

<122> Brain over brawn? No! Both! Brain tells you to dive for the bottom of the stems, where they sink into the earth to become roots. You need to snap enough stalks to force a tunnel through this ravenous deathtrap. Make a L1 SR on STR.

Make it and you do just that. Ah, sweet mercy! If you fail, you take 2d6 damage in acid burns, armour reducing 1d6 in effectiveness. But – you can try the STR saving roll again with the same reward for success and the same price for failure. Keep trying, in fact, until you have fought your way out or have perished in an inferno of acids. You waste 10 minutes time for every failed saving roll on STR here.

Either close the book or go to <123>.

<123> Breaking free from the pernicious prison, you sense, quite rightly, that you are not too far from the safety of the city now. This means that it is the last chance for the Forest Fantom to find you and rip you into its shadowy dimension amongst the roots and tubers of Phantog. It senses you rather than sees you and now that it has located you, tendrils of ethereal menace are snaking upwards, homing in on your khremmatic signature.
On other worlds, its distant cousins are used by starships as organic sensor systems but here in the death-jungle of Phantog, this feaster of souls knows no master and pursues only its own purpose and prey.

Deep within your cerebellum, the certain knowledge that something wicked is stalking you sinks slowly in…

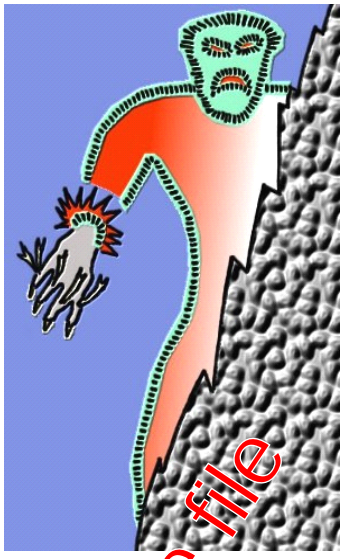
You attempt a positive visualisation of a healthy future, happily wed to your queen, a wizard of rank and power.

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

How to become that future you? Running? You cannot sustain a mental image in which you get away from this formless Fantom of the forests.

Sample file



Sample file

Change channel – quick! Two more visions of possible salvation flit through your mind as you search for a reason to believe: you just might be able to cloak your khremmatic signature from this prescient predator or, alternatively, you might stand and wrestle with it, making it wish that it had stayed at home in bed, tucked up with a good book, rather than tangling with a boss dude like you. The pictures in your skull flicker and fade as the Fantom's feathery fingers feel for you.

Decide! If you will engage head on, go to <113> but if you wish to disguise your magical core, go to <114>.
<124> Phew! That could have been curtains! Sweeping aside a sheaf of foliage, you see heaven on earth (Apys on Trollworld, more prosaically). Buck up! Run for your wife, Bullseye!

Make the best saving roll you can on the average of STR, CHR and SPD – you need to draw on all three attributes to break the tape at top speed and regain

any wasted time and scramble ahead of the pack. Go to <125>.

Sample file

<125> You gain WPs equal to 100 times the saving roll level you just achieved, Watching through her bee'noculours, Apida appreciates that burst of vitality, that explosion of virility.

How much wasted time was there in your progress through peril back to the bosom of the bee-folk?

Now to check on the other guys. They each have six chances of suffering 'ten wasted minutes' so I suppose if you wasted more than an hour, you did not win the race. Roll 6d6 for each competitor. Any dice showing one indicates that wizard wasted 10 minutes somewhere along the line.

Three ones indicates a critical failure at some stage in the journey. You may roll to find out what bee'fell your dearly departed colleague (you decide the mechanics, Sherlock) or you may prefer to speculate over a mug of mead with the other, duly chagrined by the loss of a fine Guild member but now just so much Phatagonian fodder. But we should not be morbid!
Rank the other wooers according to lost time. If there are any ties, roll 1d6 to separate them. The slowest back gets 100 WPs with each time interval upwards getting 100 more (that means most WPs will be awarded if everyone got different times). If anyone was making hourly CON checks they need to make six such checks. Now go to <126>.

Sample file

<126> Back inside the sumptuous bedroom that is where Apida chooses to conclude her groom-gauging procedure, the bride-to-be'e wrinkles her (presumably to other Manukans) cute little nose and sniffs unhappily.

The Venerable Bee'de explains. It transpires that Apida does not much care for human body odour – it is

something that your best friends might shy away from sharing with you but the Venerable One gets straight to the point. Your final task is to create and mix a perfume that will be congenial to the queen's olfactory sense. Not for her to wear – she comes up smelling of roses every time. You need to splash the concoction on all over if you are to become bee'loved of your bee'throthed. Get your creative juices flowing and may you find that essence rare! Go to <127>.

Sample file

<127> There have been many great perfumiers but what you must do would be bee'yond their compass, for you, as well as employing your wits, your sensitivities and your intuition, must access the secret workings of Trollworld that can only be tapped into by the wizardry inherent in your very bee'ing.

You and your peers are taken to a series of laboratories, the like of which the senior ranking mages in Wizards' Guilds throughout Trollworld would give their mother's left leg for. The marble floors and walls gleam in the filtered sunshine, the obsidian bench tops give mute testimony to the solid work that may be wrought here at the heart of Apys, while the jars and bottles filled with precious powders and elegant essences from the furthest corners of Khaghtch'an are enough to make the eyes of a stone golem weep with gratitude.

This cornucopia of compounds, this workshop of wonderment is waiting for the creation of nothing less than marital bliss. You are shown to a separate work chamber each one, Perry bowing in awe one moment and then skipping with joy the next, while Spontaneous Combustius' eyes twinkle with explosions yet unborn but here merely awaiting fertilisation. Go to <128>.

Sample file

<128> You have been given just 30 minutes to blend a cologne which will benefit you in this contest of husbandship. How can you know what scents will conjoin with your own to set Apida's pulse racing? Intuition, instinct, call it what you will – this is where you must turn.

There are so many oils and essences to select from, so many herbs and powders. One thing you all must

choose is how many different elements you will introduce to your perfume. Write down the number you think best and go to <130>.

Sample file

<129> Did you make the WIZ SR? Pity if you did not!

Whatever, now put the perfume on – apply it liberally, no matter your political persuasion. Now is the time to present yourself to Queen Apida for her delectation and approbation – or not.

Let's see if your fellow suitors had any success bee'fore you go though. Roll 1d6 for each with 6 counting as zero and five indicating a re-roll – this gives the level of the WIZ SR they need to make.

Keep track and hop, skip and jump your way to <131>.

<130> Now write down what the different ingredients are and go to <132>.

<131> In the presence of the Venerable Bee'de and a retinue of soldier Manukans, Apida has you all raise your arms high towards the ceiling, whereupon she daintily sniffs your armpits. The aromas of haphazardly concocted perfumes waft across her boudoir and tickle the nasal hairs of the Honour Guard. It is their strict and sworn duty neither to laugh nor to sneeze but tears leak from their insectoid eyes and trickle down into their furry cheeks.

Make a saving roll now based on the average of your LK and CHR. If you made the saving roll on WIZ, you may re-roll one dice of the two you roll, as you may do again if you roll doubles. Do this for all wizards competing for Apida's favours and record the level saving roll each makes.

It is now that the queen must declare her choice of husband. Go to <133>.

Sample file

<132> Add up the number of letters in your ingredients and divide by 5. Whatever the remainder is indicates the level saving roll on WIZ you need to make for the perfume to have magical properties. If the remainder is zero, you only have to avoid a critical fumble! Now go to <129>.

<133> It is the perfume that drives Apida's choice of groom. The wizard who makes the most attractive perfume doubles his/her WPs! In the unlikely event that there is a tie, then this tie must be broken in a wrestling contest – 1d6 plus the level of saving roll made on the average of STR, DEX and SPD, the difference between the scores reducing CON and when CON reaches zero, that wizard is compelled to ask for quarter. Go to <134>.

<134> This landmark moment in the history of both queen and colony is heralded by an outburst of trumpetery, the soldiers downing their pikes and morphing into a pretty decent military brass band. The echoes of tubas, trombones and French Horns reverberate about the acoustically accentuated chamber, setting up a hypnotic hum in your head.

Whoever it is that Apida has taken to be her one and only must step forward to receive the ebony engagement ring that has processed through generations of Manukan royalty and their consorts for time immemorial. All contenders receive 1,000 APs for taking part in this ritual of renewal for the Manukan gene pool.

Sample file



The winner – you? – also receives a rare boon. The Venerable Bee'de unrolls a cracked and yellowed parchment and begins to read, intoning in a buzzing drone, the words bee'yond human comprehension. The enchantment settles like a victory laurel on the brow of the wooing champion, raising all wizardly attributes to 30 plus 1d6.

The transformation is visible to those bee'sted in this romantic contest and deep bows are bee'stowed in a reverential response. Apida comes forward and plants a long, lingering kiss on the lips of her bee'trothed, savouring the prospect of pleasures to come.

Sample file

After what seems an eternity in heaven, the Venerable Bee'de gently eases the couple apart and insists on completing the ceremony. Turning to the victor, he asks in a stately whine (if such a tone can possibly be appreciated by human hearing) if the successful suitor is content to be Apida's consecrated consort or if he will pitch his troth higher still at the next ranking queen. He draws attention to the dowry of 30,000 GPs that goes with the queen's claw.

If the winning wizard so wishes, he may play on in the game of love, being taught 1d6 +2 L3 spells of his choosing; Apida must then turn to the second placed

wizard, who in turn may accept her hand or set his sights higher still.

If you have the opportunity and choose to shoot for a further distant wedding target, go to <135>; if you missed out on Manukan matrimony, you are treated as an honoured guest and taught 2 spells at one level higher than your own level before being given safe passage out of the hell that is the Jungles of Phantog; if you have accepted a lifetime commitment and bonded irrevocably with Apida, go to <136>.

<135> Not one to settle for winning the jackpot, are you? No, you want the keys to the one-armed bandit's treasure chest, don't you? Well and good, Apida must try to forget you…
You are escorted by a cohort of the guards to another chamber. It may be that you are in the company of a fellow wizard if you have this opportunity not by dint of victory but through the choice of a better competitor. No matter! On you go to <47> and may Dame Fortune forgive you for jilting your bride-to-be's.

Sample file

<136> This is where we part company, my friend. You have competed against talented magicians and won through by wits, will and wonderful wizardry.

What is in store for you deep within the Jungles of Phantog, nestled inside the safe confines of Apys with Apida as your regal spouse? That I will not say – you may plough your own furrow and imagine richly or find an accommodating GM to continue this Phantogonian fantasy. I wish you well.

If you would like my participation, it would be my pleasure, mon ami (ou ma amie)! Just trollmail me (Khaghbboommm via trollhala.com) or to

mark.findlayrd@gmail.com. I'm not one to resist sharing the spinning of an epic T&T yarn!

Sample file

<136a> (OK, this 'a' reference indicates I made a teeny mistake and did not have the energy to correct it.)

Now you all know how to fire your headgear's zapper, it is time to test out the defensive technique that might save your skin from something a darned sight worse than sunburn. Halictidia is champing at the bridle – of the centi-steed that will pull her chariot – but will permit one minute for you wizards to get a feel for your force-shields.

She knows right well that only real danger can spur defensive reactions of the quality that can save your hide so without further ado she turns her zapper on each of you! She has multi-discharge setting (you do not) and she also has a stun setting which, gentle soul that she might become in her dotage, she has activated. Those zaps still kick like a mule stung by a jellyfish though!

Sample file

As the jarring flashes of impending pain scintillate your way, you must all make the mandatory L2 SR on SPD or take it up the jacksey. Those who fail get walloped and then some, needing to make a L3 SR on CON to stay this side of comatose. Fail and you lose the amount you missed the roll by times 10 in WPs, make the SPD SR and you gain whatever you bettered it by times 10. Halictidia likes a man who can dance on the balls of his feet and despises any who can't take their medicine.

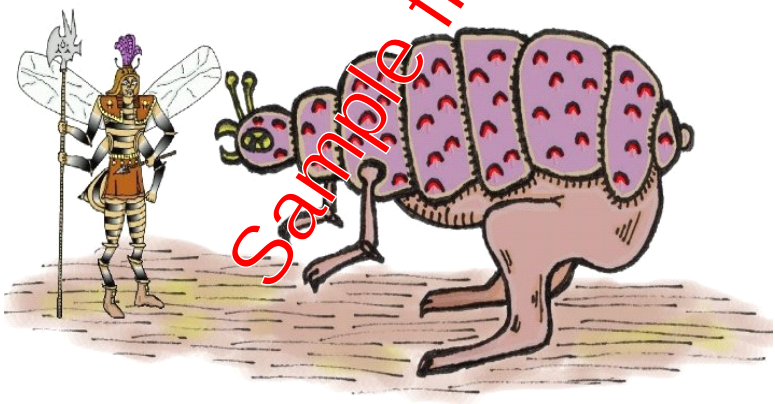
Once this examination of your reflexes is over, you may go to <137> to help keep Apys and its environs safe and secure.

<137> Ah, yes…you were about to bee'gin your tour of duty as a charioteer, weren't you? There is little time

for training so you will have to learn on the job. These are single jockey chariots, with vicious blades, four of them, attached to both wheels for scything at flora and fauna as you hurtle about the perimeter of the Apys crater. Going into Phantog's beckoning arms is tantamount to suicide as once those cradling arms wrap themselves around someone or something, even the magically-waxed blades offer no lifeline.

Sample file

The steeds for these chariots are one of the few imported creatures that has been able to adapt to Phantog and avoid early extinction: these are hard-shelled, hard-boiled Blister Bee'tles, so called because of the acidic properties of their near-impenetrable carapaces, which rapidly form into boils of lava-like pus on contact with all but the thickest hides or pelts. The bee'tles are not easy to master but, once they have been settled to another's will, they are docile unless goaded into violence; further, they are tirelessly strong and have a fleet turn of their ramrod-driven one hundred feet. They are sensitive to the directions of the bridle and, as a final deal-clincher, are allergic to Manukan flesh.



Sample file

There is one significant drawback, of course, namely that you are not Manukan. It really would be a wise course to stay in the driver's seat for this part of your wooing campaign. Let us see how you fare – go to <138>.

<138> Halictidia is fearsome, some would say, if they dared or cared not for the tenure of their heads on their shoulders, reckless charioteer and where she

goes, her guards, follow. Unholstering her bee'tle-goad, a stout length of sun-seasoned leather with lead-weighted balls on the end of steel filaments sprouting from the shaft, she gives her blister a hearty crack on the carapace and caroms off to Cratersedge, the disputed boundary between Phantog and the Manukans. She kicks up a storm and you must follow through the maelstroem. If you, too, would crack your blister, go to <140>; if you want to flick the reins lightly, go to <141>; if you want to shout 'Yee-harl" or some such and tug on the bridle then go to <142>.

Sample file

<139> Next, we should find out how those other wizards fared, you know, the ones who are trying to steal the fair maiden's hand from you. Let's find out if the elf clan could handle a chariot.

Roll 1d6 for each of them: on a scale of 1 to 6, 1 means they screwed up royally while 6 means that they drove a mean chariot, With regard to WPs (yes, you have to keep track for each of them too), 1 = -150, 2 = -100, 3 = -50, 4 = +50, 5 = +100, 6 = +200.

Why only the elves? Because Flusho the Wonder Nit and Ambrosia Nectar both have some skill as a charioteer, albeit not with a blister bee'tle doing the carting. Try LK saving rolls for both – if they achieve L3 or better they add one when you roll the 1d6 for them (if they reach 7, roll everything again).

Hope you're the leading lover! Now go to <150>.

<140> You don't actually know what you are doing, admit it! In these circumstances a stiff saving on LK seems appropriate. Have a shot at a L3 – if you make it, go to <143> but if you fail then go to <144>.

<141> The iron fist in the velvet glove, eh? A L3 SR on DEX should get this baby into the bathtub, powdered and pyjama'd. Make it and you are the boss charioteer, the ace of cool and you gain 200 WPs; fail and the bee'tle bee'tles off and tries to buck you out the back – if it succeeds, it just might chow down, with you as the main course, if its great speed is too much for you.

Better to try to stay on board. That means either having another try at driving it where you want to go (L4 DEX this time, getting progressively harder with each failure until at L7 the guards take over and you

Sample file

lose WPs equal to twice whatever you miss the final saving roll by) or you can use brute strength to master it – that takes a L3 SR on STR - go to <147>.

Sample file

If the gentle but sure (DEX) touch served you well, go to 139>.

<142> The blister bee'tle is not sufficiently well-endowed with grey matter to distinguish between cries of 'Yee Har!', 'Geronimo!' or 'I say, old chap, would you mid frightfully if I asked you to escort me thataways!'. You might get lucky and strike the right pitch to prevent a fever but to avoid stasis.

Let's see – L3 LK and then L3 CHR! Fail both and you suffer the ignominy of being pushed (lose 100 WPs because it just doesn't cut the marriage mustard); fail one of the two saving rolls and the beastie eventually potters forward and joins its mates, probably no thanks to you (lose 50 WPs for sucking chunks as a charioteer – and, yes, you can go negative in Halicitidia's little black book; if you make both rolls, the monster does your bidding and takes a shine to you, licking your boots clean when it reaches the ranks at Cratersedge (that sets a fine example to Halictidia – watch this space – and you gain 100 WPs or showmanship!

Sample file

This done, go to <139>.

<143> That certainly impressed both the bee'tle and Halictidia. Maybe it would be wise not to chance to luck next time but for now, at any rate, your lucky stars have shone brightly on your bee'half. The blister bunches all one hundred legs and pulls the chariot as if its life depended on it, not yours!

You circle the parked ranks of Manukans three times before sending your bee'tle leaping into the air, over the top of the stunned admirers! The take off and flight

are fantastic, plain sailing – now you have to land though! Make L1 SRs on STR and LK and go to <145>.

Sample file

<144> Not making it with Dame Fortune leaves you on a knife-edge – and looking at those blurring, whirring blades, right over four of them too. You have to hang on for dear life as your blister bee'tle surges forward and you feel the g-forces pulling at your string. You teeter on the edge, shifting your weight desperately as Cratersedge rockets at you.

To keep aboard you must make a L3 SR on SPD – fail and you lose your grip and close in on those windmilling scythes of sorrow (go to <146>); make it and your stay with the plot and now must make a L3 SR on STR! Streuth, mate, this does not get any easier! Go to <147>.

<145> If you made both rolls, you land with silent precision, wheeling to the manukans and their queen, who holds up a card with a perfect '10' writ large upon it. You are, at this moment, her hero! Take 250 WPs and go to <139> with polite applause and a chorus of 'For He's A Jolly Good Fellow' ringing in your ears.

But if you failed both or just one of those rolls the landing was your undoing. It could have been a poor grip on the reins or it might have been tennis elbow. Whatever, you at no time have the chariot under control and the axle breaks, as do your legs.

As you lose consciousness, you see the mandibles of the blister bee'tle closing down on your head and you think briefly of a lusciously sweet, overripe watermelon as the lights go out for good and close the book.

<146> Anybody like salami? Eating it, I mean, not being made into it…

Sample file

You fall out of your pram and are now dicing with death. Any last spell? There is a L3 spell that you could cast, were you to know it, think of it and make the INT SR…

Write it down and go to <148> even if you don't know how to cast this spell (and, no, Fly Me will not get you out of harm's way quickly enough – what do you mean, unfair? You just failed a saving roll, buster, so don't play the aggrieved kindergarten tot with me!).

<147> This is not about if you stop but how abruptly you achieve this cessation of forward thrust. The bee'tle has no wish to be at the mercy of Phantog with a chariot impede its choices. If you failed the saving roll, you did not manage this muscle to master the blister in your own time and space; in its on time and space, it stops right at the fringe of Phantog and you soar up and over the chariot rail and into the jaws of a Turbo Tiger. What do you want to do? Write it down and go to <149>.

Sample file

If you reined in your bullocking bee'tle, you draw up, right on cue, parking neatly next to the queen. That took her breath away! Take 100 WPs – you deserve them. Glowing with pride, you can slip anchor and away to <139>.

<148> The spell you need is called 'Shield Me'. If you did not think of it or have not learnt it, that may well be because it was not in the 5.5 Rulebook, that sacred tome of so many T&T players. It works because the chariot slashers cause magical damage due to the weird wax worked into them.

If you cast it, well done. You live to tell the tale and only lose 50 WPs for being, frankly, dog chunder as a charioteer; if you tried something else, unless it is so

clear cut that it would have saved you, you are now wafer-thin and stone, cold dead so close the book; if you thought of Shield Me but never got time to tuck it under your belt then make a L3 SR on the average of your WIZ and LK – make it and the mighty trelf wizard Khaghbboommm, who happens to be watching over head with his equally awesome brother, Khaghtch'an, zaps it out for you. Woot! You are saved from being rashers of bacon.

Sample file

Make a L3 SR on INT and you suck in the understanding of that spell and have it in your repertoire for future salvation. Allelujah! The golden oldies of the Kraken wizarding set smile, wave and wander whence they will, leaving you to suck up the 50 WPs penalty that Halictidia dishes out for being so unimpressive as to lose control of a spanking new chariot.

If you did not expire as razor-thin slivers of liver sausage then go to <139>.

<149> If you wrote down Fly Me, that gets the job done. You don't fly off into the teeth of Phantog but simply halt your perilous path and land beside blister and buggy. Halicitdia is neither amused nor charmed by your premature ejaculation from the reins of control and considers that this may a Freudian slip on your part, an omen of an unwanted nuptial future. You drop 100 WPs and have some ground to make up. Go to <139>.

Sample file

If you did not save yourself (maybe you genuinely found another way, in which case, jolly good show, old bee'an – take your 100 WPs and proceed as if you had cast Fly Me) then you may take no further part in this little drama nor, I fear, any other on Trollworld for Phantog is fierce and Phantog is hungry!

Phantog eats you up and spits out your still bee'ating heart, because it is not sentimental and will not touch this organ of loving kindness. The Manukans recover your heart, preserve with their unique embalming fluids and send it back home to your loved ones. If you care to send me a message (trollmail me, Khaghbboommm via trollhala.com or email to mark.findlayrd@gmail.com) then I will offer you a slim

chance of zombie-resurrection or better, Your cyber-call.

Sample file

<150> Bee'fore any serious patrolling gets done, since the scouts have reported that Cratersedge is clear of varmints, Halictidia has a nuptial task for each of you.

She points out six places of entry and then demands that you each find a tall tree of spectacular girth in the Phantogonian nightmare that stands ready just beyond the safety of Cratersedge, there to carve her and your initials within a loveheart into the tree's being, thus showing Phantog that Halictidia is not consorting with any wuss. Once that news sinks in, go to <151>.

<151> The three elves slip silently into the lurking menace that is Phantog; wizards they may be but woods craft and stealth is in their bones.
As they go, each on their own journey to love or death, Ambrosia turns to Flusho and asks if he thinks they will ever be seen again. The Wonder Nit grins and replies cheerfully 'Hope not!' and then he runs off to face his own demons. Did he mean it? There was humour in his voice but only having two competitors instead of five would trim the odds in kindly fashion.

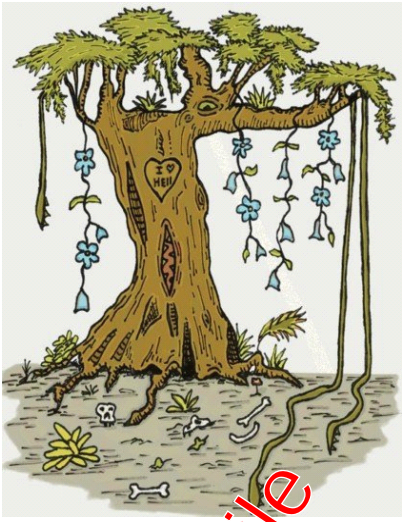
Sample file

Ruefully watching Flusho as he disappears into the dark, fetid Jungle, Ambrosia turns to you and wishes you 'Good luck and bon voyage'. Make a L3 SR on both LK and WIZ for Ambrosia Nectar and go to <162>.



<152> Carrying a lot less water in your body but slicked with perspiration, you set foot with timorous trepidation into the fastness of Phantog. Tiptoeing gingerly, you seek out a tree of great girth and majestic height that is not likely to kill you as you carve your initials alongside Halictidia's into its bark. You imagine what it would be like if the boot was on the other foot- some calligraphically enchanted arboreal giant with a knife cutting into your subcutaneous matter – and this begins to seem like a Poisoned Chalice (also available as a mega-solo form Khaghbboommm Press). Eventually you find a tree that is certainly big enough and doesn't instantly seek to exterminate you. Roll 1d6. If you got 1 or 2, go to <156> , if you got 3 or 4 then go to <157> and if 5 or 6 showed, go to <158>.

Sample file



Sample file

<153> The black throbbing organs reek of malevolence – you could destroy them all and rid Phantog of one of its soldiers of darkness. Trollgod knows what might happen if you did that though…There is no obvious way out as the opening has been firmly sealed off. You can try an Oh There It Is spell, wait and hope or slash at the black hearts with your dagger. Go to <155> if you strike a blow for freedom or to <163> if you go for another option.

<154> Have you ever been in an urukish steam bath? Even if you have not, you will have heard of them. The steam is scalding so that the iron bristles that sprout from an uruk's rhinoceros hide can be scraped off when they reach maturity for harvesting. The cloud cover over Phantog this morning acts like a tinfoil blanket, broiling everything from the ground up with its life-leeching grip. Even uruks would blanch.

Not even your journey to Apys with the Huntmaster prepared you for this baptism of fire. You can feel your

eyeballs beginning to melt, your toes curling and shrivelling in your boots.

Make a L3 SR on CON and take the difference if you fail. If your goose and your liver got cooked, close the book, otherwise slide off to <152> on a tide of sweat.

<155> A warning bell sounds within your head. Gonnggg! Do you want to stop and heed its warning? If you pause to listen, go to <168>; if you carry on with your knife work, go to <169>.

<156> The jungle giant you have elected to subject to incisions has a dark, purple bark, shiny and hard, comprised of small, shield shaped sections. As your knife begins gouging a heart into the trunk, the ground opens underneath your feet. If you make a L2 SR on SPD, you can cast Fly Me and go to <160>, otherwise go to <161>.

<157> The ground you tread upon crackles with every step you take; the hot perspiration the Jungle lifts from your skin is now met and matched by a cold chill arising from the terror tingling your spine, forcing clouds of steam to drift upwards from you, acting like a flare for hungry insect life.

Strangely, though, none comes.

You creep apprehensively forward toward a gargantuan hardwood, whose trunk climbs endlessly towards the universe beyond Phantog, glancing upwards to see that you are now under the canopy of this forest monster. Above you, the bell shapes of countless silvery-blue pendants alerts you to possible danger, while at ground level you now realise that the crunching sound is coming from the bones of countless dead rodents, whether fried by this damned

Sample file

jungle necro-climate or caught by something more tangible, something you are drawing nearer with every movement you make towards the trunk you are to engrave your love for Halicitidia upon.

Sample file

The awful solitude of your plight hits you like a wall of fire. Something inside you feels as if it is about to shatter. Go to <174>.

<158> The furnace atmosphere of the forest is frying your feet as you walk. Running would be crazy in this thickly treed environment but holding your pace to something sensible is agony! Make a L3 SR on CON.

If you fail, take the difference as sole damage and put up with limping along until you get back to Apys. Any DEX saving rolls that are not specifically related to your hands are one level higher for each five points of damage taken or part thereof (e.g. six points of damage would make saving rolls two levels higher).

Eventually, and not soon enough for your comfort, you stumble on a tree with a girth great enough girth and get your carving knife out. The tree is not too keen on this and the 'other ideas' it has are not aimed at your good health. Go to <180>.

Sample file

<159> You plunge through the opening amidst the roots of the great tree and land flat on your back. It is not far to fall and you are no hurt by the sudden drop. You might be hurt, though, by the savage teeth surrounding you. Go to <161>.

<160> Concentrating on casting the spell (did you make the INT SR?), you have no chance to elude the branch that lashes down and donks you on the head. Take 1d6 CON damage and attempt a L2 SR on STR to stay conscious. Go to <159>.

<161> You have fallen into a cavity within the roots of the mighty tree and are encircled by large, gnashing molars. From the clashing of these huge teeth, they

might well be capable of biting through steel cables, certainly through flesh and bone.

Behind the teeth is a ring of black hearts, pulsing and pumping in excitement, set what appears to be a filthy Phantog nutrient bath of slushy mud. It would appear that what the teeth chomp on feeds the hearts. Your only chance is to dive through the teeth before they chance upon your limbs in their ceaseless, pounding mastication. This looks risky indeed.

Make a L2 SR on DEX. If you fail, close the book – you are forest fodder; if you twist and turn without getting chewed out as you jump for safety, then go to <153>.

<162> If Ambrosia failed with saving roll, from your perspective, all that happens is that she waves and blows you a kiss. Well! If you don't win Halictidia's affections, you could do worse than woo a witch!

If she did come up trumps, however, your perspective is quite different. There is definitely magic in the air and, perhaps, romance too! Roll 1d6 – you may add this to your LK permanently as her wish has been granted by one of those two old charlatans, Khaghbboommm or Khaghtch'an, who are rehearsing for a play about djinn and who just happen to be passing invisibly overhead. Now go to <154> and get on with the show.

<163> You are undone by one of two mistakes, either casting a L1 spell when you were clearly admonished not to, in which case your helmet fries you and you can close the book, or you failed to be proactive, unlike the black hearts of the tree. If the latter, you are still alive, for the time bee'ing at least.

The pumping organs swell as you stand there and you get the distinct feeling that if you do not put a stop to

Sample file

this, pronto, you will be crying into your beer. There is a L3 spell that might just work for you but you will have to decisive – write down your spell and go to <167>, as you must if you fail to come up with the mystical solution.

<164> Mission (impossible) accomplished as far as letting the love shine, there is now the little matter of managing a safe return. If you are wounded, this is not good. Make a L3 SR on STR or, in this foul sweatshop of a jungle, you pass out. Go to <178>.

If you are uninjured or sufficiently resilient, you drive yourself on through the stench, the decay and the hissing, bubbling evil that eats at the soles of your boots, excruciating step after excruciating step. Go to <181>.

<165> The black nut tattoo will either kill you or thrill you. Make a L2 SR on the average of CON and CHR – fail and you die as the tattoo throttles you and your eyes pop out, your tongue filling your mouth and bulging monstrously: close the book.

If the Dice Goddess blessed you, the nuts fill you with their eldritch power. Each one of your attributes is raised by 2d6. The line between success and failure is almost indistinguishable but you have found the right side.
Now finish the love-carving and make your way back to the Manukans and their queen. Go to <164>.

<166> As you solidify the mud, the sap is cut off from the hearts. Rather than swelling further, they shrivel pitifully, becoming diamond-hard little nuts. At the same time, with an inhuman groan that splits the trunk asunder, the evil tree monster dies. It is over in an

Sample file

instant, as Phantog withdraws its demon-force, quick to divert its power elsewhere.

Sample file

You can now clamber back out in the furnace that is Phantog and complete the carving. As you do so, the heart-nuts throb violently, emitting shrill whistling sounds. Then they explode catching you in the shockwaves. Knocked off your feet, the spirit of the tree enters you and a black nut-necklace forms as a tattoo about your neck.
Go to <165>.

<167> The spell that can get you out of immediate danger is Hard Stuff. If you selected this spell from your wizardly wardrobe, make your L3 SR on INT.

If you fail the saving roll, just as if you stood there and thought not of Halictidia but of sweet Fanny Adams instead, the black hearts become engorged until there is not enough room here for you and for them, the outcome being that you are driven back into the teeth which grind your bones as effectively as any giant might. Close the book.

If you cast *Hard Stuff*, the result is quite different. Go to <166>.

Sample file

<168> Somehow, Wizard Control in Khaboom has scried you and got a message into this normally impenetrable communications no-go zone! 'Stop!' the voice of Pausanias, the L15 Duty Wizard commands. 'Cast Hard Stuff on the mud and then strike!'



If you do not know the spell, Pausanias instantly teaches it across the divide. Then the communication is severed with an electric snap that does 1d6 damage to you. Make your L3 SR on INT to cast the spell.

If you fail, you get one more bite at the cherry – a second failure gives the tree the opportunity to strike decisively. The black hearts become engorged until there is not enough room here for you and for them, the outcome being that you are driven back into the teeth which grind your bones as effectively as any giant might. Close the book.

However, success brings a much sweeter smelling future. Quite rosy, in fact. Go to <166>.

<169> The ears of the deaf are indeed useless. As you strike the first heart with your blade, slashing at its pulpy surface, an ethereal cloud hisses forth and engulfs you. The tree melts you from within the demonic bubble, sucking your essence into its being, strengthening its root system and adding decades to its reign of terror. Close the book.

Sample file

<170> The panic wave that sweeps down upon you breaks on the iron wall that is your resolve, the rock of your reason. Whatever you are about to face will be better confronted with calm dignity than crazed cowardice.

Digging deep makes you more than you were and you may add 1d6 to CHR. As the doom-laden pendants above your head open to drop their load, you at least meet this challenge with your wits intact. Go to <177>

<171> Nightmare forms burrow into your brain, phantoms of the Phantog phenomenon. Creatures from the abyss crawl over your skin as your imagination conjures up horrors to compete with anything the Jungle might throw at you. Your mind implodes under the pressure and you cast the equivalent of a Firestorm of Protest spell upon yourself.

The upside if that if you did not know this spell, you do now; the downside is that the different personae contained within your psyche start battling it out with one another for sovereignty over your being.

The psychosomatic struggle is over in less than a heartbeat but it dictates the course of your future, short-term and long-term, if there is to be one. Go to <176>.

<172> The vlad's next gambit is to imprison you, driving its branches deep into the ground in a dense wall of gnarly wood – rather like the Wizards' Guilds Wall of Thorns spell but the vlad does not need to bother with pricking you. You are in the jailhouse now, even if your bottom is not yet soggy. As a great value (for the vlad, that is) combo, the murderous tree

Sample file

begins to march its branches inwards to crush your guts out (more fertiliser).

Sample file

There is a spell you could use to get free and you will have to write it down. There are friendly as well as fiendish eyes upon you and, if you do not know this spell but can think of it, from way back in their comfort zone in cosy Khaboom, Wizard Control will transmit the spell pattern into your mind's eye and, provided you make the L3 INT SR to master it, the spell will be yours to cast forever and a day.

May you not be squeamish in your selection even if you left your gumboots at home! Go to <177>.

<173> If you muffed it, you must take 1d6 damage for every branch that strikes viper-like for your feeble physique of flesh and nutritious blood. Roll 3d6 – that is how many impalations are on the cards. You must make progressively higher saving rolls on LK to be missed by each successive thrust the vlad makes. So, if you rolled 10, then you would need to make SRs from L1 all the way up to L10. Armour helps but once it has taken hits to twice its rating, it is useless.

If you die close to a book, if not go to <172>.

Sample file

<174> Make a L3 SR on CHR to save your sanity. If you make it, go to <170>; if you fail, go to <171>.

<175> As the pendant's hidden contents land all around you, they spring lightly to their legs! The tree shares its fortunes symbiotically with a voracious insectoid, the Organ-Grinding Mantis. A legion of these lethal and desiccated death-carriers come at you, fan out to block your escape, oblivious to your inner turmoil.

They look brittle and cracked but that is scant consolation to you now as they are in their element.

You have one chance for a spell. If there is a L3 spell you would like to try, even if you do not know it, write its name down and go to <179>.

<176> The fragments of personality involved in this Guerre de Coeur are the *Baby You*, sweet and naïve, the *Control-Freak You*, desperate for safety in a world of danger, the *Naked-Ambition You*, determined to be top dog and to enjoy the fruit from every tree, and the *Hero You*, risking all every time to make the world a better place. Which will win, that is the great question of your life?

Try a L3 SR on LK – make it and you get to choose; fail and you can rule out your first preference and then ask someone else to choose from what's left. Then you must play this character differently, less roundedly. I hope you live to put this to the test. Now go to <175>.

<177> The magic you need to cast is Slush Yuck so that you can push the branches aside with disdainful ease and hack them all off, one by one. That would teach the tree a lesson it would not forget in a hurry and allow you to carve a declaration of your love for all to admire!

Try that all-important L3 INT SR to get the spell off perfectly despite the pressure. Fail and you get squeezed until all your organs emerge for your orifices looking like beetroot pate; make it and you conquer the vlad and strike a hammer blow at the heart of Phantog.

Either close the book or do your best to make it safely back to the Manukans and the delightfully exacting Halictidia (in which case, go to <164>.

Sample file

<178> You are in a bad way, my fine wooer of bee queens!

Prostrate on the floor of Phantog, oblivious of those nasty little gluteus maximums worms that are wriggling towards you. Naught but a silent, if unconscious prayer, can aid you now. Would you, were you offered the choice, sacrifice something of everything to retain anything rather than nothing? That is the choice that the capricious Demon-lord Zorgoth is about to make for you.

I know what he would opt for but if you do not like the idea of a vampiric leeching of 1d6 from every attribute then you may smiling serenely (in your stupor, your saintly expression recalling to mind the demon's pledge to the Lady of Lake Calimere to behave himself as if her eyes were upon him (which they may well be).

So – choose! Either Zorgoth drains you a tad and then *Blows You To* back to Cratersedge or you can get eaten here as rump steak to worms and die with your dignity (?). Either close the book or arrive, deus ex machina style, at <101>.

Sample file

<179> The spell you need against these desiccated carnivores is *Devoted Rain Cloud*. If you wrote that down, all you need do now is make your L3 SR on INT and the rain comes down and the chitinous creeps crackle, snap and pop like a bowl of rice crispies. You get to complete the love-calligraphy unimpeded and now you need to n\make your way back to the Manukans and your intended, the majestic Halictidia. Go to <164>.

If that spell was unknown to you, fret not. There are scrying stones fixed upon you back in Khaboom and

Wizard Control presumes to interfere in this vile jungle realm.

Make a L3 SR on INT – if you make it, you get the pattern of the spell tattooed on your grey matter; now all you need is another SR at L3 on INT to cast the incantation and serve up soggy mantis goulash to the ravenous forest floor. Success and you complete your wooing work and make your way make on a wing and a prayer.

However…if you wrote down another spell or you failed one of those INT saving rolls, the munching mantises make light work of armour, skin and born and feast upon your marrow. Crush! but that would hurt! Organless, you would have to close the book…

<180> This titan of plant life is known to the Manukans as a vlad. This Vlad has no intention of allowing anyone to practise the alphabet on its skin and you can be quite certain that its bark is worse than its bite.

As the blade touches the wood, the vlad whips down an army of branches all of which end in rock hard spikes. Its aim, if true, is to fill you full of not so tiny perforations and then use your corpse as a homemade sprinkler system when rainy season comes (did I mention the Phantog monsoons? You do not want to be caught out when those waters break!).

You need to make a L3 SR on the average of your SPD and DEX to avoid becoming a human(oid) sieve. Go to <173>.

<181> In other parts of Trollworld there might well be a period of respite before the next onslaught of khremmatic chaos; not so in Phantog. Desperate as you are to get back to their security of Halictidia and

Sample file

her guards, something else wants a piece of you. A big and very significant piece of you.

Stepping out from the ever-shrouding Jungle on to the path you so recently forged to carve out your love for the waiting queen comes a figure of fear, impossible slender on stork-like legs, towering above you, arms tipped with suction pads and claws. This is the Bee'guiling Braindrainer, who, with one psychic blast from its third eye, can leave an army of Manukans drooling like octogenarians in their dotage.

What do you want to do as the middle eyes opens wide, its concentric circular irises spinning iridescently? Write it down right now and go to <184>.

<182> You are greeted by cheers from your fellow wizards and polite applause by the Manukans. Halictidia leaves with an escort of guards to inspect the tokens of love left in testimony on the tree trunks. An equal number of soldiers stay with you.

Let's take stock – is everyone back? Roll a L3 SR on LK for each of your competitors: a critical fumble would indicate that they were unsuccessful, that something went very horribly awry and that they are no longer capable of taking in the breaths needed to keep their hearts beating and their brains alive; any other failure just means that they didn't manage a heart-carving and get no WPs; success means that, like you, they completed the love-task and score 100 WPs times the level of the saving roll made on the average of DEX and CHR for artistic endeavour. You can also take APs to the same value.

Halictidia returns, with the head of a very hairy and toothy simian skewered on her sword. A generous woman, she gives the head to whichever wooer-wizard

Sample file

who has most WPs at the moment and commends all those who have recorded their love for her in the arboreal annals of history.

Sample file

Two more tasks and then this amorous arbiter will make her mind up about who to tie the knot with. Go to <183>.

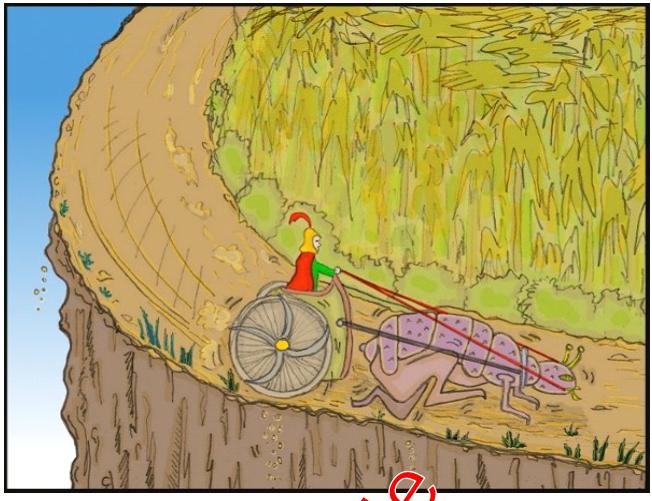
<183> The hundred-legged blister bee'tles stand ready, champing at the bit (the guards give them a stinging wallop and insert new bits). The penultimate task is to be a chariot race around Cratersedge! Halictidia trims her claws somewhat primly. She holds the lap record and would not take kindly to a novice beating her personal best, not even in an effort to woo her.

Soldiers see that you are correctly set in your racing buggies, staggered around the circumference of the great crater so that no one has an advantage. The race is to be just one circuit and you will need to go flat out. A short test of nerve and bee'tlemanship but long enough to sort the men from the boys!

As you most assuredly must be alive if you are here reading this, your blister is already attuned to your masterful touch. Oh, that Halictidia already were so attuned! There is little difference between the bee'tles in Trollgod-given speed so for this element of our unstable mix we shall take yours; as to other qualities, you can be sure that dexterity and charisma will take their rightful places, as will strength and intelligence; the queen of this cocktail of attributes must be, in the final reckoning, nothing but luck…

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing



Here's how we shall chart the progress of this race of rivalry: make saving rolls first for the other competing wizard-wooers and then for you, first on STR to seize control! then on SPD for sheer adrenalin rush! then on INT to see how to best make use of the goad! then on DEX to skilfully apply those subtle touches! then on CHR to coax that critical extra effort! and finally on LK to gain that much prized je ne sais quoi. Any critical fumble scores you minus 3.

Sample file

Roll for each wizard attribute by attribute, keeping running totals of the saving roll levels made – a L3 SR on STR to begin with would net you an opening score of 3. The winner is the wizard with the highest score after the LK roll.

May the best catch win! 500 WPs for the winner, 400 for silver, down to zilch for last if there are six racers. Before you start, there's one last twist of the lemon – if you so choose, you may risk all on a double score LK roll. You must play that lucrative roll by 5.5 rules so 1,2 and 1,3 are critical fumbles, meaning you fall out and get run over and sliced up, requiring a L5 SR on CON

to get away on a CON of 1 (they will heal you immediately as a sign of their appreciation of such splendid entertainment!). Work it all out and go to <185> closing the book in time honoured fashion if you die).

Sample file

<184> The only thing for it is to activate your helmet's force field! Anything else means you are helpless before this paralysing predator and it removes your brain energy in seconds, leaving you a cabbage for the herbivores to nibble at (close the book time).

To activate the force field in time you must make a L3 SR on SPD. Fail that and you are sucked dry off intelligent thought and left to rot (doesn't take long at all here in Phantog).

If you thought to use what you were so thoughtfully provided with and got your act together in time, what will you do now that it is your turn to go on the front foot? Write it down and go to <165>.

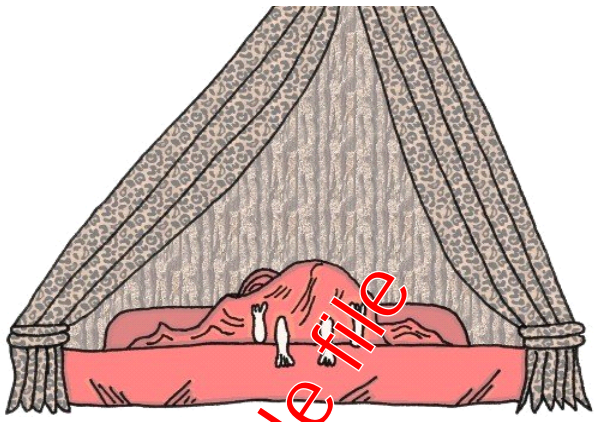
<185> Did you emulate the late, great Bee'n Hur? There is a crescendo of applause for the winner and polite appreciation for anyone who pushed hard for victory. If you stayed aboard, you now have a new talent (+6 on whatever you like for Charioteering).

There is a tree with a great bower overhanging Cratersedge where Halictidia has a cosy little pied a terre; up there nestled in the tree's arms, she wants to have a little tete a tete with each of you before she declares her husband-to-be'e. One by one, up you go (and a meagre L3 SR on INT will suffice to see if Flusho, Ambrosia and the elfy boys manage to get the juices flowing) and you are led, hand in claw, into a charming boudoir, with chintz curtains and orange and black striped linen.

Without waiting for any sign of tenderness, Halictidia pulls you to her in a bold embrace. As you lips brush together and her arms crush you against her heaving body, you feel something stabbing you from behind!

Sample file

No, not an assassin, silly. It is her stinger. You see, to accept a Manukan queen's stinging barb is to allow her the greatest pleasure possible to her kind. Her senses are overloaded with waves of ecstasy and she swoons and melts.



Sample file

As for you, you suffer 1d6 CON damage – not a great price to pay for your queen's moment of heavenly delight – but the real problem is likely to be her venom. That's not nice at all. Still, you are a L3 wizard so you can cast Too Bad Toxin and live to tell the tale of this moment of shared bliss. If you don't know the spell, quel horeur!
Make a L3 SR on LK. If you make it, those voyeurs at Wizard Control back in Khaboom were recording these moments for posterity (and their prosperity, as there is a great market for this sort of salacious stuff) and they load the spell pattern into your reeling mind. With the spell to cast, you must make the INT SR to get it off pat.

No Too Bad Toxin spell means a devastating dose of neuro-toxins rampaging around your glands, leaving you no choice but to TTYF yourself out of pain's way (that would be close the book time for the hard of thinking). Surviving this baptism of fire in the passion

parlour brings you (and your rivals) 100 WPs times the level of the best CHR SR you can make.

Sample file

And from there, it is time to take a look at the old scoreboard and for Mr Bee'an to formally read the bans for the wedding to come. Go to <187>.

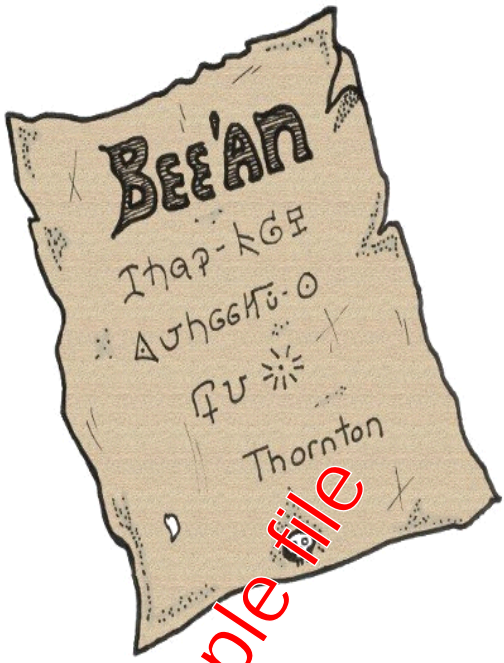
<186> Smack the fiend with an electric blast from your sparkly headpiece, that's what! No spell will phase it – Blasting Power and Freeze Pleeze just provoke it into a frenzy of destruction, all raining down on your soft little head!

To zap the sucker, make a L3 SR on DEX to focus the death-ray on the Braindrainer's third eye, obviously the place to whack it if you are playing for keeps. Either close the book, as it freezes you with sneering contempt and leaves your cadaver for the flies (that's about one lick per fly, given their pandemic population), or cry out in triumph as the bolt from the blue (helmet) gives it a glowing hole where that killer eye used to sit.

If successful you be. make it back to the Manukans, a hero for sure, and go to <182>.
<187> The blister bee'tles stamp their hundred legs in a cacophony of drumming! As a piece of dressage, the skill of Manukan and bee'tle is unrivalled. The soldiers are determined to mark this nuptial newscast with deafening respect.

Whoever it is that Halictidia has taken to be her one and only must step forward to receive the ivory engagement ring that has processed through generations of Manukan royalty and their consorts for time immemorial. All contenders receive 1,500 APs for taking part in this ritual of renewal for the Manukan gene pool.

Sample file



Sample file

The winner – you? – also receives a rare boon. The Mr Bee'an unrolls a cracked and yellowed parchment and begins to read, intoning in a buzzing drone, the words bee'yond human comprehension. The enchantment settles like a victory laurel on the brow of the wooing champion, raising all wizardly attributes to 50 plus 1d6.

The transformation is visible to those bested in this romantic contest and deep bows are bee'stowed in a reverential response. Halictidia comes forward and plants a long, lingering kiss on the lips of her bee'trothed, savouring the prospect of more stinging to come.

After what seems an eternity in heaven, Mr Bee'an gently eases the couple apart and insists on completing the ceremony. Turning to the victor, he asks in a stately whine (if such a tone can possibly be

appreciated by human hearing) if the successful suitor is content to be Halictidia's consecrated consort or if he will pitch his troth higher still at the next ranking queen. He draws attention to the dowry of 40,000 GPs that goes with the queen's claw.

Sample file

If the winning wizard so wishes, he may play on in the game of love, being taught 1d6 L4 and 1d6 L5 spells of his choosing; Halictidia must then turn to the second placed wizard, who in turn may accept her hand or set his sights higher still.

If you have the opportunity and choose to shoot for a further distant wedding target, go to <188>; if you missed out on Manukan matrimony, you are treated as an honoured guest and taught 1d6 spells at your own level before being given safe passage out of the hell that is the Jungles of Phantog; if you have accepted a lifetime commitment and bonded irrevocably with Halictidia, go to <189>.

Sample file

<188> Not one to settle for winning the jackpot, are you? No, you want the keys to the one-armed bandit's treasure chest, don't you? Well and good, Halictidia must try to forget you.

You are escorted by a cohort of the guards to another chamber. It may be that you are in the company of a fellow wizard if you have this opportunity not by dint of victory but through the choice of a better competitor. No matter! On you go to <57> and may Dame Fortune forgive you for jilting your bride-to-be'e.

<189> This is where we part company, my friend. You have competed against talented magicians and won through by wits, will and wonderful wizardry.

What is in store for you deep within the Jungles of Phantog, nestled inside the safe confines of Apys with Halictidia as your regal spouse? That I will not say – you may plough your own furrow and imagine richly or

find an accommodating GM to continue this Phantogonian fantasy. I wish you well.

Sample file

If you would like my participation, it would be my pleasure, mes amis! Just trollmail me (Khaghbboommm via trollhala.com) or to mark.findlayrd@gmail.com. I'm not one to resist sharing the spinning of an epic T&T yarn!

<190> Not what she meant but maybe it will impress, nonetheless. Stand to attention and make the best CHR SR you can. If it is better than L2, you win a bonus 50 WPs plus 5 for every level you rose to over L2 and get away with what might have proved to be an unforgivable indiscretion. Adjust your attire and return to <61> to make another choice.

<191> The shambling bag of bones Bee'dle Jhai helps down the spiral staircase smells as if he has spent the past few years living in a compost heap or perhaps rather as an integral part of that compost heap. Red-rimmed eyes stare wildly out from behind a curtain of lank, greasy grey hair that would probably corrode any barber's scissors that attempted to trim it. There are no introductions so his name is kept a secret known only to the dim recesses of his memory.

Sample file

He leans on a gnarled staff twisted at the head into the unmistakable shape of a kraken in silver. His hand glows with power after he rubs his nails up and down against this head and then he stretches his bony fingers out to each one of you wooers in turn. Do not fear – you will not catch anything nor will you be harmed. His place here is as teacher not as tormentor, although there are any number of roles he has taken on in the ancient days of glory he once basked in.

To learn the spells he is here to lay out before your mind's eye, you must make an INT SR at the level of the spell. That information and a brief description

follow. You had better be on your toes for the others all learn the spells very quickly.

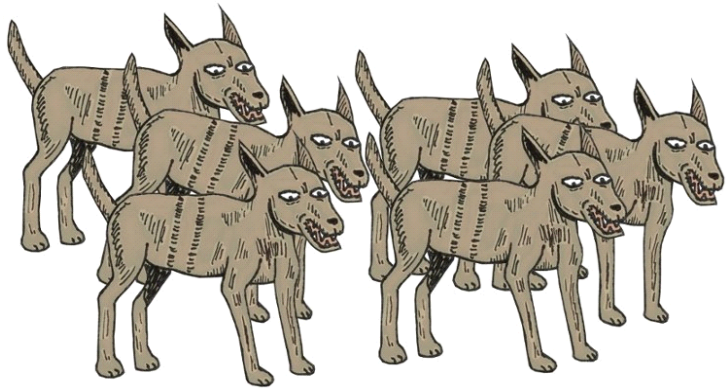
War Spells Education Menu:

- ***Call of the Wild*** **– L1 – WIZ cost 10 – range 10' – duration 2 combat turns – MR equals caster's STR+CHR – the swarm of bugs attacks in melee fashion at the caster's direction - power up either doubles duration or MR**



Sample file

- ***Ice Storm*** **–L2-WIZ cost 10 –range 100' – duration one combat turn – the ice storm has 20' diameter but does little real damage – power up doubles diameter or range**
- ***Miasmal Stench*** **–L3-WIZ cost 6 –range 30' – duration 4 combat turns – a stinking, choking cloud of gas 10' in diameter falls on those within range causing them to lose all combat adds if they fail a L1 SR on CON – power up doubles diameter**
- ***Hungry Hunting Horde*** **–L4-WIZ cost 30 –range 150' – duration one combat turn per level of caster – summons pack of dogs, wolves or jackals that will do caster's will; pack MR equals caster's CHR times level (will only attack en masse)**



- ***Net of Suffocation*** **–L4-WIZ cost 40 –range 30' – duration one combat turn per level – the spell creates a 20' diameter net of magical energy that will trap any creature who fails a L4 SR on DEX as well as doing 1d6 spite damage each round as the net constricts**
- ***Arrowstorm*** **–L5-WIZ cost 34 –range 100' – instantaneous – the caster sends a 30' diameter arrow cloud which creatures in the area must make L5 SRs on LK and DEX to avoid or take the difference in damage**

Sample file

Now go to <193>.

<192> You can roll for the other wizards unless you want to get a friend or relative to name five animals for you.

Her favourite is the tiger, of course, because it is such a deadly predator. You gain 50 WPs for whispering that world, maybe with a hint of a snarl. Anything else capable of killing a cow nets 30 WPs. For the others, they need to roll a L5 SR on the average of INT and LK to score the maximum, with L4 success gaining 30 WPs; a critical fumble means they whispered 'goldfish' or 'gerbil' or 'dodo' and lose 50 WPs (you would suffer

that penalty too if you came up with a similarly soft choice).

Now go to <64>.

<193> Bee'dle Jhai produces six straws that protrude from his proffered claw. 'They are of different lengths and they will determine who leads which squad in the war games to come.'

Not for the common sexist reasons but rather because, here in Apys, the female sex is the dominant part, he offers these bunched straws to Leverona first. The Lostreld witch examines them with considered gaze before selecting a stem, which Bee'dle Jhai declares indicates she will lead the ogres.

In turn, the other wizards draw straws, extracting their battle-fates from the tightly clenched claw with bated breaths. Simon Magoo seems content to lead the elves and Moldevort licks his lips at the prospect of heading up the zombies; Yaga Baboo claps his hands when he draws the dwarf squadron and the smile playing across Hokey's features as he takes the uruks. That leaves you the mixed platoon – brimming with possibilities, for sure, but it will take a general of dazzling character as well as a steely mien to weld them into an effective fighting force.

As Bee'dle Jhai introduces you to your new model army, you must make a L5 SR on CHR before you go to <194>.

<194> First impressions count for everything and the soldiers need to feel that they have a leader who they will go to hell and back for. If you made that roll then that is how they see you. You may add 1 to your Battle Roll when fighting begins for every level you made

Sample file

over L4 and subtract 1 for every level less. You may also take 50 WPs for impressing Stenotrida with your firm and inspiring meeting with your troops if you made a L5 saving roll. You need to make this check for the other warlords.

Sample file

On to <195>.

<195> Out you go now to your first battle. There is nothing of Phantog's steaming stench down here on Stenotrida's killing zone so you will be able to concentrate of strategy and doing unto others before they can do unto you.

You are up against the war-like uruks under Hokey's generalship. Before they separate from you, so that tactics can be settled without the scrutiny of prying eyes, the spit at your troops who glower back and call them big girl's blouses. Hard to tell who had the better of that little exchange.

You need to decide your game plan now. You must choose one of the spells prescribed for these skirmishes and you have a choice of four basic strategies – full frontal assault, initial engagement then a decisive pincer attack from both flanks, picking off the enemy with bows, spears or hit and run attacks or seeking to draw the other side to you once you have gained higher ground or cover. We'll call these four Battle Plans A, B, C and D.

Sample file

Now write down your spell and the orders for your troops and go to <198>.

<196> Here's where the rewards are doled out…

A loss by more than 5 – Absolute nada on the WPs and a token 30 APs
A loss by 5 or less – 25 WPs and 50 Aps
A draw, honourable or otherwise! – 50 WPs and 75 APs
A win by 5 or less – 100 WPs and 150 APs
A win by 5 to 9 – 150 WPs and 200 APs

A win by 10 or more – 250 WPs and 250 APs.

Now go on to your next set to (via the previous paragraph if you didn't write down the paragraph reference).



Sample file

<197> Next up are the ogres, led in to battle by that most glamorous of generals, Leverona. The witch, who is serving as the senior apprentice to the great Nethalkan, Grand Vizier to Lord Shivorq at Castle Lostreld (see their later adventures in 'The Poisoned Chalice', also available from Khaghbboommm Press), is certain to let her minions play to the strength – smashing things – while adding a soupcon of je ne sais quoi to the bubbling cauldron of battle.

Before you find out what she has up her voluminous sleeve for you and your lads, you need to decide your battle orders now. You must choose one of the spells prescribed for these skirmishes and you have a choice of four basic strategies – full frontal assault, initial engagement then a decisive pincer attack from both flanks, picking off the enemy with bows, spears or hit and run attacks or seeking to draw the other side to

you once you have gained higher ground or cover. We'll call these four Battle Plans A, B, C and D.

Now write down your spell and the orders for your troops and go to <201>.

<198> The uruks under the cunning and ruthless Hokey, a wizard known to love Hokey Pokey ice cream and dance a particularly frenzied Hokey Cokey, are less likely to go for the full frontal death charge they would favour without their leader but there is no chance that they will hang back and pick your guys off.

You can roll 1d6: 1 means they seek higher ground (Plan D), 2 or 3 means they ignore the doubtless seething Hokey's orders and go at it head on (Plan A) and 4,5 or 6 means they try to close round you as Hokey drilled them to do (Plan B). His chosen spell is *Hungry Hunting Horde* (check to see if he casts the spell with an INT SR).

Sample file



Now go to <203>.

<199> Next up are the elves, led in to battle by that (possible) military genius, Simon Magoo. Now Simon

is a zealot and, although the elves are a crack team, especially with bows in hand, he thinks he knows best, as has been the way of generals over the centuries of military disasters.
Although no slouch with his wand in hand, he might not have the tactics off pat yet if the wide-eyed, madman stare coming your way over the battlefield is anything to go by. It might be deliberate – his greatest claim to fame is once attempting to out stare a basilisk – or it might be that he can't quite make out what you and your troops are up to…

Anyhow, you need to decide your game plan now. You must choose one of the spells prescribed for these skirmishes and you have a choice of four basic strategies – full frontal assault, initial engagement then a decisive pincer attack from both flanks, picking off the enemy with bows, spears or hit and run attacks or seeking to draw the other side to you once you have gained higher ground or cover. We'll call these four Battle Plans A, B, C and D.

Now write down your spell and the orders for your troops and go to <202>.

Sample file

<200> Are you ready to roll your sleeves up and take on the legions of the Undead, led by that bad boy of the necromancer crowd, Moldevort? Although thoroughly beaten with the ugly stick and still smarting after a run in with a school boy, the bald guy with the mad red eyes is ready to lead from the front with his death-cry, "*Amada Cadaver*", in the hope of multiplying his zombie warriors while you take the skinheads bowling.

Before you find out what he has got planned by way of untimely deaths for you and yours, you need to decide your battle orders now. You must choose one of the

spells prescribed for these skirmishes and you have a choice of four basic strategies – full frontal assault, initial engagement then a decisive pincer attack from both flanks, picking off the enemy with bows, spears or hit and run attacks or seeking to draw the other side to you once you have gained higher ground or cover. We'll call these four Battle Plans A, B, C and D.

Now write down your spell and the orders for your troops and go to <206>.

<201> Ogres like to charge full steam ahead but Leverona has coached them to first seek high ground and then to charge down with greater momentum! Will they follow orders or revert to type?

You can roll 1d6: 1, 2 or 3 means that they see the red mist and just put their heads down and charge at you (Plan A) while 4,5 or 6 means they accept Leverona's leadership and climb up high for the grand charge down (Plan D). Leverona's chosen spell is Net of Suffocation because she has a kind of bondage thing going on (check to see if she casts the spell with an INT SR). Now go to <205>.

Sample file

<202> The elves really do not care for anything else in battle other than picking the enemy off, little by little, to demoralise them. A hail of arrows is almost de rigeur. But – maybe Simon Magoo wants to go down in military history as an innovator…

You can roll 1d6: 1 means they were given for a surprise full on assault AND they follow them (Plan A), 2 or 3 means they climb to higher ground and wait for you to attack (Plan D) and 4,5 or 6 means they try to what they normally do and cherry pick victims at a distance (Plan C). Simon's chosen spell is *Arrowstorm*,

just as a tonic for his troops (check to see if he casts the spell with an INT SR).

Now go to <204>.

<203> You are lucky with your force of fighting men and other kindreds. They will do as you have ordered unless you fail a L1 SR on LK. If that happens, then you must find what they do by ruling out your plan and assigning 2 numbers to each other Battle Plan and rolling 1d6 to determine the outcome of their mutiny.

There is a table covering the possibilities given what you and Hokey got your troops to do. Remember to add or subtract to the Battle Rolls (which are made on 2d6 DARO) according to whether your lads were impressed when you met (same for Hokey).

Here's that table: (you are in italics and your opponent is underlined)

Sample file

	A	B	C	D
A	-1	0	N/A	0
B	+1	0	N/A	+1
C	0	+1	N/A	+1
D	+2	+1	N/A	0

You add or subtract to you Battle Roll according to the table. Before you do roll, you also need to see how those spells worked out. Each of you will have vulnerability to one particular spell from the list of 6 given at <192>. Roll 1d6 for each side to find which spell was the Achilles' Heel – if the other commander cast it successfully, their attack force gets to roll 3d6, not just 2d6. Got it? Good! After you find out which side comes out on top, go to <[illegible]> to check your WP and AP bonus then you can go to <199> for your next military encounter.

<204> Your force of fighting men and other kindreds are not prone to disobedience; even the minotaur heeds his general. They will do as you have ordered unless you fail a L1 SR on LK. If that happens, then you must find what they do by ruling out your plan and assigning 2 numbers to each other Battle Plan and rolling 1d6 to determine the outcome of their mutiny.

Sample file

There is a table covering the possibilities given what you and Simon Magoo got your troops to do. Remember to add or subtract to the Battle Rolls (which are made on 2d6 DARO) according to whether your lads were impressed when you met (same for Simon).

Here's that table: (you are in italics and your opponent is underlined)

	A	B	C	D
A	+2	N/A	-2	-2
B	+1	N/A	-1	-1

C	+2	N/A	-1	+1
D	+1	N/A	-1	0

You add or subtract to you Battle Roll according to the table. Before you do roll, you also need to see how those spells worked out. Each of you will have vulnerability to one particular spell from the list of 6 given at <192>. Roll 1d6 for each side to find which spell was the Achilles Heel – if the other commander cast it successfully, their attack force gets to roll 3d6, not just 2d6. Got it? Good! After you find out which side comes out on top, go to <196> to check your WP and AP bonus then you can go to <197> for your next military encounter.

<205> The hill giant is pretty keen to take the ogres on a head to head clash of the titans but even she do as you have ordered unless you fail a L1 SR on LK. If that happens, then you must find what they do by ruling out your plan and assigning 2 numbers to each other Battle Plan and rolling 1d6 to determine the outcome of their mutiny.
There is a table covering the possibilities given what you and Leveron got your troops to do. Remember to add or subtract to the Battle Rolls (which are made on 2d6 DARO) according to whether your lads were impressed when you met (same for Levvy).

Sample file

Here's that table: (you are in italics and your opponent is underlined)

	A	B	C	D
A	-1	N/A	N/A	-1
B	0	N/A	N/A	-2
C	+2	N/A	N/A	+1
D	+2	N/A	N/A	0

You add or subtract to you Battle Roll according to the table. Before you do roll, you also need to see how those spells worked out. Each of you will have vulnerability to one particular spell from the list of 6 given at <192>. Roll 1d6 for each side to find which spell was the Achilles Heel – if the other commander cast it successfully, their attack force gets to roll 3d6, not just 2d6. Got it? Good! After you find out which side comes out on top, go to <196> to check your WP and AP bonus then you can go to <200> for your next military encounter.

<206> Moldy wants his zombies to zumba their way round your line and crush you from the outsides in. Good plan, methinks, but are the corpse cadets capable of listening and remembering as opposed to ignoring and dismembering?

You can roll 1d6: 1, 2 or 3 means that they just plod straight at you without a thought in their skulls except for munching on your brains (Plan A) while 4,5 or 6 means they accept the bald dude's leadership and go for the pincer manoeuvre he prescribed (Plan B). Stinker that he undoubtedly is, Moldy fires off a *Miasmal Stench*, as if the rotting flesh of his troops wasn't foul enough! Check to see if she casts the spell with an INT SR. Now go to <208>.

<207> Last out of the stables are the dwarves, marshalled by the spitefully malevolent Yaga Baboo. Baboo has long, gangly arms and people often annoy him (to their great cost) by adding an 'n' to his name. I advise against it.

He is a bit of a maverick and also very laissez-faire when it comes issuing orders; as for formulating plans, he leaves that to less creative folk.

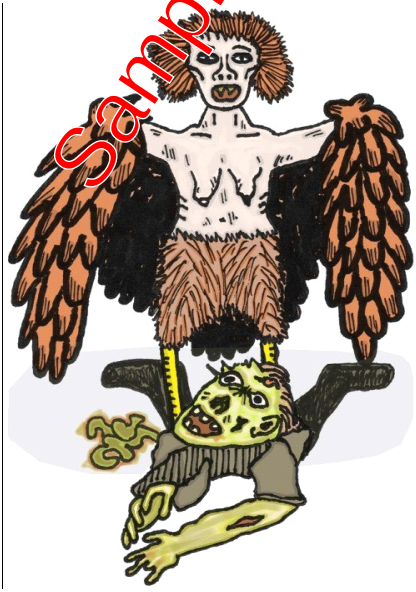
Sample file

Anyhow, you need to decide your game plan now. You must choose one of the spells prescribed for these skirmishes and you have a choice of four basic strategies – full frontal assault, initial engagement then a decisive pincer attack from both flanks, picking off the enemy with bows, spears or hit and run attacks or seeking to draw the other side to you once you have gained higher ground or cover. We'll call these four Battle Plans A, B, C and D.

Now write down your spell and the orders for your troops and go to <209>.

<208> Your harpy actually enjoys the taste of zombie meat so even she will do as you have ordered unless you fail a L1 SR on LK. If that happens, then you must find what they do by ruling out your plan and assigning 2 numbers to each other Battle Plan and rolling 1d6 to determine the outcome of their mutiny.

Sample file



There is a table covering the possibilities given what you and the self-styled 'Coffin King' got your troops to do. Remember to add or subtract to the Battle Rolls (which are made on 2d6 DARO) according to whether your lads were impressed when you met (same for Moldevort).

Here's that table: (you are in italics and your opponent is underlined)

	A	B	C	D
A	0	-1	N/A	N/A
B	-1	0	N/A	N/A
C	+2	+1	N/A	N/A
D	+2	-1	N/A	N/A

Sample file

You add or subtract to you Battle Roll according to the table. Before you do roll, you also need to see how those spells worked out. Each of you will have vulnerability to one particular spell from the list of 6 given at <192>. Roll 1d6 for each side to find which spell was the Achilles Heel – if the other commander cast it successfully, their attack force gets to roll 3d6, not just 2d6. Got it? Good! After you find out which side comes out on top, go to <196> to check your WP and AP bonus then you can go to <207> for your final act of warfare.

<209> The dwarves have no plan to follow and set about several different strategies at the same time…

You don't need to roll for these dwarves because they are all of the place, trying to be unpredictable and highly dangerous at the same time. Baboo's chosen spell is *Call of the Wild*, as he likes to get under people's skins (check to see if he casts the spell with an INT SR).

Now go to <212>.

<210> You really want to run through all the other match ups? Well, if you're certain, go ahead, the stage is set and you are the master of ceremonies…but if you would rather we went for a quick resolution then just roll 1d6 for each side and fill in the table below:

	H	SM	L	M	YB	WPS WON
H	N/A					
SM		N/A				
L			N/A			
M				N/A		
YB					N/A	

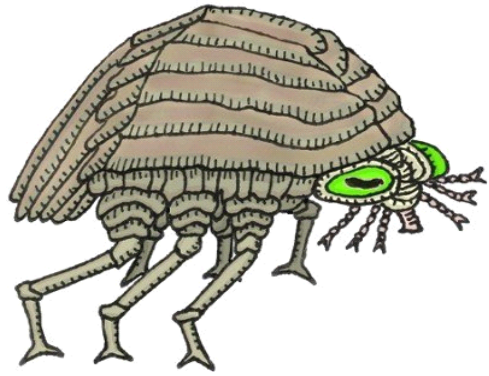
Just roll 2d6 for both sides and write in the WPs won by each wizard by reference to the scoring at <196>. Then record the total WPs won in the final column and see how you ranked in this mercenary bunfight.

The winner gains a bonus 100 WPs and a dubbing with Stenotrida's rapier – arise Sir Wizard!

You might think that would be enough to allow her to make her mind up but no, the warrior 'wasp' has a couple more hoops for you boys to jump through. Say goodbye to your loyal soldiers = who knows? If you win Stenotrida's hand in marriage, she might let you keep them as your personal bodyguard! Now off you trot to <211>.

<211> The last test of your virility, as far as Stenotrida is concerned, is to get back to Apys without being eaten alive by a particularly vicious Phantog predator, the Gimblespack. This evil reptile has a symbiotic relationship going with another creature, Colonic Gutbuster, a small but mindlessly voracious arthropod.

Sample file



The Gimblespack is very good at catching things but not very good at eating them as it has a delicate, easily upset stomach; the Colonic Gutbuster has no problems turning flesh and bones to soup with its acidic dribbles and its waste products are most agreeable to the queasy monster that hosts its dinner parties.

The Gimblespack has a shell on its back which is adamantine in protective qualities and provides a fine dining area to its guests, with a neat open/shut hatch for shovelling in the savoury treats; it has six arms for pinching, grappling, snipping and snapping, six legs that get it round the Jungle at a fair rate of knots and razor sharp senses for detecting anything that might be snacked upon by its little friends.

Sample file

The Gutbusters are only as big as a man's fist but they don't need to be any larger to impress: they are red and hairy, much like an angry Scotchman, and scuttle about with ravening rapidity, each claw having a toxic stinger to spice up the menu.

Bee'dle Jhai offers you all straws again and, one by one, it's off down a dark and lonely passage to the surface where your new best friend is waiting. The Bee'dle's bagman back in Apys sends him a message

if someone either gets back in one piece or is made into soup so that he knows when to let out the next rabbit from his hat (even the Manukans don't want to tangle with more than one Gimblespack at a time). Your luck's in and you get to go first!

On to <213>.

<212> The centaur is happy picking off dwarves and the dragonman is eager to meet might with hot chilli breath and unless you fail a L1 SR on LK. If that happens, then you must find what they do by ruling out your plan and assigning 2 numbers to each other Battle Plan and rolling 1d6 to determine the outcome of their mutiny.

There is a table covering the possibilities given what you and Yaga Baboo got your troops to do. Remember to add or subtract to the Battle Rolls (which are made on 2d6 DARO) according to whether your lads were impressed when you met (same for Mr Yaga).

Here's that table: (you are in italics and your opponent is underlined)

Sample file

	A-D	B	C	D
A	-1	N/A	N/A	N/A
B	-2	N/A	N/A	N/A
C	+2	N/A	N/A	N/A
D	+1	N/A	N/A	N/A

You add or subtract to you Battle Roll according to the table. Before you do roll, you also need to see how those spells worked out. Each of you will have vulnerability to one particular spell from the list of 6 given at <192>. Roll 1d6 for each side to find which spell was the Achilles Heel – if the other commander cast it successfully, their attack force gets to roll 3d6,

not just 2d6. Got it? Good! After you find out which side comes out on top, go to <196> to check your WP and AP bonus then you can go to <210> see who has done best in Queen Stenotrida's bee'dy eyes.

Sample file



<213> Cheer up! You might not even meet the dreaded beastie. Let's give that a shout, shall we? Go for your life with a L4 SR on LK and go to <215>. If you failed, well that's a very different kettle of fish… go to <218>.

<214> The inside of the Gimblespack's shell is very clean and bacteria-free (if you cast *Cateyes* to see the high standards maintained here). This is how all eating surfaces should be. The Colonic Gutbusters sigh with relish at the tasty morsel the Maitre D has set as today's special. Unless you can make a L3 SR on CPD and cast a spell to get you out of here pronto (like Wink-Wing perhaps) you are chowed down upon and the essential essences not required as part of a balanced diet by the Gutbusters are regurgitated for the big guy to savour. Close the book.

Sample file



(If you managed to throw in some magic to save your bacon, go back to <220> and try again because the Gimblespack is still very hungry and more than a little agitated now.)

<215> If you made it, you get back to Apys untroubled by anything other than the ferocious heat, the foul rotting stink and the fear that comes when you know everything wants to eat you. Go to<217>.

<216> Ok, so you're safe for a finite number of pico seconds…what next, mon brave? The monster is not going away…Go to <220> and try again.

<217> Bee'dle Jhai punches the air when he sees you sloughing your way out of Phantog's devilishly destructive clutches and back over Cratersedge. The Manukan soldiers with him cheer and even Queen Stenotrida smiles at your return. You get a further 100 WPs for getting out of the jungle alive.

The other wizards? A L3 SR on LK will see them right…failure puts them out of the picture permanently. They get the WPs bonus too if they returned.

Now, one more challenge…nothing war-like, more something designed to put you through your romantic paces. Go to <219>.

<218> Out 'there' again, you almost faint as the reek of putrefaction and the wave of heat steamroll over you. Make a L1 SR on CON.

If you fail, you must add a level to all saving rolls you are called upon to make until (if!) you get back to Apys.

Sample file

Now, pay attention…because it's coming! Quick, what will you do? Run? Cast a Protective Pentagram? Make a stand and zap away at it? Write down you fateful decision and go to go to <220>.

<219> Deep in the heart of Apys, there is a cosy little restaurant that only the high faluting upper crust gets to dine at, such is its exclusivity. The Bee'dle has wangled you the possibility of a table for two with the bee'lle of the ball. To get the chance to gaze lovingly into her many eyes over the silver service you need to come up with a more appealing menu than your rivals.

There are to be three courses and two wines, one for desert, so you have a fair few chances to impress with your empathy with the Maitre'n royal palette but, equally, there is quite a bit of scope for coming across as rather distasteful.

Go to <228> where the Master Vintner and Kitchen Supervisor will display their wares for you perusal.

Sample file

<220> If you decided that drawing a line in the sand was the thing to do and you cast that Protective Pentagram spell (L5 INT SR?), go to <222>; if you chose to do a bunk, you could cast a spell first if you want – then go to<223>; if you stand your ground and blaze away at the monster, go to<224>.

<221> Ah, parting is such sweet sorrow, especially after all that food. You have run the gauntlet and have not been found wanting.

With Stenotrida at your side, you, as Royal Consort, may have a great race yet to run. That is another storey...

I would be delighted to steer the ship of adventure for you again and if you would give me the tiller a second time just trollmail me (Khaghbboommm via trollhala.com) or to mark.findlayrd@gmail.com. What will be'e will be'e!

<222> If you failed to cast the spell then the fiend grabs you at puts you into the deathtrap on its back - unless you can make all of a L5 SR on STR to fend it off, a L5 SR on SPD to slip aside from its first fatal attack and a L5 SR on DEX to duck and dive well enough to prolong your precarious life a nano second longer. If you go inside the shell, go to <214>; if you cast the spell, go to <216>; if you made all those saving rolls, go back to <220> and chose again, even a repeat dose.

<223> If you cast Little Feets (L2 SR on INT) then you are too fast if you can make a L2 SR on SPD –you make it back to Apys safe and sweaty unless you fail a L1 SR on LK, in which case you go round in circles and run into the Gimblespack again (go to <224> but to<217> if you made the LK SR and got back to the city's loving embrace).Without Little Feets, you need a L4 SR on SPD and then that LK roll.

<224> The Gimblespack has a MR of 560. You need current WIZ of 56 or more to hit it with a spell. If you reduce its MR to less than 200, it will regard discretion as the better part of valour and slink off to lick its wounds (and you would take 560 APs!).

If you can't manage that, it takes a shot at you. Go to <222> and have a crack at those three little saving rolls. If you employ less direct means of attack (or defence, walking halfway round the circle), then go <223> but you can reduce the saving rolls by one level each if you consider that you disadvantaged the monster.

Sample file

<225> Although all offerings would be a delight to the tastebuds, the local product is the one they all love best. There is plenty of it so now chance of missing out. You take 50 WPs if that is what you went for. Go to <233>.

<226> The wine with the sweetest flavour for those with the sweetest of sweet tooths is the shiraz-viognier. You gain 50 WPs if you selected this bottle. However, there is a limited supply…did it run out before you got your turn? Make a L1 SR on LK. You only get the WPs if you make this SR. Now go to <229>

<227> The desert has to be accompanied by a sweeter vintage. There are two very sticky late harvest wines, one a rich golden syrup, the other straw coloured with a hint of strawberry; there are two ice wines, the first sweetened with snowdrop extract, the second melted by the 24 hour sun's caresses; there is a vigorous mead that is a local speciality and, finally, there is a fortified merryberry liqueur.

What will it be? Plump for what you imagine Stenotrida will like best and go to <225>.

Sample file

<228> Mr. Bee'jolais selects and cares for the wines of the Apys court and his 'friend', Mrs. Bee'gundy, makes sure the larders are well stocked. Your first call is to select the wine to be served at this romantic little tète a tète. Mr. Bee'jolais dusts off some bottles from deep within the cellars, decanting each one for you to taste. Remember to spit – you don't want to get drunk!
There is a fruity merlot, a heavy syrah a light and very quaffable pinot noir, a lively, balanced shiraz-viognier and a cabernet sauvignon full of tannins with a hint of blackberry. What do you think Stenotrida will like best? Make your choice, write it down and go to <226>.

<229> Mrs. Bee'gundy opens the pantry door so that you can cast your eyes over the possible entrees. You could start with prawn cocktail, calamari fresh from Lake Calimere, succulent buffalo mozzarella, sweetbreads, gaily coloured gazpacho soup or mushrooms a la grecque. Record your choice and go to <231>.

<230> The desert dripping with the honey that these Manukan queens simply cannot resist is the baklava! She licks her lips and sighs expectantly when she see the treat in store for her…o the joys of young love! But was there enough by the time you got Mrs. B's ear? Make a L1 SR on LK to see if you were able to get the girl her just deserts. Take 50 WPs if you did and then go to <235>.

Sample file

<231> Stenotrida runs true to form and has a love of sweetbreads, even though they are savoury rather than sweet – a psychosomatic culinary treat for her. Make a L1 SR on LK to see if you were able to order this awfully nice dish before supplies ran out. Take 50 WPs if you did and then go to <232>.

<232> For the main course, the royal kitchens can prepare any of the following: Bee'f Wellington, Lobster Thermidor, Honey Baked Ham, Paella, Nut Rissoles or Chicken Fajitas. What do you think your date would appreciate? Write down your notion of the bee's knees and go to<234> .

<233> Mr. Bee'jolais and Mrs. Bee'gundy are as one on this: the final course should be the perfect sweet treat that leads to sweethearts finding true love. There are some sumptuous choices to be considered. For a start there's jam roly poly – how could you go wrong on that? Then there's crème brulée, an unfirm favourite with its wondrous wobbling. You could do worse that

set the flaky pastry of a baklava before your queen. But wait! What about Black Forest Gateau? But then again, what about peach pavlova or perhaps a luscious chocolate mousse? Pity you can't present a smorgasbord of such delights! You really do have to pick one though and then get along to <230>.

Sample file

<234> You can't go past the Honey Baked Ham but this is really meant to be saved for a higher ranking queen. Make a L3 SR on CHR and you can persuade Mrs. B to do you a big favour. You scoop the 50 WPs bonus if you could bring home the bacon for the meal's centrepiece. Now off you go to <227>.
<235> Did you put together the perfect menu and take the place opposite the wondrous queen, setting her appetite ablaze? Even if it was you who showed full empathy with Stenotrida's tastes, you still need to tot up the WPs for all the contenders because she will take the hand of the one who racked up the best performance overall, no matter the romantic dinner you have all striven to make just right.

Whoever it is that Stenotrida has taken to be her blushing bridegroom must step forward to receive the ebony engagement ring that has processed through generations of Manukan royalty and their consorts for time immemorial. All contenders receive 2,500 APs for taking part in this ritual of renewal for the Manukan gene pool.

Sample file

The winner – you? – also receives a rare boon. The Bee'dle Jhai unrolls a cracked and yellowed parchment and begins to read, intoning in a buzzing drone, the words bee'yond human comprehension. The enchantment settles like a victory laurel on the brow of the wooing champion, raising all wizardly attributes to 70 plus 1d6.

The transformation is visible to those bested in this romantic contest and deep bows are bee'stowed in a reverential response. Stenotrida sweeps her chosen one off of his feet and plants a long and lingering smackeroo on those puckered lips.

After this trip to the stars, the Bee'dle crowbars them apart so that he can complete the ceremony. Turning to the triumphant wizard, he asks in a stately drone if the successful suitor is content to be Stenotrida's consecrated consort or if he will have a crack at the next ranking queen. He draws attention to the dowry of 60,000 GPs that goes with the queen's claw.
If the winning wizard so wishes, he may play on in the game of love, being taught 1d6 L6 and 1d6 L7 spells of his choosing; Stenotrida must then turn to the second placed wizard, who in turn may accept her hand or set his sights higher still.

If you have the opportunity and choose to shoot for a further distant wedding target, go to <236>; if you failed to win a bride, you are feted as an honoured guest and taught 1d6 spells at your own level before being given safe passage out of the hell that is the Jungles of Phantog; if are the one how will be kneeling at the altar with Stenotrida, go to <221>.

Sample file

<236> Game on! The sky is the limit for you it seems and Stenotrida must settle for second best – poor gal!

You are marched with great pomp and circumstance to another chamber. Will you have another laurel crown to wear? Time will tell…

On you go to <67> and may luck be'e your lady tonight.

<237> You had better give Bee'n Hurley a quick run through your greatest exploits, whispering urgently into his shell-like. As he hears your tales of derring-do, he makes a mental note of a comedy scene in which you are actually opening the ogre's laundry basket instead of his treasure chest, and then, with a flourish, embellishes your heroic deeds until they really do

sound Homeric and Herculean at the same time. Make the best saving rolls you can on LK and CHR.

Sample file

Once he has regaled Phortaxus with your chronicles of chaos, he sets about the telling of his last charge, the tall, dark and not so handsome Catweezil. This wizard has either made the continent a safe place single-handedly or he is a fashioner of fabrications of incredible unlikeliness. Make the same SRs for Catweezil.

If his combined level exceeds yours, he is believed and you are dismissed as a bad B movie refugee; if you surpass what he proved capable of then you are feted and he is booed off this stage (if you tie, Phortaxus seems undecided, shrugs and gives you both quizzical looks). The better wizard gains 200 WPs, the loser nothing (in the event of a tie, you both take 100 WPs).

Now that Phortaxus knows what to say of you to his Lord, the rapidly ageing Aberforth, you are permitted to follow Melitidda and Bee'n through the gold-edged door behind a tapestry into the Lord of Porttree's private interviewing chamber.

Sample file

Go to <238>.

<238> As you step through and bow deeply, the old man before you shudders and looks to Phortaxus in horror. 'You would betray me, wretch? After years of service even you now prove perfidious at the last! Is it not enough to have performed dark magic upon my youthful limbs, burdening me with the aches and pains of old age in the prime of my youth? And now you lead your wizard-army with these terrible bee monsters to sting me along with your treason!'

With single-minded calm, The Chief Steward flexes a finger at an attendant and the man slips forward

silently and unseen to clamp a smoking rag to the mouth of Porttree's Lord. Phortaxus turns to Melitidda and bows, with a smooth apology accompanying his deferential manner.

'This should have been done before you entered, Your Highness! You should not have seen him like this. He will be himself again already; the medicine will have worked, for a while, at least.' He pivots to the cringing servant. 'Dolt! Do I have to tell you every time! You are incompetent, you have shamed your Lord and embarrassed me before these powerful guests in our land; you have offended their sensibilities and you shall pay the blood price!'

He turns to Melitidda and asks if she will name the cost the man must now pay. The queen rarely troubles herself with such trifles and indicates to Bee'n that he must address the question.

Her seneschal muses… 'How many wizards does it take to light a candle? Hmmm… Burning at the stake perhaps?' Then he points directly at you. 'You decide. Let's see how your sense of humour flows – no less than this fool's blood, I hope! My Lord Phortaxus, I commend this fellow's verdict to you and your Lord's good judgement.'

Ahem! Whilst mercy may be sweet, the crowd in an arena does not come to see mere posturing. Think on what should be and go to <239>.

<239> What fate will you decree for this misbegotten son of a black cat path-crosser? If you wish to demonstrate your bee'nevolent, forgiving nature, go to <242>; if you would make an example of him and have him tarred and feathered and then hung, drawn and quartered, go to <243>; if you would like to perform a

Sample file

comedy double act with the wretch, go to <244>; if you see fit to take him on at fisticuffs, with hands tied behind your back, in a display of your pugilistic prowess, then go to <245>.

<240> On to business. Alberforth has quite recovered now and is seated, upright and spittle-free, in a high-backed chair that Bee'n tells you is the Seat of Proclamations. His reason for receiving Melittida and her Manukan legates is that the neighbouring city of Castleward is making bold claims for territories long ago disputed but for generations held by the Lord of Porttree. The Baron of the now envious southerly city, Lanceabit, is here in Porttree to argue his case for the return of ancestral lands to his dominion. Although he has been careful not to overstep the mark, there is the hint of a thinly veiled threat in the deputation of steel-thewed, naked to the waist, barbarian warriors that make up his retinue, along with a gaggle of wizards from the Castleward branch of the Guild.

Sample file

Alberforth, it is soon revealed, is reluctant to accept the advice of Phortakis, who seethes with indignation and counsels repatriating all wizards above the 5th Level of Expertise to Porttree. His Lord wishes to hear a second opinion and the Chief Steward can hardly object to Alberforth seeking Melittida's opinions, such is her stature.

Were this a matter of Manukan territory, there is no doubt that Melittida would win the approval of her co-regents by striking hard and early in the piece; however, she has learned to be more circumspect when it comes to the affairs of those kindreds not warded by a natural barrier such as Phantog.

For this reason, she values her consort's advice and now turns to each of you to hear what you would have

the Lord of Porttree to make by way of response to the puffed up and tautly coiled Baron. Before any of you have the chance to speak your minds, Lanceabit as admitted into this grand atrium where he is seated in the Chair of Supplication, to his obvious displeasure. He glares suspiciously at each one of you as he accepts the mores of his society and settles in the antique chair. Go to <241>.

<241> No one wants to go first.

Perhaps daunted by the Baron's baleful gaze, Sunnyman stands and declares that what once was should be so once more and that Porttree and its Lord would be best advised to accept the ebb and flow of fortune. There is no sign of reaction from Melittida or Alberforth but Phortaxus snorts and fume sunder his breath.

Sample file



Then Catweezil ventures his opinion that the Baron should sling his hook and crawl all the way back to his castle and be grateful his noble ass isn't kicked all the way there! After a painful silence, the Baron thumps his fist on the table and declares that he has an

opening for the wizard, should he care to enter service (whether he admires the forthright approach of the grinning wooer or sees a way to get him alone in a dark alley is anyone's guess).

Hanzalf finds another angle and would have a wizardly duel settle things - the Castleward Guild leader against the senior sorcerer of Porttree. An intriguing notion but one that soon has the prosecutor wiping the smile from his own face when Lanceabit shifts the goalposts by offering to put his best mage up against one of the Manukan deputation.

Before things get too heated, the Wood Wizard clears his throat and waves an olive branch. This gets everyone's attention as the olives drop off and roll across the table to surprised recipients. His notion, he puts forth with a degree of trepidation, is that all lands outside the city walls of both nobles should be put into an ecological trust under the governance of elves and sylvians from all over the continent. This brings more silence.

Sample file

When Ragnarok stands to speak, towering over his auditors, his idea is an arranged marriage between Alberforth's 16 year old son, Ruynhar, and a nice young philly from the Baron's family stable. The only suitable candidate in the Castleward line of succession is a girl called, obtusely, Watermelon Sugar, since her elder sister, Orange Blossom, ran away after being caught in flagrante with a groom in the tack room. This is rather frowned upon by Melittida, as she is used to the ruling females in a dynasty getting to handpick their husbands.

Well, there you have it, a grand array of advice and now it's your turn. You could back any one of your colleagues or you could proffer your own scheme for

stemming insurrectionist tendencies before war raises its biter, twisted head. Right down your counsel, whether uniquely yours or taking up the cudgels of a fellow wizard, and go to <246>.

Sample file

<242> The terrified servant looks up with eyes scarcely able to credit the reprieve you are offering. Of course, the reactions of the key protagonists vary considerably: Phortaxus is dumbfounded and on the verge of expostulation, Alberforth drools copiously, whether in approval or merely in an attempt not to drown himself you can only speculate, Bee'n Hurley cartwheels in a confined area as a distraction, knocking over several bone china vases and an all too full chamber pot and Melittida?

Make a L4 SR on LK. If you make it, she swoons just a little at your charity and you gain 100 WPs; if you fail, she is not in that sort of mood today and she sighs petulantly and stamps her stiletto heel foot on yours, piercing your footwear and the skin beneath (take 1d6 damage) – you lose 100 WPs and she countermands the clemency you have proffered and has Bee'n tell the snivelling man a joke with a sting in the tail sufficient to kill him.

Either way, go to <240>.

Sample file

<243> All your fellow wooing wizards cheer - they like a good bit of tarring and feathering (not so nice for the birds that are plucked mercilessly but what do they care of that?). When the cringing fellow looks like an oversized turkey trussed up for Thanksgiving, Phortaxus has him taken outside and attached to the saddle of four cart horses by each of his limbs. What follows is neither pretty nor exact in terms of division. However, just about everyone approves…but Melittida?

Make a L4 SR on CHR. If you make it, she claps and taps her toes in time to the hoof beats and you gain 100 WPs; if you fail, she tuts and thinks you are a blood-letting leech – you drop 100 WPs.

Now go to <240>.

<244> Bee'n Hurley looks on a touch apprehensively – he wouldn't like to be displaced in his mistress' heart! Your partner takes some convincing to really believe that you want him to tweak Photaxus' nose while you squirt him with water from a buttonhole carnation before you two soar from trapeze to trapeze above his (wet) head. Maybe you should think twice before you leap? Oh well, on with the show and let's hope everyone's game for a laugh.

The first part is easy, once you have your big red noses on and your elongated shoes; the hard part is eluding is angry fists as he splutters and turns puce.

If you can make a L5 SR on DEX, your out of harm's way and manage to up your sidekick too –that would have everyone else cracked up with merriment and net you 100 WPs into the bargain; fail and it's no laughing matter – you drop the poor fool and he breaks his neck while your antics are greeted with stony silence from Melittida (lose 100 WPs) and a punch on the ear from Phortaxus as you fall to the floor (you are now deaf in one ear, you choose which one).

Before Monty Python signs you up, go to <240>.

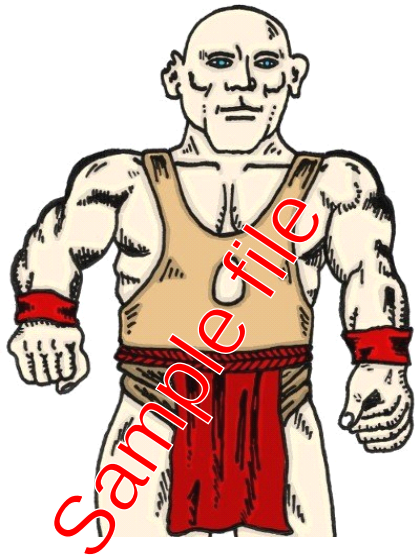
<245> Wouldn't you just know it? Once your stronger and spell casting hand has been bound behind your back, Phortaxus informs you with a supercilious smirk that this man, Frank Bluto, used to be the Porttree middleweight boxing champion until he had an ear bitten off by Tkye Tyson, the hungriest fighter this city has ever known. You will need to duck and dive and dance on your toes to get away with this choice. Still, it promises to be quite entertaining and Hanzalf is willing to act as your cornerman, tending to any cuts

Sample file

with Poor Babys at the ready. Seconds out and you're under way!

Sample file

You need to roll make a L7 SR on STR to knock Frank out with your southpaw jab and make a L5 SR on CON not to be ko'd by big Frankie. The fight is scheduled for 10 rounds. You gain 100 WPs if you win, lose 100 if you are laid out on the canvas and can take a token 25 for a draw.



If you do go down, try to take it on the chin and not up the Micky Duff. Now go to <240>.

<246> If you came up with your own strategy for the disputing noblemen, go to <250>. If you added your possibly porky weight to the diplomatic thrust of another, your destination and fortune can be found as follows: Ragnarok – go to <248>; Sunnyman – go to <249>; the Wood Wizard – go to <251>; Hanzalf – go to <253>; Catweezil – go to <252>.

<247> Well, you see, it's like this…the seeds have been planted and it's no longer entirely up to you.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Make L5 SRs on LK and CHR. If you make both, your views are accorded sufficient respect that you may back out and you may go to <255>; if either of those chunky rolls are failed then it's off to <256> for you, sunbeam!

Sample file

<248> This plan would be a good one for the Baron is he had a son but that he does not. Alberforth has quite strong views regarding his son's future bride but does think he must be the one who decides in the last resort. As diplomats, both you and Ragnarok have gone down like lead balloons.

Go to <255> to find out what Melittida makes of your sortie into such politically choppy waters.

<249> The Baron rubs his pudgy hands in glee while Phortaxus spits feathers. Alberforth sweeps his hand across the table, sending goblets spinning and splashing – this is clearly unacceptable to the masters of Porttree.

As treaty traducers, you and Sunnyman have gone down the gurgler with Alberforth and Phortaxus and they still are the power in these lands. Go to <255> to see how Melittida assesses your political acumen.

<250> I wonder what you came up with? You will have to email me at mark.findlayrd@gmail.com or to Khaghbboommm via trollhalla.com so that I can adjudicate, pontificate and otherwise exercise my unroyal prerogative in such matters. If you don't want to wait, you must go back to <246> and make another choice, this time backing a fellow wooing mage.

Sample file



Sample file

<251> Nice as this idea might be, the Baron thinks it is cuckoo and Alberforth has gotten too long in the tooth for his trust to be given on a whim.

You have the most valuable admiration of the Wood Wizard though. He pats you kindly on the back, shrugs and says that perhaps the time for such sociological advances is not yet come on the Trollworld. He now regards you as a brother in environmental activism and will cede all the wooing points he gains from now on to you! Make a L1 SR on LK – if you succeed, Melittida will permit this chicanery.

This caring and concerned quaintly queer little fellow will also offer you hearth and home in any forest, Phantog most unequivocally not included, from this day on which means your CON will be restored instantly in a green leafed forest and your WIZ will recover at 5 times normal rate under a leafy canopy. This calls for a loud 'Woot!' and who are you to remain woot-less at such times?

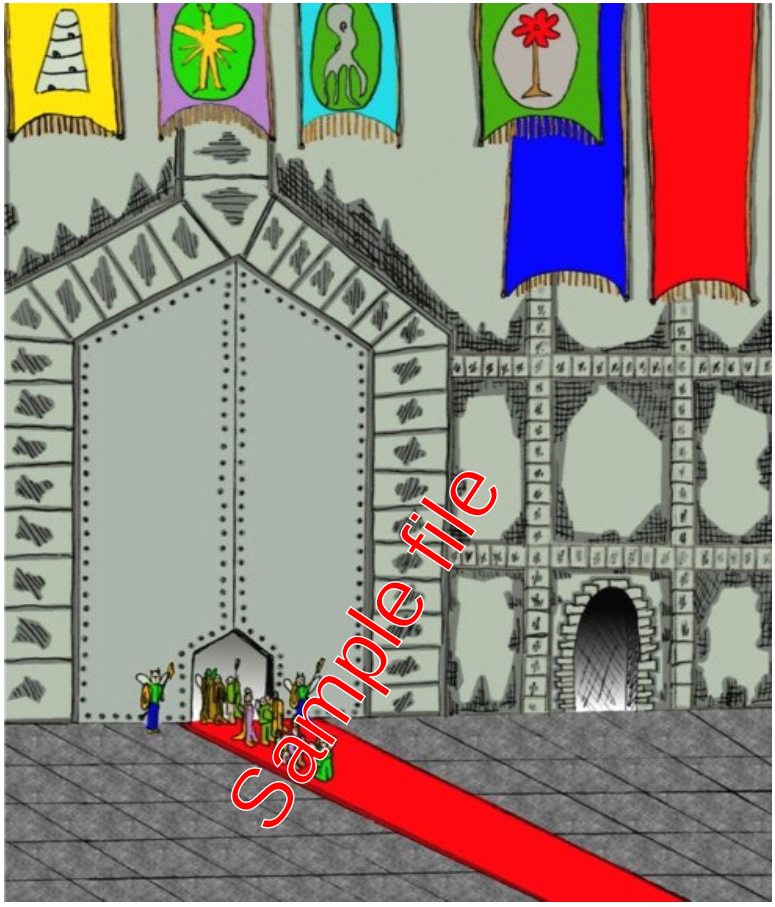
Now go to <255> where you will discover what Melittida makes of your counselling services.

<252> The Baron bridles at this and Alberforth really does not see this gem of a strategy as being the crowning glory of his reign in Porttree. Much as Phortaxus would like to Lanceabit's butt booted from here to kingdom come, he is not keen to see the exchequer drained by a protracted war.

<253> Now this is an idea that has some traction. Alberforth wants to see a duel between you and Hanzalf before you meet the Baron's champion spell-blaster. Can you get your mojo working and your dander up for this confrontation of khremm-crazed killing? If yes, go to <257>, but if you would rather demur and say with a shrug of indifference that this is no way for civilised men to settle their differences, go instead to <247>.

<254> If you both failed, the party gets wet and windswept before returning back to Alberforth's palace. On the other hand, if there was a successful roll, the wizard or wizards attracting the kraken gain 100 WPs because Melittida will have realised a lifelong ambition.

Sample file



Sometimes a kraken will come close though and a large beastie can lift a tentacle to the edge of the cliff tops…If one has been sighted, the wizard(s) who brought it close must make a L1 SR on LK. Failure means that this is indeed one of those rare behemoths that can take the lives of the watchers. You would then need to make a L1 SR on LK – a critical fumble indicating the kraken lunches off the whole party, queen not excepted, for it is hard to run when you are bound to your companions.

It surely wouldn't unfold that way, this tale of love, would it? If it does, close the book. If not, off you go to <260>.

<255> Here's the marker's scheme (you will need to keep track of the points not just for you but for you rivals):

Trying to encourage a nuptial alliance – 50 WPs (remember that it is Melittida's perspective, not Alberforth's, although she does take into account both her personal preference and the attraction to her host)

Suggesting that Baron gets his backside kicked all the way back to Castleward – 75 WPs

Recommending that Porttree returns all land previously owned by Castleward – minus 100 WPs

Suggesting the areas outside the city walls go into a eco-trust – 50 WPs

Backing out of a wizard to wizard battle – minus 50 WPs

Taking part in the dullest wizard duel in Porttree's long history – minus 50 WPs

Coming up with your own master plan to reconcile the neighbouring cities – 100 WPs

Now that is dealt with, Melittida has a private audience with the three Western leaders and we must hope that she soothed their fevered brows because when they emerge from the smoky den of deals and diplomacy Bee'n Hurley tells you there is just time for a sightseeing jaunt to the Western Edge, the extreme point of the continent, where the legendary kraken is

Sample file

sometimes spotted from the towering, windswept cliffs. Go to <257>.

Sample file

<256> Oh my! A showdown between you and Hanzalf, the victor to meet the Baron's man. Bee'n Hurley would be'e selling tickets for this if it were to take place back in Apys but here in Porttree he has to settle for dancing an impromptu caper and offering you both a life assurance policy written in washable ink.

Phortaxus has lackeys run to have the duelling pen readied. This is an iron cage, 12' wide by 50' long and 10' high. It has two doors which are magically locked once the tussling wizards are inside. The cage itself is suspended 100' above glowing coals which are hot enough to warm the floor of the cage high above. The duelling arena seats five hundred people and those Porttreeans lucky enough to beg, borrow or steal tickets are thrilled at the prospect of seeing two high level mages marmalise each other.

Sample file





Once you have been dressed in the duelling robes, a garish green leotard, clinging to all your knobbly bits,

with a red flowing cape attached, Phortaxus warns you that the penalty for casting a spell before the Big Duelling Dong is donged is instant death by *boba*. *Boba* is an ancient custom banned in all civilised parts of Khaghtch'an and not seen for several centuries but still spoken of as the ultimate deterrent to those who might behave really, really badly. Believe me, you do not want to die by *boba*.

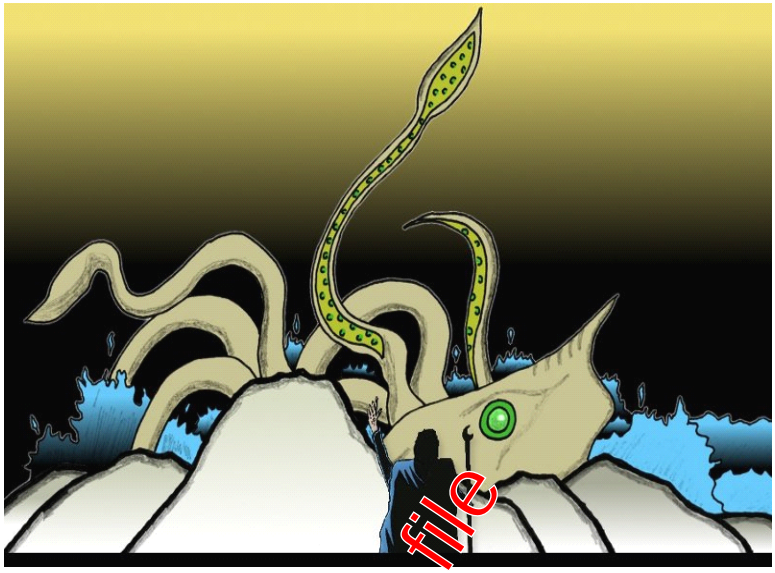
Sample file

A flabby man-mountain of blubber steps forward in a wobbly, quivering gait to perform the ceremonial donging with an enormous rubber-tipped donger as the lights are dimmed and then it is time for action!

Write down your spell, make you INT SR spell check and go to <259>.

<257> The great continent of Khaghtch'an is named not just for its worrisome shape but also for the epic monster that lives and wreaks havoc of its western coast. The kraken is several times the length of the greatest ship that has been launched from these shores; it has tentacles that can lash the seas into foamy troughs that no ship can escape from and its maw is capacious enough to take in these same ships, masts and all. The weather is inevitably vicious at the Western Edge and those courageous enough to traverse the cliff tops to peer out into kraken country must bind themselves together so that they are not blown out to the watery tempests raging below. Will a kraken be sighted today? It is good luck, perversely, and if one does surface all the watchers may add 1 to their LK. Today the drawing force for krakens is you and Sunnyman. You may both attempt L7 SRs on WIZ and then go to <254>.

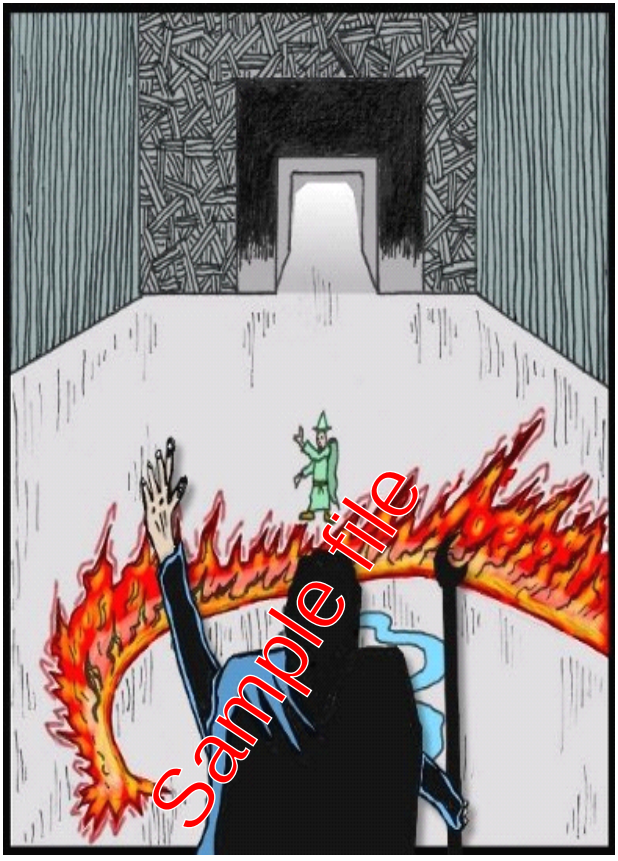
Sample file



Sample file

<258> Hanzalf casts another Protective Pentagram. He has a molar which is a khmmm battery (the cheat got it past the Manukan body search when he arrived in Apys) so he is not going to run out of WIZ any time soon. You really can do no more than wait a second time. The crowd is growing restless.

A slow hand clap starts, then jeering and catcalls. Want to try a third spell? Maybe best not to bother, Hanzalf, his lank grey hair tied tightly in what he thinks is a chic, chick-bait of a top-knot, grins widely at you and then yawns, before bowing to the crowd.



As you might understand, Melittida is furious and calls this farce to a halt. You are both brought down very roughly (take 1d6 damage) and slapped repeatedly with a wet kipper by Bee'n Hurley, who is the only one who is glad things turned out this way. Take 1d6 wet kipper damage.

With boos ringing in your ears and rotten tomatoes squelching on your person, go to <255> to see if there is any chance of forgiveness or redemption as far as Melittida is concerned.

<259> Hanzalf casts Protective Pentagram. Of course, he needs to make a L5 SR on INT to do it successfully. All you can do is wait should he make it. Then you can cast a second spell. Make the spell check SR and go <258>.

<260> In a private conflab, Melittida welds an agreement of sorts between Alberforth and the Baron. It may hold but it is the best that can be done. And in return, you ask? Both Castleward and Porttree will be scoured for the works of cartographers both faithful and fanciful and any maps placing a city within Phantog's jungle fastness will be destroyed, along with all memories pertaining to Apys or the Manukans.

The queen is satisfied with the efficacy of her embassy and all wizards receive 50 WPs. After some breathtaking trips in the countryside about the city, you get to make the pilgrimage to the Porttree Talking Whitewood, the sentient tree that is also known as Kraken-Friend for its yearly conversations with the leviathans.

Then there are tales of the wild west, including rumours of horrors at Castle Bilistrik a few hundred miles away to the east (see '*Send In The Army*' from Khaghbboommm Press') and evenings spent watching the finest thespians, bards and minstrels, culminating in Bee'n Hurley's one hour stand up show (all right, 10 WPs x the INT SR level made by each wizard for contributing a one-liner or the outline of a skit for Bee'n's show), it's off to pastures new for the Manukan diplomatic team.

Not a bad start but is there romance in the air? As the magic of the eco-friendly Blow You To spell is readied by the Porttree Wizards' Guild, under the Wood Wizard's bee'dy green eye (25 WPs for him!), Melittida

Sample file

decides with a look that brook's no debate, that she will take your hand and travel in your company to the next destination, fabled Fingledell in the High Elven forests.

This is your big chance to steal a march and maybe even a base! Make a L3 SR on CHR. If you make it, there is a tingle of electricity as you hold hands with the queen and you gain WPS as you do APs. Success means you go to <261> while failure sends you to <264>.

<261> You made it to first base with Melittida! The love-pitcher's on the mound - ready, run! She snuggles in close and allows you a first kiss. Make a L4 SR on CHR. If you make it, ah, bliss! you gain WPS as before. Success means you go to <262> while failure sends you to <264>.

<262> Second base and the backfield's in motion. Hands begin to caress and explore virgin territory. Make a L5 SR on CHR. If you make it, ah, bliss! you gain WPS as before. Success means you go to <263> while failure sends you to <264>.

<263> Stealing up to third, you're heading for home. Knees tremble, pulses race and the sap rises. There is only so far you can go physically in transit but imagination knows no such limits. Make a L6 SR on CHR. If you make it, ah, bliss! you gain WPS as before and there can be little doubt that you have moved ahead of the field.

For these moments of spine-tingling delight you have earned the right to a 20% bonus on all WPs from now on with regard to Melittida. *Sic transit gloria mundi*! Let's do as that great cake maker Rudyard Kipling

Sample file

suggested and treat success and failure both as imposters and send you on your wooing way to <264>.

Sample file

<264> So much for romance. Now is the time for mindful diplomacy as the entire Manukan party finds itself within the forests of the High Elven People, outside the bowers of legendary Fingledell. The *latticeweb* trees that have interwoven to form the exterior of this living citadel are found nowhere else on Khaghtch'an and few are privileged enough to set eyes on them for the elves value their privacy as much as the Manukans do. Twelve elven bow masters wait upon Melittida, six male and six female. All are lithe and their finely chiselled features reflect the natural beauty of this forest, so diametrically opposed in feeling and form to Phantog.

A bow master, clearly a high ranking Lady, steps forward and bows. 'In the name of my people and my forest, I salute you, Queen and entourage, and acknowledge the spirit of reverence and respect in which you come to us, here in Fingledell. We have shown you the same certainty of regard on our rare missions to your home city, great Apys, and we revere you for keeping the fearsome Phantog in check these centuries gone.

Sample file

Come! Link arms with us and enter fair Fingledell for the High Lord awaits you and has set aside work that may be done together, for it is through mutual striving that we maintain our respect and deepen our understanding of the other.' The Manukans all do as she bids and Bee'n Hurley is at pains to make certain that all wooing wizards adopt the mores essential to the success of Melittida's embassy. Go to <265>.

<265> Passing through the fronds and branches of the main gate to the citadel under the protection of the commanding J'henna Feathershaft, you become a rare

wizard on the Kraken continent: someone who has been invited in to both Apys and Fingledell. Inside, the citadel is filled with light and the people are engaged in timeless crafts.


Sample file

Weavers sit next to spinners and carvers keep the company of wood turners; lute makers work beside fletchers while cobblers sing with silversmiths. Wherever you look there is painstaking activity, carried out with skill and artistry that surpasses all understanding.

As if in a dream, you all are guided into a wicker dome in which stands an elf of sincere yet gracious visage, whose costume is adorned with such sigils as would suggest that he might cast mighty magics at no cost to himself and that he is the custodian of millennia of elven travails. This is Zelah-vehar-Zorah, the High Elven Lord. This noblest of lords takes Melittida's

clawed hand and places it within his own as he looks deeply within her eyes.

Sample file

As you look on, agape, the queen softens and glows. Something has been given that cannot be matched and does not need to. In turn, the High Lord takes a hand of each member of the party and when it comes to your time, you feel a glow within your body such as never before and a reshaping in your mind is quite indescribable. Roll 1d6 for each wizard – add this number permanently to WIZ and INT.

Once the greeting has been completed and the Manukans have accepted with full grace, without attempt to repay, Zelah-vehar-Zorah sets out in a spellbinding tone the labour that will be shared. This will be the teaching of this year's crop of come of age adolescent elves, those who stand on the threshold of learning the secrets of this most secretive of peoples. You are to teach the forest spells and must, therefore, master them very swiftly yourself.

Go to <266>.

<266> An incredibly elegant silver-haired elven woman comes to take all the wizards away from the rest of the Manukan party to a sacred grotto, where water falls in musical beauty. This woman is older than you could imagine a living person ever being but she wears her years with grace and tranquillity. As she sits you in a circle around a thurible made of smoked crystal, emitting the aroma of lavender and ambergris, she tells you of the first branch spells that are taught and what they are intended to do. To summarise, they are:

Heard It Through The Grapevine **- enables caster to talk to trees**

Root Of The Problem **- makes INT SRs 1d6 levels lower**

Sample file

Barking Mad **- causes target to howl manically, unable to attack or flee**

Sap Rising **- boosts CON of caster by 1d6**

Branching Out **- allows caster to gain sympathy of target if LK and CHR exceed target's LK and CHR or MR**

Out Of The Woods **- enables caster to escape from traps with a LK SR at 1d6 level**

With the spells explained, this veteran professor immediately begins the teaching of the six basic forest enchantments to the six visiting wizards. You must all make a savings starting at L1 all the way through to L6: if you make the SR, you suck in the spell. If you fail a roll you may still proceed to the next one.

Sample file

The insistently penetrating tone eventually ceases and the tutor slumps forward, clearly overcome with exhaustion. If you want to rush forward to give what aid you may, go to <268>; if you believe it is best to leave it to others, make a L6 SR on LK and go to <269>.

<267> Velarial is helped back to her falé by gentle elven maids and you are all permitted to stand outside this simple wooden hut and join in the healing chant with a circle of healers. It is this work that preserves her life against the ravages of time. Make a L7 SR on WIZ. If you make it, your contribution shines – you make take 50 WPs because Melittida would like a husband who gleams in the eyes of these elves. This would harvest you 50 WPs. If you are up to it, you can give your fellows the same chance but I will not insist – that is down to your sense of fair play and

knowledge of the rules of cricket, a game practised assiduously by the forest elves throughout summer.

Once this ritual is over, you are all escorted to larger falés, open to the breezes, where groups of students await your teaching. They are all bright-eyed and eager to learn, model students each one. There is no doubting their ability to master these spells an so it is your teaching that is the variable factor. First, let us see how many students each wizard has in his tutorial group. Roll 3d6 – that is the number.

To teach each spell that you got under your belt you need to make CHR saving rolls – it is your personality that will unlock or not the door of knowledge for these rapt apprentices. The first spell takes a base L1 to teach successfully, the second L2 and so on except that you must add one to the level for every five students you have under your care. So – if you have nine students you would start at L3; if you have 11 you would start at L4. I trust that is clear.

Sample file

Any wizard who teaches all six spells successfully wins 300 WPs with each failed teaching costing 50 WPs, meaning that getting the students to master just one spell earns only 50 WPs.

This work last all through the day and there is no respite until the task is completed. Therefore you must make a L3 SR on CON and should you fail you find that the penultimate spell you are to teach is one level higher and the final one two levels higher. You should do this stamina check for all wooer-teachers.

When the lecturing is done, sometime after midnight, the elves bring you nori cakes and waterfall wine which refreshes you and allows deep sleep. You may spend APs at dawn if you wish and you also find that

two points have been added to all of your prime attributes.

Why this gift has been bestowed on you alone, only the Trollgod can know. Now go to <271>.

<268> How many healing points do you want to expend on this revered teacher? Write down your contribution to her wellbeing, make the L2 INT SR and go to <270>.

<269> If you made the saving roll, a elf physician is quick to attend her; it happens from time to time at her age when she gives so freely of herself.

'You really should let others take up this work, Velarial! You are too precious to your people to pass over just yet. There are good apprentices, trained by you who can do this work for our people now.' The antique elf smiles kindly at the doctor and shakes her head softly.

If you failed the LK SR, one of your rivals races to the scene and casts Your Baby healing on the fallen teacher. Roll 1d6 to find out who it was. Oh, there are only five rivals! So be it, a 6 indicates that the elf doctor got there first. If one of you fellow wooers gave succour, that wizard gets 200 WPs.

Now go to <267>.

<270> If you gave her 5 or more points of healing (that is, a base WIZ cost of 10) and the spell worked, you do enough to stabilise her and an elven medic takes over, praising you for your swift intervention.

'She is dear to us beyond words,' he tells you. 'Our people will mourn for a full summer when her time of leaving comes. But we are grateful and more than the

Sample file

day has not yet come. You are elf-friend now and may call upon any forest elf for help should you be in peril. Take this silver sigil and keep it safe, elf-friend.'

Sample file

He presses upon you a small silver fern, tingling with magic. Your good deed and the elven reaction has been noted by Melittida and you have won favour.

Take 150 WPs and go to <267> (if you healed less than 5 points your parsimonious act didn't get you the sigil and didn't win you any WPs).

<271> Zelah-vehar-Zorah has summoned the Manukan party to the Hall of Decisions after a light breakfast of honey, nuts and morning dew has been shared. This low-ceilinged chamber is where the elves in days of yore made their choice to abandon all hopes of reaching the stars and their former home world and tied their umbilical cord irrevocably to the Trollworld.

It is here in the dark, silent space of a thousand bees' wax candles and one hundred scrying mirrors that they have recently made their decision to seek an alliance with their ancient foe, the Dragonkin, because of what they have seen coming from beyond this magic-rich planet.

Sample file

The High Elven Lord asks two things of Melittida: the assistance of her sister, the Star-Gazing Queen, and an embassy from Apys to the Dragon Roosts, to the High Priest, Vougra, and to Great Hormuz himself, to proceed the mission the forest elves themselves will undertake. Both requests as quickly and graciously granted by Melittida and then Zelah-vehar-Zorah asks leave to go inside the minds of each of her suitors so that he may weigh their suitability to engage with her in a matter of such gravity for the forest elves.

The queen has no qualms in speaking for you all and agreeing to the incursion. One by one, you are taken into the High Lord's inner sanctum and given

strangely perfumed vapours to breath from a bowl of polished onyx. The fumes tear your eyes and scorch your throat and then you feel fingers peeling back your memories and seeing your dreams.

Sample file

Go to <272>.

<272> If you grew up on a farm, go to <275>; if your father was a smith, go to <276>; if you belong to a wealthy family, go to <277>; if none of these apply to you go to <278>.

<273> The other wizards had very uneventful experiences. None of them had any special qualities relevant to Dragonkin. Matters are really quite pressing and both Zelah-vehar-Zorah and Melittida agree that there is no time for sightseeing.

Bee'n Hurley is disappointed not to have a crack at making the forest elves laugh at his stand up show but maybe its for the best. Failure might have been too much for him to bear and an unfunny jester is a leading contender for suicidal depression. We wouldn't want that.

Sample file

After presenting you all with sorrel wreathes as a token of gratitude for your service, the elven wizards 'Blow You' eastwards a long, long way, their softly sung spells serenading your leaving. Go to <274>.

<274> As the queasy sensation in the pit of your stomach settles, you feel the wind roaring in your ears. Wind! At least it is the Zephyr and not dragons. Allowing your gaze to sweep panoramically across the horizon, you see that you and your party are standing at the zenith of a giddily high column of rock rising sharply out of the desert escarpment far below.

Fending off the vertigo that swarms over this peak, you see, away across the rust-red landscape, the sister pinnacle to your tower of basalt. Set into the rock face is the mythical dwarven city of Baroo Khazad

but it is not there, to the Septem and the Stone Duke that you are bound; that will have to come another time, if you win Melittida's hand, on another diplomatic mission.

Sample file

No, it is dragons that you have come to find and, if you are blessed by whatever great wizard-god looks out for the people of Apys, the exalted Hormuz himself! Make a L8 SR on LK and go to <298>.

<275> If you spent time looking after chickens, go to <279>; if poultry management was not your task on the family farm, go to <280>.

<276> If your father trained you in the work of the forge, go to <279>; if this was not taught to you in your youth, go to <280>.

<277> If your family had gold aplenty, with a fortune in the bank vaults, go to <279>; if your wealth was of a different nature, property or a thriving business perhaps, go to <280>.

<278> Zelah-vehar-Zorash has tested you and found that you have nothing in common with the great dragon lords of the Host of Hormuz. Rousing you from the heady stupor caused by the dream-inducing incense, he tells Mollittida that you are likely only to take a bit part in the mission to the Dragon Roosts unless Destiny gives the *Cord of Fate* a strange twist.

You will, therefore, receive only half WPs during your time there with other Manukan legates. Go to<273>.

<279> The High Lord sees that you have some real possibility of affinity with the Dragonkin.

It may be that you handled chicken eggs with rare care or that you healed faster when burnt in the hot flames of the forge or that your love of gold gives you an empathy with the driving passion of the Dragonkin; whatever it is that the prescient elven sage has

Sample file

glimpsed, it is enough to provide you with a chance of a pivotal role to play in the negotiations to come.

Sample file

Go to <281>.

<280> Although there is no obvious signs of soul connection with Dragonkin revealed to the High lord through your dreams and reminiscences, the gently probing, infinitely resourceful Zelah-vehar-Zorah sees something in you that is worth putting to the test.

It could be naught but unadulterated greed or it might be that you have it in you to tip the balance or just that fang and claw is your style of fighting, whatever it is, the noble elf sends you deeper into your reverie, to a strange world, long forgotten on Trollworld. Go to <282>.

Sample file

<281> You stand at the pinnacle of a mountain of gold, more gold than you have ever imagined could exist. The gold shifts beneath your feet and certainly feels real but is there more to reality than mere feeling?

You realise that the atmosphere is very thin indeed and you see, as you look up, a single moon and what must surely be the Trollworld as pale discs overhead in a night sky filled with constellations. Looking down again, you see that the base of this mountain of gold is ringed with great eggs, swathed in fiery nests.



Sample file

A distant roaring voice in your head commands you to break open one of the eggs, whose shells are streaked with a particular colour, with every hue ever seen on an artist's palette represented.

Will you do as you have been instructed and descend from the golden peak to brave the flames wreathing the eggs (go to <283>) or will you remain atop the great wealth beneath your feet (go to <284>)?

<282> What is real and what is illusion? To sleep perchance to dream but will the dream turn t nightmare and will the sleeper awake?

You stand (float?) above a sea of lava, red dominating the landscape under an ashen sky. In the distance, high above your head, you see dragons riding thermal

currents, snapping at smaller dragons or diving to snatch prey from the molten seas beneath them. A voice deep within you bids you call one of these masters of the air element to you.

Sample file

Will you refuse and bide your time (go to <285>) or attempt a summoning (go to <286>)?

<283> It is hard to keep your feet on this crunching, yielding slope of gold pieces. Make a L2 SR on DEX. If you fail, you slither your way down and then need to make a L2 SR on STR to stop your slide into the fires of Tarnation that charbroil those massive eggs and their shells.

Fail that and you have to make a L10 SR on CON and take the amount you failed by, if indeed your do not turn out to me asbestos-like in your resistance to heat, from CON. Let us suppose it kills you, oh wizardly wooer of strange regal insectoids – that being so, you would have to close the book.

However, I feel it is most likely to be the will of the Dice Goddess that you survive the journey to the eggs. Fabulous! Now what, oh wise one? Mull that over on your way to <290>.

<284> This is not the stuff that heroes are made of! You have flattered to deceive and although all that has glittered has indeed been gold, it slips through your fingers, as does your chance of having a major say in the epoch-building events beginning to unfold about you. Go to <285>.

<285> What might have been is not to be. The dream implodes and you are wrenched back on a thin, ethereal cord to peaceful Fingledell. The journey back carries danger though, especially when the cord is forced to act like an elastic band.

Make a L5 SR on the average of INT and CON. If you fail, the difference is permanent INT damage. However,

Sample file

you are back and not lost in that savage preternatural Trollworld you briefly sampled.

Sample file

Now go to <273>.

<286> To summon a dragon has never been easy and in these times their nature is all the more wild, their will all the more indomitable.

If you know the *Double-Double* spell you might like to attempt to cast it on whichever attributes you believe will be called upon for this Promethean task. You may cast it more than once, depending on your WIZ, but must make the prerequisite INT SRs.

Record what you affected, if that was your way, and go to <288>.

<287> An act of suicide, I must inform you. The frame is slick as ice and you cannot maintain a hold and plunge downwards into a sea of molten lava which receives you and never lets you go. Close the book.

<288> A dragon will bend to your wizardly wit and will if you can make L.? SRs on CHR plus two more from your choice of WIZ (possibly drained by spell casting), INT or LK. If you make the saving rolls, go to <289>, if not then you must go to<285>.

Sample file



<289> From being little more than a speck on the horizon, a red dragon comes scorching and smoking across the ghostly grey sky, locking onto you as the source of the call to its sense of duty. Great wings beat great gouts of heat about you (make a L1 SR on CON – if you fail, you faint and fall into the deadly lava

and must close the book) and then its claws grab at you, pincers seizing your body like a child's doll.

Sample file

Up it soars, its serpentine scent reeking in your nostrils, until you see a shimmering silver portal. Relying on its momentum, it releases its holds on you and sends you arrowing to the translucent window to who knows where.

You may choose to grab at the frame of the portal (go to <287>) or accept your fate and go through to <291>.

<290> Paper or screen being the medium of our piloting of this whimsical adventure, these are the possibilities for action now that you are egg-sactly where you should be'e (oh dear, a sentence with an egg pun and a bee pun – I lose all my WPs so I am out of the nuptial race): 1) Talk to the egg 2) Hit with a spell to crack it open (come on, you must have one! Freeze Pleeze maybe?) 3) Hurl handfuls of gold at an egg 4) Attempt to walk through the *Fires of Tarnation* and through the eggshell (or even Wink-Wing inside, with a L4 SR on INT most definitely called for). For 1), go to <292>; for 2), go to <293>; for 3), go to <294>; for 4) go to <295>.

Sample file

<291> Go to <281> and do as you are told!

<292> Hmmm! I wonder what you are saying? I wonder if anyone hears a tree falling over in a forest in a world where everyone is deaf? Maybe the dragonling in the egg can hear you…Make a L7 SR on LK and then a L10 SR on CHR (bet you wish you'd cast Double Double…or maybe you did?).

Make them both and you are in business and may go to <297>. Fail and its <296> for you, old fruit.

<293> Not so hard to crack the shell open, now is the time for a strong combination of WIZ and LK. If you

can make L6 saving rolls on both, the dragonling that emerges is no more than spirit and finds a home in your body.

Sample file

You now have several wonderful properties. Your WIZ and LK are doubled and you can, of course, speak Dragon. You are also able to breathe fire in a cone 50' ahead of you, capable of incinerating small trees and doing your level d6 damage – this you can manage once every 5 minutes. What's more you can fly by merely wishing and focussing, although you must stick your arms out, flap your hands and make rolling 'r' noises to do so – that means spell casting is out while you are flying under this means. You may go back to Fingledell at <273>, taking 150 WPs and 300 APs with you.

Fail either or both roll and the dragonling is physically complete and flies off to explore its exciting new playground – that means its <296> instead for you, old peach.

Sample file

<294> Very good! Dragons love gold, even when they are just hatchlings. The shell cracks open and out pops a baby very happy to be showered in gold.

You are blessed by the dragon god, Hormuz, and will never fail a saving roll when in the presence of a dragon. How about that! You may now take 150 APs and the same in WPs - return to Fingledell and your waiting body via <273>.

<295> I really don't know if that was wise. If you didn't Wink-Wing inside, the *Fires of Tarnation* are too hot for even your spiritual self and you melt away into nothingness, being one with most of the Multiverse. Close the book.

However, if you did Wing-Wing inside, you become fused to the being of the dragonling. This is enough to cause it to emerge as an adult. You should roll one up

and add your attributes to its. You are out of the wooing stakes and must close the book but you reap a whopping 1,000 APs for the transformation of a lifetime.

Sample file

<296> Not good enough. Close but the cigars are not for sale. You showed that you are worthy of a place in the ambassadorial roster for this jaunt and can take 150 APs and 75 WPs. The High Elven Lord brings you gently back to your body where spirit successfully re-integrates (much better than the dis- prefix).

Fingledell awaits you at <273>.

<297> Whatever you spaketh, it hit home. A dragonling forces its way out of the egg, flicking shell into the *Fires of Tarnation*. How will it react to you? Maybe it wants a mother…

Sample file



More pertinently, we need to find out whether or not it was quite ready to emerge into this flame-grilled world. Dragonlings start out just as incorporeal spirits with the physical body forming just when they are ready for the off.

Go to <293> to see how far this one was down its developmental track.

<298> If you made the saving roll, it is indeed the all-seeing Hormuz that you will meet after holding audience with his High Priest, Vougra; if that roll eluded you, instead of the all-wise Hormuz, you will treat with the embittered and venomous Furcifer, First-Comer to the Trollworld. Go to <299>.

<299> It doesn't take long before you are spotted by dragons (or maybe scried by Vougra or an acolyte). A squadron approaches from the north, bearing down fast out of the sun.

Sample file

If you received a dragonling spirit in Fingledell, you are permitted to join the winged giants – this greatly impresses Melittida and earns you 100 WPs; you may go to <305>.

Otherwise, you must make a L3 SR on SPD as the dragons swoop down to collect their visitors – go to <303>.

<300> As the dragon crashes down through the furnace temperatures of the upper crater, some might not survive. If you failed the CON SR, you are on the verge of fainting. Make a L3 SR on DEX and STR.

If you fail either of them, you do not manage to hang on and tumble down to a splash landing in bubbling

magma. Close the book. If you feel vindictive or just want some more wrist action, you may roll the CON and maybe the STR and DEX saving rolls for the rest of the gang. You might have fewer rivals.

Sample file

If you, never mind the others live, go to <305>.

<301> High above the cumuli nimbi, you see that Melittida is enthralled by this ride; Bee'n Hurley, too, is having a ball, bicycling his legs and hollering to high heaven. He shouts to you to pull a face to make the queen laugh. Make the best CHR SR you can and o so for your rivals. Whoever does best takes 50 WPs (split them if there is a tie).

Now go to <302>.

<302> The dragons settle into an arrowhead formation and home in on high crags looming over the raging ocean. These are the Dragon Roosts, home to all but the most rootless of their kind. Plumes of smoke rise from the Roosts and the roaring of dragon conversation scorches your ears.

Your dragon dives steeply through a smoking vent in a crenulated mountain and the g-force is pulverising. Make a L4 SR on CON and go to <300>.

Sample file

<303> If you made the saving roll, a dragon plucks you from the wind-blasted peak and lifts you effortlessly into the cerulean sky, where its vast bulk saves you from the buffeting wind. Go to <301>.

If you failed, the dragon passes you by and has to come in for a second attempt. Lose 50 WPs for being shown up. You can make the roll for the other wizards. Perhaps they will be embarrassed too. Go to <301>.



Sample file

<304> The choices are as follows:-

Blue – go to <307>
Red – go to <308>
Gold – go to <309>
Silver – go to <310>
Black – go to <311>
White – go <313>

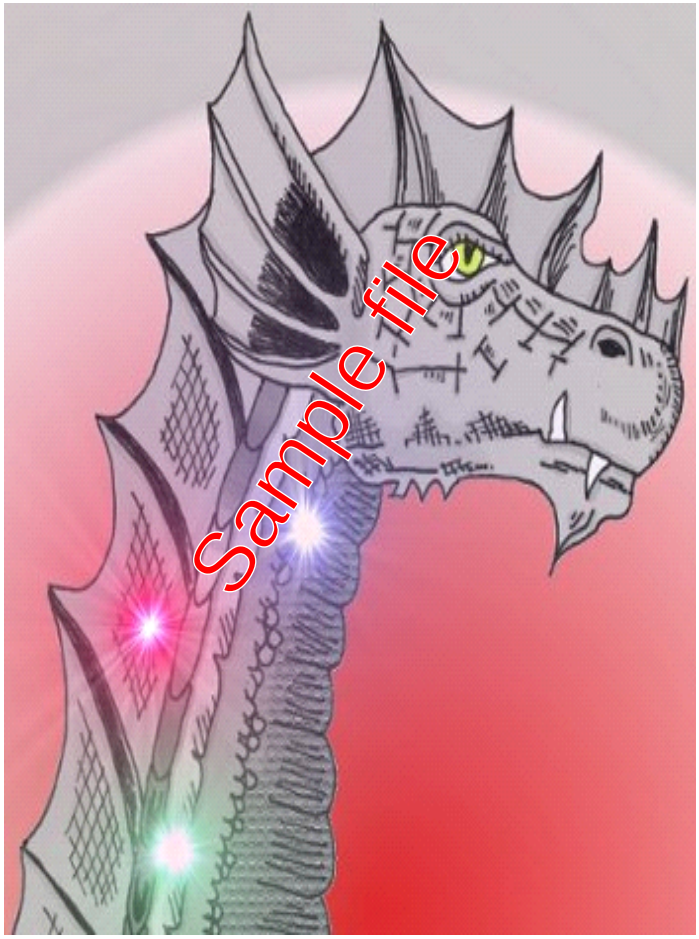
When you have made your choice, before you go to the destination paragraph, write down where the other wizards go to. It does not matter if more than one goes to a particular colour – we'll handle that later.

<305> This volcanic arena is dedicated to the reverence of Hormuz. Few visitors ever set foot in this hallowed sanctuary, still fewer win favour from their

attendance. At first take, the temple seems what one might expect.

Sample file

A huge silver dragon stands on a slab of heatproof rock, which floats on a bed of magma. The dragon is much bigger than any dragon that has ever lived and its metallic body is peppered with portals of every hue that the Dragonkin cares to garb itself in.



Those with 20:20 vision would spot a very small figure walking from a green portal to meet you. From close scrutiny, it is possible to ascertain that the acolyte is a

gnome – he looks comically tiny against the great silver dragon temple. Producing a megaphone from behind his back, he shouts out a greeting.



"Felicitations, Melittida, queen of Apys, your embassy meets with the approval of Vougra and you are permitted to enter the great body of temple-body of Hormuz, you and your cortege including those who would seek a permanent place by your side, in your heart and in your bed. I am Loft, Dragonkin apprentice and personal attendant to the ineffable Vougra.

I have been charged with helping you in your weighing of the merits of these suitors before your business is considered. These wizards must select a portal to

enter the mystical chambers of Hormuz. You, Melittida and your fellow Manukans, will accompany me through the naturally restorative green portal and so you will be refreshed for the Council with Vougra and what may proceed from that. Choose now, ye wizards! Take note of the still, small voice that speaks only to you.'

Sample file



Sample file

Loft raises a staff topped with a golden orb and brilliant light explodes about the sanctuary, ricocheting from every facet of the great silver wyrm. Go to <304>.

<306> The blackness sucks at you. Magic is futile against the overwhelming might of the abyss. Roll 1d6.

This is the number of steps you manage of your own free will before the void takes hold and pulls you to it, welcoming you into its arms, there to hold you, to cradle you, to keep you safe for eternity, never to let you go, never to allow danger to threaten you again, to preserve you even from the reach of Death itself. There is, as Vougra told you, nothing here for you, nothing in infinite abundance.

You are the Child of the Void and enjoy all the privileges of this abysmal, unending fate. You live forever in the darkness, Close the book.

<307> If you were judged to have affinity with the Dragonkin by Zelah-vehar-Zorah you find yourself whisked away by a gentle, yet irresistible vortex of hot, dry air along a tunnel that spirals downwards. Go to <314>.

If there was no such positive assessment made by the High Elven Lord of Fingledell, you are picked up by this slowly spinning whirlwind and turned upside down and every which way but loose. You must make a L3 SR on CON and take this difference in damage if you miss it.

Sample file

Two mental images appear in your mind, one a fang, the other a claw. Both look razor sharp but, on the sunny side, neither looks to be dripping with poison. You understand that you must reach out with your thoughts and take one of these weapons of Dragonkind (any rival with you will follow your lead). If you opt for the wickedly rapacious fang, go to <315> but if you choose the ever-grasping claw go instead to<316>. Any wizard with you, will do as you do.
<308> If you were found by Zelah-vehar-Zorah to warrant nothing more than a bit part in this play, your every molecule is ripped apart as you pass through the red portal. There is a searing flash of agony and then everything is very still and utterly silent - go to <317>.

If you were not found wanting back in the forests of the High Elves, you see before you a tall man of extremely large girth and a gleaming bald pate. He wears green robes, laced with golden thread and

embroidered with silver fangs; small dragon tails hang from his robes, spaced out every hand span.

Sample file

He beholds you solemnly and speaks: 'I am Vougra, High Priest of Exalted Hormuz. Before you are permitted to take part in the Exchanging of Words with the Manukan people you must make a choice: will you take the *Way of the Fiery Fang* or will you walk the *Path of the Grasping Claw*? Speak now and I shall send you on your way.'

Make your choice: for Fang, go to <315>; for Claw go to <316>. Any wizard with you, will do as you do.

<309> As you pass through the golden portal, you see before you a monstrous claw, reaching out to take you in its taloned grasp. You sense that no magic will work for you now and there is nowhere to run to – the portal behind you has closed silently, you see as you glance anxiously over your shoulder.

Your eyes begin to spin, or so it feels, and every image in your mind is dominated by gold – gold coins, gold jewellery, golden vessels and golden armour. You are snapped taught with excruciating pain as every atom is your body seems to erupt upwards.

Go to <317>.

Sample file



<310> Passing through the portal, streams of silvery light coruscate before your eyes. It is too much for you and your stagger giddily, a hand going to the wall to steady yourself and to prevent an undignified collapse. Instead of wall, your flesh meets flesh and another's hand passes across your brow, wiping away the dizziness and restoring your vision.

Before you stands a giant of a man, extremely large of belly, with a gleaming bald pate. He wears green robes, laced with golden thread, embroidered with silver fangs and covered with small dragon tails hanging down or waving, seemingly at random.

He fixes your eyes with imposing gravitas and speaks: 'I am Vougra, High Priest of Exalted Hormuz. Before you are permitted to take part in the Exchanging of Words with the Manukan people you must make a choice: will you take the *Way of the Fiery Fang*, as most of the Dragonkind do, or will you walk in the shadows and choose the *Path of the Grasping Claw*? Speak now and I shall send you on your way.'

Make your choice: for Fang, go to <315>; for Claw go to <316>. Any wizard with you, will do as you do.

<311> As you leave the sweltering heat of the arena for the cool dark of the black portal, a voice booms out in your brain.

'Halt! Think again! I am Vougra, High Priest of Exalted Hormuz. Before you are permitted to take part in the Exchanging of Words with the Manukan people you must make a choice: will you take the *Way of the Fiery Fang* or will you walk along the *Path of the Grasping Claw*? If you will pursue the Faith of the Fang, turn back and enter this illustrious temple through a white portal; if you will follow the Cult of the Claw you must enter through a red portal. There is nothing for you if you proceed into the dark.'

Sample file

Make your choice: for Fang, go to <313>; for Claw go to <309>; if you do not heed Vougra's advice and continue into the black oblivion ahead of you, go to <306>. Any wizard with you will do as you do.

<312> You are now in the midst of Hormuz. You cannot see the great dragon wizard-god for he has not taken on corporeal form for this audience; instead he roils about you, as great fog banks of whiteness and he speaks within your skull.

‘Welcome and well done, wizard. There are plans afoot that will rock Trollworld to its core, if they proceed unchecked. The First Footer, Furcifer, sits on Sar, surrounded by glistening gold, consuming it and excreting it in an endless cycle – this is the means by which the dragonmen – not my kindred, not yours! – seek to find their way on to this planet of unheralded khremm. They are shaping an interstellar alliance with Zweetz, who ever covets this planet’s treasures for his own. No one could ever trust Zweetz and these dragonmen are no fools but they are overconfident, unfeeling and reckless in their need.

You must take this message to Melittida’s co-regent, Colettida the Star Watcher Queen. It is you that I entrust with my message for I, even I, dare not draw Zweetz’ attention to the defence strategy that must be welded for all the kindreds of Trollworld, elves just as much as Dragonkind. Take my blessing and return to your intended. Do not forget that this is the greatest imperative of your life. Go to your friends, your rivals and your beloved queen. Make haste! I give you the gift of speed!’

Sample file

With this pronouncement, the audience is at an end and you are whisked away to another meeting far below. You gain double WPs from now on and your feet gain small wings – a permanent *Little Feets* spell. You may take 500 APs into the bargain. If you have another wizard with you, your rival is rewarded in the same way.

Now go to <324>.

<313> As you pass through the white portal, leaving behind friends and favour, you see before you, in a great hall bare of all trappings, a single, mountainous fang, it reaches ever upwards and you cannot, no

matter who sharp your eyes may be, quite fix on the tip – it is there, you know, but your very gaze slips off as you attempt to lock in on it.

Sample file

Shifting your vision downwards, you perceive, as you focus tightly, a stairway spiralling up the titanic tooth. There seems nothing else for it but to begin the climb – why else would you be here? There can be no doubt that the climb will be difficult to complete: the fang is slippery so you must ascend carefully. Gravity seems a far more onerous burden than it ever has before.

You must make a L10 SR on CON (your target is 65). If you fail, the amount you failed by comes off your WIZ. Then you must make a L9 SR on CON and so on all the way down to L1, always taking the difference from WIZ. A critical fumble brings an automatic reduction to WIZ of 2d6 (DARO). If your WIZ reaches zero, you slip to the bottom of the fang and must start again, this time with LK being reduced instead of WIZ.

If LK reaches zero, just as WIZ did, as you fall, a pit of perfect blackness opens beneath you and it is into this impenetrable darkness that you fall – go to <306>.

Sample file

If you make it to the top of the great dragon's tooth, go to <312>. If you have a wooing rival with you, roll for that wizard too, just as instructed above.

<314> You are now blind. This is catastrophic in terms of your wedding plans as Apys will not accept a blind consort for a queen of the Manukans.

Vougra, the High Priest, takes pity on you and allows you to embark on the path to priesthood as his acolyte, serving as an apprentice under the gnome, Loft.

This is the life destiny has scripted for you. Close the book. If you wish to know how your training progresses, email me or drop me a trollmail – the

details are contained within these pages. If you do continue with this character, take 1,000 APs for good measure.

Sample file

<315> You have made your bed and now the time has come to lie in it.

Sparks ignite before your eyes and, even when you shut your eyelids tight, they explode alarmingly inside and outside those lids. There is a sudden wave of white that seems to wash over you and then…you see nothing but whiteness. It is not cold, far from it, and you know you are not in a blizzard but you are rendered so snow blind that your eyes will not register anything more.

A voice booms out in that glaring lightness, booms so loudly that it threatens to deafen you. Make a L1 SR on CON – fail and your hearing is destroyed. Go to <314>.

Should the dice not let you down, you recover and your inner ear mechanics adjust to this profound and bombastic voice. 'You who would win the hand of a queen in marriage must be weighed in the *Scales of Hormuz*. If you are not worthy of a queen's love, you are not worthy of life itself!'

Sample file

The whiteness implodes and as your eyes rediscover their photon-translating properties, you see an enormous set of scales, bronze in the main but with pans of pure gold.

'Choose which side you will sit to be assessed!' the voice commands in tones of such compelling charisma that you do not even think of disobeying. You must go to seat yourself on the left pan (go to <318>) or on the right (go to <319>).

<316> The die is cast and as ye reap, so must you sew. Everything turns to blackness and for some twenty minutes you are left alone with your thoughts in the

suffocating silence. The weight of this waiting is so oppressive that you (and any companion) must make a L1 SR on CHR to muster resolve and maintain morale – fail and you lose 1d6 from INT.

Sample file

At long last, relief comes in that form a stairway that appears in the blackness, rising up and up. Sooner or later, you will begin to climb this staircase and when you do…why, it walks with you, easing your passage up towards the stars, towards the twin moons of Trollworld and, soon enough, you see that you are destined for Sar, the smaller of the sister moons. Onwards and upwards you go, faster and faster, able to breath no matter then elevation and untroubled now by gravity's pull.

On you go through the fabric of time and space until you reach the surface of this small globe, orbiting your planet and, at the end of the stairway, you see a glittering and you know that's here, all that glitters is indeed gold. Then, in the absolute quietness of space, you hear a rumble and then a roar and then you see pale yellow eyes observing you, taking your measure, drinking in your being hungrily, greedily.

Go to <317>.

Sample file

<317> The eyes blink and the gold shifts as an enormous, ancient dragon rises from its bed of gold. 'More!' The word is transmitted at brain-curdling volume, decibels giving way to centibels, then kilobels until no prefix is adequate. 'Bring me more!' The loudest voice you have ever heard. The aged-worn dragon rolls its eyes in their sockets, its tongue spilling out of its mouth to lick up gold which it swallows with pure avarice.

As you watch, mesmerised by what this creature has become, three figures materialise to the left, humanoid, and beckoning you to them. If you do as they encourage, go to <320>; if you think better of it go to <321>.

<318> There is something sinister lurking in the air as you ride the scales. Is it something coming towards you or something rooted deep within you? Pictures form in your head, pictures of what if would really mean to be married to such an alien creature as Melittida.

Some would be repelled, some would shun such a fate. Make a L5 SR on CHR. If you make it, you may go to <312> - you have not been found wanting, there is a pure, accepting love within you. Take 200 WPs (do the CHR check for any companion, same reward, same downside).

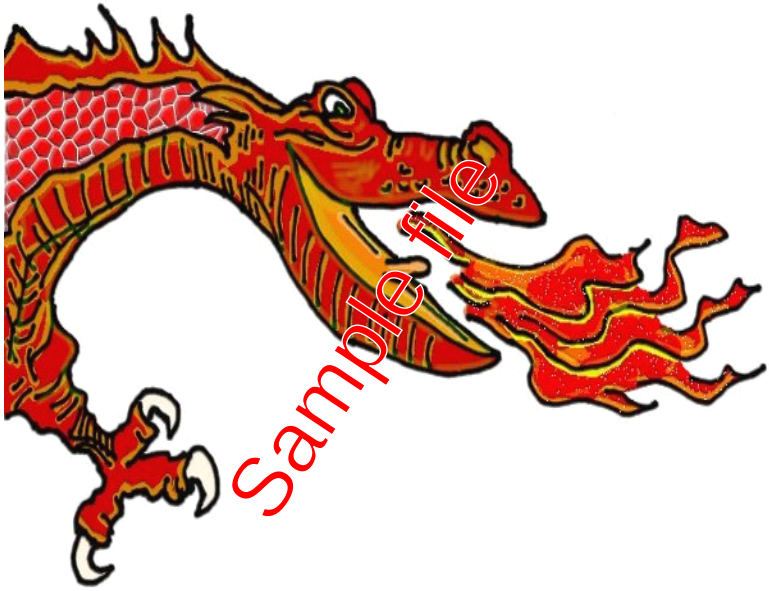
If you failed, the intolerance of the unknown, the fear that leads to rejection and worse, has too large a place in your heart. You are expunged from the Dragon Roosts, eliminated from the race for the altar and teleported back to Apys, where you are given safe passage out of Phantog (take 500 APs and close the book).

Sample file

<319> Dexterously, you take you seat on the immense scales and await the verdict. Try a L5 SR on current WIZ. Make it and your innate wizardliness is adjudicated of sufficient potential to make you a good match for Melittida. You gain 200 WPs (remember to give this test to any wizard with you, same reward, same penalty) and may go on to <312>.

Fail and your magistrate deems you a poor match and dismisses you from the Dragon Roosts, teleporting you back to Apys. You are struck from the list of Melittida's suitors, given safe passage out of Apys, thanked for your efforts but firmly told never to darken Phantog's dark doorstep again, Take 500 APs and close the book.

<320> These creatures are not men, that much is evident. They are scaly, have stout tails and their heads are heavy and saurian. 'We are the dragonmen,' they state plainly, in unison. 'This,' and here they indicate the ancient dragon, 'is Furcifer, First-Footer of the Dragonkind on the planet below, second in power only to Hormuz himself.'



They pause and you realise that the communication has been one-way and telepathic. The dragonmen continue. 'We will see that Furcifer is fed. You will bring Furcifer food. Furcifer's food is gold.' You can see that they tell the truth; the huge First-Footer continues to devour gold and his eyes flick over to you, seeing a new provider, another stocker of his larder.

Without warning, the dragonmen begin to exert psychic pressure on your skull and the brain within. It is excruciating! Make a L2 SR on CON and INT and

take 1d6 damage to CON if you fail either roll, 3d6 if you fail both. Now go to <322>.

<321> These creatures have little patience. They link arms and focus on you. You sense that your magic would not have impact on this trio but their psychic powers bear down on you. Make a L10 SR on the average of your CON, CHR and WIZ. If you make it, go to <322>; if you fail, go to <323>.

<322> Impressed with you resistance, these beings mind-speak with you. 'We are dragonmen. We want your help. If you will give it, we will return you to your planet.' They clearly do not waste words.

Without waiting for any response from you, they go on. 'You will pledge your help or you will die here. There is no alternative. You will bring your own weight in gold to the priest, Vougra, or his replacement should he be cast down. You will do this within one of your world's months. If you fail, you will die. There is no alternative. Be gone!'

Sample file

With that, you find yourself once more on the stairway but this time your feet will only move down towards the Trollworld, waiting for you, spinning as always, far below. You have been subjected to a geas. Unless you deliver the gold specified within the time allotted, you will die. It will not be painful but it will happen. It may be best that you abandon your quest for Melittida's hand.

However, if you do become her lawfully wedded husband, it could be that the Manukans will supply the gold gladly…Your choice: either close the book and adventure on your own on a life or death gold hunt or continue on your merry marital way with only one

week left at the end to fulfil the geas. If you elect to continue your pursuit of Melittida, go to <324>.

<323> You lose your grasp of current events as a tide of condescension sweeps over you. If you could tune into to the thoughts of a cabbage, they might well be much as yours are for an undefined period of time, on this small moon, reached by a stairway, orbiting Trollworld. Or…they might not be. Perhaps the soul-life of a cabbage is much richer and varied than yours is now.

When thoughts do begin to stir and when, sometime later, your eyelids lift and separate, you see saurian headed 'men' stood over you and feel the psychic control they have over you. Go to <322>.

Sample file

<324> While you have been off gallivanting, Vougra and Melittida have signed an accord which both a very pleased with. There is an extension to Manukan privacy rights, with dragon patrols to make entry into Phantog for those foolish enough to brave its fetid jungles a most perilous undertaking. In return, the Manukans have agreed to bring a tribute in gold each year to the Dragon Roosts. No progress has been made with regard to elf-dragon relations but at least the peaceful intentions of the forest elves have been conveyed by the Manukans and listened to without interruption by the Council of Elder Dragons. All wizards are awarded 50 WPs for contributing to the building of this accord.

Vougra has a jolly side which he seldom exhibits but now is such a time and so Bee'n Hurley is permitted to deliver his stand up routine. Very funny it is too. Like most comedians, he needs a stooge in the audience and he looks for one of the wooing wizards. Whoever makes the best SR on LK is chosen. The humour can

be cruel and Bee'n's has quite a sting in its tail. He talks about a pantomime donkey and asks, 'Are you the front end of an ass?' When he gets a shake of the head, he asks 'Then are you the rear end of an ass?' to which he gets another 'no'. With a flourish, he declares to much hilarity, 'Well, you must be no end of an ass then!'

Not everyone could take this in good grace, without losing face. The picked upon wizard (maybe you!) must try a L7 SR on CHR – success brings 100 more WPs, failure carries with it the loss of 100 WPs.

After the show is over, it is time to go on to your next port of call. Go to <325>.

Sample file

<325> It would make sense to visit the nearby dwarven stronghold of Baroo Khazad next – sense, that is, if you were travelling by some means other than instant magical teleportation. So, instead of a meeting with the vertically challenged, you are off to the city of Nesstlehaven, where it's elderly Baron, Ludvig, his promising son, Otto, and Chancellor Brandt await you.

Bee'n tells you that it is a custom of the city that everyone stands with hands clasped behind their backs in the presence of the Baron; this is not merely a mark of respect but also a taboo that has kept successive barons safe from assassins. This is the one thing above all others you must remember and obey at all times for Ludvig's attendants are on a hair trigger when it comes to reacting to anyone who breaks this tradition.

The city is smaller than Porttree and its relative proximity to the great Khaboom is, perhaps, a reason why it has shown no sign of growing these last few centuries. Few people of Nesstlehaven have ever

visited Khaboom but those wanders of the Kraken continent are drawn like a moth to a flame by the big city's mythology. The villages for some one hundred miles about Nesstlehaven pay loose allegiance to its Baron but more look to it for military strength against goblin raids, as the least favoured of kindreds seeks what others possess in daring sorties from their mountain fastness, rather than paying tribute to their lord, who has always been loathe to invoke the yoke of taxation. Now that is a guaranteed recipe for currying praise, if not service.

Sample file

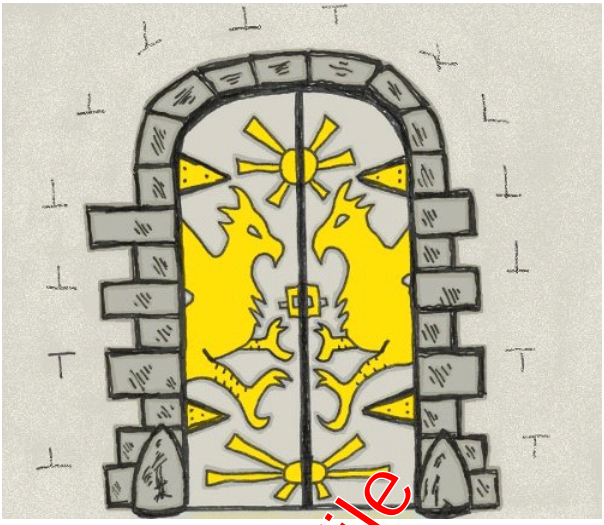
As you arrive outside the city's walls and the Manukan legates trumpet their greetings to the Baron, Melittida takes a moment to address you, her suitors.

'I am sorry that my thoughts have turned so much to my mission and not to your wooing. This is ever the way with the Ambassadorial Queen. However, I have, I assure, you taken careful note of your conduct and the twinkles in one or two eyes have not escaped me. I hope soon to be able to get to know you all more intimately so please, I pray, continue to be patient and know that your every move in support of our embassies plays a part in my matrimonial judgement.'

Not words to make the heart strings go 'zing!' but she is a sincere woman. Go to <326>.

Sample file

<326> As you march through the city gates, twin pillars of granite carved into the forms of gryphons, with massive bronze doors between them, you are met by a young man with clean good looks and mop of tousled auburn hair. He introduces himself as Otto, the Baron's son and heir, and declares that he stands ready to test the mettle of each challenger for the hand of the Manukan queen.



Sample file

As he bows low at the end of his short speech, brass instruments sound and kettle drums are pounded. On behalf of his queen, Bee'h Hurley accepts the young man's offer of trial by combat with his own unique musical accompaniment – a series of loud, fruity raspberries that resound from the city's walls.

Otto is armed with a rapier and awaits the first wizard to be tested. The rules are simple: you and the princeling are to be pitted in the Nesstlehaven arena against a foe of the Chancellor's choosing. You may cast one spell and then Otto will seek to make a kill. If he finds that you have not made sufficient inroads with your magic, he will quit and the beast will live. You must not kill your opponent with your spell as this honour is allotted to Otto. A final note: *Hold That Pose* is banned as it is very dull for the spectators.

Melittida asks who will take the lead, her gaze skimming over each one of her suitors. In response to the many hands that shoot up, she decrees that it shall correspond to the alphabetical order of your names

with the exception that she wishes to reserve your trial until last. Go to <327>.

<327> If any of your original wooing rivals have fallen by the wayside you may take their place and fight alongside Otto twice or you may roll 1d6 to see which of the other wizards gets a shot of double jeopardy.

First up is (should be!) Catweezil. This mage is clearly nervous as he has no idea what to expect and has no clue as to what Otto may have up his sleeve. 'It won't look good.' He observes with a slight stutter, 'if I let the Baron's boy get creamed by some strange fiend from the swamps of Hell. I don't think I'd get away with just a blot on my copybook!' The haughty Sunnyman nods, seemingly sympathetic, and then he opines, 'Just get on with it, lightweight!'

Perhaps he intended to sting Catweezil into action, perhaps he miscalculated; at any rate, the tremulous wizard sets his shoulders back and waxes his moustache into sharp points before stepping out from the small dressing room provided for Otto's sparring partners into…

Sample file

The Nesstlehaven arena is filled with shadows. Enclosed by a great doomed ceiling, the light comes from thousands of candles set into a deep and wide sunken ring between the excited spectators and the combat oval. The local compère, a florid man in a houndstooth jacket, Ted Buttterballs by name, has done his ritual 'hype and howl' routine and this has been topped off with Bee'n Hurley juggling rotten tomatoes and pelting poor Catweezil as he emerges into the flickering light. A wodge of khremm is wasted as his knee-jerk response is to throw up a Protective Pentagram spell. Will this count as Catweezil's spell?

Maybe…he needs a L1 SR on LK if the ruling is not to go against him.

Sample file

Otto strides confidently into the arena over the little retractable bridge that allows the combatants across the candle trench, bowing to the roaring approval of the crowd. Ludvig's boy is a popular heir-in-waiting. From the other side of the arena comes bounding a rotund ball of hairy fury, spitting fire and bristling with razor-clawed arms. The Widow-maker Spiteball comes straight at the two humans on its eight high-stepping legs.

The wizard did not get to L7 just by a quick dash through some Jackpot Strike-it-Lucky jamboree dungeon Catweezil is the veteran of countless life or death struggles. Without blanching, he casts his spell. Roll 1d6 to see what Catweezil cast and then go to <333> for the outcome (if he failed the LK SR that will be covered there):

1 – *Blasting Power*
2 – *Little Feets*
3 – *Slush Yuck*
4 – *Mind Pox*
5 – *Oh Go Away*
6 – *Invisible Wall*

Sample file

<328> Next to team up with Otto is Hanzalf. The thoughtful, sometimes withdrawn, practitioner of the mystical arts rolls back his sleeves and flexes his fingers in preparation for whatever is released to face the young tyro. Arcane syllables play across his lips as he readies a repertoire of spells to boost Otto and to entertain the crowd. He has a nervous tick and it looks as if he might crack under the pressure of needing to be decisive. More his style to weigh up the situation, to sift and sort, then to strike like a hawk. A gong sounds and the moment of truth is upon Hanzalf.

Across the bridge and into the arena charges, to the 'oohs' and 'aahs' of the crowed, now on the edge of

their seats, a creature with a bright turquoise carapace and a monstrous coiled stinging tail. It does not slither like a snail but scuttles on what must be several hundred small legs. Its head is a head from someone's very bad, very sick dream – it has slits for eyes, glinting with malicious intent, a snout filled with sabre and saw teeth, a tongue that darts out a good man's length from that cavernous mouth, showing a fork at the tip dripping with what must surely be poison, and it also is possessed of clacking mandibles that could, no doubt, break an uruk's back is easily as you might a twig. It is known succinctly as the 'Deathbringer'.

Sample file



Roll 1d6 to see what Hanzalf casts and then go to <334>:

1 – *Hidey Hole*
2 – *Wall of Thorns*
3 – *Fire At Will*
4 – *Dum Dum*
5 – *Fly Me*
6 – *Porta-Vision*

Sample file

<329> We reach the half way mark and Otto is not yet breathing heavily (not his thing, as it happens). This time he's paired off with the gangly Ragnarok, his turban reputed to be a khremm-enhancing battery – certainly, no one has seen him take it off and whether he is bald or blond is anyone's guess. He struts confidently to the door, turning to mock-salute the remaining wooers.

'Now you're going to see a master at work, my friends,' he boasts. 'Whatever we face, Otto will remember this fight as his most fabulous ever! Shall I take him to the wire and have the crowd gasping or shall I make the outcome swing one way then the other until the giddy audience begs for a victor? Relax, friends, you won't top my efforts so don't fret yourselves none.'

Then he's gone and you peer out to see what he and Otto must face…and out across the bridge and into the arena walks a cat, an ordinary household moggy…or maybe there's more to it than meets the eye…Yes! Ragnarok rolls his eyes in dismay, for this is Schrodinger's Cat, a feline with the uncanny ability to perplex. Its mystery lies in its seeming to be alive and dead at the same time – debates can become quite heated when determining whether the cat is beaten or not.

Sample file

This was not what Ragnarok was expecting and when he finishes scratching his head over what spell he should cast there is quite a stream of blood.

Roll 1d6 to see what the wizard casts and then go to <335> for the outcome:

1 – *Wall of Fire*
2 - *Glue You*
3 – *Blasting Power*

4 – *Slush Yuck*
5 – *Befuddle*
6 – *Blue Shirt of Life*

<330> Into the second half of the evening's amusements and after filling up on popcorn and brandybeet wine the audience is ready for some fast and furious action. The fourth wizard slated to appear is Sunnyman.

Not given to long speeches, Sunnyman, with his brooding eyes and sneering mouth, does not live up to his name. Although never directly, rude, a trace of arrogance always plays on the corner of his mouth and his honey words for Waittida are far too saccharine for everyone else's tastes.

Bee'n Hurley goes to shake his hand to wish him luck and employs the old electric buzzer trick, The look of malice that is shot the jester's way drips acid – Sunnyman never laughs at his own expense. The creature that comes flapping over the bridge resembles a great manta ray but these wings were made for hovering above the ground rather than skimming the ocean. It has a savagely barbed tail and two antennae that crackle as it moves. The slitty eyes fix on Otto and Sunnyman – it knows its foes.

Sample file

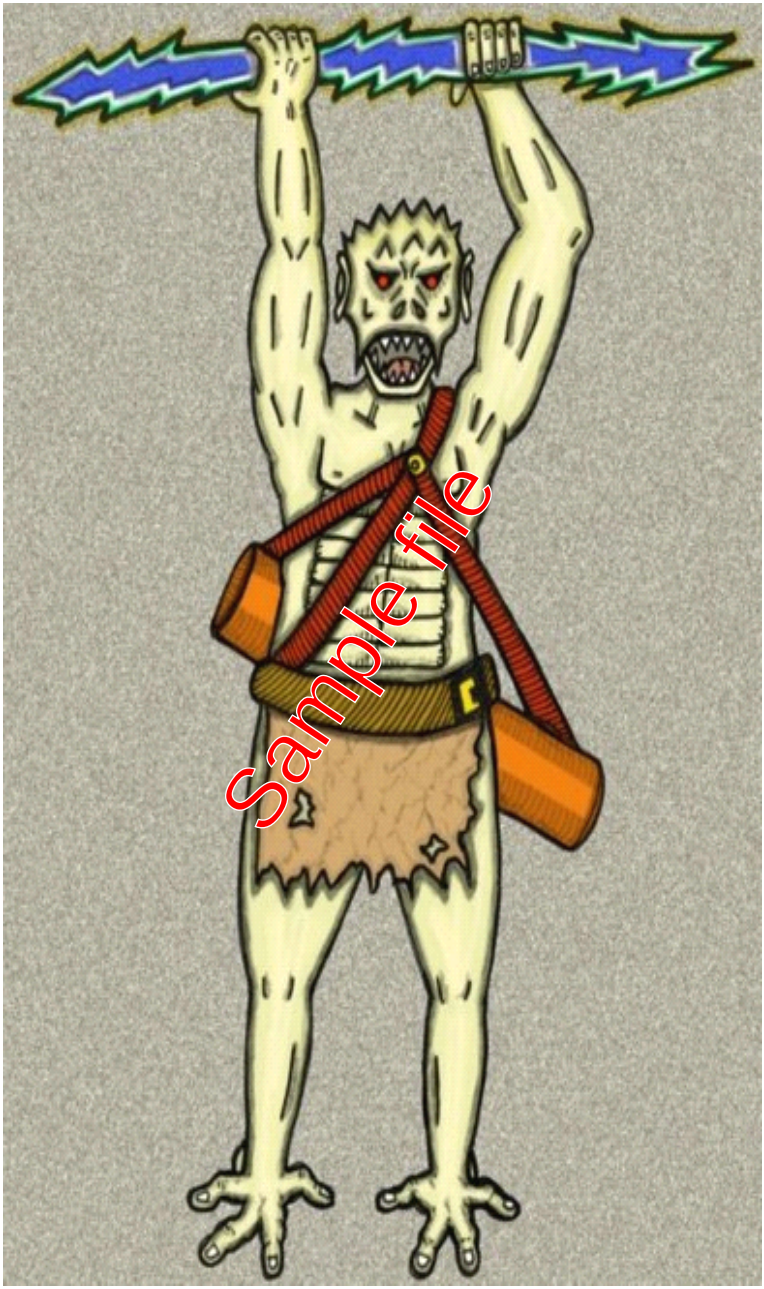
Roll 1d6 to see what spell Sunnyman casts and then go to <336> for the outcome:

1 – *Know Your Foe*
2 - *Spirit Mastery*
3 – *Befuddle*
4 – *Dum Dum*
5 – *Freeze Pleeze*
6 – *Mind Pox*

<331> Next onto the plate steps the gentle Wood Wizard, his hair festooned with twigs, his robes mossy and patterned with lichen. Not a person to take life lightly, he nonetheless possesses a potent armoury of spells to go with his wealth of forest lore. The Wood Wizard (for no one can quite shorten his name to 'Woody') carefully withdraws form a sleeve a diving rod and draws forth from a deep pocket a pale blue egg. He nods to show that he is ready for the testing time.

To face our woodland friend and the gallant Otto, the Nesstlehaven Arena Master lets out a ravenous, bellowing brute, ogrish but with a snowy pelt and brandishing a clutch of frost-bolts – it is the dreaded Snomad, a lunatic predator that knows no fear from the icy realm of the Mountain Kingdom, where Dobby, he who took the *Mask of Fubinos* from Goblin Crag, is king.

Samplefile


Sample file

Roll 1d6 to see what he cast and then go to <337> for the outcome:

1 – *Take That You Fiend*
2 – *Little Feets*
3 – *Smog*
4 – *Trollgod's Blessing*
5 – *Zappathingum*
6 – *Shield Me*

<332> The Nesstlehaven crowd is used to the best being served last. You see Baron Ludvig smiling proudly at Otto, with Chancellor Brandt running his gaze over you. The Manukan embassy is clearly enthralled by this grand show and this is a great opportunity to leave a lasting impression with Melittida – going last is the arena equivalent of pole position.

Your rival wooers are seated at the front, bathed in candlelight as they await this climax, this fabulous finale. But are they rooting for you as good sports surely would do, or are they hoping to see you taken down a peg or two?

Sample file

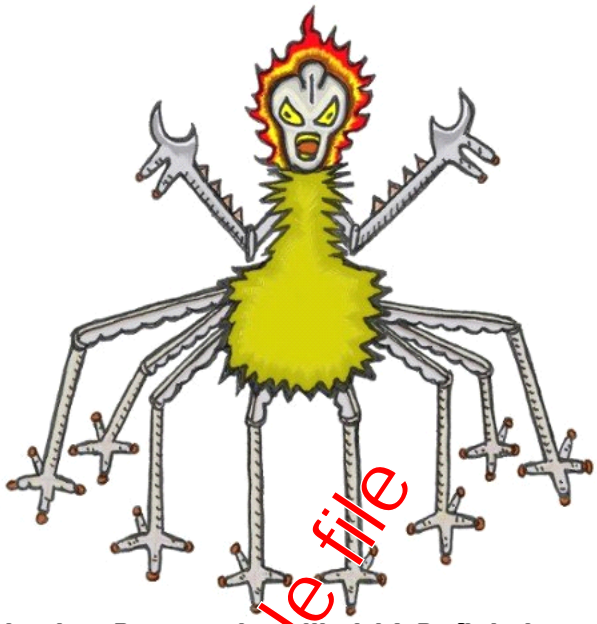
No time to ponder on that riddle as the gasp of the crowd tells you that you nemesis is out on the sand. With a wicked sense of the dramatic, the Arena Master, has sent forth a giant Green Hornet, its legs weighted or perhaps magically glued so that it cannot stay airborn for more than a few moments. The insect looks venomously at you and then Otto, its alien eyes incomprehensible but surely harbouring an evil intention. The gong sounds and you must cross the fateful little bridge…

You have been given a choice of spells by the Arena Master and you must do waver from the script, Make your choice and then go to <338> for the outcome:
1 – *Double Double*
2 – *Unerring Blade*
3 – *Firestorm of Protest*
4 – *Devoted Rain Cloud*
5 – *Oh Go Away*
6 – *That's A Natty Beard*

<333> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the Widow-maker Spiteball (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

Failed LK SR – no spell allowed; the Spiteball is too much for Otto alone and so he sidesteps a few charges and dodges claws and flame before sheathing his rapier, the signal for the Supervising Arena Magician (SAM for short) to teleport him to safety while the Spiteball is lured back into its cage with choice morsels, dripping with blood. At least it's not the blood of anyone you know… No WPs awarded

Sample file



Sample file

1 – *Blasting Power* – he killed it! Definitely no WPs; Otto tuts in displeasure and disapproval
2 – *Little Feets* – on the money, this gives Otto all the help he needs to beat the monster, who doesn't know what hits it; 100 WPs awarded
3 – *Slush Yuck* – the Spiteball is the brightest bulb in the tulip field and in ploughs straight ahead into the goo; the slushy yucky stuff is enough to extinguish its fire but then it powers out and meets Otto head on; without flame to toast its foe, the Spiteball comes off second best in a titanic tussle – 150 WPs awarded
4 – *Mind Pox* – hopeless! Now it is defenceless and that's no fun at all for anyone; no WPs awarded and lots of booing from the crowd
5 – *Oh Go Away* – the Spiteball actually has very high CHR and the spell is like a red rag to a bull; it charges fixedly at the spellcaster which leaves Otto with an easy opening for a deft thrust with his flashing rapier; it is over very quickly and not considered a fair fight or an entertaining spectacle – no WPs awarded

6 – *Invisible Wall* – the Widow-maker did not possess a bucketful of spare brain cells and what it does have are seriously rearranged as it crashes into the invisible barrier; the crowd hoot at the shocked and stunned monster, which gives Otto a decent run for his money but can't shake off seeing stars and so goes down and is counted out – 200 WPs awarded

With this fight now ended, go to <328> for the next event on tonight's card.

Sample file

<334> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the Widow-maker Spiteball (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

1 – *Hidey Hole* – The crowd hate this spell in the arena! Yes, you can see blood spurting out of bodies for no apparent reason, you can see limbs seemingly popping off but it does quickly; this is declared a void contest; no WPs awarded
2 – *Wall of Thorns* – this spell does not stop the Deathbringer but it may well slow it down enough for Otto to hack its legs off – a L5 SR on LK please: make it and Otto wins, fail and he has to yield and sheath his rapier with SAM saving his noble bacon – 100 WPs or zero awarded, depending on the saving roll
3 – *Fire At Will* – this spell does little damage and leaves Otto no choice but to sheath his rapier and have SAM save his butt - no WPs awarded
4 – *Dum Dum* – This should work but – if a critical fumble is now rolled, Hanzalf is the one left dumbstruck and Otto will have to rely on SAM to get

him away from the Deathbringer – either 100 WPs or negative 100

Sample file

5 – *Fly Me* – Otto approves of this touch and flits above the Deathbringer stabbing nimbly and retreating quickly; it takes time but there is only going to be one winner and this spectacle is a crowd-pleaser – 150 WPs
6 – *Porta-Vision* – Hanzalf casts a mobile image of a giant rabbit with Bee'n Hurley's face; the crowd laughs uproariously while the Deathbringer fails to catch the big bunny, leaving Otto free to skewer it with impunity – 150 WPs

With this combat now concluded, go to <329> for the next confrontation.

<335> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the Schrodinger's Cat (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

Sample file

1 – *Wall of Fire* – the small feline attempts to leap through the blazing wall and lands either badly burning or quite unharmed, depending on your view of quantum physics; there is interest value in this so it brings 100 WPs but (poor Otto can never be certain that his rapier actually killed the cat or not
2 – *Glue You* – to some, the cat seems to be moving very slowly, while others do see any thing other than normal feline grace; to Otto, it is too stop-start for him to quite get where the cat's at – surreal for the audience and worth 100 WPs but the fight is considered a stalemate
3 – *Blasting Power* – the cat gets cooked but then again it looks unsigned as it licks its fur rather than its wounds; Otto attempts to slice it like a salami but the pieces often resemble one long sausage-cat – another draw and just 50 WPs
4 – *Slush Yuck* – the cat is too quick for this trap and leaps at Otto only to disappear up to its neck in the sticky stuff; then it's back at Otto's throat again – it's

too much and he sheathes his sword; this charade is worth 50 WPs
5 – *Befuddle* – the cat struts silkily over towards Otto and then wanders off as if it has lost the plot; when Otto seeks to take advantage of it loss of concentration it suddenly is to be found rubbing against his ankles; after five minutes of not much at all happening, Otto sheathes the rapier and SAM ends the farce – no WPs
6 – *Blue Shirt of Life* – a strange spell for Ragnarok to cast – the cat is not wearing a shirt and the shirt it is not wearing is neither blue nor red; Otto saunters over to the cut, ready to deliver the coup de grace when a red shirt appears on the cat! Otto swishes regardless and the cat is cut in two as the shirt vanishes – then the red shirt reappears and the cat's two halves seamlessly join!

This fiasco goes on for some time until Otto sheathes his rapier in disgust – 100 WPs for keeping the crowd laughing in the aisles – Bee'n Hurley wants one of these cats for his act.

With this weird battle now over, go to <330> for the next head to head collision.

<336> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the Hovering Horror (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

1 – *Know Your Foe* – Sunnyman tells Otto exactly how tough his opponent is. 'Gee, thanks,' Otto replies, clearly underwhelmed. 'Would have been nice if you'd slowed it or confused it but no, you want to write its biography for me!'
The Horror wiggles its antennae and raises the barb before sending a blast at the wizard – L5 SR on SPD to step aside or Sunnyman takes 6d6 damage; all too

Sample file

fraught for the brave Otto and after a torrid time dodging the Hovering Horror's barb, he sheathes his rapier and SAM steps in; no WPs awarded unless Sunnyman got zapped, in which case 50 for entertaining the crowd with his collapse
2 – *Spirit Mastery* – this would make for a dull battle (I suppose Sunnyman might make the Horror perform tricks) but the downside of this is the touching part…he gets stung from here to kingdom come and is out of the wooing race; Otto is stunned, sheathes his rapier and waits for SAM to get him out of there
3 – *Befuddle* – a very confused Horror barely responds to Otto's prods and jabs; not much fun for the crowd either – no WPs awarded
4 – *Dum Dum* – let's say a one in six chance of this most perfidious of spells backfiring…a roll of 1 on 1d6; otherwise it's as in Befuddle above; if Sunnyman stupefies himself he is helped back to self-governance but loses 200 WPs for the indignity
5 – *Freeze Pleeze* – roll for the damage done – the Horror has a CON of 120; if it is killed no WPs are awarded, otherwise this will se Otto through to victory – 100 WPs
6 – *Mind Po…* – as in Befuddle; Sunnyman's determination to deprive the Hovering Horror of its free will is not good sport so no WPs

Sample file

With team sorted, go to <331> for the penultimate rumble in the arena.

<337> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the Snomad (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

1 – *Take That You Fiend* –The Snomad has a MR of 200: roll 1d6 to see what level the Wood Wizard casts the spell at – if the Snomad takes damage enough to halve its savagery then Otto will win the fight and 100 WPs

will be awarded; less damage and Otto will have to call upon the services of SAM – 50 WPs only; if the Snomad is slain by the *TTYF* then no WPs are given and the crowd jeer nastily

Sample file


Sample file

2 – *Little Feets* – this old faithful will allow Otto to get the job done – 100 WPs
3 – *Smog* – roll 1d6: odds and the Snomad is groggy and Otto has a big enough advantage to triumph (100 WPs), evens and there is little effect and the Snomad

just gets whiter and madder – SAM is prevailed upon and just 50 WPs are given
4 – *Trollgod's Blessing* – the Wood Wizard is on quite intimate terms with the Trollgod and a very big club strikes the Snomad; it wanders about groggily while Otto delights in tripping it up to stoke its already volcanic rage; the Snomad ends up pounding such a hole in the arena floor that Otto is able to bury it and that is that for the Snomad – the crowd have never seen a monster buried alive before and they love it! – 150 well earned WPs are given and a repeat booking is made by the Nesstlehaven Events Master
5 – *Zappathingum* – this is a big help to Otto and he puts on a splendid show, riling the Snomad until it bursts a blood vessel in its tiny little mind and keels over, breaking its unpleasantly snotty nose – 200 WPs are awarded and there is a standing ovation and a request for this team to come back soon
6 – *Shield Me* – clearly rattled, the Wood Wizard does nothing to aid Otto and SAM is hastily press ganged into service – negative 100 WPs!

With the Wood Wizard and Otto done, go to <332> for your big chance to shine in the candlelight.

<338> This paragraph covers the outcome of spells against the giant green hornet (remember the INT SR at the level of the spell):

1 – *Double Double* – what did you double? – Otto's dexterity or his strength maybe? – at any rate, good call; he gets the job done in double time and your haul is 100 WPs
2 – *Unerring Blade* – surely you jest? – spite damage is not much of an advantage against this stunning stinger! – SAM is needed quickly and you get no WPs
3 – *Firestorm of Protest* – ok…so Otto and the hornet are very crabby and while he wags a finger petulantly

Sample file

at it, the hornet waves its tail querulously! – there is a bit of fun in this for the crowd so 50 WPs but the bout is called off by the Arena Master
4 – *Devoted Rain Cloud* – cunning, very cunning! – with wet wings, the hornet flounders hopelessly and Otto has a field day; nice one – 150 WPs
5 – *Oh Go Away* – the hornet has a MR of 180 – are you a target or does it flee? – no WPS for the latter but if you have to battle it and survive you will get 200 WPs providing that you leave the killing blow to Otto – you will need a L5 SR on DEX to dodge its maddened attack of a L4 SR on SPD to get off a second spell before it has you in its sights
6 – *That's A Natty Beard* – interesting and worth 50 WPs for raising a titter – Bee'n Hurley likes it but SAM has to intervene before very long.

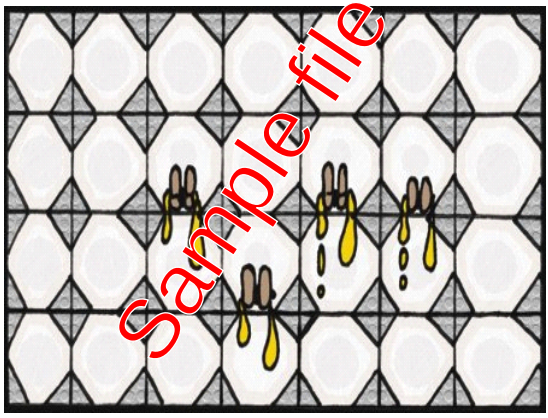
The show can go on no longer so go to <339> for a debriefing with Melittida (sounds promising for the amorously inclined).

Sample file



<339> The dressing room is hushed as the queen makes her entrance, delighted with anyone who saw Otto through to victory. Nesstlehaven is not so far from Phantog and taking part with style and effect in this ritual of bravado will help secure the privacy rights of the Manukans in the bye-laws of these parts for a new fifty year period unless anything happens to offend Ludvig in tomorrow's negotiations.

Her thoughts turning to the forthcoming nuptials, Melittida decides that she will take a bedfellow tonight. Whoever scored most heavily in the arena gets this opening presented on a plate. Go to <340>.



<340> The recipient of this token of her favour has the chance to nail his success to the bedpost or go down without all guns blazing. A L5 SR on the average of CHR and CON is the order of the night – make and all is blissful (150 more WPs); fail and damp squibs limp lettuces are more in keeping (negative 150 WPs). Now go to <341>.

<341> Breakfast is probably needed one way or another and it is now the Manukans offer a case of their fabled honey to their grateful hosts. Make a L3 SR on INT: if you succeed, you might notice that Chancellor Brandt separates out six jars from the crate and sends them off in the direction of his quarters, the naughty fellow. Still, you wouldn't tell, would you? If you would, go to <345> otherwise go to <342>.

<342> The honey has wondrous medicinal properties and Ludvig has been taking it with toast every morning now for twelve years – many say it has slowed the ageing process visibly. It is the honey and its supply that is the key to the renewal of the privacy treaty.

Before entering the atrium, you are reminded about the need to clasp your hands behind your back while in the Baron's presence. As uniformed flunkies take you inside the marbled atrium, Ludvig stands ready to hear Melittida's entreaty, flanked by Otto, no worse for wear after last night's dust-ups, and Brandt, confident and poised in his exalted status. Once Melittida has finished her rhetoric, it is Brandt who interjects before Ludvig's nod of agreement gets close to halfway.

Sample file

'My Baron, I know full well it is an accepted norm that these jars of honey compensate us for our preservation of the isolation of these good bee-folk but these are troubled times. We would be best served knowing that their armed forces stood at the ready outside the edges of accursed Phantog, ready to fight with our militia against these ever more frequent goblin incursions. The hetmen in the villages of your Barony already mutter that we do little to safeguard them – it would behove you well to extract more than honey if your son is to have a baronial seat to inherit.'

Ludvig seems nonplussed: whether it is because he fears his Chancellor has crossed a Rubicon with his guests or whether it is that he is just too doddery to be decisive, there is no time to find out.

Without giving him time for contemplation, Melittida jabs a finger at each of her suitors. 'What would you have us do?' she demands curtly. 'Let me hear the wisdom of my future husband!' Each wooing wizard is given a wax tablet to scribe his counsel upon. You must write down either 'Aye' or 'Nay' to indicate if you would do as Chancellor Brandt demands.

Go to <344>.

<343> Who gets to kiss the ring of Ness? There's something to make sure you are doing first…write it down and go to <351> (if it is a rival who has this chance, make a L4 SR on INT for this wizard).

<344> There is a greater chance that your rivals' advice will be to support Nesstlehaven against the goblin menace and to station Manukan troops along the perimeter of Chantog. Roll 2d6 for each wizard with 5 or 6 meaning they lean against following the Chancellor's wishes. Go to <348>.

<345> Have you remembered something? Write any action you take down and go to <350>.

<346> It is a sorry sight, you troubling Ludvig as he pays his respects at his father's grave, his custom every morning before breakfast. He sighs and thanks you, before dismissing you sadly. You have placed additional weight on his stooping shoulders.

Sample file

You may take 50 APs but perhaps you should consider a job as a professional snitch when you are finished with this pursuit of a bride. Now go to <342>.

<347> Baron Ludvig glances across to his son, who inclines his head ever so slightly. 'I respect your choice and understand your strategy, Queen Melittida. We must not expect you to fight our battles. Your friendship is boon enough. Otto, you will retire from the Arena and give your time to leading patrols from village to village, letting all people know that Nesstlehaven is their protector. Deal firmly but fairly with all goblin troubles. Now we must thank our visitors and sign anew the treaty that is most natural. Bring me the Pen of State!'

A fanciful and feathery quill is fetched by the servants and the treaty is signed and sealed. Ludvig offers his ring, the Ring of Ness to Melittida to kiss and she does not hold back. The air is tinged with khremm as this family heirloom bestows some blessing on the grateful queen.

Sample file

The ring is offered to one other – whichever of you wooing wizards who makes the highest combined level saving roll on LK and CHR. Roll those cubes and go to <343>.

<348> What does the majority suggest? Although she was quick to discover your thoughts, this queen will not abdicate her ambassadorial authority. She knows how sacred Manukan secrecy is to her people and so she flatly denies the Chancellor's request, not waiting to hear if Ludvig will concur.

If you advised against posting militia on the outskirts of Phantog's steamy expanses you gain credibility –

take 75 WPs, as do other wizards in accord with their intended. No go to <347>.

Sample file

<349> This time the destination is the mountain home of the western dwarves. Bee'n Hurley promises Melittida that he will not make any jokes about size really mattering, being vertically challenged or anything of that nature and sighs despondently. Oh well, those old jokes will be a little less stale when he gets back to Apys.

Now go to <352>.

<350> Did you remember to clasp your hands behind your back? If you did, congratulations! You can go to <346>.

If you failed to observe this custom, you have transgressed and you are punished. Guards grab you (no! don't even think of resisting or casting a spell!) and you are held in custody until Melittida is ready to leave. Lose 200 WPs and go to <349>.

Sample file



<351> Did you remember to clasp your hands behind your back? If you did, congratulations! You get to kiss the ring (or maybe it was another wizard IF he made the INT SR).

Kissing the Ring of Ness renders you immune to all Trollworld poisons. If your hands were clasped and you kissed the ring, you gain 100 WPs (if your hands

were not clasped, you lose face – and 50 WPs – and the opportunity goes begging).

Sample file

Although Baron Ludvig offers an escorted tour of Nesstlehaven and its environs, Melittida declines with full honour as time is marching on. Bee'n Hurley gathers the ambassadorial team into a line to bow and give praise and then the group huddles together to be teleported to… go to <349>.

<352> The dwarven kingdom on the northern coast of the body of the Kraken is remote and rarely visited, just like its easterly counterpart, Baroo Khazad, in the Dragon Roosts. You will not have to glimpse Finroch Glaum as a distant vista though – this time you will walk amongst the industrious people of the Stoneduke, Kalid Zest.

Sample file

You and your companions are deposited on a windswept plateau atop a mountain amidst mountains, this one the tallest peak, affording views out over the ocean to the north and to the central plains to the south, with nothing but more mountains to the east and west.. The plateau is unremarkable and there is nothing to show signs of the life and times of the dwarves.

This place is kept clear with great diligence and foresight born of past strife; it is the only easy means of access to Finroch Glaum and any approach would be detected by the dwarf watchmen long before the city would be under threat.



Sample file

Within minutes of your arrival, a platoon of heavily armoured dwarven warriors emerges from the rock itself and marches purposefully towards you. The leader hails you with a single blast of a hunting horn and the Manukans, Melittida not excepted, prostrate themselves and wait for the dwarves to stand before them. Bee'n hisses that you should follow suit but Ragnarok and Sunnyman are not inclined to bow before dwarves: make a L1 SR on INT for both of them – if either fails, they are excluded from this visit and must wait with two Manukans on this barren, forsaken plateau.

Go to <353>.

<353> The leader of the dwarves, one of the thirteen warlords that make up the Military Council along with the Stoneduke, passes out rainbow hued candles to each of the wooing wizards. 'We were warned of your coming,' the squat, muscular, gimlet-eyed warrior grunts. 'Take a thunderstick and charge it with khremm; when you have filled, hurl it to the heavens and we shall see what you are made of! We have need of wizardly services and we would test thy mettle before we loose you on the work required.' The thundersticks are about a good 2' in length and as thick as your arm. Melittida and her ambassadorial team step back to leave you mages to your business. They watch impassively with arms folded. Make the best saving roll you can on WIZ as you concentrate on priming the flare; do the same for the other wooers and then go to <354>.

Sample file

<354> Now make the best saving roll you can on STR; do this, too, for the others and go to <355>.

<355> Did you get the thunder rumbling and the lightning streaking across the Khaghtch'an skies? Did flashes of colour burst all over dwarfdom, did a cacophony of eardrum-splitting intensity explode across the mountain range?

Double the level of the WIZ SR and multiply by the STR SR level made – algebraically, that is (2WIZ) STR = X, with X being the power and range of the thunderstick's acoustics and photonic display. Rank the chuckers in order, with the top dog getting 250 WPs, down to zero for last place. You can split any ties pro rata.

I suspect that Warlord Hygram has been impressed by the virtuosity of Melittida's suitors. Now go to <356>.

<356> Linking arms with the party from Apys, the dwarves descend with you in tow through the rock bottom of the plateau. Everything goes grey and you feel all feel nausea wash over you. Make a L1 SR on CON for all the wizards – failure indicates a bout of vomiting which brings the loss of 50 WPs and a stiff laundry bill.

All things must pass and this sensation is no exception: your vision clears and your stomach settles and you stand in what clearly is an infirmary. Go to <357>.

<357> Hygram shrugs as he casts his eyes over the casualties being ministered to by servile kobolds overseen by impressive woman, clearly a warrior of some distinction and definitely a human and not a dwarf.

Sample file



‘We have been mining for new purposes of late and we ran into … ahem, ‘difficulties’. Our wizards do not have healing magic – it is beneath their dignity and dwarves seldom require physicians, a word we have borrowed from the human tongue. Over fifty of our best miners were sorely hurt when we encountered these ‘difficulties’.

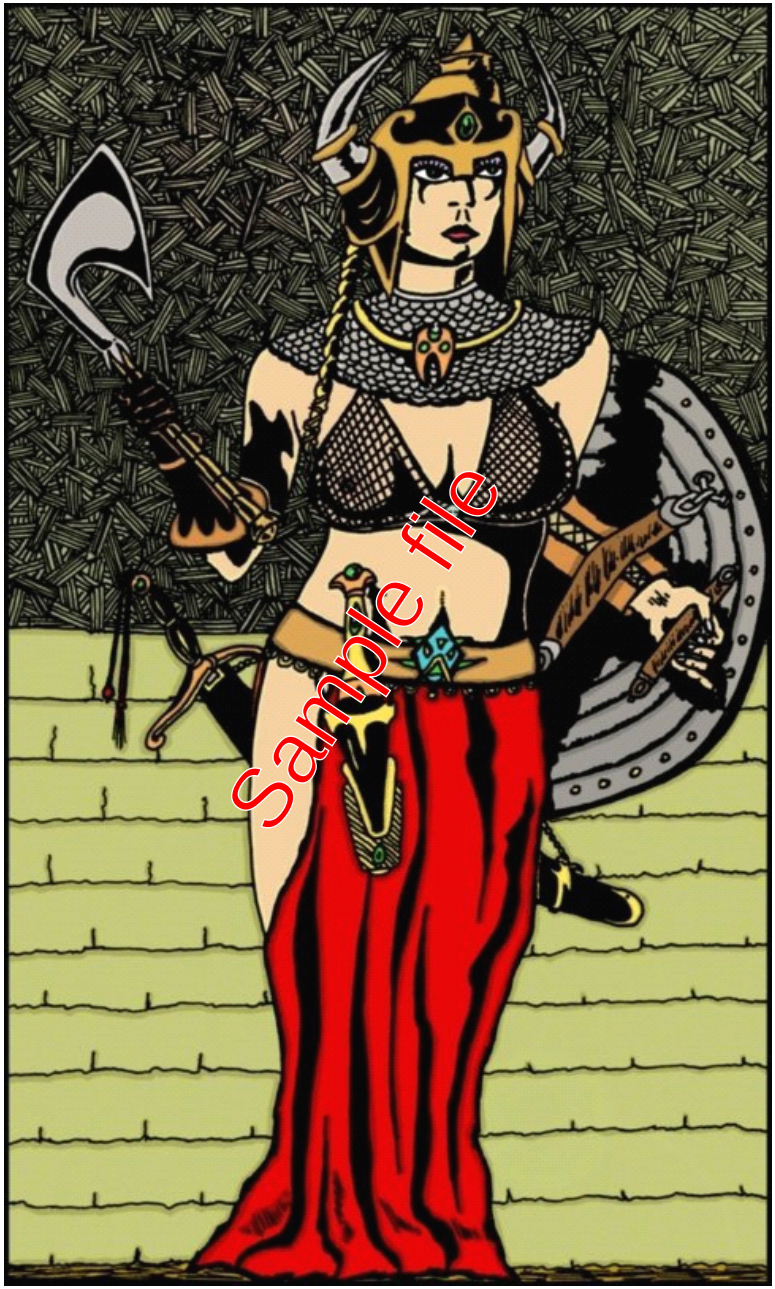


Sample file

These kobolds give them some comfort, it is true, overseen by their mistress, our ally, Hypollyta, but it is not much and they deteriorate before our eyes. They have been afflicted by wounds that have admitted poison and disease. What is more these injuries are accursed! We will be well disposed towards this Manukan embassy if you can save our miners. There is still much work to be done and they represent our deep delving Brains Trust. Please – and that is not a word I offer lightly or often – save them!’

With that, he accepts a hand of solace from Hypollyta on his broad shoulder and subsides into a sloth of depression. Melittida looks to you wooing wizards expectantly –there is much to be gained for Apys’ cause from the misfortune of these dwarves of Finroch Glaum.

Go to <358>.


Sample file

<358> If you do not know Too Bad Toxin, Poor Baby, Healing Feeling or Curses Foiled Melittida will have one of the other wizards teach you – probably not necessary. In turn, the wizards must try to cure one of the miners by removing the curse, neutralising the poison, killing the infection and closing the wound. This means four saving rolls without a critical fumble. If you or anyone else throws the dreaded 1, 2 combination, the patient dies.

There are eight patients for each wizard – you gain 30 WPs each miner you put right but lose 50 if one dies through your negligence. When the doctoring is done, go to <359>.

<359> With gruff dwarven gratitude for lives saved expressed by a fist thumped squarely in the middle of each wizard's back (roll 1d6: 1-3 = 1 point CON damage, 4-6 = 2), Hygram escorts you through spiralling tunnels cut aeons ago into the Trollworld rock, whistling a catchy tune as he goes, breaking offing from time to time to add the refrain 'Heigh Ho, Let's Go' under his rasping breath. It is also quite apparent that he is a garlic lover.

Sample file

These tunnels are cut for dwarves and you all have a bit of stooping to do, especially Ragnarok (who needs to make a L1 SR on LK not to suffer 1d6 attritional scalp damage). As you continue to descend, you cannot help but feel that the air is getting warmer. Hygram again? No, the source of the heat is the rock itself.



Sample file

As the curving tunnel begins to straighten and flatten out, and as Hanzalf confesses that he has lost track of the number of doors you have passed, you hear the sound of pick axes and hammers. Someone is being very busy! Go to <360>.

<360> Hygram clears his throat and coughs. You may all be coughing – there is a good deal of rock dust in the air now and your windpipes could clog up so the resourceful Bee'n Hurley hands out handkerchiefs to everyone (time for a quick L1 SR on LK for you lest you received an unpleasantly used rag).

The warlord's cough does not seem to be very penetrative or to rack up high decibels but it has an immediate effect – the banging stops. A thickset – even by the broad standards of his kindred – dwarf steps out of the clouds of dust and stands hands on hips before you. He takes a hip flask from his belt and swigs deeply before sweeping his mining goggles from his eyes and wiping the grime from his cheeks.

Before he can speak, Melittida rushes forward and clasps him a fierce embrace which he returns with back-breaking gusto. This, you learn from the whispering Bee'n, is Kalid Zest, the Stoneduke himself. Go to <361>.

<361> 'Well come, indeed, Melly, my little philly!' he guffaws with obvious pleasure. 'Why, you're all grown up now! No more bouncing you on my knee, that's for certain. I suppose you're ready for that bottle of Porttree port I put away for you when I first heard your egg had been fertilised. No more work for us today, boys! I'm drinking the vintage stuff with Melly tonight. Why, it's beer o'clock now anyway!'

Sample file

The Stoneduke is in a naturally good humour because he is doing what he loves best, carving tunnels in rock, and this mood of goodwill to dwarves is heightened by the appearance of his favourite Stonedaughter. Of course, there is no question of paternity here but the Manukan custom has been to appoint as marks of honour an 'Honour Father' and an 'Honour Mother' to each successive Ambassadorial Queen and Kalid Zest holds this mark of respect close to his heart, as a pinnacle of pride for his kindred.

‘Would you permit these wizards to join us in our cups, dear Kalid?’ the queen asks. ‘I am flattered! They all wish to woo me and I fear I have allowed my work to get in the way of courtship.

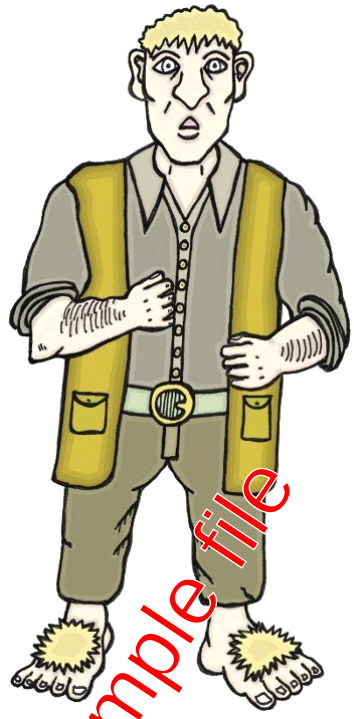
One of them will become as family to you, Kalid – it would be good for you to get to know my future consort, as our meetings are all too seldom. I would value your opinion of these suitors of mine.’

The Stoneduke nods. ‘Perhaps we will find something else for them to drink though – that port is destined for just two throats to warm!’ With that he puts an arm about ‘Melly’s’ waspish waist and the pair walk off in an ungainly fashion, their legs not at all suited to such partnership, until they disappear through a door embossed with a pair of upturned unicorn horns, Bee’n and Hygram link arms and beckon you to follow them after the leading lights. Go to <362>.

Sample file

<362> The Unicorns’ Horns is an exclusive watering hole here deep in the rock that is all about you. This dwarven society is strictly hierarchical and feudal. The thirteen warlords who form Council with the Stoneduke and the seven wizards of his Fist of Magic, the Septem, are members, along with their extended families, but that is all. Guests get signed in and Hygram does more writing than he has had to do in a decade as he records the names of the entire entourage from Apys, along with Hypollyta.

What’s your poison? There is an extensive range of expensive ways to induce an alcoholic coma, as the barman, a canny hobb from the west named Bibby, lists for you.



Sample file

‘This is the finest wine ever produced in Porttree and this is even better – from Nesstlehaven, don’t you know?’ It is not really a question. ‘We have dwarven syrahs made here under the mountains, the grapes trampled by over one hundred different feet – very heavy and rich in tannins and trace elements – fragrant pinot gris from the elven forests, if you’re a bit of a nancy, and ruby and tawny ports bottled by canny hobbs (ok, I admit it, they come from my family’s estates). There are fairy desert wines of succulent gustatory pleasures and dragon chartreuse, the like of which will never be seen again. And if that’s not enough to wet your whistle and tickle your fancy, why, the centaur calvados is sublime!’

What about the beer, did you say? You can't have a pub without beer! We have the best ogre ale, stout made with shamrock hops by leprechauns and uruk bitter that makes your eyes water with wonder. You may get to try all these luxury libations if you have the head for a long, wet night – and if your liver holds out!'

The hobb no sooner finishes than he has to begin pouring wines and pulling pints. You have time to get your drinking boots on a decide where to start. Maybe spin a bottle? Go to <363>.

<363> Sunnyman takes the lead here (I will just add, for the last time, that if a wooing rival I mention has departed the scene, you must substitute another) and with a show of bravado asks for ogre ale all round. Bibby looks impressed (or maybe, he has a malicious sense of humour). Will you down a glass of ogre ale with the others or will you decline? Maybe you will be sneaky and just pretend to drink? The paragraphs to go to in the order of the choices above are: <366>, <367> or <368>.

Sample file

<364> How many rounds did you stay in for? The alcohol consumption determines your immediate fate.

1-2 rounds – go to <371>
3-6 rounds – go to <372>
7-9 rounds – go to <373>
10 or more – go to <369>

<365> You may keep going, either drinking, sitting a round out or pretending to drink but tipping it into one of the dragon's foot spittoons that are set beside each table. You go to <366> for drinking, <367> for turning the alcohol down and <368> if you just make a show of drinking. The aim is to get through as many rounds as you can. One failure is ok but two means that you

must go to <370>. The important thing is to tally up the number of rounds you got through.

Sample file

<366> You do not need to do this for the other wizards, just you. The number of drinks you have taken but not drunk indicates the level of the saving roll you need to make on both INT and CON. Now go to <365>.

<367> You do not need to do this for the other wizards, just you. The number of rounds you have sat out indicates the level of the saving roll you need to make on both LK and CHR. Now go to <365>.

<368> You do not need to do this for the other wizards, just you. The number of drinks you have downed indicates the level of the saving roll you need to make on both INT and LK. Now go to <365>.

<369> I'm not sure if you really drank that much but, whatever, you are there for the last knockings when the Stoneduke and Melittida punish the port and throw their glasses starboard to smash against a bust of Kalid's challenger next year in the three-yearly challenges he has to undertake and succeed in to remain Stoneduke (the challenger has a false beard attached and he looks decidedly seedy with his facial fuzz laced with shards of glass and drips of wine).

Sample file

Kalid Zest tosses you a cannonball of no insignificant weight. 'Here, take a shy at Budzoor – if you can knock his nose off, you'll get my vote for the bridegroom-to-be'e!' Make a L2 SR on STR to catch the lead ball and a L3 SR on DEX to be bang on target with the nostril-wrecker shot. Make both and you gain the Stoneduke's personal recommendation and gain 500 WPs; miss and you still get 300 WPs for digging in until Bibby closes up for the night.

Now go to <374>.

<370> Hic! Feeling merry or did they drink you under the table? Kalid Zest is known as 'Lager Legs' in the Unicorns' Horns and you will not out drink him. That does not matter though. What does is whether or not you are judged as able to hold your drink or to be a lightweight. The Wood Wizard has stuck to the fairy desert wines while Catweezil has drowned his sorrows in dragon chartreuse, more fool him and Ragnarok has attempted to prove you don't have to be one of the Little Folk to drink a yard of the shamrock stout.

Time to go to <364> for the breathalyser test.

<371> Was it the Shoggoth Shandy that did for you? Not one of the lads, clearly, Kalid Zest suggests to Melittida that you are unlikely to be the life and soul of the party and that a wooden chair might make a better partner. You are docked 100 WPs.

Now go to <374>.

<372> Sticking to the uruk ale was a bold but brainless strategy. The Stonedlike is concerned that the newly laid sawdust on the Horns' floor might not be absorbent enough for what you are about to do.

Make a L1 SR on CON and SPD. If you make them, you get to the porcelain in time and gain 50 WPs for a master's degree of self-control; if you fail one roll, you redecorate the tavern and lose 50 WPs; if you fail both, you evacuate your stomach's overflowing load all over Melittida and lose all your WPs.

Now go to <374>.

<373> Kalid Zest sits with you for a round or two and finds you amusing and congenial company. He puts in a good word for you with the queen – take 200 WPs

Sample file

(mind you, by now he'd put in a good word for anyone who refills his glass with the cellarer's best syrah).

Sample file

Now go to <374>.

<374> We had better see how the rest of the gang fared. If you are a fan of rolling dice and think all should be fair in love and ale, roll away for the others one by one (it is possible that Kalid Zest recommends more than one of you to Melittida as he can, like most of us, be forgetful when he's had a skin full); otherwise roll 2d6 (no DARO) for each contender and proceed as follows:

2-3 – lose 50 WPs
4-6 – gain 50 WPs
7-9 – gain 100 WPs
10-11 – gain 200 WPs
12 – gain 300 WPs

Now go to <375>.

Sample file

<375> The hour is growing late; in fact, you are well past the twilight zone and into the wee hours, when nothing would normally be stirring, not even a mouse, a time when all good creatures are tucked up snugly in bed. There are exceptions to all rules (or, at least, there really should be) and this reunion of Honour Father and Daughter is certainly a case in point. Or a case and a pint perhaps.

Maybe binge drinking shouldn't be an ambassadorial prerequisite but here beneath the mountains of the dwarven folk it absolute-ly is. Tongues get lubricated and trust flows along with the beer, as spirits soar. The added fact that Bee'n is doing his 'I'm a Teapot' routine guarantees a prevailing air of glasnost.



Kalid Zest tells you of his plans to add to the underground rivers of the Kraken continent with a network of canals reaching all friendly and lucrative

locations and to make a killing with toll charges for making the subterranean trade routes much safer than the land alternatives.



He let's slip that they have Apys on their planning sheet and you all see Melittida's eyes sober and her jaw set. That would be terrible!

Do you want to try to talk the Stoneduke out of this one port of call? If so, go to <378>; if you prefer not to attempt this feat of inebriated diplomacy, go to <379>.

<376> There are six spells to be learned. You must make a L3 SR on INT to learn each dwarven spell. The key spell to learn is the last one. You should attempt to

master each magical enchantment but you need only roll for '*Can You Dig It*?' for your rivals. When you have completed this intense educational experience go to <381>.

1 - Spell - *Hammer Blow* Effect- Enchants blunt weapon to shatter metal, stone and other brittle solids
Range – Touch Duration - 1 combat turn
Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 8

2 - Spell - *Pulverise* Effect- Enchants blunt weapon to crush stone and similar solids to powder or fragments
Range - Touch Duration - 1 combat turn
Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 8

Sample file



3 - Spell - *Stonewall* Effect- Erects stone wall in front of caster up to twice casters height and three times arm span, taking 6d6 hits Range - 20' Duration - 1 turn Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 10

4 - Spell - *Rock On* Effect- Enables caster or other being to keep going under extreme conditions – doesn't restore CON but SRs are based on full

attributes not reduced ones Range - Touch Duration - 1 hour Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 15

5 - Spell - *Boulderly Go* Effect- Enables caster to hurl a boulder unerringly at a target – generates STR x level hits Range - 50' Duration - 1 combat round Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 12


Sample file

6 - Spell - *Can You Dig It?* Effect- Caster is able to dig out a tunnel through earth or rock with bare hands – tunnel is 50' per level Range – Touch Duration - 5 minutes Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 15

<377> The next morning does not dawn happily for the heavier drinkers amongst Kalid's set. That accounts for most of his warlords but not the wizards' council,

the Septem, who long ago mastered the drinkers' spell, 'Hair of the Dog'. Hypollyta seems limber and light too as she knocks to wake you and has you all break bread with her in the Marble Refectory, a tasteful dining suite provided that you are charmed by busts of all the past Stonedukes staring wide-eyed at you as you eat.

Sample file

The custom is for the sculptor to capture their likeness at the moment they lose a three-yearly challenge, thus ending their reign. Evidently, no Stoneduke enjoys losing a challenge, probably, as you learn from Hypollyta, because with defeat comes a one-way ticket into the heart of Mount Magma, as no new Stoneduke wants a bitter has-been hanging around, criticising, interfering and stirring up insurrection.

As you munch on fungus hocks and moss muffins, the warrior woman tells you that Melittida has decreed that you will work with the dwarves on tunnel digging today. She concedes that this is not really wizard work but reassures you that the Septem will teach you a clutch of dwarven spells and that if you manage to pick them up then you will be natural navvies and the blisters will be bearable.

With the night's fast shattered beyond repair, she takes you to the ethereal chamber of the Septem. You find that after this repast, all wounds are healed and you may also spend APs. Now go to <380>.

<378> Melittida watches with avid interest as you whisper into the Stoneduke's ear. He snorts and snores a little, then jerks his head in your direction. Hs steely grey eyes bore into yours as you practice your persuasive oratory. Let us hope it is not like trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear when Kalid Zest is so deep in his cups.

You must make a L6 SR on CHR. If you succeed, he will listen to reason and abandon that particular canal route (Melittida always gets her way with him so it isn't going to get dug regardless of your rhetoric). You impress the queen so much for promoting the Manukan cause even when you're three sheets to the

Sample file

wind that you trawl up 500 WPs if you got the Stoneduke to see things your way and 300 even if you words were as pearls cast to swine.

Now go to <377>.

<379> Roll 1d6 to see if any of the other suitors will strive to achieve what is so dear to the intended's heart – the preservation of the privacy of Fortress Phantog, namely Apys. There were five other suitors to begin with so we shall say that a roll of 6 means no one is up for it (if anyone has bee jettisoned along the way then 5 will also mean that the wooers don't dare disturb the machinations of Kalid Zest and has canal-digging dwarves).

Let us suppose some ardent admirer does take the bull by the horns (an apt metaphor in such a place, you will agree): that wizard must make a L6 SR on CHR to replot the course of history in the making. That's 300 WPs for trying and 500 for success!

Sample file

The plain, unvarnished truth is that Melittida can wrap the Stoneduke around her little finger so it ain't going to happen anyway but the queen will warm inside and out to anyone flying the flag for Manukan rights. Now go to <377>.

<380> As you wind your way through spiralling, mazy corridors of gleaming black rock, footfall echoing eerily, at last Hypollyta stops before a massive rusty iron door. She knocks once with the full force of her fist and then turns on her heel and leaves you. Before you can think of calling to her, a deep voice booms 'Enter!' as the door swings open inwards.

Your eyes take in a domed chamber of polished obsidian walls, floor and ceiling with seven thrones set

in a circle in the centre, ringing a 10' deep circular pit. The chamber is illuminated scarcely by the light of countless glow worms. Seated are the Septem, seven ancient dwarven wizards, each wearing a robe of fathomless colour: purple, white, red, blue, yellow, green and orange. It is the wizard who wears the purple who speaks. He is the leader of the Septem.

'Descend, ye mortal wizards, and seat yourselves for the Learning Time. Still your minds and focus for you shall have one chance to learn the enchantments we teach our novices as they seek to earn a place one day amidst the Septem.'


Sample file

You see that there are steps leading down into the well beneath the ringed Septem. As you slowly make the descent, the dwarves begin a long, slow, deep droning chant and your mind becomes hazy. Go to <376>.

<381> Phew! Those wizards don't suffer fools gladly! That must have felt like being back in school again. Hope you didn't end up sat in the corner with the dunce's hat firmly upon your head. The wizard in

purple, his headmaster's stint done for the day, ushers you out again where Bee'n Hurley is waiting for you.

'It's alright for you lot,' he moans. 'You get to learn the digging spell because you're all teachers' pets! Me, I just get a pick axe! Life's not fair!' You see the tears of a clown streaming down his cheeks, making his stage paint run.

Wheezing unhappily, he stomps off in a huff until he opens another door and you see it leads to a kitting out room. 'OK,' the jester sighs, 'If you didn't learn that digging spell you can have a pick axe too. Everyone gets a hard helmet, a glowstone and a canary in a cage. The canaries are for detecting gas and, let me tell you, dwarves are a very gassy bunch.'

Sample file

When you have the allotted equipment, he turns to open a cupboard on a wall about chest high against him. 'One last thing,' he informs you. 'All dwarven miners have beards and they aren't run of the mill beards either. You'd better put one of these false beards on each so you look the part and don't offend anyone.'

Bee'n begins handing out the variously coloured strap on chin pieces to the cries of indignation from your fellow wizards. Catweezil refuses, which sets Bee'n off tutting his disapproval and muttering 'Don't say I didn't warn you's'. You can put your beard on like Hanzalf, Sunnyman, Ragnarok and the Wood Wizard or join in with Catweezil's quiet riot.

When you decided whether to be beardless or not, go to <384>.

<382> You quickly reach a multi-tunnelled crossways. There are as many as thirteen passages leading off

from this assembly point for mining missions. It is here that your party goes its separate ways. The dwarves have only just plotted and calculated out their canal routes to their chosen destinations and so you will each be striking out through virgin rock.

Sample file

Now it's time for burrowing through the basalt and hopefully not through to the brimstone. If you don't know 'Can You Dig It?' you're probably stuffed. You can, with pick axe in hand, dig 1' for every level of STR SR you make and then you can try again at the next level up and so on until you fail (so, if you make a L6 SR on STR you will have dug a tunnel of 6' and then you can try a L7 SR, etc). If you do know the spell, you don't even need the pick axe. Remember, you can dig 50' per level so that's bound to be 350' – that's some tunnel! Once the spell runs out, you can do the STR SR thing to go that extra mile (well, inches really, but it would spoil the maxim).

Once done with you digging, the dwarves will come to inspect the work. Make the best SR you can on DEX – that will show the craftsmanship of your work. You will need to get a distance and DEX reading for all wooers.

Now go to <383>.

Sample file

<383> The dwarves want these canals dug because to them more trade means more gold. The Stoneduke has a challenge to face soon but, win or lose, wants to leave a legacy. His assessment of the wooers' prowess weighs heavily with his Honour-Daughter, Melittida.

If you dug less than 10', you get no WPS and the dwarves look at you as if you are less than a worm;

if you dug at least 10' but less than 350', you get 10 WPs times the level of your DEX SR and the dwarves regard you as too much of a perfectionist and not enough of a do-er for your won good;

if you dug between 350' and 359', they are prepared to shrink you to a proper height, fuse a beard of

distinction on to your chin and let you convert to dwarfism – you get 50 WPs times the level of your DEX SR;

Sample file

if you dug out more than 360' of tunnel, you are awarded a Pentatonic Pick Axe (a deluxe magical staff, with 50 + 2d6 (DARO) WIZ points stored which refresh themselves at a rate of 1 per minute – it knows all the spells you know and gets your level d6 in combat, as well as being 'approved' by the Wizards' Guild) and you scoop 100 WPs times the level of your DEX SR.

On you go to <384>.



Sample file

<384> As you march out together down passages that become increasingly rough, you reach a lift shaft where a squat, eye-patched dwarf regards you with disbelief. 'You think we're funny, do you!' he fumes, as he rips the false beard off the nearest wizard to prove what he suspects and is all too obvious. Before he has finished haranguing you all on the mockery you are making of dwarven fashion, Melittida appears with another dwarf in tow. This, you soon learn, is Kalid Zest's challenger for the title of Stoneduke. Tall by dwarven standards and with a face that would sink a thousand ships, Budzoor Wortburger is still smarting from tales of the nose being knocked off his bust in the Unicorns' Horns last night.



Sample file

It takes all of Melittida's phenomenal powers of diplomacy to calm the warlord down. All wizards wearing fake chin wigs drop 100 WPs. As Melitidda goes down the shaft with Budzoor, Bee'n howls with laughter at the gag he has pulled off. 'Don't be'e mad,' he roars, 'just get even.' Down you go, into the depths of the mountain to get down and dirty with the digging, delving dwarves.

Go to <382>.

<385> Overall, Kalid Zest has been favourably impressed by the wooing wizards. Melittida is well satisfied because there is written agreement that these canals will not come within 100 miles of Phantog. It is

almost time to move on but before you teleport to the fulcrum Khaghtch'an city of Khaboom, you are invited to take part in the dwarven mine dances.

Sample file

These dwarves love dancing and there might be an opportunity for a bit of canoodling with Melittida, although Kalid makes for an eagle-eyed chaperon. There are three practised forms of dancing that these mountain dwarves love and you may try your luck at any one of them or go with your own choreography, whether ad libbing or moving to a well-known style. If you would like to dance the manic mushroom go to <387>, if you would like to do the destrukto-stomp go to <388>, if you want to take a shot at the 'swing your partner by the beard' country honk go to <389> but if you would like to show these dwarves something special outside their comfort zone go to <390>.

<386> Pentagram Square is, as its name suggests, a square but this square is contained within a pentagram, at the points of which are located the five most powerful, most venerable guilds of the city. These are the Maritime Guild, the Wizards' Guild, the Orators' Guild, the Merchants' Guild and the Forgemasters' Guild. In turn, they are said to represent water, spirit, air, earth and fire, the five elements.
You are aware of brass instruments playing loudly all about you. You can try to adjust your ears to this discord – go to <391> – or you can stick your fingers in your ears – go to <394>.

Sample file

<387> The manic mushroom takes stamina and speed. Make the best SR you can on the average of CON and SPD – you get the level times 1d6 as a WP bonus. You can go to and try another dance if you want (at <388>, <389> or <390>) but when you have danced yourself dizzy, worn holes in your socks and blistered your very sole go to <392>.

<388> The destrukto-stomp takes strength and flat feet to make a real impact. Make the best SR you can on

the average of STR and LK (well, who knows how flat your feet happen to be?) – you get the level times 1d6 as a WP bonus. You can go to and try another dance if you want (at <387>, <389> or <390>) but when you have danced your legs down to little stumps go to <392>.

Sample file

<389> The country honk takes dexterity and deep-rooted beard hair follicles be swung, which is more important than mere swinging. Make the best SR you can on the average of DEX and LK (how else can we know either the tenacity of your follicles or the gumminess of your false beard glue?) – you get the level times 1d6 as a WP bonus. You can go to and try another dance if you want (at <387>, <388> or <390>) but when you have danced your legs down to little stumps go to <392>.

<390> What you dance is your own funeral but whether the dwarves like it enough to join in is a matter of luck. Make the best SR you can on the average of your CHR and your LK – you get the level times 1d6 as a WP bonus. You can go to and try another dance if you want (at <387>, <388> or <389>) but when you have danced your legs down to little stumps go to <392>.

<391> It's not so bad really. Certainly no need for a CON SR. The Mayor has recently purchased a consignment of trumpets, tubas, trombones, wench horns and the like from the plutocrat, Davor Pisk – Davor suggested to the Mayor over a particularly fine dining experience that music would lift the tone of the city to new heights and might just help his re-election campaign into the bargain.

Sample file



Sample file

Unfortunately, there is no Musicians' Guild and no tutors which means we have a bunch of clueless ogres, uruks, minotaurs and humans blowing for all their worth and producing a river of spittle. If you have a talent for music, you can help out a few of them and earn a bonus 100 WPs. Now go to <393>.

<392> I think you might have as many as 60 WPs from your dancing exploits if you threw yourself into the jiggery and the pokery with unrestrained gusto so we'll awarded the other wizards 10 times 1d6 WPs.

Whoever got the most gets a slow dance with the honey queen. This dance is a big chance for romance as you prance and glance cleavage-wise. The wooer on centre stage with the prom queen bee can gain a 200 WP bonus for treading that fine line between intimacy and impudence by making a L5 SR on INT

and on CHR. Good luck to that Casanova of the bossa nova, whoever he may be.

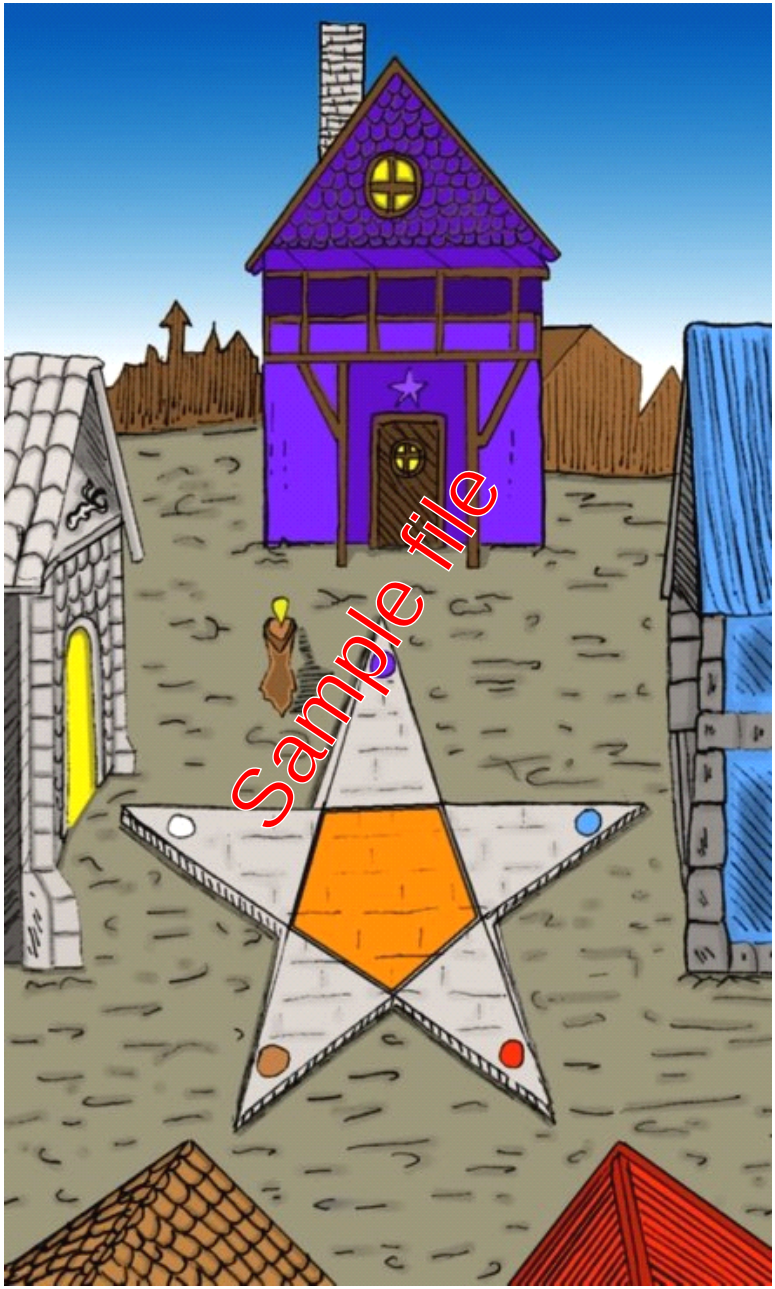
Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

When this slow boat to China reaches the distant shore of love's dream you are all transported with not so much as a 'See ya later, alligator' out of the mountain fastness and into Khaboom's central plaza, Pentagram Square. Go to <386>. Dwarves are not big on long, drawn out goodbyes.

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing



<393> As you adjust to the cosmopolitan hustle and bustle of the many people of many kindreds, so different to the other places you have visited with Melittida and the Manukans, a small man in a peculiar hat, surrounded by bodyguards, comes towards your group and bows so low to the queen that his hat tumbles from his head, which gleams baldly in the afternoon sunshine.

A lackey rushes forward to retrieve the topper but you could dash forward to do the good deed yourself. If you would like to be of service and maybe steal a march on your rivals, make the best SR on SPD you can.

Whether or not you attempt this hat trick, go to <395>.

Sample file

<394> People find your behaviour, quite frankly, ill-mannered and boorish. Try L5 SRs on both LK and CHR – make them and you get away with it, fail and you lose 100 WPs for what would be a very poor start to the Manukan diplomatic mission. Take your fingers out, clean off the earwax and go to <391>.

<395> Roll 1d6 for each of the other wooing wizards: a 6 indicates that they try to rescue and return the hat to the Mayor. If anyone does make the madcap dash, a SR on SPD is called for. Whoever does best gets to the hat first but it does take at least a L2 SR to beat the flunkey. Carefully covering the Mayor's pate with his cherished hat earns the wooer 50 WPs.

Once his head is safely covered, the Mayor unfurls a worrisomely large scroll and begins reading what he believes is an impressive, engaging and entertaining piece of self-composed rhetoric, addressed to Melitidda. You might notice several learned looking men and women scurrying for the sanctuary of the

Orators' Guild building on the north-west point of Pentagram Square…

This is going to take some enduring and you must remain attentive and respectful. Make a L5 SR on the average of INT and CHR for all wizards and go to <396>.

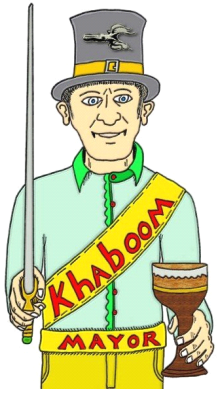
<396> All those who made the saving rolls are rewarded with 50 WPs and will have heard that the Mayor has invited you all m\back to private residence for lunch. His home is paid for by tax-payers money and is lavish, sumptuous, self-indulgent and is almost certainly the finest home you will ever have seen. The justification for this expense is (a) 1) the Mayor and his predecessors have overseen both peace and prosperity for decades now and 2) each Mayor is the target for a range of disgruntled assassins and no one would do this job for peanuts, not even the city's best known carter, a bumbling fellow called Jimmy.

Sample file

The lunch is a languid 9-course affair with a range of beverages to match those of the Unicorns' Horns. The Mayor has a magically enhanced liver and remains lucid and attentive throughout. As the ninth course, a tidbit of caramelised otters' noses, is served by an octopus-armed waiter, he slips into the congenial banter a light but tantalising suggestion that Khaboom's Wizards' Guild might be induced to oversee the construction of an encircling stone wall about Phantog, just like the vast structure that has kept Khaboom safe for centuries, and, what's more, the Mayor's Office would find reason to fund the work.

Of course, there is something transactional in all this *bon homie* – the Mayor wants the Manukans to speak up for him with the five Ancient Guilds of Authority (AGA) to give him a boost in his re-election campaign.

Is this strictly ethical? Well, it is not Melittida's task to weigh the Mayor in the Scales of Morality and a handshake seals the deal. And so it is that you wooing wizards are instructed to meet with each member of AGA and to deliver your most compelling oratory to bind their support for the Mayor.



The Mayor gets up and shakes the hand of each wizard, holding your eyes with his: you see a mortal man who wants the best for himself and for his city. Go to <397>.

<397> As you are leaving, one of the Mayor's aids asks you to Whammy his sword and cast a Little Feets spell on him as he needs to go an subdue a new office cleaner they have just employed. If you will do as you are asked, make the INT <R> and go to <400>; if you decline or fail either of the rolls go to <399>.

Sample file

<398> Back on Pentagram Square, the Mariners' Guild building looms tall and proud above you all. Their place of council and commerce is constructed to have the form of a brigantine, two masts reaching skywards, towers like fingers jabbing the underbelly of the heavens, perhaps in protest at their lot on this Kraken continent where the waters offshore are the domain of monsters and there are no land-level water courses. The brilliant white sails harvest sun and wind and power much that is done inside by the Guild.

The Mariners' Guild is compelled by its master and mistress, geography and topology, to live a subterranean life, plying the underground rivers, voyaging in the gloom, alleviated only by glowstones, something they prize beyond other Guilds. They are

led by three wise admirals, the Three Sheets to the Wind, and it is to the Poop Deck office where the Sheets meet that you wooing wizards are led by a grim and grimy tar, Able Seaman Staines.

Sample file

Staines grins and shows stumps of rotten teeth and asks if you have ever met a certain Captain Zkurvay – it appears this salty seadog never divvied up the treasure on his last voyage and the Able Seaman is determined to track him down and at least eat his parrot.

Stepping on to the Poop Deck, you see three men (very sexist, I know) sat behind a huge oak desk, their heads peeking over the top. There are name plates in front of each man: Captain Pugwash, Silas Mariner and Prince Namore. The last of these three wears a re perpetual scow, the middle one burps frequently (too much grog, no doubt) and the first beams gormlessly behind twin eye patches.

Time to make your speeches. Each wizard needs to make L3 SRs on both INT and CHR and drink a tot of grog (this means making a L3 SR on CON). Down in one is best! Go to <405>.

<399> The hobb looks daggers at you and then draws one with lightning speed. He slices at your throat once, slashing in a fluid arc of lethal intent. His second movement is to curl up into a ball and tumble through the crowd ahead of him, scattering wooers, Manukans and officials alike as if they were ten pins. His third movement is to leap through a window to disappear in a shower of broken glass.

It is the first movement that concerns you though. Make a L6 SR on SPD and go to <401>.

<400> The only person known to move at the speed the hobb moves off at is the legendary Samos Treek (see 'Obscured By Clouds' from Khaghbboommm Press). He leaves you blinking stupidly and then

Sample file

gaping as he zooms in on the Mayor. Another assassination attempt.

Sample file

The other wizards need to make a stab (bad word!) at a L5 SR on SPD – if someone succeeds, they rip off a TTYF and take out the hobb (gaining a massive 500 WPs and the freedom of the city for life, whatever than means) but if everyone fails, the hobb plunges his blade into the Mayor's heart before he is vaporised.

Go to <403> if the Mayor survived and to <402> if the Mayor's candle was snuffed out, wind or no wind.

<401> If you failed the saving roll go to <404> but if the dice were lucky for you and you made it, bully for you – you retracted your larynx in the nick of time rather than the nick of a knife. You survive a murderous attack by the notorious Buggins of the Dark Brotherhood, known to have a fat fee dependent on the removal of the Mayor.

Sample file



Buggins is a master of disguise as well as a master assassin and you have, perhaps unintentionally, thwarted him. Take 500 APs for that near death experience and 300 WPs because the Mayor and his staff fete you for your courageous interception of the assassin.

The other wizards look on disbelievingly and jealously as Melittida squeezes your hand and plants a kiss on your lips. Your heart leaps and your head spins and you gain 1 or 2 points of CHR (odds or evens). Phew A close shave!

The Mayor relaxes under the loving razor of Pantagathus, his personal barber, as if his throat is fairly itching to feel the caress of steel, while you are led out and on to the Mariners' Guild, there to make the case for the Mayor's re-election. Go to <398>.

<402> Hushed silence falls over the Mayor's beautiful home. You could hear a plum drop.

Then, just as the screaming is about to begin, his Worship sits up and grins broadly. Even his mother would not claim that he is a handsome man but now, with blood all over his robes and an extra gaping 'mouth' below his chin he looks positively ghastly!

He tries to speak but with his windpipe severed, only a ghoulish, rasping whine emerges and he claps a hand over his mouth – and then the other over his throat. A tall wizard in dark blue robes steps forward and clams the bystanders with a downward push of his outspread hands.

'That Born Again spell certainly kicked in quickly, didn't it Souza?' The wizard turns towards a colleague, this mage a dwarf, who nods and replies, 'The Double

Samplefile

Double we paid to be added to the mix served up dividends, House Elf.'

Sample file

The two wizards, neither of them elves, escort the Mayor up to his bed chamber to recover while Melittida sends you on your way to get a quick sympathy vote from the first of the Guilds you are to entreat with, the Mariners' Guild. Go to <398>.

<403> Anyone who zapped the upstart hobb with an energy bolt zooming straight to where the sun don't shine gets 300 WPs as Melittida joins in the Mayor's celebration of yet another escape from the haunting spectre of death – it is an occupational hazard.

The Mayor decides to go to the steam baths to relax and slow his heart rate under the tender care of his personal masseuse, a lovely and lithe lamia called Lady Gaga. You can hear her caterwauling as she eases knots and relieves tension executive-style while you are taken out to Pentagram Square again to begin your speech-making at the Mariners' Guild. Go to <398>.

Sample file

<404> Buggins is lightening quick and his wafer-thin yet demonically deadly blade tickles your throat, opening the carotid artery and causing *multum sanguinem fluere* (that means that a river of blood breaks the dam that was your skin and floods over your front and cascades over the floor). In fact, the blade does rather more than that: it goes all the way through to the back of your neck and your head rolls off your shoulders and your chin hits the ground very hard, breaking your jaw, as if you didn't already have problems enough not to care about a mere broken bone! Go to <406>.

<405> If half or more of the oratorical wizards made those rolls on INT and CHR, the Mariners' Guild will commit its support to the Mayor, Prince Namore

tetchily avows. 100 WPs to each successful wizard. However, failing the CON SR means that the wizard slurs his words and burbles on inanely – no contribution from any drunkard!

The Sheets have something they'd like to see you try now – climbing to the top of one of the masts of the brigantine to the crow's nest way up high. You can try if you want – it takes a L3 SR on all of CON, DEX and CHR. Success brings 100 more WPs, failure the loss of that amount. Roll 1d6 to see who will join you or roll 1d6 twice if you bail out.

Once the mountaineering of the masts has been attempted, all wizards move on to <407>.

<406> You are dead. Go to <408>.
<407> All the nice girls love a sailor and Melittida is certainly a nice girl. She is quite smitten by those who climbed the mast as shape and extension are key drivers for her. This is true, it seems, for many females in Khaboom and a crowd of shrieking, underwear-hurling women await you outside the Mariners' Guild, all eyes for the mast-men; 'Take me, o Mast-er,' cries one be'eguiling wanton. 'No, choose me, Handsome!' calls another; 'Take us all, every which way including loose!' a particularly brazen harlot yells over the other voices.

All this temptation! All wooers must make L1 SRs on CHR – failure means that the wooer abandons his suit for the queen and rushes with unfettered ardour into the arms of the eager women. Then it is a L4 SR on CON to survive the man-handling and mauling those saucy ladies dish out. Such a wizard would lose 500 WPs and have to get down on hands and knees in abject apology to Melittida once recovered, unless that CON roll was failed in which case bodily damage is

Sample file

such that marital performance is permanently impaired to the extent that no Manukan would wed such a cripple. That would be a tragic loss to the gene pool.

Eventually, you all make it through the door to the Forgemasters' Guild, a building architecturally designed at fabulous expense as, you guess it, an anvil. Go to <409>.

<408> Not what you wanted, I doubt not. Still, if you had to die, this is a fine place to do it because… go to <410>.

<409> It is not the heat from the interior that hits you but rather the noise. Not the sounds of hammers ringing out on anvils – no, they don't do blacksmith work here except for demonstrations of excellence. The hubbub that assails your poor ears is the booming of stentorian voices bellowing out opinions, instructions, anecdotes and asides.

All the Forgemasters are hard of hearing after years plying their trade and even debates in chambers are carried out at maximum decibels. The volume is not enough to burst eardrums but clearly making oneself heard is not going to be plain sailing, even for those who have won over the Mariners' Guild.

Bee'n Hurley is quick to offer earmuffs to everyone. Do you want to put yours on? Make an instant decision and go to <411>.

<410> There are very powerful wizards close by. Make a L5 SR on LK and go to <412>.

<411> If you put the earmuffs on (pink and fluffy, most enchanting), make a L1 SR on LK. If you didn't want to

Sample file

cover your ears up, make a L1 SR on INT. Now go to <413>.

Sample file

<412> Those very powerful wizards restore you to life! No charge made, it is merely repaying you for inadvertently distracting the assassin and saving the Mayor's life. You gain 500 APs for being decapitated and 500 more for being resurrected. You also gain 300 WPs, possibly out of sympathy from a concerned Melittida, and if you made the LK SR you now have the ability to remove your head whenever you choose and to retain control of your body! Now there's a turn up for the books!

Once the other Manukans and wooing wizards have inspected this miracle at close quarters, some needing to touch your neck to be convinced your head won't just roll off again, you are all escorted to your first port of call in your re-election campaigning, the Mariners' Guild on Pentagram Square.

Go to <398>.

<413> If you put the earmuffs on and failed the LK SR, the contact powder on the muffs causes your ears to grow until they are long and floppy. Bee'n thinks this is hilarious but you are 2d6 down on CHR until you leave Khaboom.

If you didn't put them on and you failed the INT SR, you didn't notice when the noise level suddenly increased to painfully levels and so you didn't think to put your fingers in your ears – you are a trifle hard of hearing until you leave Khaboom and all INT SRs are one level higher consequently.

Take those ridiculous earmuffs off now or take your fingers out and go to <415>.

Sample file



Sample file

<414> A man comes up to you and tries to stamp on your foot. He has lank, greasy hair and an unpleasant sneer. 'Give me all your money!' he sniggers.

You can give him all your money if you want or you can give him a beating – the choice is yours because he is all mouth and no trousers. Everyone in Khaboom knows Billy and no one likes him. He has been banned by all the taverns and is refused attention by all surgeons (and he often needs surgery because he believes he can bully anyone when the average kindergarten child can hold their own with him in a fight).

Now you have met Billy, you had better catch up with the others. Go to <420>.

<415> Two sweaty, red faced blacksmiths show you the way to the 'Hammer and Tongs', the inner sanctum of the Guild, where you are to meet its masters. Again,

there are three: Ilmarinen the Fair, Wayland Smith and the Chief Forger, Steely Dan.

Sample file

All three men have arms and faces crisscrossed with scars and welts, clear evidence to their life's experience won in the school of hard knocks. Before they will listen to you, they invite you all to try your hand at tempering a horseshoe.

You can refuse – go to <417> - or think of your favourite galloper and get ready to make something fashionable yet hard wearing - <419>.

<416> Steely Dan calls the house to order with a mighty strike of a bronze cymbal with his enormous gonger. Waves of sounds reverberate about the chambers. Now has come the hour for oratory.

Each wizard needs to make L3 SRs on both INT and CHR and then take up Dan's gonger and hit the right note at the end of the bombastic barrage of words (this means making a L3 SRs on STR and LK). May your praises of the Mayor thunder on into literary history! Go to <418>.

Sample file

<417> Your ill manners and pusillanimous disrespect get you thrown out, right into a water trough at the back of the Guild building. The bath refreshes you but you must await the exit of the rest of your party, kicking your heel and mourning the loss of 50 WPs. Go to <414>.

<418> If half or more of the rhetorical wizards made those four rolls, the Forgemasters' Guild will commit its support to the Mayor and Wayland Smith will clasp everyone's hand in his hammy fist to prove their commitment. 100 WPs to each successful wizard.

Ilmarinen tires of words easily and longs to get back to his anvil and so he tells you that your business here is

done in typically blunt fashion. The ears of the Merchants beckon you to them. Go to <420>.

Sample file

<419> This takes DEX, STR and INT. If you can make L2 SRs on all three attributes, you are adjudged a natural forger. Take 100 WPs and record your new talent.

If you fail just one SR, you make the horse of your dreams something that it would not wish on a donkey but at least you don't maim yourself.

If you muffed more than one SR, you fail to produce anything solid (Steely Dan pronounces your work 'metallic diarrhoea) and you splash yourself with the molten metal, doing 3d6 damage –nnnggghhhh! – lose 100 WPs for the shame!).You may test out your fellows or not, as you wish.

Melittida has never seen horseshoes hammered out before and has a go herself. Wouldn't you just know it, she masters the technique with rare skill and aplomb is made an honorary member of the Guild. That puts a shine on proceedings as you get ready for a spot of rhetoric in the Mayor's cause. Go to <416>.

Sample file

<420> The Merchants' Guild building has been constructed as a great, gaily painted trader's stall with a red and green striped canopy over an huge wooden deck – great in good weather for picnics and covered in case of rain. On the deck are wooden carvings of all sorts of goods that might be sold in the marketplaces of the sprawling city. The carvings are regularly replaced and whittling is a diligently practiced craft throughout Khaboom. To have one's carving chosen for display for a year is a signal honour and brings with it a 20% discount on anything bought within the city's great perimeter wall.

The three Master Merchants are waiting for you at the double doors but bar your way with upturned palms. You are not to make pretty speeches to them. No! They do not want change and heartily approve of the Mayor's resistance to trade tariffs. Instead of you persuading them not to fix something they know is not broken, they will take you on a tour of the finest and most extensive shopping emporium on the Kraken continent and shout you a treat each, within reason of course. No window shopping for you! You get to take whatever strikes your fancy and someone else will pick up the tab. Now that's what I call a bargain!

Go to <421>.

<421> The first Guild Master introduces himself. 'I am Greecey Penney. At your service, your majesty!' He bows low and you could swear drops of oil drip from his brow onto the paving slabs.

'I will be greatly honoured to escort you to Shoppie's Emporium. If I may make so bold, Ma'am, you would do well to remember that while Shoppie may claim to have everything you could possibly want, my prices are lower – cheap and cheerful, cheap as chips, that's Greecey Penney!' He bows again and slips on his own drippings.

The second Guild Master permits himself a sardonic smile. 'That's what you say, Greecey, but some might swap 'cheerful' for 'nasty'! Not me, of course, but, Ma'am, you might prefer, being a refined and cultivated, ahem, honeydripper, if you will forgive my familiarity – now where was I? Ah, yes, pardon my rumblings and my ramblings! You might prefer to do business with Walter Martin – yours truly, that is!'

Sample file

He, too, bows low and bits of broken goods fall from his copious pockets. ‘Never mind those!’ he exclaims breezily. ‘Plenty more where they come from! Any faulty goods are covered by my ‘Return in 20 Daze’ guarantee.’ He doesn’t explain how this guarantee works, you notice. ‘I get everything made by kobolds on the Eagle continent and ship ‘em in through the Portal – much cheaper than labour rates over here.’

It seems that he might never finish his sales pitch but, thankfully, the Guild Master-Supreme cuts him off peremptorily. This woman of mature years is covered from top to toe with jewellery – precious stones of every hue and shape – but all decadently large – compete with precious metals for your attention. There is a person under all that weight somewhere but what she looks like is lost in the mists of material wealth.

‘Greetings, hallowed visitors,’ she proclaims, her voice echoing off the gold that adorns her. ‘As long as you convince the other guilds to support our beloved Mayor, we will see that you have something memorable to take home with you. I am Miss Tiffany Diadem and I will give you something to remember for eternity and to pass down to your children and your children’s children’s children.’

Sample file

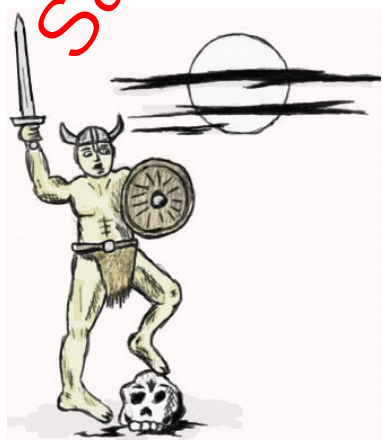
Tiffany seems to have skipped a generation but no matter – she shows you some fabulously exquisite eggs that open and display scenes of myth and fable, handcrafted by her legendary designer, Carl-Gustav Flabergee, a vastly corpulent man with a pot belly that requires a team of handmaidens to support.

Now that you have been introduced to these good and worthy Masters, it is time to journey along Catspaw Street, down Dogbreath Lane and on into Ritupya Alley to Shoppie’s Emporium. Go to <422>.

<422> You might well think that 'Shoppie' is a lame name for a man of such fame. Shame! It is a name that sticks in the mind and trips off the tongue. No one forgets Shoppie, nor his famous catch phrase, with which he ends every trade: 'My name is Shoppie – nice doing business with you!'

His store front is now half a mile long and no one quite knows how deep but the stories of what might be found in the deepest recesses of his stock rooms, what lurks unseen and undreamt of in those forgotten nooks and crannies, fuel beery conversations in taverns throughout Khaghtch'an. The marvellous merchant used to be a Guild Master but recently stood for Mayor in the small town of Stoneydaze (see 'Rotten Borough: Election Special' from Khaghbboommm Press) and now he has enough to do, running Council meetings in that enlightened place, visiting the big cities of Khaghtch'an with his magical tardis-caravan and keeping the Emporium stocked up here in Khaboom.

Sample file



He specialises in dungeon maps and bespelled artefacts – does that sound as if it might be of interest

to you? As you enter, you find a amiable, solid citizen, cheerfully whistling and rummaging about in the pockets of his apron as he concludes another profitable transaction with a warrior who you probably recognise as Fang the Delectable. Fang has just sold a ring that he found in Goblin Crag but has no idea what it might do – he did not risk jamming it on to his finger in ignorance. Fang salutes you all merrily as he departs and Shoppie turns his charm on for Melittida and her friends, even as he gauges the presence of the three Guild Masters.

Sample file

Make the best SR on LK you can and go to <423>.

<423> A L5 SR on LK will get you a very rare and collectible item from Shoppie's Treasure Trove, the *faery* grotto where he keeps the good stuff – not many get to see it so you are privileged. If you make L7, you may roll twice and choose your preferred gift; if you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth and made L9 or higher, you get first pick – whatever you want is yours. These special rewards for doing the Mayor and the Merchant's Guild a favour are:

1 - Wooden Dog – 'Its Bark Is Worse Than It's Bite' – this 3 inch carving of a cook-mouthed daschund allows the holder to turn into a dog at will if a finger is inserted into the mouth – the dog can withstand all but prolonged furnace-like heat and has a CON 20 times the holder
2 - Jester's Hat – this hat will cause anyone within earshot to roll about helplessly with mirth if they fail a L2 SR on INT (affects only sentient beings and the wearer must fully concentrate on jangling the bells
3 - Moleskin Suit – takes 20 hits and allows the wearer to tunnel easily through earth (not rock)
4 - Divining Twig – allows the holder to detect gold if within 50'
5 - Cloud Shroud – this is a cape of white feathers that allows the wearer to become no more substantial than a cloud and to drift about at ¼ speed (all physical damage to the wearer is reduced to a quarter)
6 - Khremmy Kodpiece – this pewter groin protector takes just 1 hit but doubles the rate that WIZ is regained at

You can see what the other wooers got if you like.

Sample file

When you are done in the grotto (and, no, Shoppie will not bounce you on his knee and go "Ho, ho, Ho!'), you wend your way through a maze of shelves stacked to the ceiling with intriguing curiosities and back out onto the street. Shoppie shakes hands with everyone and presents Melittida with a platinum fishnet stinger sheath which she accepts with just the hint of a blush. 'My name is Shoppie – nice doing business with you!' he calls out as you saunter down the street with your prizes. Go to <424>.

<424> The Guild Masters take pride in showing you what they consider to be the finest wares Khaboom has to offer.

In the Bazaar, Walter Martin haggles for you and buys you all a flying carpet with 24 hours flying time. In the Souk, Greecey selects yeti pelt caps which will keep you warm in temperatures as low as -20 degrees. It is, however, in Diamond-eye Duke's Duellery Shop that you get a real chance to shine.

Sample file

Diamond-eye is a genuine diamond geezer and he knows what will get your rocks off better than he knows his onions. The shop's name changed from 'Jewellery' to 'Duellery' when he called out his partner, Ruby-lips Roger and became sole proprietor as the only man standing (Duke missed Roger and shot the Mayor's favourite page boy in the ear but Roger's pistol backfired and took his head off – well, Trollworld munitions have a long way to go). Anyway, all that aside, Diamond-eye is willing to let you choose a nice stone for an engagement ring, should you be so lucky with the quivering queen, who just loves sparkly gems.

Diamond-eye Duke brings out a tray of jewels which Tiffany sniffs at… not paste, surely? No, her sniff is a sign of quality as Miss Tiffany Diadem can actually smell the carats in diamonds, emeralds and sapphires.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Each of the wooing wizards gets to make a selection but will it please the now-panting Melittida?

Sample file

Go to <425> to find out.

<425> Diamonds are a girl's best friend and a diamond geezer like Diamond-eye wouldn't insult a Manukan queen with anything less. Each diamond weights the same, as you see when the appraiser's scales are brought out, but they have quite different shapes.

To make the choosing easier, each diamond has been given a name in the kobold tongue, since it was they that mined these jewels. There are six stones: Kafe, Safel, Iral, Uret, Athec and Ticyludip. They all look as if they could last forever, as diamonds should do, and Melitidda's eyes are like saucers (a whole dinner service of them).

Roll 1d6 to see who goes first then roll 1d6 to see which diamond the choosing wooing wizard will take. When it is you turn, you simply choose the one with the name you like best. When everyone has chosen a diamond they think fit for the queen, go to <428>.

Sample file

<426> After a little bit more shopping spending the Guild Masters' money, Miss Tiffany bids you all farewell, happy that you are going to do all you can to help the Mayor get re-elected, which would mean a solid protective wall around Phantog to keep unwanted visitors away from Apys. Next it's off to the Orators' Guild.



Sample file

Go to <427>.

<427> The Orators' Guild Building is not conservative in design. The architect, one Franklin Wright, was given a free hand and some think his concept came from a dislike of the cronyism prevalent at the time in the Guild with regard to its dealings with the Mayor.

In truth, there is so much self-determination these days, much of it led by treasure-hungry delvers, that this is no longer an accusation that could be fairly levelled but, back in the day, the tongue did seem a sharp satire on the sucking up that went on. It is coloured a lustrous pink and always looks moist, even in summer, as it stabs out into the sky. Two Guild Masters greet you – Barney Yarn and Liz Peech. They each take an arm and escort Melittida inside, bending her ears to their wordsmithing.

The bouncer on the door asks each wizard to justify his admission. Go to <429>.

<428> Who has chosen wisely? Kafe is fake, Safel is false, Iral is a liar, Athec is a cheat and Ticyludip is better known as duplicity. Only Uret is a true diamond. Whoever selected Uret gains 500 WPs.

It does seem that Melittida is smitten at the moment and she confirms the suspicion by strolling off, arms in arm, with the perceptive wizard. Go to <426>.

<429> Catweezil is first in line and attempts a hypnotism spell to circumvent this test. Make a L4 SR on LK for him – if he fails, he does get inside. Go to <430>.

<430> Next in the line is Hanzalf. He tries pressing gold into the palm of the Doorkeeper, a big Rock Troll named Salty Peter, who likes to chew on celery sticks when he runs out of limbs. Peter takes the gold and bites it. Hard. Make a L5 SR on LK for Hanzalf – if he fails, the gold breaks and Peter swallows it and refuses admission. Go to <431>.

Sample file

<431> Third in the queue is Sunnyman, who tells the Rock Troll he will lose his job if he delays a VIP such as himself. Make a L5 SR on CHR for Sunnyman. If he fails, he doesn't make it through the door. Go to <432>.

<432> Now it is the turn of Ragnarok. He smiles and introduces himself to the Rock Troll by his nickname, 'Rokkky'. 'I'm a Rock Troll brother – let me in an' I'll see you get a promotion!' he cajoles. Make L3 SRs on LK and CHR for Ragnarok – if he fails either roll, Salt Peter doesn't fall for this tosh and boots his butt out into the street and won't admit him. Go to <433>.

<433> The little Wood Wizard sidles up to the big troll and beckons to him to bend down so that he can whisper in his ear. Whatever he says, it works because Peter smiles and then blushes before bowing to the Wood Wizard to usher him inside. Go to <434>.

<434> At last! Your turn. You can try gold, lying through your teeth, intimidation or you can rely on your winning smile. You would need to bribe Salt Peter with 200 GPs, make a L8 SR on INT to make him believe that you are a Manukan, a L6 SR on STR to impress him with your bulging biceps or L5 SRs on CHR and LK to have your smile be the key to the door. If you make it inside, go to <435> but if you fail in your attempt, go to <440>.

Sample file

<435> Inside, you immediately hear the sound of an oration being given by Liz Peech. It goes on and on…and on and on. Go to <436>.

<436> Make L5 SRs on INT and CON. If you make them both, 6o to <437> but if you fail one or both, go to <440>.

<437> When Liz finally ends her tirade against – well, to be frank, everyone has lost track in this volley of verbiage – her partner in hot air, Barney Yarn, takes up the cudgels. Go to <438>.

<438> Barney is prolix in the extreme. Make a L5 SR on CHR to at least look as if you are rapt paying attention. If you make it, go to <439> but if you fail, go to <440>.

<439> At last! Your turn. By now the listeners are desperate for a change. Anyone who doesn't ramble! How long do you want to speak for? Write down the number of minutes and go to <441>.

<440> Last but not least of the five Guilds of Pentagram Square is the foreboding Wizards' Guild, its home a massive copper cauldron, with something vile perpetually bubbling out over the lip, running down the sides but evaporating before it can pollute Pentagram Square. It is a warning of what might be in store for a mayor who disregards the interests of this most powerful and influential of guilds.

It is simple to get in - a L1 Knock-Knock spell. All wizards should make an INT SR to cast the spell. If anyone does get a critical fumble here that wizard loses 200 WPs and the knowledge of the spell is wiped from his mind. Wizard Control sees (nearly) everything and strikes without warning with savage success.

Go to <442>.

Sample file

<441> If you wrote down anything less than 3 minutes then the members of the Orators' Guild will follow you to hell and back. Take 200 WPs, as do all other wooing wizards who are with you. If you misjudged the mood of your audience, people leave at the 3 minute mark and the Mayor does not get the backing he wants so dearly.

Melitidda is desperate to go and her entourage has to carry poor Be'en Hurley out as he appears to have slipped into a boredom-induced (honey)coma. Go to <440>.

<442> As you enter the Guild, all the other members of your party disappear. A small gnome sits at a large desk, perched on top of a precariously piled stack of magical tomes. As you take in the round atrium, daubed in ancient runes and weird hieroglyphics, he

looks up over the sandwich he is munching upon and enquires 'Do you have an appointment, Sir?'

Sample file

If you answer 'Yes', go to <445>, if you answer 'No', go to <446>.

<443> There are a lot of angry mutterings behind your unprotected back and no a few threats of violence to your person. The centaur, whose name you see from a plate on his desk is Chet, looks bewildered for a moment and asks why your have the audacity to push in like this. He inspects whatever credentials you might have to offer – maybe a love letter from Melittida?

You must make two L3 SRs on LK. The first is to find out if the worthy Chet will accept your tokens and sanction both the queue jumping and the request to join the high powered deliberations going on upstairs. The second is to find out if those behind you in the line have murderous intentions towards you and if they have the capabilities to deliver a pre-emptive strike.

Make the rolls and go to <451>.

Sample file

<444> 'Too pure to get blood on your hands, eh? I bet you've killed before probably for money. This is your civic duty, laddie! Think again and think carefully now. This is your last chance. Will you be our Executioner of the Day?' If you agree, go to <453>; if you still refuse, go to <456>.

<445> 'May I inspect your credentials, please? We have to be very security conscious in these distressing times! You will need to go through the door behind that curtain.' A rich, claret coloured drape appears to his right.

You can either sweep aside the curtain and pass through the door – go to <448> - or exclaim that you

are a member of the prestigious Manukan embassy and that you are not to be trifled with – go to <454>.

Sample file

<446> 'Ahem,' he sighs, clearly his throat and then blowing his nose into a large yellow and black polka dot hankie. 'You will need to join the queue then. It is through the round door over there.' He points to a 3' diameter hole that has just appeared in the wall to his left, 3' off the ground.

You can either clamber through the hole – go to <452> - or insist that you are a member of the prestigious Manukan embassy and that your entire party has an appointment with the top brass – go to <450>.

<447> Did your list of ingredients include something alcoholic? If it did, Horto is particularly pleased and slips you a silver sigil in the shape of a gateau – you will get double WPs and APs while in Khaboom.

Even if it didn't, the trifle-loving little guy will now let you in. Go to <455>.

Sample file

<448> You pull the curtain back and pass through a door that clicks unlocked as you touch the porcelain handle. As you push down, a flushing sound rumbles somewhere close by and water cascades over your head. Once you have wiped the water from your eyes, you see that you are in what must be the Security Centre, although it looks suspiciously like a torture chamber, complete with racks, thumbscrews, an iron maiden and a huge quantity of sharp daggers and needles. A man speaks to you in soft tones.

Go to <459>.

<449> Odd! Why would you refuse?

Although not a very powerful wizard himself, he does have a silver dolphin ring which allows him to teleport

unwanted visitors to the Guild all the way back to the start of their journey.

He twists it spitefully. 'Take a hike, buster!' he spits, getting his beard wetter still.



You zip back to Apys in molecular form, there to reassemble. Make a L1 SR on LK. If you fail, the molecules get all jumbled up. This proves fatal so close the book. Otherwise, take 100 APs and go to <460>.

<450> 'The head honchos, huh?' The gnome fixes you with a penetrative stare. 'Let me see…' He shuffles

some papers and stamps them several times. 'Yes. We do have Queen Melittida here today. Apparently she is pressing for the Mayor's re-election.' He sniffs haughtily.

'We at the Guild do not care for mayors, especially ones past their sell by date. It is futile – the Guild would demand too high a price in exchange for its support of an inferior, a squibbling at that! I'll tell you what, if you will exterminate a few Level One wizards who have been seen by Wizard Control teaching rogues spells free of charge – I ask you! – then I'll let you straight in. Well? What do you say?' The gnome drums his fingers on an inkpot impatiently.

Will you agree to eradicate 'criminal' rogues – go to <453> - or will you tell the gnome that Wizard Control can do their own dirty work – go to <444>?

Sample file

<451> If you made both LK SRs, all is fine. You can go to the important chin-wagging session at <455>. If you failed the first LK SR, Chet is underwhelmed by your credentials and sends you to the back of the line – go to <458>.

If you failed the second saving roll, even before Chet gets to insect your bona fides, those malicious and vindictive citizens in the queue behind you hit hard without warning. The first blade strikes home as it were the Ides of March; this is quickly followed by a solid fist crashing against your temple, accompanied by an unholy oath.

Before you could say 'Supercalafragalistic exbeallidotious' a riot is underway and you are as good as hung, drawn and quartered. It's really quite atrocious! Close the book.

<452> The gnome gives your posterior a shove to help you through this tight spot. Once you righted yourself

on the other side, you see that you are in a long, narrow room in which a long line of men and women of many different kindreds are queuing to get to a desk where a centaur stands, signing permission chits or packing petitioners off with a flea in their ear.

You can join the back of the very long line – go to <458> - or stride authoritatively straight to the front to address the centaur in ringing tones – go to <443>.

<453> 'Like the smell of fear and the flow of fresh blood, eh?' He spits on his palms and rubs them together briskly. 'I think I'll take the risk of getting into trouble for leaving my desk without permission and come and have a gander at this!

The gnome waggles his fingers at the floor and you see revealed a spiral staircase going downwards. He tells you to go down and he will follow when he has locked up.

Go to<457>.

Sample file

<454> The gnome flexes his fingers and cracks a few knuckles. 'I'm very fond of trifles, as it happens. Do you have a good recipe, perchance? If you do, I'll let you in! How's that for a fair exchange? You give me a new recipe for trifle and I let you in without a ticket. My name's Horto, by the way. What's yours? Oh, I do love my trifles!'

He chuckles and dribbles into his beard. 'I hate that!' he says in exasperation. 'It was so much easier before that villain, Fortescue, casts the Natty Beard spell on me. Now I always have a damp chin!'

If you want to give Horto a recipe for trifle, write it down and go to <447>; if you don't know one, can't

make one up or just take a disliking to the squat little civil servant, go to <449>.

Sample file

<455> You are admitted to a chamber lit with rainbow glowstones where the Manukans sit at a pentagram-shaped table. The room is dominated by two silver statues, stood side by side, almost rippling with life and khremm, more like mercury than the argent metal. These, you know, are the two brothers, Khaghbboommm and Khaghtch'an, who created most of the spells that are commonly taught in the Guilds' schools and many more besides. Their elf and troll heritage shows clearly on their brows.

Along with Melittida and Bee'n Hurley are the other wooing wizards (ok, give each one a L1 SR on LK and if he fails he is not here but there, back in Apys at <460>) and two severely frowning Masters of Magic. They are both dressed in the ceremonial crimson and saffron robes decorated with the twin moons, Sar and Sahane, that indicate their status as L17 wizards. They are introduced by Melittida as Ennui Tgaddhu and Midchazzar Ydazid.

Sample file

The first, Tgaddhu, is a chisel-faced beanpole with rheumy eyes with large silver moles on each side; the second, Ydazid, is a hook-nosed with long, gangly arms and shoulders improbably broad for his thin waist.



Ennui Tgaddhu speaks. 'I will make this swift, Queen. We will give our support for the Mayor, despite our long enmity with this meddlesome mayor above all others, if he will stand aside when we move against the Rogues Guild. You will give him this offer and convey his answers to us by sunset. If he does not accept and he seeks to prevent our just action there will be all-out war in Khaboom until we reduce it to rubble or receive unconditional surrender from all who stand against us.'

Sample file

Midchazzar Ydazid takes over. 'We are far less numerous than these magic-using rogues but we are more powerful and we are the legitimate owners of royalty rights on all the safe, commonly available spells. The Guild has long offered training to almost quell all wizard crime in the city. We want our money now. We do not care if rogues teach others the spells they learn but we will have the membership dues for the protection their Guild affords them – we will become 100% equity holders of the Rogues' Guild. Their leaders can continue as directors, as figureheads but they will bend to our will and we will receive the monies that are our due for providing social order and structure.'

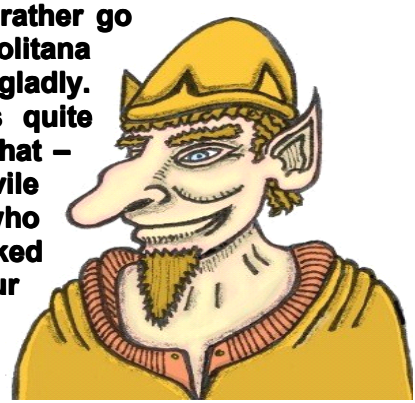


Ennui Tgaddhu concludes. 'Take our offer to the Mayor. Tell him we will share power in Khaboom so long as he takes only what is due to him by dint of his office and thinks not to take what belongs by rights to this Guild. This is the will of Napolitana, our Supreme Wizard. Her word is law here'

Sample file

At this, Melittida nods and rises to leave. Without a word, the two wizards Blow the whole party back to the Mayor's office. Go to <464>.

<456> 'Actually, I respect your pacifism,' the gnome confides. 'I think we do rather go over the top but Napolitana does not suffer rogues gladly. Our Supreme Leader is quite clear on that. Tell you what – there is a particularly vile leprechaun who deliberately Wink-Winked his fist inside one of our librarian's left nostril and caused him severe haemorrhaging. He



died when we couldn't find his blood type for the transfusion spell. You can kill him and we'll call it quits. Will that do you?'

If you think that's fair enough, go to <461>; if you still won't have a bar of this kangaroo court's rough justice, go to <462>.



<457> The gnome is quick to catch you up and stands by your side as you leave the staircase to emerge into a bare cellar with freshly whitewashed walls. Despite the cover up, you can still see scorch marks under the wash. Lined up against the far wall five men, two women, a male elf and a female hobb. They are manacled and pedicled to the wall and wear blindfolds. These are the condemned.

The guard, a big minotaur who introduces himself as Minster, asks you if you would like to use the blow pipe or the sickle. The blow pipe is a magic pipe that is deigned to shoot out bolts of khremm when blown though – you have to pick victims individually; the sickle has a long, khremm-charged blade and can be used to sweep through a whole row of victims in one swing, if the wizard employing it is skilful enough.

If you choose the blow pipe, go to <477>; if you prefer the sickle, go to <478>.

Sample file

<458> Time passes stolidly, waiting for no man or woman or anything not so easily categorised (of which you see quite a few), and the queue moves forward at a pace that would disgrace any self-respecting tortoise. You get bored; you get hungry; you get sleepy; you hear the life stories of all those near you in the line and make up ever more elaborate versions of your own biography.

When you finally reach his desk, Chet the Centaur tells you that your request to join the Manukans is redundant as they all went home some hours ago. When he sees your sad little face and the tears welling in the corners of your eyes, Chet takes pity and uses his silver arrow sigil to teleport you straight back to Apys.



Sample file

Go to <460>.

<459> 'My name is Elijah Scrote and I am the Inquisitor. I have done this job for many a long year and enjoyed every minute of it. It is an occupation that suits my temperament and my skills. I am, am told, very good at it. Very good indeed. This, though, is my last day for I have been head hunted and offered a very well paid position at Castle Lostreld (see 'The Poisoned Chalice' from Khaghbboommm Press).

That is somewhat amusing, I think, since it is usually I that does the head hunting. The boot is now on the

other foot, so to speak. However, enough of my tidings. I intend to do just as thorough a job today as I have on every other day. Let me see now – are you a danger to these wizards?'

Sample file

Elijah, a lean, wiry man with unblinking grey eyes that match his straggly hair, offers you a needle. 'Stick that in your ear until it comes out the other side. It won't hurt that much and it will only kill you if you harbour malicious intentions towards the Guild.'

You can do as he says – go to <463> – or decline, politely but firmly – go to <465>.

<460> Ah, Apys! Home of the pure, rock of the proud. Bee'n Hurley cartwheels and somersaults with joy at being back here once more. The other Manukans cheer and those who are out to greet them soon join in when they learn of the triumphs of the Ambassadorial Queen and of the promised Great Wall of Phantog. You are no doubt weary and relieved when your bodily needs are attended to with all wounds healed and invigorating pollen fed to you by real hennies.

Go to <480>.

<461> The gnome gives you a silver skull sigil, a black cap and a diamond mask. Then he opens a secret door in one of the walls and tells you to go to the end of the passage and then knock on the left hand door at the end and wait to be called in. 'Cheerio!' he says brightly. 'Don't listen to any sob stories, will you?'

You follow a long corridor, carpeted with plush yellow weave, with doleful eyes stitched into the cloth, until you reach the end of the passage. There are doors on the left and right.

Do you want to knock on the left hand door, open the left hand door, knock on the right hand door, open the right hand door or try an Oh There It Is spell on the dead end? Depending on your option, the paragraphs

Sample file

to head to, in the order listed, are <466>, <467>, <468>, <469> and <470>.

<462> 'You're a stubborn one, that's for certain! Look, I'm really quite busy and I don't want to fill in any more forms than I really have to so teach me a new spell and I'll let you through. Fair enough?'

If you will teach the gnome a spell you know that he won't (one not found in the rule book or the Codex Incantatem), go to <475>; if you either can't oblige him or are just outright uncooperative, go to <476>.

<463> The needle does hurt – take 1d6 damage – but it only kills if you fail a L1 SR on CHR. Make that fateful roll. If you fail, the needle zizzes and fizzes, hisses and hurts you to death. Close the book – you must have been about to attempt an assassination of a L17 wizard or something just as stupid!

If you succeed, Elijah takes his needle back and asks you if you have ever been to Castle Lostreld and met Lord Shivorq before having you escorted cordially to the high-ranking deliberations that Melittida is presiding over. Take 100 APs and go to <455>.

Sample file

<464> When he recovers from the surprise of several Manukans and a bunch of wizards appearing out of thinnish air in his office, the Mayor settles into assimilating the offer relayed by Melittida. As he hums and haws, he asks of the other Guilds.

Finally, he nods and gives his word, which all know must be kept on pain of death, resurrection spells or no. He gives his thanks to Melittida and reaffirms the help that will be given with the wall about mighty Phantog to preserve Apys in its cloak of secrecy. Casting his eyes over the wooers, he wishes the queen

a long and happy marriage and tells her he is certain there is a good husband to be found amongst this crop of suitors.

Melittida tells the Mayor that she will give news of his pact to the Wizards' Guild herself and take one wooing wizard with her. The wizard who makes the highest combined saving rolls on LK and CHR will be that escort and will gain 200 WPs. In addition, if more than half the Guilds have decided to support the Mayor, this is a feather in Melittida's cap and will exalt the Manukan reputation – each wizard then gains a further 200 WPs.

Your time in the great metropolis is done, you have seen many sights that will stay with you and learnt a little of the political arts that underpin the work of a diplomat. Go to <460>.

Sample file

<465> 'That really isn't an option, I'm afraid. You see, we must be certain about you, my romantic wizard. Is your love pure or does something else lurk in your heart, perchance?' You can go along with his wheedling and take the needling – go to <463> – or hold your ground and tell him to find someone else to practice his knitting on – go to.

<466> A reedy little voice bids you enter. There, chained to a wall, is a leprechaun wearing nothing but a shamrock where some would wear fig leaves. His keeper is a fairy troll, tall and slender but with a melon of a head, with little wings on the eyebrows.

'He can't Wink-Wing in this room,' Fatima tells you. Then she takes the cap and puts it on the prisoner's head and tells you to don the mask if you haven't already put it on. 'Happy Doolally, I hereby confirm

your death sentence and leave you in the hands of your executioner. Have you any last words?'

Sample file

Happy smiles at you both and says, 'Well, I don't think they will be my last but if I am unhappily wrong then I certainly do.

Firstly, I didn't do it – it was someone who either looked like me or was wearing a Happy Doolally mask, which, I have to tell you, are all the rage in the city right now; secondly, he was asking for it – literally – as he had a terminal condition and wanted to be put out of his misery so I 'euthanased' him; thirdly, he's not dead, he's just sleeping very deeply; fourthly, he was a useless librarian, completely illiterate and he kept pet bookworms that ate the scrolls for breakfast; fifthly, I believe in second chances, don't you? – surely cherries are meant to be bitten more than once and I'd do the same for you, pal; sixthly, I'm not a rogue, I'm a wizard, just not a member of this snobby, pretentious Guild because you lot are such a racist bunch of bigots…'

He is clearly ready to go on for quite some time but this sixth point is actually quite well made. Fatima looks confused. 'Look,' she says cluelessly, 'it's your call. Either squeeze that silver skull and his head will explode or fill in a report and I'll take it higher.'

If you squeeze the skull that will pop open Happy Doolally's cranium, go to <471>; if you fill in the report (in triplicate), go to<472>.

<467> The creature behind the door is trained to react very fast and very violent if this door is opened without an accompanying knock. Make a L7 SR on SPD.

If you fail, the door is slammed on you. It is a *Whammied* door and it is shut most forcefully. Take

Sample file

10d6 damage straight off CON. If you die, close the book; if you live, once it sees what you are and what you have, the guard relaxes. Go to <466>.

Sample file

<468> A female voice says 'Oh, goodie! A visitor! Won't you step right inside?' If you do as you are told, go to <473>; if you decide against it, go back to <461>and make another choice.

<469> A very uneventful paragraph, this one. But a very necessary link, given your unwillingness to stick to the script and your lack of good manners. Go to <473>.

<470> You light up a secret door. When you look inside, you see a sign that says 'This way to Hell'.
You can go back to <461> and make another choice if you doubt that this is a good path to follow, no matter your intentions, or you can go on to <474> if Hell is a place you have always wanted to visit or you think the sign is a trick to stop you getting to the really good stuff.

Either way, you get 200 APs for finding The Supreme Sorceress' carefully guarded secret…

Sample file

<471> There is a soft popping sound and Happy Doolally's head decorates the room in green and red. This was not nice of you and you pay the penalty in the form of a curse. Lose 2d6 LK and you also now trigger something in leprechauns that makes them want to kill you as quickly as possible as soon as they clap eyes on you (see the Oh Go Away spell for the general idea).

Now you can go to meet some senior wizards. Take 200 Aps and go to<455>.

<472> When Melittida hears of your clemency, you gain 100 WPs (and 100 APs). The report is filed and two years later Happy is sentenced to one year's hard

labour in a troll laundry, washing socks all day. Now you can go to meet some senior wizards - go to<455>.

Sample file

<473> You get a very bad feeling just at the last moment. Pity your intuition didn't kick in a smidgeon sooner. You walk in on a very eager gorgon. You see, she collects statues. She would like to add another one – you.

Make a L8 SR on WIZ: if you fail, you are duly petrified and can close the book because no one is going to come and bale you out with old baleful eyes looking on; if you succeed, you have time to avert your gaze, slam the door shut, whack out a good old Lock Tight and head with your tail between your legs back to <461> where you can make another choice.

<474> A great vortex suddenly takes hold of you and drags you forward no matter what you try, magic or muscle. I am not prepared to let you try the astronomically high saving roll you would need to make to get out of this one. You find yourself in the Vice Den of the Arch Demon Ashgoleth, now engaged in a pow-wow with the snaky avian of an alien, Zweetz.

Sample file



Sample file

They find your intrusion mildly boorish and so Ashgoleth turns you into a dung beetle, puts you in a jar and propels you at no little inconvenience into an alternative reality. The only way forward for this character is for you to get hold of 'Deception: Strangebrew's Chambers of the Unknown' form Khaghbboommm Press – if you do, you are able to morph back to normal form and embark on that solo adventure, having closed the book on this one.

<475> You need to make an INT SR at the level of the spell to teach in properly and he needs to do the same to learn it. The gnome's INT is 31 and he is a L3 wizard. If you succeed in teaching him the spell he claps his hands in delight and offers you an apple before

showing you the way to the meeting with the senior wizards and the Manukans. Go <455>.

Sample file

If you fail to teach him the spell, no matter who is at fault, then he fumes and stamps his little feet in exasperation. 'You're all talk and no trousers, you!' he snaps. 'You can bugger off – I'm sick of the sight of you, you big bag of wind!'

He looks like he really means it! Go to <476>.

<476> 'That's it! I've had all I'm going to take from you, sunshine!' He points a little silver arrow on a chain about his neck at you and you are teleported back to Apys.

Go to <460>.

<477> The bell tolls (this is really too small a space for a bell to toll in so the reverberations are rather unpleasant on everyone's ears). There are no last requests – everyone always asks for a pardon or for freedom sot his custom had to be dropped), there are no last words (those prisoners who were members of the Orators' Guild waxed so long and lyrical that guards and executioners had to be paid overtime and often nodded off on the job – the penalty for which is death).

Sample file

You can tell that the renegade mages know that the end is nigh; they tremble and many are sobbing. You need to make a L1 SR on WIZ each time for the blow pipe to deal a lethal dose of khremm – that's nine SRs to kill the lot. If you fail, the lucky wizard is given his or her freedom. If you fail to kill at least eight, you take the place of one of the freed wizards!



You may take 50 APs for each wizard you execute and then go to <455> to meet the bigwigs unless you are now on death row, in which case I am very much afraid you must close the book as the final curtain falls on an another illustrious career.

<478> You can go to <477> to find out how the cold-blooded killing goes but as you are using the sickle, there is a difference. You must make a L5 SR on WIZ to take out all nine victims in one sweep of this instrument of death.

If you fail, try a L4 SR on WIZ to take out eight. That would still be acceptable. If you do not kill at least eight in the first swing of the sickle, you are condemned and the two you missed are let off with a stern warning and a bit of Wizard Control gratuitous brutality (they will be able to walk again eventually).

Go to <470>.

<479> Elijah Scrote smiles thinly and fingers a silver noose sigil he keeps in his pocket. You feel your throat constricted and your windpipe no longer allows air to travel down it. Your eyes water and then boggle as Elijah pushes the loathsome needle through your nearest ear…

Sample file

Make a L1 SR on first WIZ and then CHR. You need to make both or suffer the consequences described at <463> which you must now visit. It also deals with success in the saving roll stakes.

<480> Once you have slept long and deep, dreaming perhaps of Kalid Zest, the Stoneduke, or the High Elves of Fingledell or the great dragon, Hormuz, you are roused by a hard rap on the headboard of your bed. Melittida stands there looking down at you with a look in her eyes that could be taken for fondness.

She beckons you to get dressed and to follow her outside where you see the other suitors. She sniffs the heavy, humid jungle air and breathes in deeply, filling her lungs and swelling her chest.

'It is good to be alive and it is good to live here in Phantog, held secure under the watchful care of Apys. I very much enjoy visiting the cities of men on Khaghtch'an and the other kindreds' strongholds are a wonder to me but I would swap them all in a moment, without hesitation, without regret, for this life here in the jungles. I hope you my wooers, feel some of that too.' A wave of fetid stench, the ever-present reminder of rotting vege3atation, washes over you as she utters that imprecation.

'I have not been attentive to you, as a lover a should be, but you understand why and you have shown great forbearance and warmth. I love you all!' She gives a girlish twirl and then snaps her fingers saucily. With a merry twinkle in her eyes, she turns and runs towards Cratersedge and the great trees, calling you to try to catch her. Make a L1 SR on SPD for all the wooing wizards and go to <481>.

Sample file

<481> If you failed that saving roll on SPD, you get left behind and miss out on the action! Go to <483>.

If that didn't trip you up, you make it to a small clearing where Melittida is waiting for you. 'Here,' she breathes, 'here is where I will make my choice. Here we shall be found by a kewpie and it shall guide my heart!' What, you might wonder, can a kewpie be that it can direct the love-match of a Manukan queen?

Melittida tells you in hushed tones as you all stand quietly and wait. The kewpie is a small furry mammal, about the size of a domestic cat; it has wings and would be the cutest thing in Phantog if it were not for the scent it releases whenever it feels like it, which is often. It does it especially when it is hungry – which is also often – because the racoon-like stench can cause many a creature encountered to faint at the shock of its stink.

The only creature known to enjoy being sprayed by a kewpie is a bogwopp'it which is able to neutralise the liquid stink bombs and feed off them. You are not, however, a bogwopp'it. The kewpie also fires out small darts that tenderise Phantog's residents so that the kewpie can digest them more easily – it has weak teeth, sadly for it.

These darts do no harm to those not born in Phantog though, there being a genetic modification common to all Phantog creatures that the kewpie latches on to. These darts are taken by the Manukans to indicate a loving heart and sap that rises perennially. When the kewpie comes, Melittida will prevent it from spraying – this will make it fire all the more darts and whoever is hit by most will be her choice of husband. Simple and almost painless! Go to <482>.

Sample file

<482> After some nervous waiting, the kewpie appears. With a flash of her wrist, Melittida hits it with something that gives of a cloud of yellow powder on contact. There is, very happily, no stink from the kewpie but it does stat firing its darts, angrily snarling and posturing on its hind legs.

You and the other wizards may roll 1d6 for every 100 WPs you have gained in this diplomatic love struggle. The one with the highest total will know that he alone is Melittida's first choice!

Go to <483>.

<483> There are undoubtedly some crestfallen faces as the queen announces her favourite. Any latecomers may not know how the choice was arrived at but can see that it has been made from those who kept pace with Melittida in her race into Phantog's arms. There is no need for breast beating and self-flagellation though! Melittida has something to add.

'Because my life is one of travel and I must find ways of building rapport with so many different people, so many different kindreds, I alone of the queens am allowed to indulge in polygamy. I choose all of you! There is a hierarchy but I can and will love all of you, my husbands to be'e, I promise you!'

Well, that is a turn up for the books. Even a librarian might not have seen that one coming. Sunnyman, Hanzalf and Ragnarok cheer in unison, while Catweezil caterwauls madly and the Wood Wizard pops a magic mushroom to celebrate. Every wooing wizard still with us receives 4,000 APs.

The winner – the wizard with most WPs – also receives a rare boon. Melittida takes a vial containing a potent

Sample file

philtre from her bosom and watches the victor drink its few drops. The enchanted liquid warms the cockles of the wooing champion, raising all wizardly attributes to 100 plus 1d6.

The rise in stature is visible to those lagging behind in this Casanova contest. Melittida picks the champion wooer up as if he were naught but a bairn and attaches her lips to his for a long, languid connection.

Back in Apys, Bee'n Hurley cracks a joke, an egg and a mirror for good measure and presents each wizard with a contract for signing to make matters legally watertight. Turning to the triumphant wizard, he asks in a stately drone if the successful suitor is content to be Melittida's husband or if he will throw his wooing cap at the next ranking queen. He draws attention to the dowry of 80,000 GPs that goes with the queen's claw.

If the winning wizard so wishes, he may play on in the game of love, being taught two L8 and one each of the L9 and 10 spells in the Wizards' Guild standard spellbook. Melittida has husbands aplenty and won't begrudge her colleague the suit of her best beau.

If you have the opportunity and choose to shoot for a higher ranking bride, go to <484>; if you are content to be just one of Melittida's husbands, I wish you a happy marriage and good friendship with your co-husbands. You are able to decline if you are wedded to the concept of monogamy or just think you could do without the constant competition.

If that is your chosen course of action, make L1 SRs on LK and CHR. If you fail, Melittida keeps you against your will and you would need to email of Trollmail me to have any escape plan assessed; if you make both

Samplefile

rolls, she tells you that you are being a fool but has you escorted to the edge of Phantog and sets you on your way with 1,000 GPs as a parting gift to show there are no hard feelings on her part.

Sample file

<484> The heavens beckon for you!

You are swiftly moved on – out of sight, out of mind for Melittida. Let's see if you can win the wooing wrestle another time with another gal. This one has stars in her eyes and is not put off by mooning.

On you go to <77> and let's hope you put in a stellar performance.

<485> The Tower of the Astronomer has 1,001 steps to the Observatory at its zenith. Make a L1 SR on CON for all wizards – anyone who fails is gasping wheezily for breath before the top is reached. Would Colettida want an unfit spouse? Probably not. Anyone who fails loses 50 WPs.

Go to <486> to enjoy the view.

<486> As you near the top (where you will have to stop – that's what's bothering me!), Rinsewell asks if birds do not crash into this invisible tower (Rinsewell is an ornithologist and wishes his bride-to-be'e lived in Avys, not Apys).

Bee'tleguis tells him that it is a big problem – apart from an extra, unproductive task for the workers who have to be sent out to clear away the poor, broken birdie bodies every morning there is the effect on the eco-system that de-population of birds brings, with already very nasty insect numbers getting bigger and nastier.

'Anyone think they could work up a bird-repellent spell?' he asks, hopeful as ever.

Sample file

If you would like to give it your best shot, write up the spell you would like to create (level, range, duration, WIZ cost, effect) and then go to <489>.

<487> After a long silence, into which Dr. Weird interjects a drumming of his fingers against his elongated forehead, a tremulously voice calls out, 'I want to be'e alone!'

'Oh dear,' Bee'tleguis whispers. 'This is not going to be'e easy…' He hops from one leg to another at the to of the stairwell. 'We'll try the carrot before the stick, I think. Everyone, on the count of three, make a noise like a shooting star rocketing across the heavens.'

What on earth (well not on earth at all) sort of noise would a shooting star make? Make the appropriate sound out loud, scaring the rest of your household I hope, and go to <490>.

Sample file

<488> The queen peeks out. "Oh, Bee'ty,' she murmurs huskily, 'they do look like very bad boys who need a firm hand. Bring them in and introduce them to me and they can make their confession.'

Colettida is now very eager to make your acquaintances. She preens her carefully coiffured towering bee hive of a hairdo and licks her lips lasciviously. She is a full figured lass, with star shaped eyes, twinkling in anticipation…go to 491>.

<489> It shouldn't take too high powered a spell to ward birds away from this tower – wonder why they didn't think of it before or maybe the need is a new one? I think L3 is sufficient. You can roll 1d6 for the other wizards to see what level they set their spell at. Anyone who went for less than L3 wasted time and

effort – quite useless, as Souza Fortescue is quick to observe.

Sample file

Everyone needs to make saving rolls on WIZ and INT and double the level they primed their spell for. If anyone succeeds in those rolls with a spell of at least L3, they have produced, literally out of the ether, a new spell and the tower will repel birds, according to the wizard's intention. That earns 150 WPs, no sweat.

With this wizardly work done with, Bee'tleguis knocks respectfully (you try on a door in your house – its not that easy to master the technique required) and waits for a response. Go to <487>.

<490> All wizards need to make the best saving roll they can on the average of INT, LK and WIZ (if you don't like the math, I'm sorry but you did choose to play a L10 wizard – you will need a university training by the time we get to L13!). Anyone who makes L9 has dug out the inspiration to make just the sort of sound that Colettida associates with comets and shooting stars.

If no one managed that, go to <492> otherwise go to <494>. All wizards who made the L9 roll get 100 WPs and have a talent for impersonating high speed space rocks.

<491> 'Now boys,' she trills throatily, batting her thick, bold eyelashes, 'spread out and touch your toes, facing the wall.' The wall is painted black and is windowless. Will you do as you are told or will you protest, perhaps politely, perhaps firmly?
Make a L1 SR on INT for the other wooing wizards. Go to <496> if you bend over as Colettida has instructed or to <497>.if you refuse her royal prerogative.

<492> Shame! Bee'tleguis has to resort to the stick, which he produces from his trouser leg pocket. 'Your

Sample file

majesty!' he cries in excited tones. 'There are some very naughty boys out here who need punishing!'

Your hear footsteps and the door opens. Go to 488>.

<493> Once she has you all where and as she wants you, the capricious Colettida clicks her mandibles and causes little portholes to open up in the black walls; little peepholes that have in front of them incredibly powerful, magically enhanced lenses, with in-built infra-red, ultra-violet and fluro-pink polka dot vision. These are telescopes, pathways to the very stars in the firmament above Trollworld, the means by which Colettida, the Starwatcher Queen, discharges her Constant Vigil (another solo available from Khaghbboommm Press, astonishingly enough!), a vigil often observed in comfortable isolation.

As you adjust your eyes to the lens' optic signature, the queen speaks again: 'If I do marry one of you, and hark now – I say might, then you would have to spend a great deal of time up here alone with me. 'Guisy brings me food but I would have to rely on you for entertainment in those rare moments when my concentration does not have to be fully on the cosmos. I hope you are made of the right stuff, I really do!'

With those words ringing out in warning, go to <495>.

<494> It seems improbable to me that shooting stars are very quiet – quite the reverse, I'd wager. Make a L1 SR on CON for all wizards. Anyone who fails is deafened for 10 minutes and misses out on the next award of WPs. Go to <488>.

<495> 'Let's see how you get on with a spot of constellation identification. You'll have to look closely

Sample file

and use your imagination. I'm afraid the ancient troll astronomers who gave name to groups of stars and nebulae were probably myopic or warped as far as humour goes. Oh well, it gives you a tingle of satisfaction when you finally get there. Wouldn't want to be over in a minute, anyway!'

Sample file

The queen places her hands on your hips, one by one, and makes any adjustments she deems necessary to your alignment. 'You're infringing my personal boundaries!' croaks Souza in half stymied protest.

'Well, I may let you infringe on mine a bit later on,' Colettida replies confidentially. 'Maybe your boundaries need adjusting...'

Then not just the queen but silence, too, reigns. You are set your backs to the task of watching the heavens, unmoving though they at first seem, drawn minute by minute away from the Trollworld's anchoring gravity and out into the infinite limitlessness of space. Go to <498>.

Sample file

<496> 'Oh, that's just plum,' she exclaims. 'I feel ready for action now! The sight of you in that position is almost too much for a girl.' She laughs shrilly. 'Mr. House Elf – I can see you're not an elf at all, you naughty boy – you must have been working out!'

Souza Fortescue gasps darkly that the only working out that House Elf ever needs to do is done with a pencil, just like the constipated mathematician he really is. They're good friends and House Elf merely withdraws his pencil from his pockets and brandishes it with a flourish that sets Colettida all a flutter.

(Any wizard who made the INT SR is squarely in position and gets 30 WPs, as do you.) Go to <493>.

<497> 'Come now, don't be coy,' she coaxes. 'We might miss a golden moment. You'll never hit the heights if you can't adopt the correct position. I'm afraid I'm rather fussy about that.'

She waves all her arms in frenzied fashion, making Dr. Weird feel all peculiar and Souza to feel even more irritable than normal (and he's L20 based on his Grumpiness attribute).

(Any wizard who made the INT SR is squarely in position and gets 30 WPs.) Go to <493>.

<498 Time slows and you begin to merge with the starry panorama that spreads beneath your scouring eyes. Then Bee'tleguis' voice reaches out for you from nowhere, a stabbing finger of sound, bringing back to your purpose.

'Look for the Kettle,' he directs, 'look for it in the west. Then look for the Manticore with its coiled stinger; the stinger points the way to Medusa herself and from her, following the heads of her snaky locks, you can find the Phoenix Egg, a cluster not of stars but two entwined galaxies spinning, whirling through one another, careless of individual stars colliding.

And to the north-east you may find, if you can see in more than linear dreams, the great Squidva, her eight arms cradling the tiny constellation of the Heart. Take your time and open your eyes as if for the very first time, drinking in the sights of our universe.'

His voice is hypnotic, it compels you to search for meaning amongst the web of lights set in the deep black tapestry of space. Make a L5 SR on INT for all wizards and go to <499>.

<499 Perhaps you begin to see the constellations, these portents of what may be, of all those countless possible may-be's? Make a L5 SR on LK for all wizards and go to <500>.

Sample file

<500> Has luck chosen to guide you through the stars on this journey of exploration, this voyage of discovery? Make a L4 SR on CON and go to <501>.

<501> If you made the INT SR, you can perceive patterns that would elude most mortal watchers; if you made the LK SR, you have unseen help in the work you do, on the paths you walk; if you made the CON SR, you have a backbone that will not easily crumble. Go to <502>.

<502> You did very nicely if you made those three rolls – you would have seen the Medusa, the Manticore, the Kettle, the Phoenix Egg and even Squidva and the Heart. You wouldn't have seen without the INT and the LK rolls; if you failed on CON, your back must have given you gyp and you would have quit before you completed your study – roll 1d6 to see how many of the constellations you found before you pulled stumps on the star gazing. You – and your companions – are awarded 50 WPs for every form you found (a maximum, and possibly probable, haul of 300 WPs).
If you achieved perfection, your eyes are attuned to this labour of endless patience and Colittida pinches you cheekily before you stand upright. This invigorates you – you feel zesty and frolicsome at the same time. Gain 1d6 to either STR or CON – it's a kinda magic, in bohemian rhapsody sort of way. Dr. Weird points out that he is particularly good with patients and he gets a raise of 1d6 to both attributes. There is no sign of Libra here to balance things out – that's just not the way of things on Trollworld.

Go to <503>.

<503> Bee'tleguis coughs and addresses Colittida.

Sample file

‘Your Majesty,’ he begins, with a smidgeon more in the way of obsequiousness than seems strictly necessary, ‘perhaps you would do well, all things considered and being equal despite the universe being manifestly inequitable, to commence upon revealing the reason why, a Queen of the Manukans – and a most refined and prime monarch at that! – should lock herself away in this ivory tower, for invisible it may be but the Architect did not spare the elephants, and give her most valuable of mortal lives to the unending task of studying the starry heavens, perhaps…’

‘Shut up, ‘Guisy! You don’t half go on at times! Are your ears bleeding, my poor wooers? Shall I put my tongue to good use? No, he is right – I should explain…’

And so the rationale for this Tower of the Astronomer that the Architect, whoever she might be, stole the lives of so many ill-fated pachyderms to build, is laid out before you all…Go to <504>.

Sample file

<504> ‘I watch the heavens because this planet has been invaded many, many times in the past and it inevitably will be again. Now, don’t be too alarmed – most invasions occur through accidents of interstellar travel and because they are not plotted, the invaders have tended to be few in number and are easily absorbed into the fabric of Trollworld society.

The first invaders were the dragonkind and the elvenir – the dragons were pursuing their enemies, the elves, through space when they came across what we believe to be a unique phenomenon: a singularity, a wormhole, that brought them from their universe to this one. Here, they found naught but trolls. From that moment on, Trollworld’s history has been littered with kindreds stumbling into that singularity, never in great

enough numbers to dominate until humans arrived. We, too, even the proud Manukans, came here perchance and could not, could never, return home.

Sample file

Do you comprehend what an improbability this world we inhabit is? Probably not but you may take my word – it should not be yet we can see and felt that it is. And it is a world unlike all others! It is a world replete with khremm, right down to the very core!'

This is a great deal to assimilate in one swallow, even for a high-ranking 10th Level wizard. Pause for digestion and go to <505>.

<505> Colettida has Bee'tleguis check you over for signs of distress. This involves the Manukan mind meld, a technique that very few Manukans are sufficiently skilled to practice on other kindreds. If delivered successfully, there can be long term benefits to those who open their minds willingly to the another's mind intent on delving to the centre of the brain, to visit all the nooks and crannies where the deepest, darkest thoughts are harboured, where phobias are rooted in the ganglia and synapses.

Sample file

You may refuse to allow this psychiatric incursion but if you do, you must leave the Tower of the Astronomer, you must leave Apys and Phantog forever.

You can roll a L1 SR on CHR for each of the other wizards. Already Rinsewell is muttering unhappily about his smalls. If anyone fails, that wizard elects to leave and to abandon his quest for Colettida's claw.

Make your decision too. Close the book if you will not allow your mind to be laid out two-dimensionally before Bee'tleguis or go to <506> if you are ready to sign the consent form in (your own) blood.

<506> Still here? Good. You would have been missed. To survive this potentially lethal probing, as

Bee'tleguis slips a damp cloth smelling of beeswax and bitumen over your eyes and lights ear candles to insert up to your eardrums, you must make L1 SRs on both CHR and CON. If you fail the CHR SR, go to <508>; if you fail the CON SR, go to <509>; if you fail both SRs, - ugh! – go to <510>; if you pass both tests, go to <511>. Roll for your marriage-maddened mates too.

<507> The Starwatcher Queen gestures that you should sit on the floor. Souza Fortescue, being a dwarf, does not have far to go but El Rico is less keen on this. As he assumes the cross-legged position his fellow wizards adopt, his long, droopy moustache trails on the ground and he inadvertently sits on it, causing a squeal of anguish.

Sample file

Colettida is not pleased at the disturbance – you can dock him 30 WPs. Helpful chap that he is, House Elf casts his 'Get Knotted' spell, tying the top lip hairs in a ponytail behind El Rico's head. Practical, if less than chic, he scores 30 WPs for his spot of magical housekeeping.

'If,' Colettida says sniffily, 'you are all seated comfortably, then I shall continue.' She fingers a pair of glass balls, tied by a cord to her waist. One of the balls is rather larger than the other. 'The Tower of the Astronomer was built by the brothers Khaghbboommm and Khaghtch'an eons ago and was given into Manukan keeping not to watch the stars but to watch space much closer to Trollworld. The singularity that sometimes deposits foreign beings in this universe drops them close to this planet.

I doubt it is a coincidence; I am certain that the khremm of Trollworld acts as a magnet. We watch not the stars but this solar system for it is close to home

that the enemy will appear. There is one foe, an ancient foe, who understands the workings of the singularity and is able to access it through design.

Sample file

It is this adversary I watch for and it is now that this Tower, for the first time ever, has need of its Astronomer. I sincerely hope, regardless of my own nuptial rights, that one of you is the Astronomer this tower has waited for.

Again, I have said enough. Let us have one moment of levity before we watch. Cast a spell to amuse me!' This devoted servant of not merely Apys but of the whole Trollworld lets slip her fervent mas of concentration and bee'ams at your with *les yeux d'amour*.

There can be no doubt that as a L10 wizard you can invent a piece of magical amusement, a fragment of frippery, on the spot (I think that is what House Elf did with 'Get Knotted') – write down your attempt at entertainment with effect, level, duration, range and WIZ cost and then go to <342>.

Sample file

<508> The presence of another walking the paths of your cerebral cortex, springing lightly from your cerebellum, upsets the delicately balanced and intricately complex stew of amino acids and proteins that is you. Your DNA twists and your RNA shouts, while chromosomes split and cell walls rupture. Your personality warps and your CHR becomes negative.

Go figure…Take 200 APs and go to <507>.

<509> The gentle caress of Bee'tleguis' tender mental massage causes your brain to send a red alert message to your heart – Abandon ship! Commence self-destruct sequence! You are about to have a massive coronary – a heart explosion on fact.

Make a L4 SR on STR. When you realise the message has been sent, you do all you can to constrict nerve

endings to stop that message getting through. It's like a fast burning fuse. Your facial contortions will give away the immensity of your effort as you squeeze with every fibre and sinew.

Sample file

If you fail, close the book – the bomb detonates; if you close up all your inner passages, you extinguish the deadly command and can go to <507>.

<510> You really, really botched it big time, didn't you? Don't worry, L10 wizards seldom die, they tend to just fade away. As you body and your mind close down under the agony of this paranormal penetration, your spirit flits free and is hovered up by the Great Jhinn in the Jar. Take 500 APs (this is a life-changing experience) and close the book.

You need a GM to get things moving again – email me if you like!

Sample file

<511> You are stout of heart and lusty of limb and, quite probably, are an intellectual giant amongst pygmies. Take 100 APs and the same in WPs, as Colettida takes stock of your stature. You are ready to go on with this journey into the secrets of the Tower of the Astronomer. Make a L5 SR on LK. It may be that Bee'tleguis has managed to straighten out a few kinks for you, to kneed knots in your psyche.

Any attribute which is within three of the next 'ten' goes up to that 'ten' right now (for example, if your STR is 47, it would go to 50 – same for any of the other wizards who made all the rolls required).
Go with a skip and a hop to <507>.

<512> Make a SR on INT at the level of your spell to ensure you have it right as a pattern in your mind. Go to <513>.

<513> Make a SR on DEX at the level of your spell to ensure your fingers flex in the necessary fashion as

you manipulate the magic you draw from the planet. Go to <514>.

Sample file

<514> If you didn't make both saving rolls, you flubbed the new enchantment – not very amusing at all. Lose 50 WPs and go to <516>. If you made those critical saving rolls, bingo! Go to <517>.

<515> How did you go? You should do it for the other wizards too – except for Dr. Weird. I imagine that L5 might be the mark, maybe L6 if someone got lucky and was really on their toes. Go to <518>.

<516> Doh! Souza claps sarcastically and Rinsewell flaps a pair of his smalls in your direction. Not a good show on your part so someone else gets a chance. Let's see…ah, yes, Bee'tleguis selects Old Peculiar himself, Dr. Weird.

Go to <519>.

Sample file

<517> Colettida asks Bee'tleguis who should go first and, without hesitation, the faithful servant points to you. Of you go with your spell. If you would oblige me, email me the details please as I'd love to know what it is that you have come up with.

If you manage the INT SR to cast the spell, now try a SR on the average of your LK and CHR. Make it and you and your new enchantment are big hits – take 30 WPs times the level of the new spell.

And on with the show! Bee'tleguis points at Dr. Weird…go to <519>.

<518> Dr. Weird threw a Double-Double on his SPD before he mentioned the Mutandum Mutandis spell. You can roll for him now.

If he made the best SPD SR, go to <521>; if it was someone else, go to <522>.

<519> 'How long does a Mutandum Mutandis spell last?' the Doctor enquires. 'Why?' returns El Rico, who has just undone his moustache knots. 'That's not a new spell! I thought you would show us something you learnt in Hysnavle.'
Weird reaches up to his head, grasps his ears and twists them hard. Make the best SR you can on SPD and go to <515>.

<520> The Bird-Serpent looks at the wizard who has been surpassed by all the others in the charisma stakes and grins evilly. 'You, then; I will take you. Prepare yourself for the longest teleportation that you will have ever endured. Your molecules will be scrambled but fear not! We want your brain to survive, for a little while, at least.'

There is nothing any of you can do to thwart the alien's scheme, struggle as you might. You can see the veins throbbing at Souza Fortescue's temples and House Elf's glazed look is simply his way of attempting to summon any hidden reserves of magical might that may be tapped into. Colettida's unmoving face gives nothing away but you can be certain this infringement on her freedom would result in the death penalty, were the fiend to be captured.

If is you that was chosen, go to <523>; if it was one of the other wooing wizards, go to <527>.

<521> Read <522> to see what is happening but you do not get to cast a spell, nor do any of the other wizards. Then go to <525> not <524>.

Sample file

<522> You see that Dr. Weird is changing – fast. His head is losing its ears and his nose is becoming snout-like; his tongue darts out from his mouth and you see it is forked now while his eyes have changed to an inhuman, alien yellow. His body is altering too, as you watch agog, with feathers sprouting from beneath his robes and wings replacing arms.

The Doctor has metamorphocised into some sort of, well, weird, extra-terrestrial bird-serpent.

You have time to cast a spell if you were faster than this changeling (if it was not you but another wizard you may select a spell for him – if more than one wizard was quicker off the mark, maybe because the deceiver rolled a critical fumble, then you may choose a spell for each one – don't forget the INT SR).

Write down your/their spells and go to <524>.

<523> Make a L12 SR on WIZ. If you fail, close the book. The only way you will find out what has happened to your character is if you email me…
If you made the saving roll, go to <529>.

<524> Did you remember that you are in a confined space? The use of a spell such as Hell Bomb Bursts would likely to be catastrophic, suicide even! Go to <526>.

<525> The creature hisses savagely as its tongue flickers in and out. It casts a Rock-a-Bye over you all – wizards and Manukans alike. Its power is such that it overwhelms any resistance instantly. When you stir, how ever much time has passed it has been enough for the Bird-Serpent to bind you all with invisible ropes of magical energy.

Sample file

Out of the corner of your eye, you see Rinsewell wink at you and then he opens both eyes as wide as saucers. He has the ability to cast Death Spell #9 without moving his hands. You sense the opportunity to add your lot to the efforts of the Laundry Wizard if you are quick.

Make a L1 SR on SPD and then a L10 SR on INT then go to <526>.
<526> Whatever the thing that was Dr. Weird now is, it dis-spells magic higher than L10. Your efforts seem puny to it and the futility is abundantly clear to all in the tower. The Bird-Serpent casts a group *Hold That Pose* and then speaks with hissing sibilants spitting from its gnashing mouth, cruel fangs gleaming in the light streaming from its eyes.

'What have you learned since we were last here? We will find out, we will take your secrets and then take your planet. Your Astronomer will never come to pass! Which one? Which one?'

Make a SR on CHR for all the wizards (except the former Dr. Weird, of course), record the result and go to <528>.

<527> The unfortunate mage is flipped out of this place to somewhere far less cosy and far more unpleasant. That poor sorcerer may soon wish he had never been born. If the wizard was either House Elf or Souza Fortescue, go to <530>; if it was someone else, go to <531>.

<528> Did you think to cast a Double Double on your CHR? Souza Fortescue and House Elf both did, the bonds not preventing them. Someone is at the bottom of the pecking order and that is a worry…

Go to <520>.

Sample file

<529> You have managed a minor miracle. It is highly unlikely that you will never be able to repeat this feat and it may well be that some Wizard-God such as Khaghbboommm or Khaghtch'an may have intervened; at any rate, you manage to switch places with the Laundry Wizard as the Bird-Serpent casts its spell. Poor Rinsewell vanishes in a puff of acrid smoke. You are even more unlikely to ever see his washed out face or his smalls ever again.
You can go to <531> which is a lot safer than where he has gone to and not nearly so far.

<530> These Khaboom wizards have a charm tucked somewhere discreet that allows them to swap places with someone else if they are about to be teleported against their will and their better judgement. The charm is activated and it is the forlorn Laundry Wizard, Rinsewell, who is flipped out of here all the way to Kingdom Come. There will no laundry facilities where he has gone and it won't only be his smalls that go to rack and ruin.

Go to <531>.

<531> Casting such a far-sending *Blow You To* spell has depleted the thing that was masquerading as Dr. Weird to mere mortal proportions of WIZ. Souza Fortescue, House Elf and El Rico (I am assuming he is still with us) twitch their fingers and lick their lips, a precursor to hurling their magical fury at the common foe. Colettida shakes her antennae and zaps it ferociously too while Bee'tleguis spins round and backs towards it, stinger poised for action.

If you want to cast a spell, write it down and go to <533>.

Sample file

<532> Once House Elf and Souza have bundled the Bird-Serpent down the steps and out of the tower, Bee'tleguis asks the queen if she would have him, too, leave to allow some more intimate wooing time.

'No, Guisy,' she answers softly. 'You must help me look at those twin moons and then you will choose my husband, the Astronomer revealed, for I will not let fancy dictate. I have my favourite but I will not rule by whim!'
Once again, you all review the skies above Phantog, above the Trollworld, for portents of more of these Bird-Serpents and perhaps of their Master. Go to <536>.

<533> The Bird-Serpent is beset by savage mystical attacks from all sides. The dwarf wizard keeps it simple and casts Hold That Pose; his Khaboomian colleague is more adventurous and, seeing Souza's spell take its grip, he chances an Oh Go Away – an interesting topping to the first spell. The other wooing wizard launches a TYF of thunderous potency, the small observation chamber reeking now of electricity and burning.

Sample file

The queen's Manukan zaps didn't do much for the hapless creature and when Bee'tleguis inserts his stinger it spasms like a jelly on a rollercoaster.

What did your spell contribute? Go to <534>.

<534> The Oh Go Away failed and the Bird-Serpent is desperate to attack House Elf, who somewhat childishly sticks his tongue out at it. Since it is held still by Souza's spell, this frenzy simply doubles the spasming. 'Do you think it is subdued?' House Elf asks of no one in particular. Souza applies a swift knee to its groin and grunts, 'I'd say so!'

At this act of gratuitous violence, the wizard with the seeing hat casts Spirit Mastery and all goes quiet. The calm stillness takes some getting used to.

All wizards involved in this capture who cast a spell score 50 times the WIZ expended in WPs. Go to <535>.

<535> Colettida looks quite shaken. 'This villain should be taken to the Hive Queen at once!' she orders weakly. 'I must stay here; I must examine the skies again.'

'We will take it to the Hive Queen,' House Elf answers. 'We beg your forgiveness, Highness,' Souza says with rare grace, 'but we must bow out of this marital contest for the Wizards' Guild in Khaboom should mind-read this fiend. We will seek permission from Andremida to take it thence at once.'

Colettida regards the creature, ominously vacant, and then all wizards before nodding curtly. She turns to you and your one remaining rival. 'At a pinch, one of you will do. Assist me in my star-watching. If all is undisturbed in the heavens, if the calm before the coming storm still lasts out, I shall then put you through your wooing paces.'

So – then there were two… Go to <532>.

<536> Nothing. Nothing at all. Just those two moons, Sar and Sahane, in their unending dance about the planet below them. No sign of the threat that is surely coming.

At length, Colettida has you descend the staircase to terra firma. 'Not enough room for you boys to strut

Sample file

your stuff in their,' she simpers. Standing no more than 50' from the looming edifice that may be your home soon enough, she tells you on her mark to cast a L1 spell to get her attention.

That should pose no problem, Write down your spell and make the INT SR, then go to <537> (oh, and for the avoidance of doubt, casting death-dealing spells on your rival brings instant disqualification!).
<537> El Rico (for I am confident that it is he who opposes you, he of the twirly, rope-like moustache, he of the Power Poncho of Patergonear, weighs up his options and, with a lethargic flick of the wrist, casts Sparkle unless he fails the L1 INT SR, in which case he shrugs with embarrassment. The only spell that will impress Colettida more is That's A Natty Beard (and it doesn't matter who it is cast on, bar the queen herself).

The winner takes 50 WPs. If there is a tie (same spell selected) then both get 25 WPs; if one wizard fails the INT SR (same for all levels of spells as you go on) then any successfully cast spell garners 50 WPs. Was Colettida satisfied with the magic you command at your fingertips? There's a long way to go yet.

Sample file

Now it is time for a L2 spell. Record your choice and go to <538>.

<538> Your rival tugs on his moustache. He is so uncertain as to what will impress that he begins to loosen follicles! Make a L3 SR on LK for him. If he fails, several hairs fall out and he loses 1d6 WIZ in Samson-esque fashion.

Bee'tleguis gives him a sharp tap on the bridge of his nose to spur him on into action and when his eyes finally stop watering he attempts to cast a Mirage of himself as a 50' colossus holding a telescope of

prodigious length and girth to one eye. He certainly pulled a rabbit out of the hat there and maybe a ferret will follow from his trouser leg.

Sample file

The only spell which will appeal more to Colettida (and all Manukans) is, of course, Unlucky Bees – if you chose that, I wonder who you cast it on. Same WP rules as for L1 but the reward is doubled to 100.

Now it is time for a L3 spell. Record your choice and go to <539>.

<539> El Rico is just hitting his straps now and yells out something akin to 'Ondrai, ondrai, arriba!' to make his sap rise and to shiver your timbers. He smirks at you with the (possibly) misplaced confidence of a trickster as he attempts to cast Devoted Rain Cloud to show his mastery over the weather conditions themselves.

The one spell which will impress Colettida more is Fire at Will for the exciting patterns of naked force it conjures up. Same WP rules as for L1 and 2 but the reward is doubled again to 200.

Now it is time for a L4 spell. Record your choice and go to <540>.

Sample file

<540> 'Are we really going to have to perform pony tricks for you al the way up to L10 magic?' El Rico asks petulantly. 'Why can't I just pick something with all the bells and whistles and be judged on that?'

'Because I'm queen and you're here to woo me. That means doing what I want!' Colettida replies. 'Let's see what you're made of! Quit whining and make like a busy bee!'

The sorcerer still looks just as put out as a man with a hornets nest down the front of his trousers but he grits his teeth, puts his shoulders squarely back and tries to

cast Smog. It is exceptionally stinky and Bee'tleguis splutters with either indignation or apoplexy – maybe both.

The spell that will trump this unpleasant effort is Upsidaisy – you can lift what you will and make it perform acrobatic miracles! Same WP rules as for L1 and 2 but the reward is doubled again to 400.

Now it is time for a L5 spell. Record your choice and go to <541>.

<541> As you are thinking about a L5 spell that might be fit for a queen, a loud harrumphing noise reaches everyone's ears from Craterseduz, away to the west.

Charging out of the dense, rotting foliage with steam snorting from every orifice comes a beast which would put any mariner in mind of a manta ray. This one has pincer legs, six of them, and also has six tentacles waving above its head which is in two sections, giving it three sets on razor sharp teeth to rend and rip with. Like a ray, it has a long, barbed tail that is bound to do something diabolical and its black, limpid eyes seem to suck at your soul. It is the Marrow-sucking Sickophant and it's after your juicy bits!

'I'll tell you what will knock my socks off,' Colettida gasps. 'Stopping that dead in its tracks, that's what!'

You can change your spell if you like! Write down the L5 spell you fire at yon nastie and go to <543>.

<542> El Rico sniffs. 'Not much to pick from really. Suppose he's just going to copy me.' The moustachioed one shoots for a Porta-Vision – this consists of a herd of rainbow-coloured elephants

Sample file

using their trunks to wash clean a hive-shaped carriage pulled by seven unicorns.

'Hah!' he cries, very pleased with himself. If you wrote down anything better than that you deserve a humongous 1600 WPs, otherwise fortune favours the fiestaman.
Could it be that El Rico stole a march on you? Go to <542> to recover once you have written down your choice of L7 spell.

<543> El Rico goes for Mind Pox. That's is baaaad choice as the Sickophant is not bright enough to have its mind poxed. Down to you to save the day, sport. This calls for a Trollgod's Blessing – the clubbing will see the foul fiend turn tail and thunder back to the Jungle. I will allow a L5 TTYF or such like to turn the tide but it won't get you any more WPs. If you failed your INT SR or chose some lame, peacenik spell such as ESP or Second Sight (why would anyone do that?) then the Marrow-sucker has its way with all of you, belches contentedly and trundles rather than thunders back to the Jungle. That would be 'Close the Book' time, that would be.

Sample file

Success harvests you a whoppingly staggering 800 WPs (that's for Trollgod's Blessing). You also get 200 APs for surviving this attack (the thing only has a CON of 50, the big wuss, so I should think you'd do more than tickle its fancy) - now for a L6 spell, recorded, as ever, ye honest player.

Go to <542>.

<544> Not exactly spoilt for choice, he bangs out an Invisible Wall and runs into it, banking on the old slapstick routine winning laughs. He takes 4d6

damage in the process and then groans out a Poor Baby, picking his teeth up as he chants.

Your only hope to pick up 3200 WPs and deprive him of what he believes he has earned the hard way is to cast another Invisible Wall. You may run into – nominate a number of d6 for your corporal punishment and roll them dice! If you take more damage, you win the WPs. If it kills you in doing so, close the book.

If you live on, maybe with a pancake face now, choose a L8 spell, write it down and go to <545>.

<545> Well, it's got to be Mutandum Mutandis (or some silly name with a frog in it, if you insist). El Rico turns himself into a Balrog with a dragon's body and his own face – like a centaur but much scarier. What did you do? You will have to judge your transformation against his to win 6400 WPs. If you didn't transform, looks like you're on the ropes as we head on to L9 territory.

Sample file

Out with that pen, down with the spell and away we go to <546>.

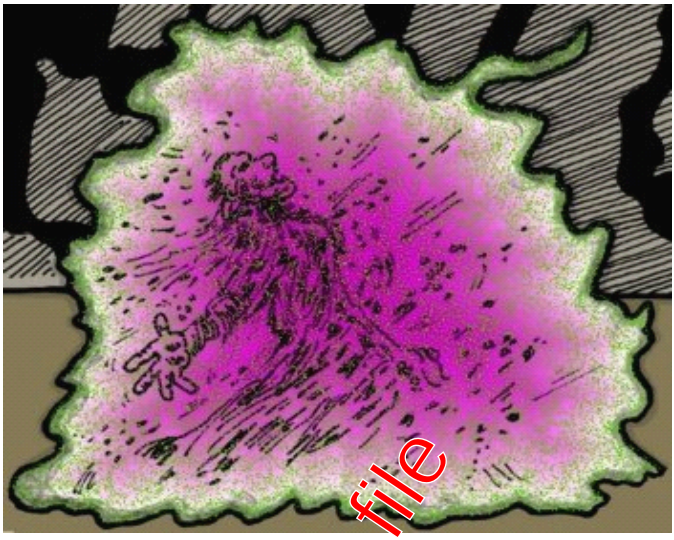
<546> Since turning someone else into something is outside the rules, El Rico turns a worm into a long, thin tube of stone - Medusa. This does not impress Colettida, quite frankly. If you managed something with a little more pizzazz then you scoop up a fortune of WPs – 12800, no less.

The race is nearly run – select a L10 spell and onwards and upwards to <547>.

<547> Hell Bomb Bursts time! Our be'eloved queen loved that and El Rico stands smugly with arms

crossed, licking his lips and moustache in desultory fashion.

Sample file



Sample file

You can't top that. Unless you caused a big explosion and lots of melting rock, he gets 25600 WPs and you don't. Probably a draw and no one adds to their WPs. Time for Bee'tleguis to announce who is getting married in the morning…
Go to <548>.

<548> You and El Rico receive 7,000 APs for staying in the hunt for Manukan treasure.

The winner – the wizard with most WPs – also receives a rare boon. Bee'tleguis sings a paean of victory in a buzzing tenor, which would raise the rafters and shatter the chandeliers were you in an auditorium. Instead, for the wooing champion, the soon-to-be'e husband of the Star Watching Queen, all wizardly attributes are raised to 130 plus 1d6.

Just as Colettida is about to take the winner's hand in her claw and scurry up the staircase for some 'getting to know you' time with her chosen beau, Bee'tleguis

respectfully but firmly stops her. Turning to the winning wooing wizard, he asks in a droning drawl if the successful suitor is content to be Colettida's consort or if he will throw his wooing cap at the Hive Queen herself. He draws attention to the dowry of 110,000 GPs that goes with this queen's claw.

Sample file

If the winning wizard so wishes, he may really reach for the stars, being taught one each of the L11 and 12 spells in the Wizards' Guild standard spellbook. Colettida's face would be likely to give nothing away to suggest she feels hard done by and some might think she was never too fussed as to which of the L10 wooers she ended up with.

If you have the opportunity and choose to shoot for a higher ranking bride, go to <549>; if you would like the title of Astronomer of the Tower, that's perfectly cool.

<549> Not content with a life amongst the stars, you are set on a course for the centre of this universe.

On you go to <87> where you may win the chance to lord it over every other wizard.

<550> The Hive Queen's steward, Bee'fuhr, stands before you and bows low. 'We are honoured by your coming, Excellencies,' he intones solemnly. 'Although the greater honour will be that of the thrice-blessed member of your sextet who wins my queen's claw, we fully acknowledge that you are mighty and have proven yourselves many times over to reach such an exalted pinnacle of your profession. We will not be'esmirch your fine names by asking you to perform minor thaumaturgy; come, see what sort of lady this queen is!'

Be'enthair clicks his mandibles crisply and a portal opens up in the wall be'ehind him. To follow him through, go to <551>.

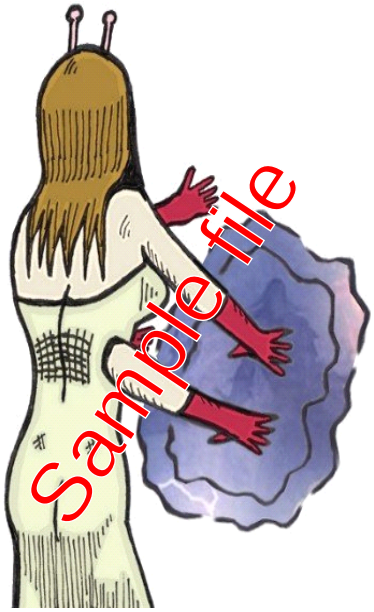
<551> You enter what clearly is a school room and you see a Manukan lady of such bearing, such unbearable grandeur that you know she must be'e Andremida for

Sample file

no other could carry such softly stated authority and not be Hive Queen. You see that for all her majesty she is engaged in a humble enterprise: the teaching of literacy to young queens-to-be'e.

Sample file

As she hears your arrival in her classroom, she halts her spelling bee'e and asks if you would care to test her students with a difficult word from your vocabulary. Each wizard must make the best SR on IN THE can muster – then roll 1d6: the level plus the number rolled indicate the target on 2d6 for the students to spell the word correctly.


Sample file

Wizards receive WPs equal to the target they set x 10, with the award doubled if the student failed to make the spelling challenge. When that is over, Andremida dismisses the class with a verse of Manukan folklore and offers each one of you her claws, clasped together as one, to kiss. Go to <552>.

<552> Andremida sets her antennae in motion and these potent appendages weave a change on the classroom, banishing books and desks, shrouding the

room in gloom only alleviated by the ubiquitous beeswax candles so favoured in Apys.

Sample file

‘Sit,’ she bids you in gentle yet clipped voice. As you do so, in a circle about her with Be’enthair hovering on the perimeter to attend to any command, she draws a cone of incense from one pocket and a flamestone from another and soon the room is filled with a heady aroma and the temperature rises sharply.

‘Is it not like unto the Jungle in here now, my wooers?’ she asks playfully. ‘We cannot settle the matter of my marriage without the presence of Phantog. I require of you, great spirit, that you watch over this wooing and aid me in my choice, even as I work to preserve you and my city.’

The aroma is soporific and cloyingly addictive. Make a L4 SR on CON and go to <553>.

<553> If you failed that SR, you drift off into a deep and pleasant reverie. This dreamworld you inhabit nourishes you and adds 1d6 to both STR and CON. However, it reduces both INT and WIZ by 1d6 each. You miss the introductions of the other wizards, no more but you do lose stature and suffer a loss of 50 WPs.

Sample file

Nethalkan speaks first, relaxed by the druggy mood of the gathering. He speaks of his work with a gentle hobb community and of the challenges he has faced from an angry spirit known only as ‘The Shouting Man’; then he lets slip his aspiration to return to Castle Lostreld, where he worked for many a year, if he cannot win Andremida’s hand. Roll 1d6 and multiply by 10 for the WPs he gains out of respect for his biography.



Then it is the turn of Limpwrist to reveal something of his life. He tells unblushingly of his great love for the fairy, Repunzel, and of her unwillingness to consider union with a human, not even once he had master the Smaller is Smarter and Bigger is Better spells. He confesses that it has taken him these last 39 years to rid himself of feelings of unrequited love and now he declares himself ready for some serious wooing pitched at someone his own size. He scores WPs in the way that Nethalkin did.

And then it is your turn. What have you to say for yourself? Email me, if you would be so kind and you can have double WPs. Otherwise you score 1d6 times the level of the best CHR SR you can make. Now go to <554>.

<554> The wizard who begins to recount some portion of his life's lot next is the man named Bumblesnore. 'My name is a legacy from my grandfather,' he reveals, 'who came here for this very same purpose many years ago. He gained an honorific replacement for his true name, which he destroyed in a magical maelstroem, but he lost out to a greater exponent of the mystical arts and fell asleep, never to wake.

Sample file

For my part, after years of adventuring, and quite successfully too I may add, I decided to do much as your Majesty does here and set up a school for wizards, offering my practical alternatives to the standard Guild spells – variations designed to keep low level wizards alive in dungeons. I asked only for a percentage of all treasures my protégées won. Alas, few ever upheld their oaths and last year I closed the school in disgust at the greed of men! Now I am ready to sit with you in your school, my queen, a professor of the arcane arts preparing the future for a stronger Apys!' This rousing speech gains him 2d6 x 10 WPs.

Last, Thotharran speaks in a desiccated husk of a voice, the words crumbling into silence as the reach the ears of the audience before the dusky wizard. 'I offer the knowledge these others do not possess, knowledge that you need, Queen, in these foreboding times. I am not alive – surely you have guessed as much? – yet I am not truly dead either, as you see with your own multifaceted eyes. I am a liche and I offer you a union like unto no other.

Sample file

There are many corpses in Phantog waiting to have undeath breathed into them. Together we will create an army! An army that will tear Zweetz' Bird-Seprents apart and feed the Jungle spirit with fresh nutrients to breed still greater horrors that will ensure the privacy and solitude of Apys and the Manukans for evermore! These wizards may join in this work if they so choose. It may be distasteful to them but needs must, as your Majesty will well understand, and I will compete on equal terms with any who unites with us in this dark enterprise.'

An unexpected offer and one Andremida makes clear she will consider, for these are indeed doom-laden days, as Colettida has made known in her queen-

conference briefing. Thotharran scores 3d6 x 10 WPs for this proposal. If you would speak against it, go to <556>; if you will work with the liche to raise a Phantogonian undead army, you must give him a drop of your blood to seal the pact – go to <557> if you will submit to this requirement.

Sample file

As for the other wizards, they will all accept the terms as they take in Andremida's grim determination to make Apys safe down the decades to come.

<555> If you failed either roll, the wooing mount is not something you find easy to manage. If you (or any other wizard rolled a critical fumble, the 1-2 combination means you fell off and took 1d6 damage, losing 100 WPs; if you struggled but remained seated, you just lose 50 WPs.

Success on both rolls shows you to have what it takes to accompany this queen and you gain 100 WPs). You pull up where Andremida has stopped, beyond Cratersedge, out here in the Phantagonian nightmare once more.

Go to <559>.

Sample file

<556> You are in a minority of one. Will you stick to your guns and refuse to have truck with this lord of the lifeless? If so you must go to <558>; if you change your mind, you are docked 50 WPs for appearing to vacillate – now go to <557> once you have given a drop of your precious blood.

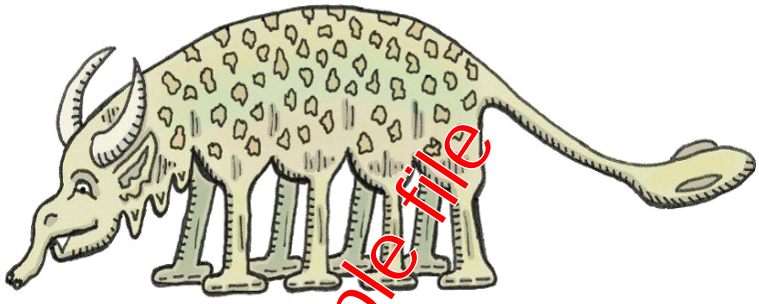
<557> Thotharran grins unpleasantly as he receives the energising blood. He gains 1d6 to an attribute found at random for each drop – so if five wizards were blood donors he gets five raises. That should be enough to raise a few more from the dead…

'Come outside,' Andremida says, taking charge once again. 'I have a place in mind where we can be'egin this work and where we will not be'e disturbed. You go again, Be'enthair, and make the preparations. We will leave nothing to chance in this endeavour for I fear

that if we are careless the cost of raising Phantagonian undead will be catastrophic!'

Sample file

Her seneschal does as he is commanded and you all follow the queen outside the city dome where mounts await you. Be'enthair Bee'fuhr is already disappearing out of sight on one of these strange steeds. 'Saddle up!' orders Andremida, with regal authority. As soon as she is aboard the beast, she canters off after Bee'fuhr. Your chargers follow where she goes, that is how they have been drilled.



Sample file

Make a L3 SR on DEX and a L2 SR on STR and go to <555>.
<558> Andremida settles her eyes on you appraisingly. Her antennae twitch as they weigh your merits, the future you can offer Apys, against the works and wonders of the other five wizards.

If you can make L13 SRs on WIZ, INT, LK and CHR then she rushes forward and presses your hand to her lips here and now, exclaiming, 'Be'eloved! My soul mate, my King and conqueror! I choose you now! You others, go from our presence, I wish to be alone with my destiny, the one who shall with me carve out the future of all Manukans.' Well. If you made those four monster saving rolls, you certainly shortcut this section! Go to <600>.

If you failed even one of the SRs, you are immediately eliminated and ejected with an armed escort of

Manukan warriors to Cratersedge, where they insist you set out for home. Good luck! It's dangerous, very dangerous, alone in the Jungles of Phantog. You get 1,000 APs to smooth your passing – email me if you want to find out what lies ahead but, for now, just close the book.

<559> You are standing in front of stone hive, about 20' high and 40' across. It is time and weather worn, with sooty black scorch marks all over its cracked surface. There is a single chimney thrusting purposefully skywards, similarly discoloured. The door is gleaming metal, however, honey tones in stark contrast to the despoiled look of the edifice.

'This,' Andremida sighs, with a wave of a claw, 'is where the Manukans cremate their queens at the end of their lives. It will Be'enthair Bee'fuhr's duty to light my pyre inside, should he still be'e alive when my time comes. The queens are still living when the pyre is lit and they are accompanied by their husbands unless they be'e already deceased.'
This shocking news may cause one or more of you wooers to turn tail and flee, figuratively at least. You may quit the contest if you so desire and close the book. Otherwise, go to <561>.

Sample file

<560> 'I must cast a spell over you all,' he drones. 'Trust me or not, it is as one with me. You must cast spells to discharge khremm if you would otherwise resist my magic.'

You may quit and close the book if you would submit in absolute vulnerability to a liche. Otherwise, go to <563>.

<561> Andremida resumes her account of the end of Manukan monarchs. 'The consort works assiduously before the Immolation Ceremony to create a spell

which will prevent the wedded couple, if they have remained true to one an other, from feeling any pain and for their spirits to pass directly into the eternal care of the Soulkeeper. This destiny I gladly embrace!'

Sample file

Any wizard still here gains 200 WPs and 500 APs. Attempt a L1 SR on CHR for your rivals – if they fail, they quit the race for the altar.

'I have brought us here,' she intones levelly, 'because none will disturb us, for to do so is to bring down upon oneself death at the stake without the boon of anaesthesia. Only a queen may enter freely, along with any companions she permits. Now, my Lord Liche, tell us how we must proceed for your scheme to bear fruit.'

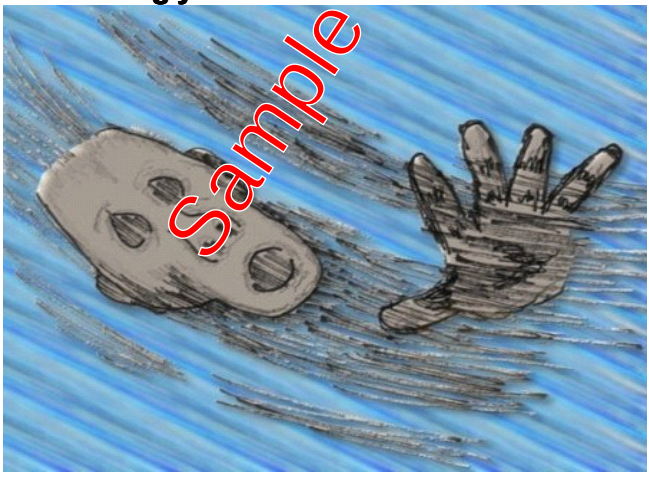
Looking up from profound thought, Thotharran grates his teeth together, flexes bony fingers and responds. Go to <560>.

Sample file



<562> Make a L5 SR on WIZ. If you failed this SR and the INT SR Thotharran's spell turned you into a vampire mummy, caused to go berserk on the night of the full moon. Adjust your attributes first as a vampire, then as a mummy and then find a second set as a were-creep for the night of the full moon, using werewolf modifiers.

You are too unpredictably malicious for Thotharran to tolerate and he grabs the hands of two other wizards and Blows You To a far place (you can email me if you would like to find out where exactly but for now, close the book). If you survived that spell, the other wizards describe the facial contortions you underwent – you are lucky there are no mirrors in here or you would have seven long years of tears and bad luck.



Go to <564>.

<563> Any wizard still here gains 200 WPs and 500 APs. Attempt a L1 SR on CHR for your rivals – if they fail, they quit the race for the altar. Thotharran casts

his spell and the ground quakes beneath the darkness of this sorcery. Go to <566>.

Sample file

<564> 'You are now indistinguishable from other undead to the undead themselves. Do not think to go near ordinary mortals for your smell will make them shrink and they will seek to destroy you, as they have done for millennia past, practicing nothing short of genocide on my undead brethren. Even the mightiest lords of the undead will not suspect the workings of my sorcery unless you confess your treachery in a moment of madness or of pride.

This deception will not serve you in the company of were creatures for they are not undead. Vampires, mummies, zombies and ghouls will all accept you without question.

There are three Undead Houses of Power on Kharghtch'an, all on what mortals dub the Undead Peninsula, with less than poetic spirit. Their rulers are Alain Lieucarte, Nephetiti and Lord Solomon, supreme masters of the vampires, the mummies and the zombies respectively. There are, of course, examples of these creatures not under their sway in great numbers but the fact of the matter is that all would of necessity have to serve these lords were the lords to so command.

Sample file

Therefore, and this is most vital, you must not dispute the word of these lords when you meet them. For meet them you must if you are to learn their secrets and deliver to Andremida and to Apys the power to raise the dead from the bosom of Dark Phantog. I will give the queen a moment to address us, if she is of a mind, then we must away!'

Thus spake Thotharran and all were quiet. Go to <565>.

<565> Andremida looks fondly, hopefully, at each one of you in turn. It would seem that a Manukan minds not the prospect of union with a liche, considering it no less alien than union with a man or elf would be. She points to a chest in the cremation chamber.

'Each of you now should select a candle from the box. I will light it for you and you must extinguish the flame with your tongue. A gift shall be yours and, once received, you shall embrace me with all the passion in your heart. I would know what sort of lover you are before I turn implacably to matters of state alone.

Once you have found and lit your candle, go to <567>.

<566> Make a L5 SR on INT for all bespelled wizards. Go to <562>.

Sample file

<567> These candles give the Gift of the Gab to each flame-swallower. Make the best saving roll on LK that you can. Do this for each wooing wizard. If you are a leprechaun, then double the level of the saving roll made. You now have a talent for convincing others of what you say. Perhaps this does no more than make you a better liar. Anyone listening with fair attention to your words will not misdoubt them unless they make a higher level SR on CHR than you just did on LK.

Now for that romantic cuddle. As you embrace the queen, you feel the depth of her passion for her people, for her city and for life itself. She will make someone a magnificent spouse. You may give her a peck on the cheek, you may press your lips firmly against hers, you may engage in vacuum-sealed lip-o-suction or you may kiss in the French way, le technique du Magi-Galois.

Decide your snogging style and go to <570>.

<568> Thotharran draws a pouch of finely powdered dragon bones from his robes and sprinkles the contents on the floor in front of the queen. To this he adds hairs pulled on Midsummer's Eve from a black unicorn's mane and then he takes out a glowing kris and carefully cuts his leathery wrist. No blood drips out but instead vapours hiss through the slit in his skin and settle on the mound he has made.

Finally, with a deep, plaintive sigh, he breathes a blue flame over his work and takes two steps back. 'You must step through the mist that will arise and you will travel first to Castle Sanguis, where Lieucarte lurks, then to the Ochre Pyramid of Nephertiti and finally to the Cemetery of Rotting Magicians where Lord Solomon resides. One after the other we will go and one after the other we will move on until the time comes for the chosen to return here while those unchosen remain. Who will step first?'

Sample file

You must decide where you will stand in the line of wooing wizards about to pass through the mystic fog that is now clouding the cremation chamber. Decide and go to <571>.

<569> You find yourself standing in the pale, insignificant light of a crescent moon, the smaller of the twins, at the foot of a hulking granite wall. As your eyes travel up and across you see that you are at the castle Thotharran spoke of. Sanguis is set atop a lightning-torn crag, the elemental forces as much at home here as their vampire lord. Instinctively you take on bat form and soar on high to one of the sixteen towers that intrude upon the heavens, the tower with the dim red eye peering out into the eternal night.

The crosswinds are not gentle with your light, unfamiliar body. Make L2 SRs on both INT and DEX (good thing you're a wizard!) and go to <572>.

<570> For a peck on the cheek, you make no impression and score no WPs; firmly pressed lips score you 50 WPs if you can make a L5 SR on CHR, nothing otherwise; suction scores you 150 WPs if you can make a L7 SR on CHR, nothing otherwise; le technique scores you 250 WPs if you can make a L9 SR on CHR, nothing otherwise. Roll 1d6 to see what the other wizards do and roll again if you get a 5 or a 6; if this happens a second time it indicates the wizard is too shy to dare kiss Andremida at all and loses 100 WPs.

For Thotharran, all WPs here are negative except the too shy stance – liche's just don't kiss nice. Hopefully, there was something in this that was enjoyable for Andremida because she doesn't get much to distract her from duties of office.

Now go to <569>.

Sample file

<571> The first to proceed gains 100 WPs while the last loses 100 WPs. You may roll 1d6 to allocate places in this line to hell for the other wizards. We will deal with your rivals' fates in good time. It is you who we shall examine through the magnifying glass now, you whose fate we shall see spun by the Weavers of Chaos.

Cast any spells you would select to protect, strengthen or otherwise support you in the trials ahead – you regain all WIZ the moment you pass through the curtain of mist bringing tears to your eyes in this place of sanctity.

When you are ready, go to <569>.

<572> If you failed either roll, the preternatural wind is too strong, too wild for you to reach your lofty destination. You have no option but to approach the main gate over the drawbridge and across the moat or to circle behind the castle to seek a back entrance. If you reached the tower, go to <576>; if you broach the main gate, go to <577>; if you seek a less ominous way in, go to <578>.

<573> The beholder perceives a threat to the castle and its master. It tests your mettle with a bathing ray that penetrates your every body cell. Make a L5 SR on the average of your CON and WIZ. Go to <587>.

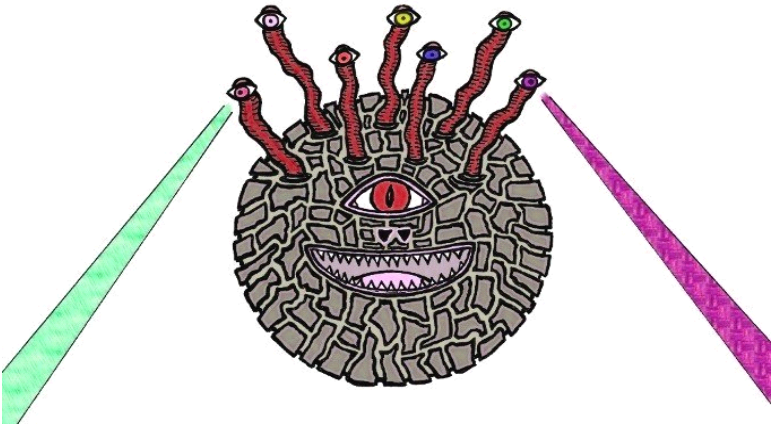
<574> That was the correct answer! Ever thought of entering 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire', the Khaboom stage show in which contestants pay 100 GPs a time to have the chance of winning their weight in a million copper pieces.

The voice calls out, 'Get inside, will ya! I want to get back to watching 'The Last of the Virgin Nuns' on Lieucarte's scrying stone. It's just getting to the climax where Sister O'Mercy gets the acupuncture treatment!' There is a predictable groaning of gears as the portcullis rises and you are admitted to the bosom of Castle Sanguis.

Take 50 APs and go to <585>.

<575> This portal is set to scramble those who are no true friend to the castle and its master. Make a L5 SR on the average of your LK and Thotharran's LK. Go to <584>.

Sample file



<576> The red beholder sends out a ray of steaming scarlet as you draw near. Do you wish to press ahead – go to <573> – or seek to elude it – go to <579> – or halt before its probing beam – go to <581>?
<577> As you walk under the gatehouse, a voice calls out, 'Who goes there? Be ye man, be ye beast or be ye fiend?' Decide upon your answer and go to <580>.

Sample file

<578> There is no less doom-laden ingress to Castle Sanguis at ground level. You find only a portal wherein a storm of electricity crackles and a mind-numbing pattern whirls. You may seek to enter through this unwelcoming doorway – go to <575> - or you may try your fate at the main gate – go to <577>.

<579> Fool? You have been disguised by a master of the arts – why do you fly away from the Castle's security checks? This calls for closer examination and the beam, which ensnares you with ancient sorcery of unbelievable force, searches deep within you.

Make the best SR on the average of your STR and CHR that you can and go to <586>.

<580> If you answered 'fiend', go to <574>; if you answered 'man' or 'beast' go to <582>.

<581> The beholding eye has determined that you are truly undead and a bone finger, tinged with blood, flickers into being to beckon you in through a portal that opens beneath the eye. Take 50 APs for mastering any qualms you might have felt under such scrutiny, in such a nightmarish place.

Go to <585>.

<582> A cloud of bats descends from the dark just as a swarm of rats scurries towards you. Then howls sound out from no great and you understand that a pack of wolves has targeted you. What will you do?

If you will stand and fight, go to <588>; if you will stand calmly despite the threats closing in on you, go to <589>; if you would seek to escape, go to <590>.

<583> If you made L5 or better, you got away and are now on the wanted list, lost in the woods. You can email me if you want to find out what happens next…

If you made less than L5, you are descended upon by a whole zoo's worth of teeth and talons. Make a L7 SR on LK. If you make it, a watching Power intervenes (you will have to email me to find out what happens next).

If you fail the LK roll, the menagerie chomps down good on you, leaving not a smidgeon of protein for the poor worms.

Any which way you look at it, it's time to close the book, chum(p).

Sample file

<584> If you failed the LK SR, you are gripped by L40 magic. The enchantment does one of two things and its power is so great that none of your attributes can affect the outcome. Rather, it controls your immediate and possibly ultimate fate. Roll 1d6: 1-4 indicates you are teleported whence you came from – return to Andremida at <599> with a bonus 100 APS; 5 or 6 indicates that the sentient defence spirit of Castle Sanguis considers you a threat that warrants permanent elimination – you are exploded from within by a series of Hell Bomb Bursts in all your vital organs - close the book.

<585> As you enter Castle Sanguis a drum booms somewhere deep within its confines. A man-servant with grey-green flesh and eyes flickering with flame greets you with a low bow.
'You will be here to feed the Master,' it rasps. 'Pardon me, you are not from the village are you? In that case, you had better follow me to drawing room. Do not dawdle and do not touch anything.' The ghoulish creature shuffles off down a twisting passage, dragging its left leg behind it.

Sample file

If you follow promptly go to <591>; if you drag your heels and want to touch something, perhaps one of the exquisite urns or a ebony statuette, go to <592>.

<586> If you rolled a critical fumble, the beholder is set into 'Condition Red' alert and transports you into Lieucarte's L40 wizard cell. Close the book (email me if you want to see how the interrogation goes…).

If you rolled less than a L5 SR on CHR, the beholder casts a spell on you which ejects you forcibly whence you came. You are back with Andremida – go to <599>.

If you made L5 or better, the beholder perceives you as a vampire ally, for all your strange behaviour. Go to <581>.

<587> If you failed, you are fried. This is L40 magic. Close the book. If you made it, the ray does you no harm and, to the contrary, boosts both CON and WIZ by 1d6. Go to <581>.

<588> Rolling sleeves up time, huh? Well, you are up against a combined MR of 1,000. Single target spells will be useless. You figure if you survive. If you do, take 1,000 APs and go to <585> (these creatures are entirely expendable so no fuss will be made and recompense required).

If the rats, bats and wolves are too much for you, close the book. Oh, and by the way, L40 magic from the castle prevents flying or teleporting or invisibility as means of legging it to safety.

Sample file

<589> Cool and dignified, that's the way! Make a L3 SR on CHR. If you make it, the creatures sniff you and decide that you are an ok sort of dude. The portcullis opens for you now. Go to <585>.

If you fail the SR, the creatures do not care for you at all and set up a screetching, howling caterwauling that prompts an eerie voice from within Castle Sanguis to yell out. 'Shut the fudge up! What ya got against that guy anyhow. Lemme take a look with my spyglass. Hmmmnnn?' Make a L3 SR on LK. If you make it, the butler decides the master will want you in one piece so he raises the portcullis and lets you in. Go to <585>.
If you fail the LK SR as well as the CHR you failed just a short moment ago, ouch! The butler doesn't care for the cut of your job and sics the wolves, bats and rats on you. Go to <588>.

<590> Make a SR on SPD – the best you can! You had better be a gingerbreadman. Go to <583>.

<591> Batson ushers you in to a room dominated by a grandfather clock and a silver metronome atop a harpsichord. Both emanate high level magic. The ghoulish servant slams the door shut behind him as he leaves. You may play the harpsichord – go to <595>- or wait – go to <596>.

<592> You just couldn't behave yourself in someone else's home, could you? The home of a notoriously unforgiving and powerful fiend, at that.

L40 magic binds you instantly and you lose the senses of sight and sound. You feel rough hands take you and, after an uncomfortable journey, you are fixed to something hard. Then you feel heat rising up to embrace you.

Either you are a kebab or you make a L13 SR on LK. If the latter, email me and I will give you the chance to talk your way out of this one. Either way, close the book.

<593> Thrilled with the work you have done, masterful wizardry imaginable only in his dreaming for all the centuries of his undead existence, Alain Lieucarte clasps your hands one by one and bids you sit, each one in a coffin line with purple velvet and ermine trim which he clicks his fingers to teleport here.

Sample file



Sample file

‘Close you eyes and think of nothing but power, total power, control that is unbreakable, your will adamantine, able to stand against the tsunami, the thunderbolt, the earthquake, against any creature living or dead. Now breath deep these vapours that bathe you and rise up, fist raised in triumph!’

Have each wizard make the best saving roll possible on the average of STR and CHR – if the total of all these rolls exceeds 30, you have all mastered the art of creature control, as the vampire has it and you make take 200 APs; if the total is 30 or less, as a group you failed.

With this all done, you may return to Apys and to Andrmida as Lieucarte is eager to test his new, silver-charged bite and you would not want to be the recipient – go to <599

<594> As you start to play, the grandfather clock's front panel creaks open and a fat man with a shockingly rosy complexion climbs out.

If you failed the SRs, he looks daggers at you and demands blood. You can apologise and defer to his command – go to <604> - or you can refuse, whether you ask forgiveness or not – go to <605>.

If you made the SRs, he smiles benignly and offers you a cigar from his case. If you accept, go to <598>; if you decline, go to <597>.

Sample file

<595> Make a L1 SR on all of WIZ, LK, DEX and CHR. Go to <594>.

<596> Eventually, the front panel of the grandfather clock swings open, a fat man with a shockingly rosy complexion climbs out.
'You are from that bee-freak queen, yes? I know what you want, you want to give her the secret of my control technique. I will give it to her, sure, but I want something in return. Two things, actually. I want 40 pounds of royal jelly and I want your teeth. Mine are crumbling horribly.' He pushes a front tooth with the stab of a pudgey finger and then spits it out. 'What do you say?'

If you will donate your teeth, go to <602>; if you prefer to keep them, go to <603>.

<597> 'Really? That's wet of you! Your loss, powderpuff,' Lieucarte gloats, blowing smoke in your

face. 'They would have made a man of you! Oh well, let's get down to brass tacks, shall we. Here's what you have to do to get what you want for that Manukan minx. Listen well, for I shall say it but once.'

Ears pricked, go to <601>.

<598> Lieucarte grins complacently. 'These Khosht cigars are old favourites of mine. At parties I smoke one on each fang. They have something that really does it for me and perhaps they will for you too.'

Make a L7 SR on WIZ. If you succeed, smoking the cigar allows you to gain 1d6 on a random attribute if you drink the blood of an uruk. All of it. The effect will wear off after ten binge blood drinking sessions.

Now go to <601>.

Sample file

<599> You find yourself back in Apys with Andremida waiting, anxious to hear your news. If you gained the confidence of the vampire lord, Alain Lieucarte, and learned the secret of vampiric creature control, every wizard who contributed to that final act receives 500 WPs. If Thotharran was somehow sidelined in Castle Sanguis, you find he is here now nonetheless, smiling with ill-disguised malice and glee, in equal measures. 'Are you prepared?' Be'enthair Bee'fuhr enquires solicitously. Andremida has no time for niceties and instructs the liche wizard to cast his magic again and send you on, hurtling through the zero dimension and on to the mummy master, Nephertiti. Once again, your mind whirls and your heart lurches (Andremida or feeling queasy?) as you leave the crematorium (unsinged, at least). Go to <606>.

<600> Well, you've certainly found a short cut to the altar, cutting every corner off in fact. You could have

had such an exciting joust with the other wooing wizards but none can hold a candle to you. Off you go to <700>, advancing a whole 100 paragraphs to the unbitter end.

<601> 'For centuries, we vampires have fought an unpleasantly even battle with were-creatures on this peninsula. We can tolerate the mummies and the zombies for they are slow and dull but these weres are too able and they are not even undead for grave's sake!

I, Alain Lieucarte, master of Sanguis for one hundred years past and three hundred more to come, wish to create a new strain of my kind. I wish you to inject liquid silver into my veins so that my bite may be instantly fatal to these weres. Then I shall pass this new ability on to selected members of my family and the Undead Peninsula shall be rid of mortal riffraff!'

You see the other wooing wizards are here too now (you can make two L1 SRs on LK for each one – if any of the wizards rolls a critical fumble they didn't make it this far). Now you and your colleagues must get to work to do as Lieucarte wishes and to receive the knowledge that Andremida desires in return. To create the magic the vampire lord so covets will take a L41 SR on WIZ, one level higher than he has reached (and anchored at).

Make the best SR on WIZ possible for each wizard present and total them – if the number arrived at is 41 or higher, go to <593>; if the total is 40 or less, you fail, causing Lieucarte to go into a frothing frenzy of rage, murder in his eyes – make a L1 SR on SPD for all wizards with anyone making it getting back to Apys with a *Blow Me To* spell (INT SR required) in the nick of time (go to <599>) and anyone who muffed it paying the price with their blood and their life (close the book

Sample file

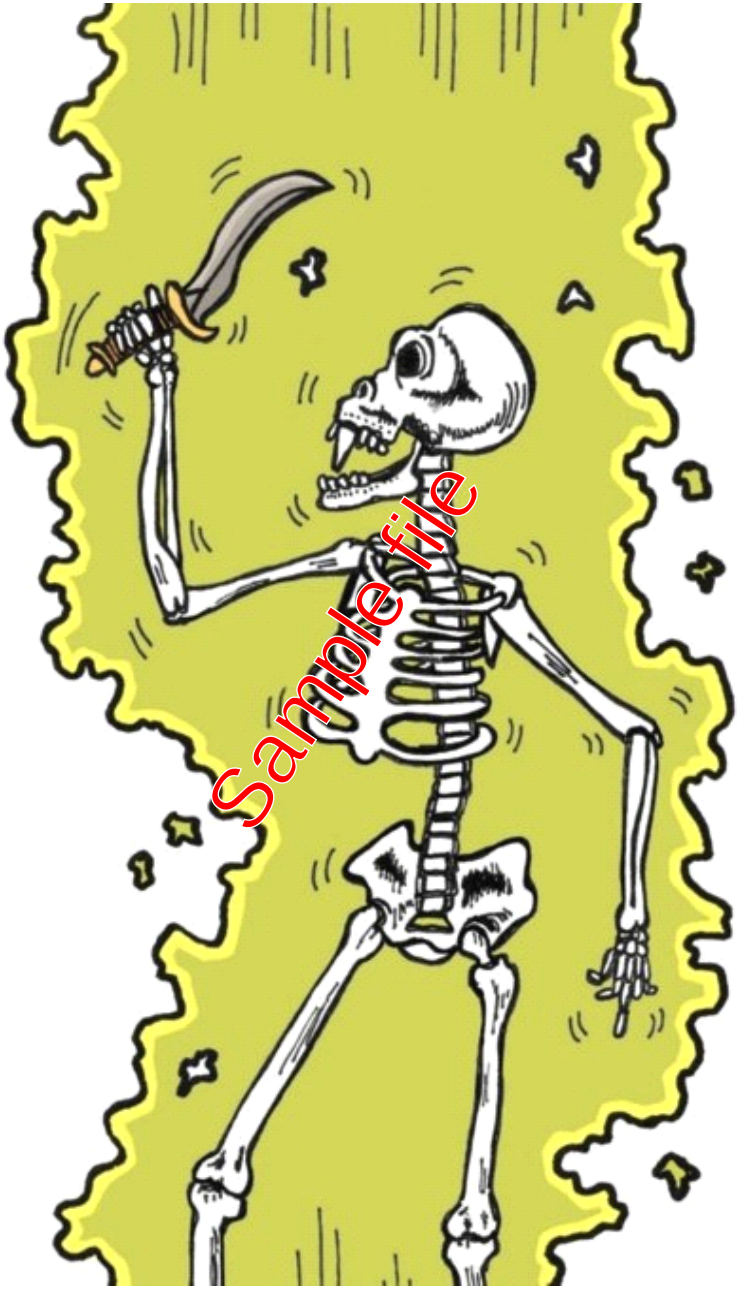
but email me if you want to hear of your life as a vampire in Castle Sanguis).

Sample file

<602> Lieucarte smiles and summons a Living Skeleton called Fang the Detestable who does all his dental work. There is no anaesthetic given in this Castle. Make a L5 SR on CON to survive the operation (book closing time if death closes its jaws on you on the operating table).

Make it and Lieucarte is a happy vampire. You may proceed, gums prominent, to <601> with 150 APs. Your speech will be impaired until you master a rearranged mouth so all CHR SRs are one level higher for the rest of this wooing escapade.

Sample file


Sample file

<603> Lieucarte frowns. 'That's damned selfish of you. I think I shall have your blood instead.' He advances on you, hands raised, fangs bared.

Make a L5 SR on SPD. Fail and he sucks the last drop of the red stuff from you before you can find somewhere to hide Succeed and you can get out of here with a Blow Me Too spell. Back to Apys quick!

Check you make that INT SR and then go to <599> or close the book, depending on them darned dice.

<604> Lieucarte gives a squeal of delight. 'Not everyday I get such high ranking blood. Most kind! I shan't take much, you have my word.' He leans forward as you bear your neck and his fangs insert themselves into your succulent vein.

Make L5 SRs on LK and CON. Fail and you have a master – whatever you do in future, know that you are at the beck and call of Alain Lieucarte, neither fully vampire nor untainted; succeed and the vampire does you no harm and is charmed by your vintage – go to <601> either way with 200 APs in hand.

Sample file

<605> Lieucarte gives a very nasty scowl and draws himself up to his full height. 'Very well. I shall have your teeth instead then.'

If you can make a L5 SR on SPD you can get out of here with a Blow Me Too spell (you need to make the INT SR too). Back to Apys quick – go to <599>! If that is beyond you, the vampire seizes your by the collar and drags you off with unstoppable brute force. Go to <602>.

<606> You rematerialise in a hostile environment and immediately suffer stinging pain. Make a L2 SR on SPD for each wooing wizard. You are standing in a sandstorm and need to cover your eyes before you are blinded. Fail the SPD SR and take the difference from CON with a minimum loss of 3.

Anyone who does not react with gusto must make a L3 SR on LK not to be blinded temporarily. The blindness lasts 1d6 paragraphs. Go to <607>.

<607> If you want to cast a spell now, write down your choice and go to <610> (where you go even if you disdain sorcery in such circumstances).

<608> Now that the sand is no longer making your eyes water you can take in the place to which you have been delivered. A huge sandstone structure stands before you. It must be over 200' high and at least twice as broad. You may have been expected a pyramid but if this is a pyramid it is far from the usual variety, built on a square base with triangles rising to an apex.

Sample file

There is no apex and there are no triangles for this edifice, built on sand in the conventional fashion, is shaped as a bee hive and its centre has been sculpted from the vantage point you currently have to depict that potential love of your life and the high queen of the Manukans, Andremida.

Bumblebore burps in consternation while Miranda swoons in shock; Nethalkan roundly curses while Limpwrist rolls his eyes and lisps 'venomouthly', leaving Thotharan to hurl a Blasting Power at the construction, in a towering rage, tattered skin blackening like thunderclouds. The fireball peters out tamely, sputtering even as its caster does and then all is still, all is quiet. There is nothing else within reach

as you scan the horizon to all points of the wind. If there is work to be done, it seems that this devotional architecture must be its location.

Sample file

Do you want to explore the structure? If so, go to <612>; if you hang back, in apprehension or lethargy, go to <613>.

<609> But you are a wizard and surely Fly Me would be better! Go to <617>.

<610> Miranda Le Feigh casts a *Wall of Iron* spell to protect you all – very sharing and caring! Bumblesnore goes for a Protective Pentagram – this one is bumped up by four levels to cover you all because he knows he is unlikely to get this job done on his own. Limpwrist and Nethalkan demonstrate greater self-interest to cast Ghostly Going, rending the sand meaningless once they are positioned within their rival's Pentagram.

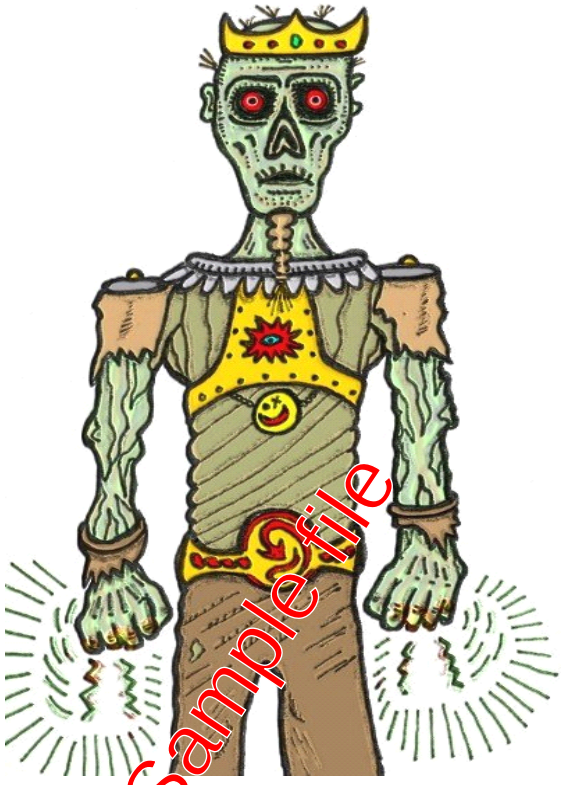
Thotharran howls maniacally and throws a spell of his own design into the mass room – he calls it '*Sands of Time*' and its effect is to slow each grain of sand so much that it simply drops to the ground.

Was your effort self-centred or magnanimous? Andremida is watching, courtesy of a powerful scrying stone. Wizards gain WPs according to the base cost of their chosen enchantment. The liche's spell has a untrimmed casting cost of 50 and is a L13 spell (of course, all need to make the appropriate INT SR).

The effect of all this expending of khremm is to be able to see where you are properly for the first time It is astonishing, to say the least. Go to <608>.

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing



<611> Make SRs on LK for both Bumblesnore and Miranda. Whoever did best spots something glinting in the sunlight. Crowing triumphantly, the wizard swoops down upon a fragment of glass, employing Detect Magic as a precaution.

Rather than being merely a fragment of glass, pressed into a fissure in the stone are three glass rings, each numbered from 1 through 3. The happy wizard takes ring #1 and pushes it over a finger. Now make a SR on LK yourself and also for the ringless wizard. Whoever makes the better roll is the fortunate recipient of ring #2, which the wearer of ring #1 tosses causally to the wooing rival, with ring #3 quickly following suit.

Now you all have your numbered glass rings, go to <622>.

<612> Although appearing quite smooth from a distance, the hive is actually quite rough and has ledges along it. You can walk round the bottom and examine everything your eyes can reach – go to <615> - or if you think the higher elevations are likely to hold more of interest and wish to carefully climb, go to <609>.

<613> How lacklustre! Lose 50 WPs and buck your ideas up! Go to <612> and get real!

<614> If you failed either of those rolls, go to <618>; if you made them, you spot a copper wire just showing as the sunlight glints on it. Thotharran is instantly at your side, with Nethalkan and Limpwrist hot on his heels. If you wish to pull the wire, go to <619>; if you hesitate, fearful of traps or trying to detect magic perhaps, go to <620>.

<615> You see a lot of sand – many gazillions of grains if you're inclined to count. It's hard to concentrate your eyes in the glare from the Trollworld star but you shield your vision with your hand (unless you have unusually long legs and like hopping) – make a L3 SR on both INT and LK then go to <614>.

<616> Make the best SR you can on the average of STR and SPD. Now do the same for the liche wizard. Whovever does best gets ring #1, the other takes #2. Check SPD SRs for Nethalkan and Limpwrist to see who got ring #3 and who was left with ring #4.

Now go to <622>.

Sample file

<617> You see Miranda and Bumblesnore flying around the hive. If you really, truly thought to do the same, make the INT SR and go to <621>; if it did not occur to you, take 50 WPs for your honesty and go to <611>.

<618> Bad luck! You missed the interesting 'thing' that Limpwrist has just discovered. It is a copper wire and, after using Detect Magic just as any well schooled freshman would do, he pulls it out, or rather he casts Jeeves and has the invisible servant do it for him. There are four numbered glass rings: He takes #1, gives #2 to Nethalkan and is about to pass #3 to you when Thotharran tries to snatch it away.

Do you want to grab it first? If so, go to <616>; if not, the liche chortles clatteringly and takes #3, leaving you #4. Go to <622>.

<619> The wire comes out easily as you tug on it and attached to it are four numbered glass rings. Eyes alighting on ring #1, Thotharran tries to snatch it away before you take it. Do you want to take it before he does – if so, go to <616> - or let him have it?

If you allow him to take what he wants, you get ring #2 while Nethalkan takes #3, leaving Limpwrist with #4. Go to <622>.

<620> As you dither, caution governing your actions, Thotharran grabs the wire and pulls it sharply. If you want to leap backwards, out of harms way, go to <623>; if you watch closely to see why he has done this, go to <624>.

<621> Make LK SRs for all the flying wizards. Whoever makes the best roll spots something gleaming in the rays of sunlight. Detect Magic reveals no threat and

Sample file

the object is found to be a glass ring with a number inscribed on it. In fact, there are three such rings, numbered from 1 to three.

Sample file

If you did not win the LK contest, go to <625>; if fortune touched you rather than your rivals, decide if you will put ring #1 on or not (write your decision down!) and go to <626>.

<622> The hive has given up a ring to everyone of the wizards now. Roll 1d6 for whichever wizards were not with you when you gained a numbered glass ring for they, too, found such hidden items. If you were accompanied by two wizards when you got your ring, the other wizards must be assigned rings numbered 1 to 3; if you were with three rivals then there will just be two rings to distribute.

All done? Good… now go to <627>.

<623> You watch as Limpwrist and Nethalkan take interest in what Thothalan has uncovered, Go to <624> but only test Limpwrist and Nethalkan for SPD – you get #4.

<624> The liche chortles and yanks on the wire, snapping it. Still there is no explosion, no tumbling blocks of stone coming down on your head. He scrabbles around in the crumbling sandstone, nails scraping the rock away until he drags out the rest of the wire.

There are 4 numbered rings attached to it. He pounces on ring #1 and shoves it on to his skeletal finger. Make a SR on SPD for you, Nethalkan and Limpwrist. This is to determine who gets #2, who #3 and who takes #4. Now go to <622>.

<625> Whichever one of your rivals proved luckiest gets ring #1; roll for LK again against the remaining

Sample file

wizard to determine who gets ring #2 and who takes #3. The rings appear harmless and inactive when worn.

Sample file

Go to <622>.

<626> If you are wearing ring #1, nothing bad happened when you put it on – in fact, nothing happened whatsoever! Roll again for LK for the other two wooing wizards to see who takes ring #2 and who is left with ring #3.

If you did not take ring #1, caution proving your watchword, make SRs on SPD for you and your rivals. There is a contest for ring #1 and snatching seems allowed. What ill-mannered wooers – what would Andremida think! The fastest wizard gets ring #1, the second #2 and the slowest to react is left, if not holding the baby, nonetheless with unloved ring #3.

Perhaps with fingernail marks running down the backs of your hand, go to <622>.

Sample file

<627> The looming sandstone monument shudders as the rings catch the sun's rays and the top rises up – incredible levitation magic to lift such a weight. It is clear that you are being offered entry into the monolith. Choose your means of rising to the time, as cream will do.

As you all peer in, you smell incense and hear a drum pounding in the distance. The inside is faintly lit with braziers filled with glowing coals and steps descend, hugging the inside walls as they spiral down into the inky depths. While you consider the merits of plunging into the unknown, tendrils snake out from below, roiling with energy and reaching out for you.

If you want to cast a spell, write it down and go to <630>; if you want to dodge these yellowy snares, make the best saving roll you can on DEX and on SPD

and go to <632>; if your intuition tells you that you should accept their embrace and you stay still, go to <632>.

Sample file

<628> As you stand and wonder, stand and wait, a weight is placed upon your mind in the shape of a block of sandstone, weighing rather more than a woolly mammoth, which crashes down upon your head from the distant ceiling.

Evasion? What would speed or dexterity do for you in this small space? Cast a spell? The bad feeling would dismay you! Tough enough to survive the impact? Think again! You are smashed flat, pancaked, a newly fashioned two-dimensional being. Unfair? Probably…

Go to <629>.

<629> Had you been able to freeze time and cast Detect Magic, you would indeed have identified sorcery at work. Had a thawing not quickly come and you chanced an Omnipotent Eye, you would have discovered high level enchantment on that plummeting masonry. You would have found a Born Again spell embedded in the molecules of rock.

Sample file

So, when you die as you just did, you are reborn, alive anew in much grander, more sumptuous and most definitely decadent surroundings. Some clouds really do have silver linings and this is occasionally true of blocks of stone too. Go to <637>.

<630> As you are about to perform the finger shifts and mouth the syllables of the invocation, you get a decidedly bad feeling. Your head feels as if it has been used as an anvil. Make a SR on LK and go to <633>.

<631> The faster you move, the faster the substance reaching for you moves; the more you twist and turn, the more precisely they track your motion. You see

that what has coiled about your abdomen are bandages, ancient but strong.

If you want to attempt to break them, go to <634>; if you decide that resistance is futile, go to <635>.

<632> Snaking about your biceps, thighs and waist are tattered and yellowed bandages, relics of a bygone age perhaps. They may be past their use by date but they are quite unbreakable you would guess. You feel them pulling you into the abyss.

Make a SR on CON and go to <636>.

<633> You feel yourself bathed in an evil aura, probing and protruding into your life and times, your heart's dark places. If the saving roll you made was less than L6, the insidious, evil magic screws inch by torturous inch 2d6 WIZ from you – permanently.

Not only that but you are ripped through time and space, gyroscoping manically, until you land on the flats of your feet in a small, plan antechamber, the roof of which is but a distant speck. Go to <628>.

<634> Make saving rolls on STR and SPD. If the combined effort adds up to L10 or better, you are swift and powerful enough to break free of the clutches of these ancient bandage bonds. If you did not manage that dynamic act of self-preservation, the bandages are not escaped without considerable cost.

Either way, go to <635> but take the impact of the first paragraph if you were unsuccessful.

<635> Something, perhaps an acid, is eating into your skin, through clothes and armour. Roll 3d6 and subtract 6. The result is how much destruction to

Sample file

armour and damage to body you sustain from the vicious bandage bonds (take damage to armour before body).

Your torment is not over yet. Make a SR on LK and go to <633>.

<636> If you did not make at least L5 with the CON SR, the ensorcelled bandages squeeze drop by painful and precious drop 2d6 WIZ out of you – permanently.

With that little matter resolved, you are whipped down into the gloom, sucking in lungful after grateful lungful of fragrant, aromatic sandalwood while your heart still beats, until you land smoothly in a high but compact antechamber which is completely featureless. Go to <628.

<637> Before we observe civil niceties, we had better deal with just how the other wizards fared. Roll 2d6 for each rival. A roll of 1 and 2 or 1 and 3 indicates that a nasty surprise was theirs – roll 2d6 once again, this being a permanent loss of WIZ.

Now to get on with the show for the circus is in town and they're selling postcards of the hanging - and this may or may not prove to be Desolation Row. Go to <638>.

<638> The glittering of gold in every direction is dazzling and disorienting. Disconcerted, you blink and rub your eyes as you look out from a gallery at the court of the Mummy Master, Sarcophagi are arranged in alcoves and niches and dog-headed men with gaudy blue woad fan the great mummified Pharoah who sits alert on a throne studded with rubies and sapphires, many bigger than your fists. Clearly, the Mummy

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

Master is both rich and ostentatious, judging from the glut of opulence spilling about his feet.

Sample file

A Wizard Went A-Wooing

As you recover your senses and acclimitise to rebirth after a flattening death, albeit brief, the liche wizard, Thotharran, calls out a greeting.

'Salutations, Lord Nephartiti! I am your humble servant, seeking only to discover how I and my fellow wizards, here in the service of the Royal Manukan Court, at the direction of the bee-folk of Apys and their Hive Queen, Andremida, a kindred who have never born ill will towards you or your mummy legions. Tell me, I pray, what you would wish us to apply our sorcerous gifts toward and if that satisfies your pleasure, I would fain set before you, Pharoah, the desire of Andremida.' The liche bows low, metacarpals grating against the sandstone ledge that holds him back from the gulf between you all and Nephartiti.

First Bumblebore, then Miranda Le Feigh add their entreaties to Thotharran's but Limpwrist and Nethalkan hold their tongues. You may add your honied words or you may keep your mouth shut as you wish. If you embark on rhetoric, go to <640>; if you believe silence, like Nephartiti's palace, is golden, go to <641>.

Sample file

<639> Assembled before the Mummy Master, his yellowing wrappings not tight enough to prevent dust puffing out from between the layers, fizzing as it falls at his feet and burning through the marble, you are clearly expected to bow low and long. Once a dogman taps you to indicate it is not permissible to kneel, Nephertiti embarks on a speech of explanation.

A Wizard Went A-Wooing



Sample file

‘I know of the threat to Trollworld from the Flying Serpent, Zweetz, and I will, naturally, give my help to Andremida and to Apys. Why would I not? I am pleased that she wishes to make Phantagonian mummies! As long as she has no truck with drooling dolt, Solomon, and Phantog remains zombie-free, I shall remain well disposed towards this endeavour. In fact, I see many advantages beyond the simple imperative in crushing the khremm out of Zweetz, once and for all. And so I have decided to get married to seal the alliance and all Apys shall rejoice that their Hive Queen shall acquire a husband-supreme!’

At this the mummy rubs his hands together in delight, sending more dust flying, this time your way! Make L1 SRs on SPD then DEX to avoid his caress. Do so for your rivals too and then go to <646>.

<640> Make SRs on CHR for all those resorting to oratory. If the combined level is greater than 16, go to <642>; if it is less than L16, go to <643>.

<641> Make SRs on LK for all those wizards not uttering a word. If the combined level is greater than 12, go to <644>; if it is less than L12, go to <645>.

<642> The pretty words used are like unto violins to the Sand-Regent's cloth-wrapped ears. You all earn WPs equal to the combined level of the CHR SRs times 5. 'I have no doubt that the banquet after the wedding shall be glorious for the speeches,' he booms. 'I shall be sorry when the bride and groom take their leave and the honeymoon begins. I shall ensure that all who speak as well as you just have shall be offered key posts in the new, expanded joint court. I applaud you all, honoured guests!'

A stairway appears in midair leading down from the gallery to Nephartiti's throne. It is clear that you are to descend it. Go to <639>.

Sample file

<643> 'Bah, humbug!' roars the monarch. 'I do not wish to listen to such verbal diaorrhea! You will all be gagged at the wedding – Andremida shall be protected from the foul maledictions that gush forth from your lips! Now, get down here and we shall draw up seating plans and so forth.'

With that a stairway appears in midair leading down from the gallery to Nephartiti's throne. It is clear that you are to descend it. Those wizards judged so harshly lose 100 WPs each.

Now go to <639>.

<644> 'I do not have time to listen to your meaningless drivel,' Nephartiti thunders. 'Good that some of you, at

least, had the sense to say nothing when in the presence of such luminosity. You shall advise me now on the seating plan for the wedding day to come!'

Sample file

With that a stairway appears in midair leading down from the gallery to Nephartiti's throne. It is clear that you are to descend it. Those wizards who wisely said nothing to anger the Mummy Master gain WPs each equal to the combined level of the LK SR times 5.

Now go to <639>.

<645> 'You fools shut your mouths this instance or I shall fill them with the hot ashes of the freshly cremated slaves I have baked for the wedding cake! You toads that dare say nothing are no better! Worse, I say, for you are cravens and have not blood but custard in your veins! However, you know more of the current Manukan court than I and so you shall advise me now on the seating plan for the wedding day to come!'

With that a stairway appears in midair leading down from the gallery to Nephartiti's throne. It is clear that you are to descend it. Those wizards who said nothing and were judged so mockingly lose 100 WPs each.

Now go to <639>.

Sample file

<646> A failed saving roll – either or both – results in Nephartiti's mortal remains coming into contact with your skin. The effect is immediate and revolting. Your skin becomes rubbery and mottled. You take 3d6 damage. No healing spell will work in Nephertiti's presence. Your CHR is halved until this affliction is remedied.

Go to <647>.

<647> You hear the sound of wheels on the marble floor and turn to see the dogmen wheeling out a small

sarcophagus. They palce it gently beside Nephartiti. 'Can you guess who is inside?' he asks.

Take a guess – if you get it right you gain 200 WPs. Go to<652> to find out who it is.

<648> The old mummy gives you a pad each to record your three pledged gifts and then passes you a blank cheque to sign. 'No stinting on the quality,' she wheezes. 'Only the best for my boy and his girl.'

Decide upon the three gifts you will buy the happy couple for their new home and then go to <650> where 'mummy' will assess the practicality of what you have settled upon.

Sample file

<649> As you make your way towards Nephertit's dressing sarcophagus, your fellow wizards begin conspiring, plotting to give the Mummy Master something more than he is bargaining for.

The plan is to learn his secrets and then to strangle him in his own bandages while you grab the others and escape (you figure Andremida wouldn't approve of you leaving some of her suitors in the lurch). There are four parts to the scheme that has just been hatched: 1) stuff a sock in his mouth to stop the Mummy Master from casting any spell or calling for help; 2) wrap the bandages round him so tightly he can't whack any of you; 3) push him over so he can't trample on you or run for help and 4) set him on fire. There is no magic to be attempted because he must have colossal khremm resistance.

Which action will you take on? You may roll or assign for the other wizards (if there are less than four of you, you should attempt two actions). Write down who is

going to do what and get ready to carpe the diem at <656> - et tu, Brute?

Sample file

<650> Let's see what you all have chosen to pledge as wedding gifts. You may roll 2d6 fort he other wooers with DARO applying. They choose gifts corresponding to their three dice rolls with a roll of 11 counting as 1 and anything above indicating a gift not on 'mummy's' list of acceptable presents. The lowest score wins. You receive WPs from 500 downwards in jumps of one hundred according to your ranking and must adjudicate if your choices correspond closely enough with the listed gifts.

Here is 'mummy's' list:

10 – Wall clock
9 – Dinnerware
8 – Microwave oven
7 – Glassware
6 – Towels
5 – Cook pots
4 – Vase
3 – Photo frame
2 - Kitchen knives
1 – Bed linen



Sample file

Now that this part of the wedding preparations are done and dusted (a favourite phrase of all mummies), more thoughtful work is ahead. Go to <653>.

<651> Your task is to select lingerie for Andremida. It might be your thing or it might not be. You can make an INT SR for yourself and your companions with the best rol gaining that wizard 100 WPs for a well judged selection of lace and gussetry. No trying anything on though – sorry, it just won't wash.

You miss the key part of the action sorting through underwear, which may be a metaphor for your life in

general. Go to <655> to catch up on developments elsewhere.

Sample file

<652> A small, shrivelled old lady in particularly tatty bandages with a blue rinse gets out as the dogmen lift the lid of the sarcophagus. 'Meet my mother,' the Mummy Master says warmly. (No WP chances for the other wizards, just you.)

'Now you go off with mummy and decide what wedding gifts you will give me and my bee'autiful bride and then you can help her with the seating plan for the marriage rites. Off you go now, don't dawdle. After that's done to mummy's satisfaction, I'll tell you what you came here to find out and you can help me get dressed in my wedding bandages.'

The dogmen escort you and the Mummy Master's mummy to a hazy lounge, carpeted in green yak hair. Go to <648>.

Sample file

<653> Who is to sit where at the wedding and then at the reception to follow? 'I'm all the family he's got left now,' confides the old mummy. 'To be fair, he killed the rest. Had to really – they were always trying to overthrow him. Anyhow, those rings you've got – let me see the numbers.'

She scrutinises the rings closely with eyes that might well be beady if you could see them. Perhaps she has one-way bandages on. 'Hmmmn…odd numbers on the groom's side, even for the bride. That's an easy way to settle it. Now sort yourselves out. The groom's group can go off and help Nephertiti with his wedding bandages and the bride's lot can come with me to sort out her bottom drawer.'

If you have an odd numbered ring, off you go to <649>; if you have an even numbered glass ring, go to <651> unless you would like to seek to swap with a wooing

rival – to convince the other to swap you must beat him or her with a better CHR SR in which case you can go to <649>with the groom's party.

<654> 'Let's spruce me up, shall we. I'm not a vain fellow like that strutting peacock, Solomon, but I think I shall look rather dapper in these weeds – what do you say, fellows.' He absolutely is in the most chipper mood he's been in since he discovered the source of the Vile. Best make hay while the sun shines, hey?

As the bandages start to be wound round his bulky form, the first part of the deception begins: the wizard stuffing the sock in his mouth needs to make L2 SRs on both DEX and SPD. If a roll is failed, another wizard may step in (you decide who) but the saving rolls are L4!

If Step 1 is bungled, go to <658>; if the sock plugs up Nephartiti's windpipe, go to <659>.

Sample file

<655> What a triumph over adversity! You (or some of you) have learned the secrets of mummymaking and mummy mastery and Nephertiti is cooking in his own juices (hmmmn…to desiccated to have juices but the metaphor is apt otherwise). If you were with the Mummy's mummy, I suggest you go <649> to so that you understand what the others accomplished, read through and get back herein time for tiffins.

But how to get out of here before a necrotic Nephertiti stops being too hot to handle and becomes to hot to handle? Benefactors are watching (creepy, isn't it). As you regather wits and fellow wooers, you feel yourselves teleporting away from the Hive Monument. Phew! Sometimes that queasy feeling is worth putting up with. You owe whoever is responsible for the *Blow*

You To **a favour in return and favours have a habit of being called in.**

All in all, a good day's work – secrets learned and Nephartiti's designs on Andremida are as ashes. Go to <657>.

<656> The dressing sarcophagus is spacious and filled with new black silk bandages, which, he tells you, he intends to wear with top hat and tails. 'I shall look just dandy, shan't I?' he asks cheerfully. He begins to sing in a voice that would scare dragons and the strains of 'I'm getting married in the morning' beat like hailstones on your eardrums.

In such a good mood is he that he whispers all you need to know about preparing mummies and have them rise to obey your commands in the ear of each one of you, one by one. All you have to do to listen, learn and have at your fingertips is make L7 SRs on WIZ, INT, DEX and CHR. As long as one of you makes it, all will be well for Andremida's aspirations and the successful wizards will have a new talent, requiring only chemicals, 48 hours and those rolls again to make a mummy with a MR equal to the maker's STR and CHR.

Anyone who masters mummymaking gains a rich 500 WPs. Now for your cunning, turnip-flavoured plan, to stop him stealing your bride! Go to <654>.

<657> The odour of rot and decay permeates your senses, not just by smell, as you find your feet and gather your composure in a new and oppressive environment. For a brief moment, you are reminded sharply of Phantog but this cloying stench of putrefaction is different, repulsive yet more…familiar. Mists swirl about you and there is little to be seen

Sample file

except for the shapes of your rivals, not more knowing than you as to what lies ahead.

Sample file

Then, taking a step forward, Bumblesnore yelps in alarm and as he does so you feel something clutching your ankle fiercely. If you wish to cast a spell, go to <662> once you have written it down.

<658> The Mummy Master is a L40 brute of a mystical being. He knows more ways to spifflicate you than Heinz have made baked beans. You – all of you – are annihilated in an atomic implosion of cataclysmic agony. Close the book.

<659> So far so good! He splutters and protests, not yet comprehending the treachery. Time for Step 2. Who is going to truss him up like a petrified turkey? This takes L3 SRs on STR and DEX as he is starting to flail about.

If a roll is failed, another wizard may step in (you decide who) but the saving rolls are L5!
If Step 2 is bungled, go to <658>; if Nephartiti is ready to go on the table at Thanksgiving, go to <660>.

<660> You are victorious on the way! He can't speak and he can't use his arms. Those wedding bandages are top quality stuff, supplied by the plutocrat, Davor Pisk. Now to fell him like a redwood that's ready to drop. Timber! The wizard who is to carry out Step 3 just has to make L2 SRs on STR and DEX to bring him down to earth and to avoid a kick in the unmentionables (that would be 8d6 damge, armour counts, I'm afraid – Nephertiti kicks like a donkey).

If a roll is failed, another wizard may step in and (you decide who) but the saving rolls are unchanged but a L2 SR on SPD is also required!

Sample file

If Step 3 is bungled, go to <658>; if Nephartiti has been laid low, go to <661>.

<661> Almost there! Time to burn the witch! Well, the mummy but let's not be pedantic. It may not destroy him – his type have a habit of resurfacing – just ask the Fantastic Four how hard it is to get rid of Dr. Doom – but this will give you the chance to do a runner…to Lord Solomon. Talk about out of the frying pan and into the fire!

To set fire to Nephertiti, you (or the wizard assigned Step 4) need a match or you need to Call Flame. What will it be, eh? If you or another try using magic, go to <663>; if you (or another) take the matchbox in your pocket out and strike a match, go to <664>.

Sample file

<662> There are many spells that might save you from the ravenous zombie rising up from the damp earth to pull you down to devour. Fly Me, maybe, or Oh Go Away; Hold That Pose, obviously, but Protective Pent*agram* would only isolate you and the zombie from everyone else. If you did not cast a spell, you need a L4 SR on STR to break free or the zombie starts doing damage, mindlessly at that. It has a MR of 50. Perhaps you are fighting it now within a Protective Pentagram?

The other wizards react as follows (roll 2d6):

2 – Freeze in horror, zombie gets free attack
3 or 4 – Protective Pentagram (the fight is on)
5-10 – Oh Go Away (the zombie makes like a mole and burrows desperately)
11 – Rely on STR (*TTYF* to follow if the SR is successful)
12 – Zombie Zonk (nb – INT SRs for all spells please!)

Here, the spell Zombie Zonk will take command of any zombie within range if the caster's INT, LK and CHR exceed the zombie's MR. Once the zombies have been neutralised, on to <665>, if you please.

<663> The attempt to use magic against him, albeit indirectly, breathes fire into Nephertiti's limbs and he snaps his bonds and rises vengefully, blowing out any fire he sees. Go to <658>.

<664> The match, when touched to the black silk bandages, ignites the material like a spark on a dust-dry prairie. He's shooting flames in all directions and spasming wildly. The bandages round his mouth burn u and he begins howling like a banshee. Run!

A L1 SR on SPD to get away before the banshee wail engulfs you – if it does, then you need L5 SRs on INT and CHR to snap out it's control. Fail those and you find yourself closing the proverbial book. If the banshee wail does not get you, you flee to the others, burning rubber as well as the mummy.

Go to <655> (oh, and you can check to see if anyone else falls foul of the howl).

<665> Miranda Le Feigh snorts with distaste at this place and its occupants. 'I thought Phantog was as bad as it gets but whatever this sorry hole is, it takes the biscuit! I'm sick of these mists – I want to see what I'm dealing with!'

Brushing Limpwrist aside as he attempts to take her hand, she withdraws from her décolletage her 'Weather Feather' and a sudden shaft of light, which gather into a brief cyclone of light, banishes the fog and, along with a glimpse of cleavage, you see that

Sample file

you are standing in a vast graveyard, stretching out as far as the eye can see to all points of the compass.

Limpwrist gasps in alarm at the movement all around you: zombies tending vegetable plots, cutting back weeds, watering plants and pruning with rapt concentration. Nethalkan steadies his companion with a loud click of his fingers and draws attention to another phenomenon – some of the zombies are laying down in open graves and then sinking into the ground.

Glancing about him hastily, this senior wizard tugs on Thotharran's sleeve, grating bone against bone, and demands of him, 'Well, do we stand here until we take root in this infernal garden of decay or is there some way to find Lord Solomon? The sooner we gain the knowledge we were sent here for, the sooner we get back to Andremida and the sooner we can get back to making love!'

A fair point, really, and Limpwrist takes the other sleeve so that the lich is ganged up on. 'Turning from one to the other with hatred flickering in his burning eyes, Thotharran spits out, 'Do as I do, if you will risk the Underworld!' As they release his arms, he hurries forward to an unoccupied grave and lies down in it.

If you will follow suit, go to <667>; all the other wizards do so bar Bumblesnore who has just cast a Hidey Hole, as he courteously informs you, and has meandered over to inspect the zombies' horticultural efforts – you can join him in his *Hidey Hole* if you like – go to <668>.

<666> There is no beast here but, instead, an effect far more insidious. As you walk the halls of the Unliving, great corridors and atria all constructed from plundered gravestones of the poor, innocent departed, their life savings going not to commemorate their time

Sample file

above but to amplify the heartlessness of those below, you feel things wriggling in your flesh. The squirming sensation is everywhere, an internal infestation of things moving inside you. Go to <670>.

<667> As you follow Thotharran's lead, you feel the cold of the grave seeping into your bones. Make a L1 SR on CON. If you fail, Death is stretching its bony fingers out for you! You can feel the pull from 'the other side' and your whole life flashes before you with the bits where you did all the selfish, mean deeds in Technicolor and the more angelic aspects in grainy sepia. The thread that connects your soul to your mortal remains is wafer thin right now and Death is ready to sever the Gordian knot.

Make a L7 SR on WIZ. If you fail, the cord is cut and you drift off towards a plane less mundane, a realm of angels and demons. That would mean closing the book, of course. You can make those saving rolls for the other wooers too. If nothing as predictable as Death reaches out for you, although at this moment a hefty tax demand lands on your door mat, you feel yourself descending at speed towards the hidden depths of Trollword. With a crunch, you stop and see that you landed heavily on an unfortunate zombie minion.

Take 40 APs for killing another fiend, why don't you? The next step in your life's journey is to that dread number <666>…

<668> Your invisible companion has also cast a '*Muffler*' spell which means you can talk, whistle, burp and generally be unquiet without anyone hearing. 'Let's see what they are growing,' he suggests, stroking his chin thoughtfully. As you inspect the zombie gardeners at work, you see they are growing

Sample file

zombie pumpkins. 'Let's take a few seeds,' your fellow inspector directs. He carefully picks several up and then transfers them to a satyr skin pouch. Make a note if you do likewise.

Then he points to a zombie raising a large green pumpkin above the head of another while two more zombies rip the head from the shoulders of the waiting shambling corpse. The first jams the pumpkin where the head previously sat and then the three set about carving eyes, nose, mouth and ears on the new Zombikin. They repeat this operation maybe a dozen times and you notice that the new creatures move appreciably faster than the ordinary common or garden variety.

Two Zombikins collide some way off from you and there is an instant explosion equivalent to two *Hell Bomb Bursts*. 'I think we've seen and learned enough,' opines Bumblesnore. 'Let's get out of here, pronto!' He rushes for a grave and pulls you along.

You may take 100 WPs and 100 APs, for your curiosity as much as anything. Bumblesnore gets 200 WPs as this was his production. Now go to <667>.

<669> You are the last two to put one foot in the grave. The graves are unsettled by early use they were not designed for. Go to <667> but increase the level of saving rolls called for by one.

<670> The graveyard transporter is a means of creating new zombies and you are all infected with zombieitis. Some have a greater natural resistance than others – it depend son your immune system. Make the best SR you can on the average of WIZ and CON and add the level to the results of 2d6 (no DARO)

Sample file

when you consult the List of Effects below (roll for all wizards).

Sample file

2 – You are 100% zombie – the effect is permanent
3 – You totally zombified but a L7 SR on LK will make you return to normal in daylight
4 – You are fully fledged zombie but a L7 SR on LK means you will only be like this when you are underground
5 – You are a bona fide zombie but a L7 SR on LK means that you will be able to return to normal form whenever you smoke a cigar
6 – You are zombie through and through but a L7 SR on CHR means that you can lose this state and return to normal whenever you are at sea or on water (you need to get a boat)
7 – You are turned into a zombie but this effect will end if you leave this place and make a L4 SR on CON
8 – You are a zombie – however, you will return to normal if you get out of here
9 – You will be a zombie as long as you stay down here; your STR above ground will remain doubled as you will retain your zombie physical power
10 – You will be a zombie as long as you stay down here; your STR and CON above ground will remain zombified as you will retain your zombie physical power
11 – As 10 but you are able to control any one zombie you meet away from this place if you make a L3 SR on CHR
12 – As 11 above but you can control up to 1d6 zombies with a L3 SR on CHR
13 or better – As 12 above but you are able to create up to 1d6 zombies as well as control them (you need a L5 SR on WIZ to create up to 1d6 provided that you have corpses less than twenty four hours dead and then you need to make the L3 SR on CHR to control them or they attack you until destroyed – MR40 each)

Sample file

You can modify attributes per the rule book when/if in zombie form. Take 200 APs and go to <671>.

<671> Not enjoying the zombification you have undergone, you stagger on, stumbling your way to a great gravestone of a door inscribed:

"RIP – not! Hah! The Worms go in and the worms crawl out but which are the real worms?"

You see there are names written below and the date – the date is today and the names are your names! Your fellow wizards set about opening the door but it is magically locked. They cast *Knock Knock* spells but the door does not budge until between you have cast the equivalent of a L40 *Knock Knock* spell. AT this, the great slab of stone slides down into the depths and you are admitted to den of Lord Solomon, the Zombie Master.
Go to <672>.

Sample file

<672> You see that Lord Solomon's *Den of Iniquity* is a grim place indeed. All manner of punishments are going on, ringing the Zombie Master with the anguish of the living as his zombie torturers apply hot irons, burrowing insects, needles and far fouler instruments best not thought of, let alone described, to the suffering unfortunates. He grins hideously, his bottom lip almost peeling off, as he feasts his eyes on you and it is hard to read thoughts of fresh victims in his sunken, rheumy eyes. You all get a very bad feeling as you think of magic-casting, panic not far off.



'You look nice,' he says greasily. 'Those maggots suit you. I expect you've destroyed many of my zombies in your wizarding career – perhaps you know have more empathy for the condition? Let's not beat around the bush. I know why you are here and I rather enjoyed my spies' account of your treatment of that big girl's blouse, Nephertiti. Surprised? Do you think it beyond my wit to wrap a zombie in those ridiculous bandages and fool that imbecile? Do you think me that insipid? Watch and tremble, mortals!'

He spins round, fast for a mouldering heap of zombie flesh, and casts a group Double Double with a Little Feets spliced in on all his torturers. The howls of agony from the victims bear testimony to the efficacy

of his sorcery. 'There, they can thank you for casting aspirations about me. Their pain is your doing!'

Thotharran smirks, either at the torment of the prisoners or the paranoia of Lord Solomon, it is impossible to know which for certain with a liche wizard. The Zombie Master rants on for a good hour and this aural/oral torture is almost as bad as the corporal punishment being dished out by the zombie sergeants.

You are spared the details. Go to <673>.

<673> Lord Solomon recomposes his decaying flesh and gets down to brass tacks. 'Nephetiti wanted a bride and so do I. He wanted that Manukan bint, Andremida, but she's nothing special – more trouble than she's worth. I want one of you as my bride.'

He crooks a finger to beckon you all to him but it falls off as he flexes it. He picks it up and pops it into his mouth, munching thoughtfully. 'Which one, I wonder?'

Go to <674> while he ponders this deep question.

<674> 'You first, my pretty,' he chauvinistically says to Miranda. Feeling her lumpy, worm-filled face, the witch steps forward with obvious dread. Lord Solomon takes her hand and presses it to his lips. 'Would you like to be my bride?' he asks voraciously. 'You already look more to my taste than you did outside.' He licks his lips with relish.

Make a SR on the average of WIZ and CHR for Miranda Le Feigh and record the result. Now go to <675>.

<675> I suppose I should say that if any wizard has fallen by the wayside on the Road of Misadventure that you must ignore any reference to them (in other places

Sample file

you might have to substitute one for t'other). You can't have fallen else you would not be here!

The Zombie Master clicks his fingers to summon Bumblesnore. A middle finger and a thumb drop to the ground, a tasty snack he notes for later when he feels peckish again.

'Ah, Bumblebore,' he begins. 'No, Bumblesnore,' the wizard returns, only to meet a storm of abuse. 'Never, never, never correct me, you harridan! I wouldn't marry you for all the lice in an uruuk's under garments! Now, clear off!' Bumblesnore winks at you as he returns – that name of his has come handy before.

The would be bridegroom scans you all, deciding who next to consider. Go to <676>.

Sample file

<676> Lord Solomon decides to test the marital mettle of Nethalkan, seeking to draw his hand to his mouth, presumably to bestow a kiss and not to bite it. The elderly wizard bows and observes that a Master of such distinction would surely prefer a younger and, well, more female bride.

'I don't care what the electricity's like as long as there's static and it's current.' Lord Solomon guffaws. 'A/C D/C, it's as one to me. And age is no barrier, my little fruitcake. I find the decrepit more to my taste, actually.' He smacks his lips with gusto and Nethalkan takes a step backwards, blanching.

Make a SR on the average of WIZ and CHR for Nethalkan and record the result. Now go to <677>.

<677> Next to be scrutinised is Limpwrist. He waltzes forward and addresses Lord Solomon in a camp voice he hopes will prove abhorrent to the Zombie Master. No such luck as Lord Solomon sprouts a bushy

handlebar moustache and takes the wizard to his knee where he gives him a thorough dandling.

Sample file

'Oh, yes, I like you, ducky,' he croons. Limpwrist looks aghast and it may be at more than just the hairy slug on the Zombie Master's top lip.

Make a SR on the average of WIZ and CHR for Limpwrist and record the result. Now go to <678>.

<678> Your turn, of course. Lord Solomon has had his eye on you (it fell out when he stared particularly hard in your direction and he levitated it onto the end of your nose but don't worry, he's levitated it back now). 'My you're a saucy little kitten, and no mistake,' he says longingly. 'I think you'd give nearly as good as you'd get, what!' He rubs your thigh and squashes down a number of writhing maggots that had poked their heads up to say 'hello' and to check out the scene.

Make a SR on the average of WIZ and CHR and record the result. Now go to <679>.
<679> Compare the results for the possible brides. The wizard who made the lowest level SR is the one Lord Solomon decides to wed. There is no escaping his attentions or his intentions as he is a master of L40 magic as well as zombies. With delight he escorts his bride, regardless of gender, down a corridor and along to the altar, making the other wizards best man or bridesmaids, again regardless of sex.

The unlucky Zombie Mistress is ordered to throw the bouquet of lilies well past being fresh – make LK SRs for all wizards bar the bride and the highest catches it if they make a L1 SR on DEX (if there is a critical fumble here, the next luckiest wizard has a chance to nab the bridal bouquet and so on). You gain 200 WPs for catching the limp lilies.

Then the reception: mouldy trifle and rotten tomatoes are the highlights and you may imagine the lowlights if

Sample file

you have a strong enough stomach. Everyone has to tuck in so SRs n CON all round, please – less than L3 and you throw up on yourself and lose 200 WPs.

Sample file

Once the feast has been consumed, Lord Solomon is ready to carry his bride over the threshold, from whence on to a honeymoon in some distant mass grave. If you are the bride, close the book (you can email me if you want to know how you fare with married life; you gain 1,000 APs if that is consolation at all). For the non-newly weds, the Zombie Master insists you take a flowers back for Andremida to make up for the fact that he just will not teach you his control over corpses. He has a promising protégée, so full of worms that she is known as 'Sievera', take you to his private garden.

Go to <680> and we shall see if you have (gan)green fingers.

<680> Sievera points to where the lilies are growing (growing? – more like dying) amidst a vast pumpkin patch. There a zombikin is tending to them, making sure they are properly wilted with their putrefying touch.

'We dig in all the zombie parts that drop off,' Sievera tells you. 'They're super-rich in nutrients. If you happen to die here, would you mind signing these consent forms so that we can use your bits and pieces too? The small print? That just says I get the brains as a signing up commission.'

With this cheery prospect, go to <681>.

<681> Before she has the chance to get her pen out of her ear, where it is solidly stuck, a massive zombikin lollops up. His head is a massive Jack-o-Lantern, a zombikin form of tattooing.

Sample file



Sample file

'This is Hell Bomb Burt,' Sievera tells you over her shoulder as she runs for cover. 'Watch out! He has an explosive temper.' Go to <682>.

<682> 'Just get on with picking your lilies,' Burt shouts angrily. 'And mind you don't touch any of my pumpkins! And pull the lilies up by the roots! Don't just snap them off! Understand!' Even his closing question is shouted a booming volume so it doesn't seem much like a question. It is quite clear that you should do as he says.

'When you all have flowers to match your livers I will teleport you back to Apys!' he yells at double normal volume. Go to <683>.

<683> You all start picking. It is a very delicate task as the lilies are almost entirely rotted through. It takes a

mammoth L10 SR on DEX to succeed, such is the rot damage to the stems. Have all wizards remaining try to do as Burt has asked, please do! Go to <684>.

<684> If everyone made it, go to <686>; if anyone failed go to <685>.

<685> Hell Bomb Burt sees the fatal flaw in the picking. He goes apolopleptic! Steam streams from his head holes and the pumpkin head itself goes from orange to red to magma! The Hell Bomb Burst that is his brain is about to blow! You all see the teleportation zucchini in his pocket.

Have all wizards make a SR or 6PD. If someone can make a L6 SR, the zucchini can be triggered before Hell Bomb Burt goes off. If no one does, close the book; otherwise, it's on to <687> with 200 APs in hand.

<686> Just as well! Yelling at the top of his lungs, Hell Bomb Burt does as he promised and sends you all back to Apys forthwith, lilies in hand, leaving blowing his head off for another explosive moment.

That was no Garden of Eden and you are well shot of the place. Take 200 APs and go to <687>.

<687> Who is still with you? Your number must e reduced by at least one, courtesy of Lord Solomon's wedding bells. For you, much has happened and that seems true of time, too. Not so for Andremida. She stands as she did when you left, having given her a full taste of your kissing power, Be'enthair Bee'fuhr by her side.

'Oh no! What happened? Quick? Tell me all about it. Oh. I'm sorry – I'm devastated to see that you did not

Sample file

all return! It's my fault. I shouldn't have sent you, no matter how great the need!'

When she settles, Be'enthair aks for an account of what befell you. The wooing wizard making the highest INT SR may spill the bee'ans. Chronicle your adventures and go to <688>.

<688> When Andremida takes in all that you have bee'n through, all your trials and tribulations, she presses a claw to your breast, each of you wooers. She wears a ring now, one that you remember was not there bee'fore you left and she uses its power for your benefit.

Make a L1 SR on WIZ – just you, as the others, for their own reasons, decline. More fool them. Andremida heals all hurts, reversing anything suffered in the Realms of the Undead that you would like cancelled out.
Then she closes her many eyes for a minute and ponders. If you learned the secrets of vampire control and mummy mastery from Alain Lieucarte and Nephertiti, go to <689>; if you and your rivals did not, go to <690>.

Sample file

<689> 'You have brought back to Apys the chance of salvation for the whole of Trollworld. Let me understand what you have learned – teach me, I bee'seech you.' She looks with rapt anticipation at each one of you. You all must take turns to impart this knowledge – it must be a perfect combination of intelligence, wizardry and charismatic tutoring. Roll saving rolls on each of these three attributes and total them. Make a note and go to <691>.

<690> 'You have failed. Perhaps it was too much to hope for. Without this knowledge needed to meet the

forces of Zweetz, I intend to end my days a spinster, standing at the side of my sister, Stenotrida, the War Queen. You may stay and fight with us or you may leave – the choice is yours. I thank you for your work for my city and my people and will give you safe passage through Phantog if you will not stay. If you will stand with us, you will be a valued member of our War Council.'

Sample file

The die is cast and the chips are down. If it's poker that is to be played you had better know when to bluff. You may take a further 7,000 APs and close the book as the Wheel of Misfortune takes another turn.

<691> Andremida is able to learn what she yearns to know if her teacher makes each of the three saving rolls at not less than L10 (that's a target of 65). As long as one wooer manages to explain things clearly to her, she will master these dark arts and the strings to her bow will be manifold. Any successful teacher gains 300 WPs. If no one succeds, things are grim. Go to <690> if this tragedy occurs, otherwise gallop ahead to <692>.

<692> 'Wonderful!' she buzzes like a chainsaw in hyperdrive. 'Let's go make some mummies. Oh you dead monsters of Phantog, you shall have a new mistress, you shall serve my people in your death as you never did in life!'

Be'enthair Bee'fuhr looks nonplussed at her near hysteria but stress of planetary proportions might do worse to many a monarch. Once outside in the steamy jungle humidity, you are reminded how sweet even Lord Solomon's garden smelled in comparison with Phantog. Feversihly, Andremida bids you all cast Dem Bones Gonna Rise (a L1 SR on INT for everyone, please).

As the ground shifts, let us see what you drew forth and if Andremida can control the monster and mummify it. Roll 2d6 (no DARO) and go to <694>.

<693> The queen is thrilled with what she can now deploy against enemies of Apys. The Manukan forces can be amplified with Phantagonian auxiliaries,

Sample file

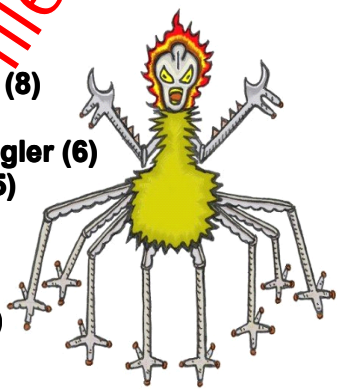
commanded through vampiric lore and bound by mummy magic. She has you cancel your Dem Bones Gonna Rise spells and asks Be'enthair to take your to your chambers within the Hive City.

'Bee'fore the next war bee'gins,' she buzzes tenderly, 'I shall spend a little time with each of you bee'fore I settle on a mate.'

Bee'fuhr hurries you back to Apys and shunts you along spiralling corridors, past workers and soldiers, until you are ensconced in your quarters. Take a moment to rest and restore yourself for the last test to come. Go to <695>.

Sample file

<694> This is what you get:
2) Phantagonian Fiend (9)
3) Marrow-sucking Sickophant (8)
4) Gimplespack (7)
5) Wide-nostrilled Mucus Wrangler (6)
6) Sapsucking Spinesnapper (5)
7) Gimblespack (4)
8) Widow-maker Spinecall (5)
9) Bee'guiling Brainstrainer (6)
10) Two Headed Slithy Tove (7)
11) Phantagonian Fantom (8)
12) Swarm of Zombees (9)



The last is something hitherto unencountered in Phantog, a mutant strain arising in an instant, an unwanted 'gift' from the Zombie Master, who loves throwing curve balls. For all these beasties consult the Bestiary at the back where should you need to give battle in the event that Andremida cannot control what you have raised for her to practise her new skills upon.

It is a matter of each wizard's LK as to how she, and so they, will fare – the number in brackets after each monstrosity from the Jungle's dark heart indicates the

level SR on LK the wooer must make for Andremida to have full power of the freshly bandaged horror. If the LK SR is failed, the wizard must battle to destroy the foul creature – refer to the Bestiary as to how to handle the combat. If Andremida controls the monster summoned, the wizard receives 100 WPs times the level of the LK SR; if the wizard has to destroy the creature and succeeds, that wizard receives 50 WPs times the level of the LK SR and the half that in APs.

Should a mummified monster slay you, close the book – so near, so far; if you live, go to <693>.
<695> There is a firm knock at your door and when you call out 'Enter', stepping through the doorway is Andremida, dressed in a metallic bodysuit. She could be your knight in shining armour if she wasn't female, possessed of multiple eyes and limbs and making a buzzing noise.

Sample file

She carries a tube-shaped object under one arm. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull giant killer', she says smiling. 'It's our time to play now.' She lays the rolled up object out on the honeycombed carpet and you see a shiny white sheet, covered with rows of red, blue, green and yellow spots. 'Tine to play Twister,' she laughs.

Through the door comes Be'ebthair Bee'fuhr with the spinner. 'You take that side, I'll take this. You can spin the needle now, Be'enthair.' And with that, the game is under way. It is a little different to Twister that you might have played, dear and patient reader, in that Andremida has surplus limbs and so there are extra spins for her so that all her legs and arms are committed. Very soon, she is tangled about you in a most alluring fashion.

You should make a saving roll on DEX. A critical fumble means you made a social faux pas and took

advantage of the intimacy to collapse on top of her. That's is not cricket and even though that is quite a different species, it is the same in the Manukan Book of Wooing Etiquette – unacceptable familiarity so no WPs scored, game over. Otherwise, make a CHR SR and multiply that against the level of the DEX SR you made. A skilful Twister player who does not sprawl in ungainly fashion on the queen has a close up chance to impress her with passion, tenderness and technique, three things sought after in a husband to be'e. The product of these two factors is the number of WPs you gain.

Sample file

Repeat the DEX and CHR SRs to find the WPs for remaining wooing rivals – Andremida is going to get a real workout now! Go to <696>.

<696> If I could only know who is left in the race and who stands where in the queen's favours but that knowledge is not mine. So be'e it. I shall do my best, ignorant though I may be'e.

Andremida has almost made up her mind but there is one test she requires two wizards to undertake before she declares where her heart lies. The top two wooers are to strip down to their loincloths and wrestle in a great vat of Royal Jelly and the winner will take the grand prize, the place by Andremida's side at the altar. If you are not in the Top Two, all you may do is spectate and cheer on your favourite. Good sportsmanship like that is most be'ecoming.

On to <697>.

<697> You may cast any spells you like. You will be given one hour to prepare so some WIZ expended will be regained. This should be ample time to tie your loincloth securely and meditate on the challenge ahead.

The contest is to take place outside the hive and as you walk out into the sunshine,, with your second, one of the consorts of one of the lesser queens, a huge crowd of Manukans, packed into gantries hastily erected to form a coliseum, set up a buzzing that would remind someone from our planet of a gathering of lumberjacks with powerful Stihl chainsaws in a small cave, engines running. It is thunderous, it is deafening and you are on centre stage. The seconds help you and your opponent into the pool of Royal Jelly and there you stand, chest deep in goo.

Sample file

The gong sounds and the contest is underway! Go to <698>.

<698> You are not allowed to use magic against your opponent, direct or indirect. Your opponent will have cast Double Doubles on all of STR, LK, DEX and SPD as well as Little Feets. Hidey Hole is allowed because magic is cast over the jelly vat to allow spectators a good view, regardless.

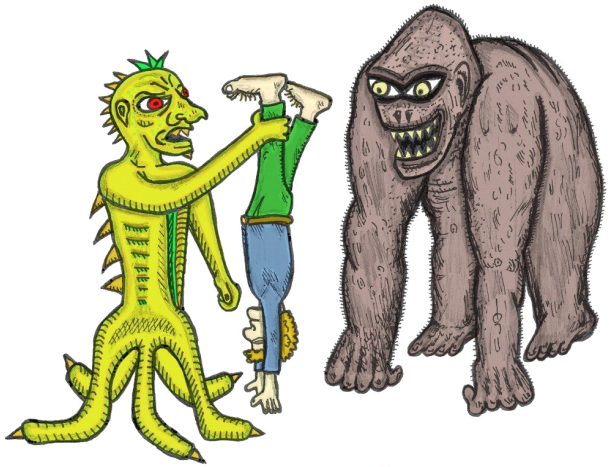
After that, it is a battle of five rounds of 1d6 plus combat adds with the difference between the two scores coming off CON as measure of when someone is forced to submit. Maybe you Double Doubled CON too? You may attempt a stunt against your opponent with a simple matching of saving rolls on a given attribute that counts for combat adds – e.g. you might attempt a dodge and test DEX; the difference between the two stunt rolls is added to the better wrestler's combat total for that round.

I think that's enough for you to make a fair contest of this last, sticky situation. Good luck! Go to <699> when the victor's hand is raised.

Sample file

<699> As the vanquished wooer is hauled out of the jelly pit, Andremida leaps in with unfettered joy and be'egins to wrestle playfully but forcefully with now declared husband-to-be'e. Make SRs on STR and LK (they are the last you will make in this wooing contest) to determine the fate of your loincloth in the frolicsome activity that follows.

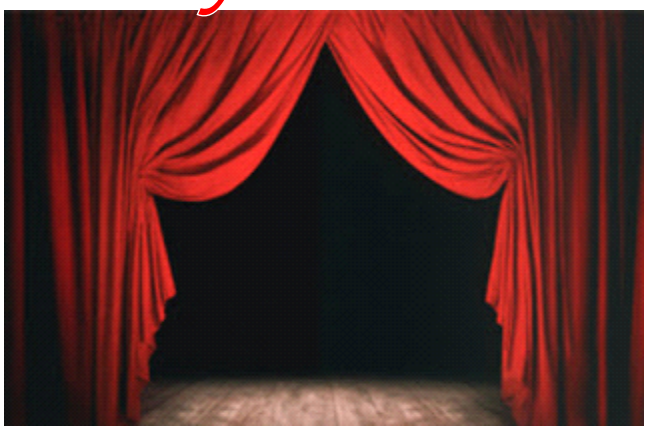
Congratulations! The wooing Champion of Champions – that's you! If there was a stadium roof to come off, it would sailing upwards towards Sar and Sahane, Trollworld's first artificial satellite. May married life suit you well. Go to <700>.



<700> As the winning wooer – the ultimate winner in this sprawling saga of Manukan marriage and matriarchs – you receive 42,000 APs and will be on one of the arms of the Hive Queen in the battle to come.

You also receive Andremida's dowry of 150,000 GPs – spend them wisely, there is a war brewing and you will be at the centre of it.

Sample file



Apendices

1 Wizard Character Sheets

Level 2 Wizards

Name - **Nux Fractor** Kindred – Human
STR - 21 WIZ - 21 INT - 21 LK - 14
CON - 18 DEX - 14 CHR - 18 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +8
WEAPONS – Kukri 2+5
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1 and 2
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name-**Spontaneous Combustius**
Kindred – Human
STR - 21 WIZ - 21 INT - 21 LK - 18
CON - 14 DEX - 18 CHR - 14 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – Kukri 2+5
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1 and 2
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Sample file

Name - **Perry Stroika** Kindred – Half-elf
STR - 14 WIZ - 21 INT - 21 LK - 18
CON - 14 DEX - 21 CHR - 18 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +10
WEAPONS – Two kukris (normally Vorpalled)
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1 and 2
OTHER - Wand of Focus

Name - **Ali Bongo** Kindred – Human

STR - 14 WIZ - 21 INT - 21 LK - 21
CON - 14 DEX - 14 CHR - 21 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +8
WEAPONS – Kukri 2+5
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1 and 2
OTHER - Wand of Focus

Name - **Sly Toffand** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 18 INT - 18 LK - 18
CON - 18 DEX - 21 CHR - 14 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +14
WEAPONS – Kukri 2+5
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1 and 2
OTHER - Wand of Focus

Sample file

Level 3 Wizards

Name - **Ambrosia Necta** Kindred– Human
STR - 14 WIZ - 2(INT - 32 LK - 18
CON - 14 DEX - 2(CHR - 21 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS - +1(
WEAPONS – Jambiya
ARMOUR – Leather with steel reinforcements (7)
SPELLS – All L1-3
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name - **Flusho the Wonder Nit** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 32 INT - 25 LK - 18
CON - 18 DEX - 18 CHR - 18 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +10
WEAPONS – Pair of katars 2+4 each
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-3
Name - **Argyron** Kindred – Elf
STR - 18 WIZ - 32 INT - 25 LK - 18

CON - 14 DEX - 21 CHR - 18 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – Urukslayer 2+8
ARMOUR – Dragonskin (10)
SPELLS – All L1-3
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name - **Megalesius** Kindred – Elf
STR - 18 WIZ - 21 INT - 21 LK - 18
CON - 21 DEX - 21 CHR - 25 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – Urukslayer 2+8
ARMOUR – Dragonskin (10)
SPELLS – All L1-3
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Sample file

Name - **Skelmis** Kindred – Elf
STR - 14 WIZ - 25 INT - 32 LK - 18
CON - 14 DEX - 18 CHR - 21 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +10
WEAPONS – Urukslayer 2+8
ARMOUR – Dragonskin (10)
SPELLS – All L1-3
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Level 5 Wizards

Name - **Leverona** Kindred– Human

STR - 14 WIZ - 28 INT - 53 LK - 18
CON - 18 DEX - 21 CHR - 28 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +10
WEAPONS – Haladie 2+4, Tiger Claw 2
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-5
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name - **Moldevort** Kindred– Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 18 INT - 53 LK - 14
CON - 18 DEX - 21 CHR - 28 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – Three Quarter Staff 6
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-5
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Sample file

Name - **Yaga Baboo** Kindred – Human?
STR - 14 WIZ - 32 INT - 53 LK - 18
CON - 14 DEX - 25 CHR - 25 SPD - 14
COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – 2 Katars 2+4 each
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-5
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name - **Hokey** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 28 INT - 56 LK - 18
CON - 18 DEX - 21 CHR - 21 SPD - 14

COMBAT ADDS – +12
WEAPONS – Butcher's Knife 2+3
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-5
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Name - **Simon Magoo** Kindred – Human
STR - 14 WIZ - 53 INT - 32 LK - 28
CON - 14 DEX - 21 CHR - 14 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +17
WEAPONS – Kukri 2+5, Poniard 2
ARMOUR – Leather (6)
SPELLS – All L1-5
OTHER – Wand of Focus

Level 7 Wizards

Name - **The Wood Wizard**
Kindred – Human
STR - 14 WIZ - 49 INT - 74 LK - 18
CON - 21 DEX - 35 CHR - 35 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +2
WEAPONS – Whipwood truncheon 5+5
ARMOUR – Dogwood Bark (10)
SPELLS – All L1-7
OTHER – Not telling!

Sample file

Name - **Hanzalf** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 53 INT - 74 LK - 28
CON - 18 DEX - 28 CHR - 28 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +23
WEAPONS – Quarterstaff 2
ARMOUR – Enchanted leather (18)
SPELLS – All L1-7
OTHER – Lots of secret stuff…

Name - **Sunnyman** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 74 INT - 56 LK - 25
CON - 21 DEX - 25 CHR - 25 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +21
WEAPONS – Quarterstaff 2
ARMOUR – Enchanted leather (18)
SPELLS – All L1-7
OTHER – A few tricks up his sleeve…

Name - **Ragnarok** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 74 INT - 49 LK - 35
CON - 18 DEX - 25 CHR - 25 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +26
WEAPONS – Quarterstaff 2
ARMOUR – Enchanted leather (18)
SPELLS – All L1-7
OTHER – Bits and bobs, knicks and knacks

Sample file

Name - **Catweezil** Kindred – Human
STR - 14 WIZ - 74 INT - 49 LK - 18
CON - 85 DEX - 49 CHR - 25 SPD - 18
COMBAT ADDS – +26
WEAPONS – Quarterstaff 2
ARMOUR – Enchanted leather (18)
SPELLS – All L1-7
OTHER – Bag of Tricks

Level 10 Wizards

Name - **House Elf** Kindred– Human
STR - 25 WIZ - 70 INT - 105 LK - 35
CON - 21 DEX - 35 CHR - 35 SPD - 25
COMBAT ADDS – +36

WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff – Ominous Thunder (WIZ 55)
ARMOUR – Fire Cloak (30 physical plus all magic below L7)
SPELLS – All L1-10
OTHER – Many, many things!

Name - **Souza Fortescue** Kindred – Dwarf
STR - 28 WIZ - 77 INT - 105 LK - 28
CON - 35 DEX - 32 CHR - 25 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +31
WEAPONS – Deluxe Ring - Nazik (WIZ 45)
ARMOUR – Rhinoceros Hide Poncho (70)
SPELLS – All L1-10
OTHER – Many, many things, some of them very strange and very nasty!

Sample file

Name - **El Rico** Kindred – Human
STR - 25 WIZ - 105 INT - 74 LK - 28
CON - 21 DEX - 39 CHR - 39 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +33
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 35)
ARMOUR – Cape of Good Hope (40)
SPELLS – All L1-10
OTHER – Painter's palette with colours of the rainbow, all doing something wonderful and magical

Name - **Dr. William Weird** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 63 INT - 105 LK - 42
CON - 18 DEX - 42 CHR - 42 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +43
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 50)

ARMOUR – Belt of Life (30)
SPELLS – All L1-10
OTHER – Demon-plane Goggles of Astral Travel

Name - **Rinsewell** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 105 INT - 67 LK - 53
CON - 25 DEX - 39 CHR - 42 SPD - 21
COMBAT ADDS – +42
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 60)
ARMOUR – Cap of Damage Limitation (30)
SPELLS – All L1-10
OTHER – A laundry bag full of enchanted underwear

Level 13 Wizards

Name - **Nethalkan** Kindred – Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 88 INT - 139 LK - 35
CON - 28 DEX - 53 CHR - 35 SPD - 25
COMBAT ADDS – +42
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 80)
ARMOUR – Diamond skin (100)
SPELLS – All L1-13
OTHER – A veritable cornucopia of treasures!

Sample file

Name - **Limpwrist** Kindred– Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 70 INT - 139 LK - 46
CON - 22 DEX - 42 CHR - 56 SPD - 25
COMBAT ADDS – +42
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 60)
ARMOUR – Dragon skin (60)
SPELLS – All L1-13
OTHER – Magical bracelets (all heavy) by the dozen!

Name - **Bumblesnore** Kindred– Human
STR - 14 WIZ - 116 INT - 139 LK - 31
CON - 22 DEX - 39 CHR - 39 SPD - 21

COMBAT ADDS – +28
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 100)
ARMOUR – Invisible body sheath (50)
SPELLS – All L1-13
OTHER – He opened Pandora's Box and survived to come away with mystical treasures!

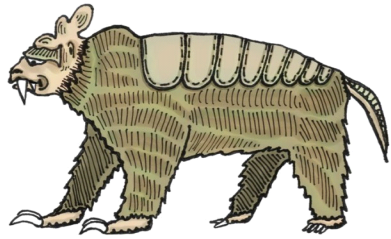
Name - **Miranda Le Feigh** Kindred– Human
STR - 18 WIZ - 84 INT - 139 LK - 28
CON - 32 DEX - 42 CHR - 46 SPD - 32
COMBAT ADDS – +36
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 70)
ARMOUR – Demon body stocking (40)
SPELLS – All L1-13
OTHER – She found a stone with more than a sword to pull free!

Sample file

Name - **Thotharran** Kindred– Human (liche)
STR - 18 WIZ - 70 INT - 139 LK - 42
CON - 35 DEX - 56 CHR - 35 SPD - 25
COMBAT ADDS – +47
WEAPONS – Deluxe Staff (WIZ 60)
ARMOUR – None but all damage halved by L*iche-Leech* spell
SPELLS – All L1-13
OTHER – A great number of treasures from tombs, the ghoulish grave robber!

2 Bestiary (Monsters of Phantog)

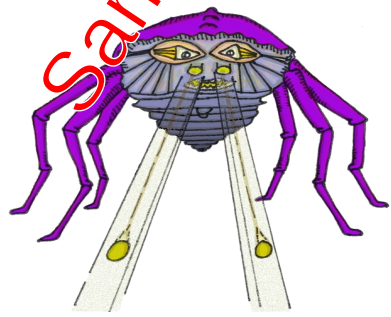
Phantagonian Fiend. This (thankfully) rare monster likes its food minced and mashed. Razor sharp claws at end of hydraulic piston-like forelimbs slice and smash at your pitifully pathetic mortal shell. The Fiend does 2d6 times 20 damage in the blink of an eye.



Sapsucking Spinesnapper, a low-slung, twenty-legged monster with foreclaws custom-designed for breaking the backs of even the most stout of Phantog's vertebrates and with a proboscis able to probe the hardest skins or shells of the Jungles' inhabitants.

Wide-Nostrilled Mucus Wrangler. It charges head down, nose-down, firing a shower of snot-pellets with gay abandon. It bellows ecstatically – no doubt glad to have cleared its nasal congestion. These bug-packed [illegible] bullets can penetrate plate armour at the velocity they leave the Wrangler's snozzle and they are lethal for the bacteria they spread.

Sample file



Cancer Cobra. Its bite does not bring instantaneous death. No, that would be too kind by a long chalk. But for most it does nonetheless bring certain death.



The disease its bite delivers works its way through the central nervous systems and embeds itself with morbid tenacity into the cell walls of the victim's body. What's in it for the snake? Not much except that it serves to maintain its self-esteem.

Sample file



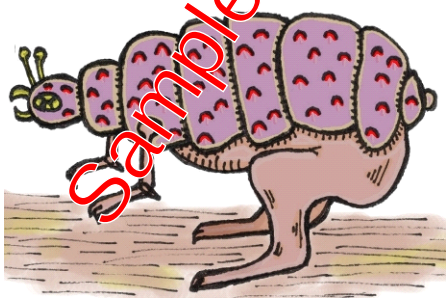
Phantagonian Fantom. The fiendishly ferocious fingers of the Fantom grip you. An icy chill strikes at your heart. Make a L1 SR on CON. Fail and a cardiac arrest paralyses you and your killer is able to suck out your soul at its leisure for its culinary pleasure.

If I do not hear the sound of a book closing far away in Phantog, then play on! In this incorporeal fight, the Fantom has a MR of 40. You have a khremm MR equal to you normal WIZ, LK and CHR. Spite rules apply.

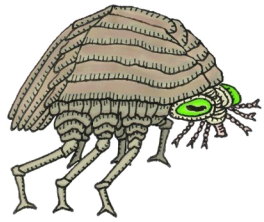
Those are the lines of battle now drawn. Fight it out. Normal spite damage applies but it is your WIZ that is hurt not your CON. This applies to combat damage but you do have the chance of forming intangible mental armour about you. If you lose a round of khremm-battle, make the best saving roll on INT you can: the level of the saving roll indicates the armour protection you have generated that round.

WIZ damage naturally heals at one point per day if you make a L1 SR on LK – that is a saving roll each day. Fail the LK roll and the WIZ point is lost permanently.

Sample file



Blister Bee'tles. These are hard-shelled, hard-boiled bee'tles, so called because of the acidic properties of their near-impenetrable carapaces, which rapidly form into boils of lava-like pus on contact with all but the thickest hides or pelts. The bee'tles are not easy to master but, once they have been settled to another's will, they are docile unless goaded into violence; further, they are tirelessly strong and have a fleet turn of their ramrod-driven one hundred feet. They are sensitive to the directions of the bridle and, as a final deal-clincher, are allergic to Manukan flesh.



The Gimblespack (MR 560). This evil reptile has a symbiotic relationship going with another creature, **Colonic Gutbuster,** a small but mindlessly voracious arthropod.

The Gimblespack is very good at catching things but not very good at eating them as it has a delicate, easily upset stomach; the Colonic Gutbuster has no problems turning flesh and bones to soup with its acidic dribbles and its waste products are most agreeable to the queasy monster that hosts its dinner parties.

Sample file

The Gimblespack has a shell on its back which is adamantine in protective qualities and provides a fine dining area to its guests, with a neat open/shut hatch for shovelling in the savoury treats; it has six arms for pinching, grapping, snipping and snapping, six legs that get it round the Jungle at a fair rate of knots and razor sharp senses for detecting anything that might be snacked upon by its little friends.

The Gutbusters are only as big as a man's fist but they don't need to be any larger to impress: they are red and hairy, much like an angry Scotchman, and scuttle about with ravening rapidity, each claw having a toxic stinger to spice up the menu.

The Two-Headed Slithey Tove. This creature is able to shoot its barbed and sticky tongue at prodigious speed over 100' and then has the tongue-strength to reel in victims the size of elephants!



Sample file

It has a tongue CON of 100 if you ever need to hack through one, heaven forbid! The beast's own CON is 500 but it has a delicate disposition once wounded. Each time it is hit, it gets phased and pauses to lick its wounds with both tongues.

If it's CON is reduced to less than 400 it will curl up and roll away, knocking down trees as it goes. Starting with Ambrosia Nectar, you, dear player, need to make the attempt to zap it for each wizard in any order you may care to prescribe.

Marrow-sucking Sickophant. Charging out of the dense, rotting foliage with steam snorting from every orifice comes a beast which would put any mariner in mind of a manta ray. This one has pincer legs, six of them, and also has six tentacles waving above its head, which is in two sections, giving it three sets on razor sharp teeth to rend and rip with. Like a ray, it has a long, barbed tail that is bound to do something diabolical and its black, limpid eyes seem to suck at your soul.

Kewpie. The kewpie is a small furry mammal, about the size of a domestic cat; it has wings and would be the cutest thing in Phantog if it were not for the scent it releases whenever it feels like it, which is often. It does it especially when it is hungry – which is also often – because the racoon-like stench can cause many a creature encountered to faint at the shock of its stink.

The only creature known to enjoy being sprayed by a kewpie is a bogwoppit, which is able to neutralise the liquid stink bombs and feed off them.

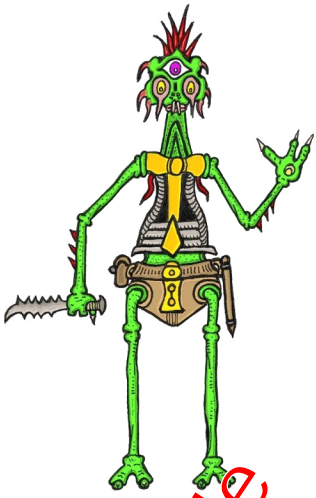

Sample file

The Widow-maker Spiteball. A rotund ball of hairy fury, spitting fire and bristling with razor-clawed arms, it advances quickly on its eight high-stepping legs.

Schrodinger's Cat. A feline with the uncanny ability to perplex. Its mystery lies in its seeming to be alive and dead at the same time – debates can become quite heated when determining whether the cat is beaten or not.

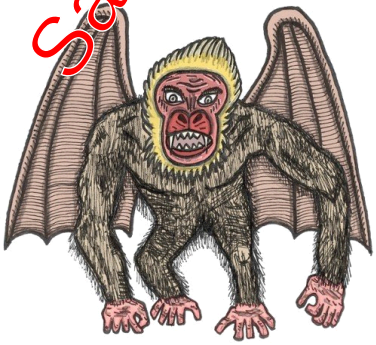


Snomad. A ravenous, bellowing brute, ogrish but with a snowy pelt and brandishing a clutch of frost-bolts, a lunatic predator that knows no fear from the icy realm of the Mountain Kingdom, where Dobby, he who took the Mask of Rubinos from Goblin Crag, is king.

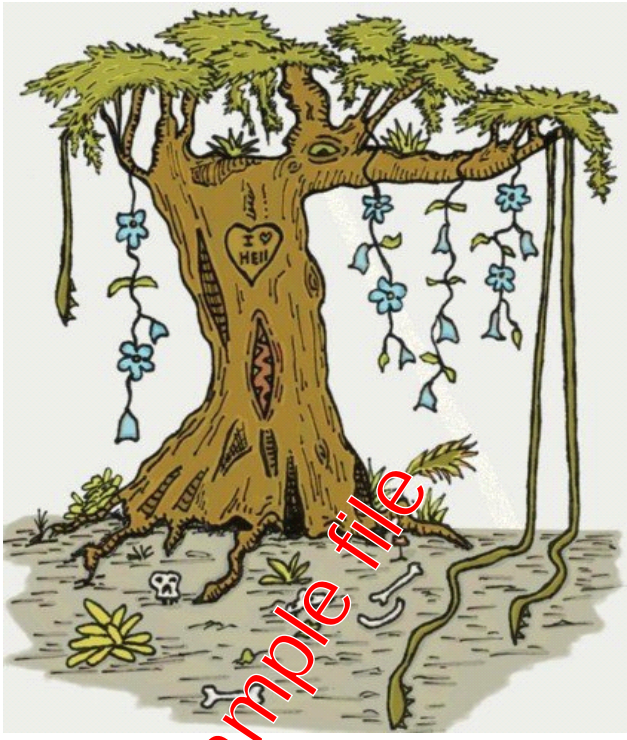


Bee'guiling Braindrainer. A figure of fear, impossible slender on stork-like legs, towering above you, arms tipped with suction pads and claws… this is the Bee'guiling Braindrainer, who, with one psychic blast from its third eye, can leave an army of Manukans drooling like octogenarians in their dotage.

Sample file



The Gibbous Moonmonkey. A solitary primate, to such a degree that its propensity for naught but its own company has left the species perched precariously on the precipice of extinction. Some do hanker after raising a child in their own image but hermaphrodite they are not.



Sample file

The Vlad. This (if an) of plant life has no intention of allowing anyone to practise the alphabet on its skin and you can be quite certain that its bark is worse than its bite.

Any blade that touches its wood will provoke the vlad into whipping down an army of branches, all of which end in rock hard spikes. Its aim, if true, is to fill you full of not so tiny perforations and then use your corpse as a homemade sprinkler system when rainy season comes.

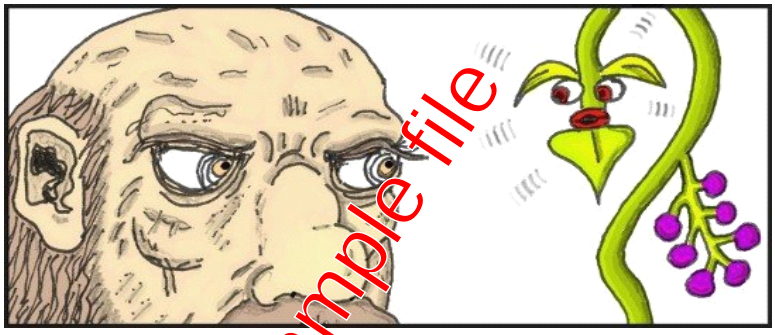
Organ-Grinding Mantis. A voracious insect, swarming silently and descending with fierce velocity, anyone attacked by a swarm of these vile creatures needs to be very quick to get away or cast a saving spell or there will be nothing at all left to provide identification.

3 Other Kindred Magic and Little Known Spells

Soular Plare, an incantation that will summon help if help is within your WIZ times 10 miles. This spell is of your level and carries a casting cost of 10 WIZ points.

Elven Spells

Heard It Through The Grapevine - enables caster to talk to trees Range – Touch Duration - 1 turn Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 10



Sample file

Root Of The Problem - makes INT SRs 1d6 levels lower Range – 20' Duration - 1 turn Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 12

Sap Rising - boosts CON of caster by 1d6 Range – 50' Duration – 1d6 turns Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 15

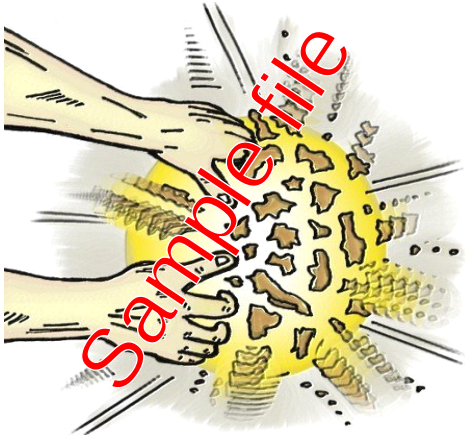
Barking Mad - causes target to howl manically, unable to attack or flee Range – Touch Duration - 1 combat round Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 10

Branching Out - allows caster to gain sympathy of target if LK and CHR exceed target's LK and CHR or MR Range – 30' Duration - 1 turn Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 11

Out Of The Woods - enables caster to escape from traps with a LK SR at 1d6 level Range – 10' Duration - 1 combat round Power Up - Yes WIZ Cost - 11

Dwarven Spells

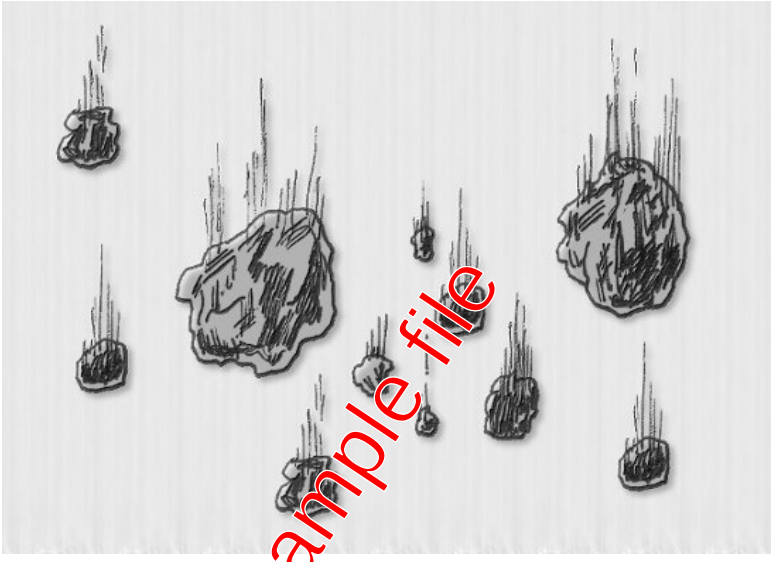
Hammer Blow Effect- Enchants blunt weapon to shatter metal, stone and other brittle solids Range – Touch Duration - I combat turn Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 8


Sample file

Pulverise
Effect- Enchants blunt weapon to crush stone and similar solids to powder or fragments Range - Touch Duration - I combat turn Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 8

Stonewall Effect- Erects stone wall in front of caster up to twice casters height and three times arm span, taking 6d6 hits Range - 20' Duration - I turn Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 10

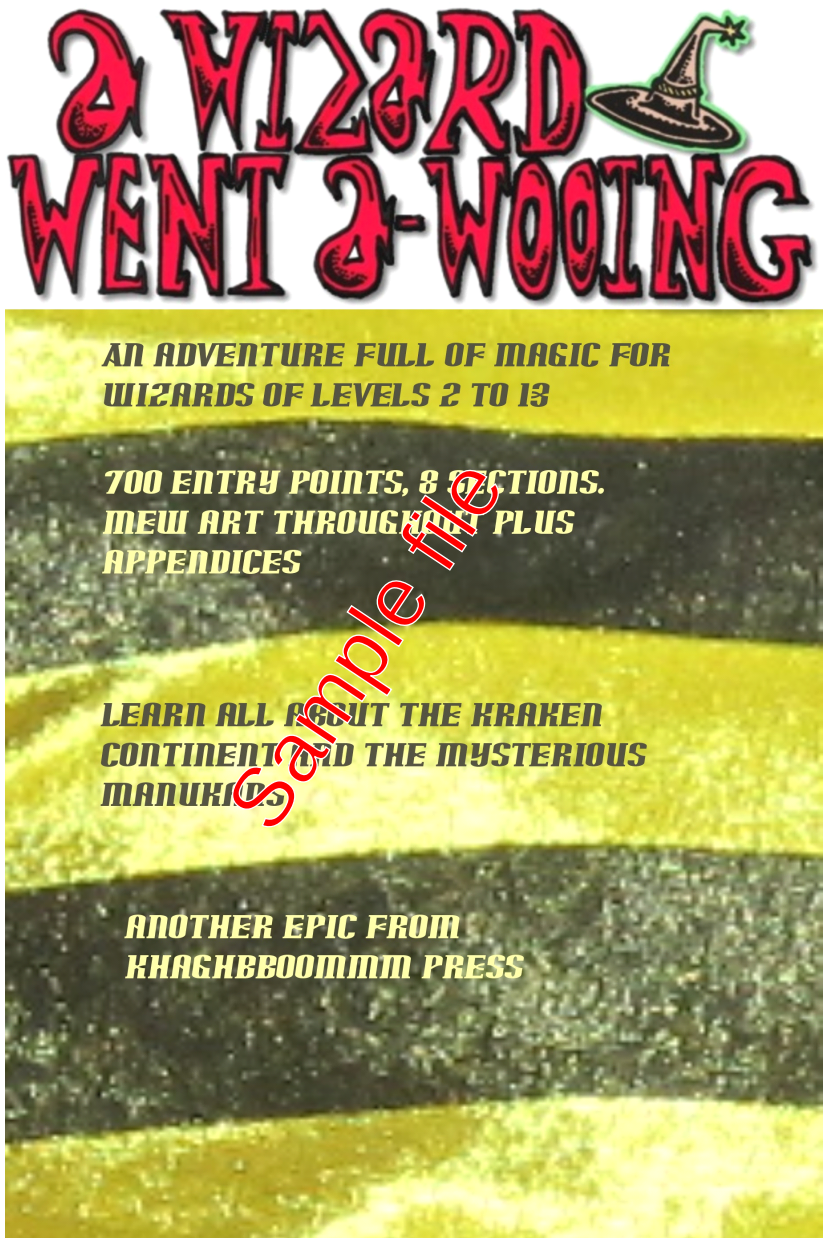
Rock On Effect- Enables caster or other being to keep going under extreme conditions – doesn't restore CON but SRs are based on full attributes not reduced ones Range - Touch Duration - I hour Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 15



Sample file

Boulderly Go Effect- Enables caster to hurl a boulder unerringly at a target – generates STR x level hits Range - 50' Duration - 1 combat round Power Up? – No WIZ Cost 12

Can You Dig It? Effect- Caster is able to dig out a tunnel through earth or rock with bare hands – tunnel is 50' per level Range – Touch Duration - 5 minutes Power Up? – Yes WIZ Cost 15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