

A fantasy role-playing game for face-to-face and play-by-board games

by Paul Elliot and Mike Hill

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### Version History

- 3.1: Added sample foes, non-human player characters and a beginner's adventure.
- 3.2: Added the random treasure rules.
- 3.23: Fixed a few lingering typos.
- 3.24: Updated character sheet; minor text amendments; update to *fate* weapons.
- 3.25: Added table of contents (finally).
- 3.4: Updated layout, fixed text for clarity in a number of areas.
- 3.41: Overhaul of entire text. Pre-publication.
- 3.5: Added wizard templates to assist in character generation.



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# Introduction

TunnelQuest or *TQ* for short is a brief set of fantasy role-playing rules originally entitled *Dragons* and designed by Paul Elliot (of *Zenobia* fame) and developed extensively by Mike Hill (*Tunnels & Trolls v6.0*).

Paul's game was intended to provide a simple but compelling set of rules that he could use with his family. When I read Paul's original draft, I was really impressed with the core mechanics that transferred all of the dice rolling duties to the players, leaving the referee free to get on with the adventure, so I set about creating a more detailed - but still simple - set of rules, based on Paul's game, that paid homage to my favourite role-playing game: *Tunnels & Trolls*.

Although the game concepts and mechanics really *are* simple, it would be helpful if at least one player is familiar with role-playing games in general and such venerable classics as *Tunnels & Trolls* and *Dungeons & Dragons* in particular.

To play this game and most role-playing games, you will need some dice; TQ only uses the readily available six-side dice. For ease of reference, dice rolls are indicated by the abbreviation: 'xd6' where 'x' indicates the number of dice to be rolled. For example, a roll of 2-dice would be indicated by the code 2d6. The result of the dice roll will often be modified by the addition of 1 or more; so the code 2d6+2 means roll 2 dice and increase the total by 2. Each player, including the referee should have at least 2 dice.

Occasionally it will be necessary to generate a random number in the range of 1 to 3 inclusive; this is referred to as 1d3. To do so, roll one die and read the result as follows: 1 or 2 = **1**; 3 or 4 = **2** and 5 or 6 = **3**.

## TunnelQuest 3.0: Features

- The referee never needs to make a dice roll – the turn of events is determined by the player's actions
- Each round of combat is resolved with one dice roll per player
- 2 six-sided dice; you'll never need more than 2 dice per player (including the referee)
- Small numbers – even I can do the math!
- Enemies are represented by one simple statistic and require no record-keeping
- No defined attributes, choose your character's talents and abilities from a list or create your own
- Simple, incremental character advancement
- An easy to use magic system with plenty of options and over 70 spells
- This version of the rules includes a character sheet and a complete beginning adventure
- A breeze to adapt for published settings and adventures
- Designed for traditional face-to-face play and remote play-by-post games

## Glossary

- **Dice or die:** roll a single die or two dice where indicated (2d6); 1d3 is the total of a single die halved
- **Difficulty number (DN):** the target number that must be equalled or exceeded with the throw of two dice to achieve a particular result
- **Foe Rating (FR):** a numerical value measuring the threat posed by a specific enemy
- **Hits:** scoring a *hit* in battle results in a loss of one or more *hits* of damage
- **Non-player character (NPC):** a character or monster controlled by the referee
- **Player Character (or PC):** the player's representation in the game world
- **Referee:** the person that creates the adventure, administers the rules and stage-manages the game session
- **Saving Throws:** a game mechanic used to determine the outcome of particularly risky endeavours
- **Talents:** a series of skills and abilities possessed by adventurous characters

# The Basics of Play

As with most role-playing games, play evolves conversationally; players describe the actions of their characters and the *referee* narrates the story elements, bringing life to the non-player characters he or she controls.

However, when the outcome of a character's action is in doubt, the referee asks for a dice roll to determine the result. The player then rolls 2d6, adds a specific modifier and must score equal to or greater than the assigned *difficulty number* (DN) to succeed. In a fight the difficulty number is the *foe rating* (FR) of the enemy.

The DN for non-combat tasks can vary greatly, depending on a number of factors such as: the goal; the circumstances; the environment; perhaps the equipment that the character has available and the character's physical condition.

*For example*, the player might tell the referee that he wants his character to climb a rough stone wall. The referee may decide that this is a task that any half-decent adventurer can complete with ease and announce that the character scales the wall without a hitch. However, where dramatically appropriate, the referee may call for a dice roll to gauge the character's climbing ability. If the character was being pursued by a savage hound the referee might assign the climb a difficulty of 9 (standard); if it's also dark and raining perhaps the DN should be 11 (challenging); furthermore if the character is suffering from a wound to the shoulder the climb might have DN of 13 or more.

Another way of looking at task resolution is to assign a DN based on the best possible circumstance and apply penalties to the player's dice roll for less than optimal conditions. In the case of climbing a vine-covered tree the referee might assign a difficulty of 6 (easy) but apply a penalty of -1 to the player's dice roll for each factor which may influence the outcome – such as torrential rain (-1); carrying a heavy load (-1); suffering from heat stroke (-1) and so on... The net

result will be the same as applying a higher difficulty number but the process might seem more logical.

**Table 1** offers sample difficulty numbers as a suggestion for the range of challenges that low-level characters may face. When selecting a difficulty number for a task, bear in mind that first level characters will add somewhere between +0 and +3 to the dice roll.

In many situations, possessing the right talent will give the character a valuable edge. If the character has a talent that could be useful in the current endeavour, the player should explain to the referee how his character's talents may be employed. If the referee agrees, the player adds the character's talent level (or levels) as a whole number to the 2d6 roll.

In some cases, the player may add the character's *experience level* as a whole number too. Experience levels are discussed in greater detail below but for now all you need to know is that heroes with many successful adventures under their belts tend to fare better than the complete novice.

If the dice roll plus all of the relevant modifiers equals or exceeds the DN, the task was completed successfully; if not, the character suffers a negative consequence such as:

- The character is unable to progress further because he or she failed to force open the locked door – an alternate path must be found, possibly a more dangerous one
- A trap was triggered and the character suffers a wound or is captured by his enemies
- An argument is lost and the character is pilloried for his public failure
- In combat, a failed roll almost always results in the character suffering damage

Table 1: Sample difficulties

Action	Difficulty
Easy	6 to 8
Standard	9 or 10
Challenging	11 or 12
Foolhardy	13 or 14
Heroic	15 to 18

# Creating a Character

Players begin by choosing a *calling* (also known as profession, class or type) for the new character from among the following: *rogue*-, *warrior* or *wizard*-. The choice of calling is the most important decision in the process of building a new hero.

**Rogues** are *renaissance men*-, they dabble in several spheres of expertise gaining some value from armour and having the ability to use weapons and spells to good effect.

Rogues add their level to their combat dice roll whilst they have 2 or fewer points of magic, once they gain a third point of magic, their level bonus must instead be applied to spell casting rolls.

- Rogues may use a shield and add +1 to hits when doing so
- They gain a maximum of +2 to hits when wearing armour or using a shield, no matter how many pieces they wear
- Rogues may possess talents that relate to neither magic nor fighting at one level above their own experience level

**Warriors** are masters of combat but lack a broad depth of talents and knowledge and have little affinity for magic. Warriors add their experience level as a bonus to all combat dice rolls, feats of strength and other activities deemed appropriate by the referee.

*Example:* Yuon the Barbarian (a warrior) is hunting small game with his trusty bow and arrow. Yuon has the *archery* talent at +1 and the referee allows his player to add the character's level (+1, for a total of +2), as the activity seems like the sort of thing barbarians might get up to. Later, Yuon attempts to use his *repair* talent (+1) to mend the hem on Maid Morrior's court gown. Yuon does not get to add his level in this particularly un-barbaric activity!

Warriors also receive the following benefits and restrictions:

- Add +1 to the combat roll *and* +1 to hits when using a shield
- May wear any type or value of armour
- Mighty blow: a warrior may expend his or her own *hits* to successfully strike a foe without the need to make a combat dice roll (a warrior can perform mighty blow once per session, per experience level and must spend 1 point of hits for each 10 points of foe rating)
- Warriors may possess talents relating to combat at one level above their own experience level

*Example:* Yuon must battle an ancient and mighty dragon, it has a foe rating of 42. If Yuon expends 5 of his own hits in a mighty blow, the dragon will be wounded even though he wouldn't have a chance to hurt the beast under normal circumstances. As you will see below, because Yuon's player didn't need to roll the dice, the dragon cannot activate any of its own powers.

**Wizards** on the other hand are well-versed in the arcane arts of sorcery. Wizards add their experience level as a bonus to all spell casting rolls and any intellectual pursuits deemed appropriate by the referee.

Wizards also receive the following benefits and restrictions:

- Wizards gain no benefit nor suffer any penalty from wearing armour or using shields
- May spend magic points to counter magic damage or spells of the same colour
- Wizards may possess talents relating directly to magic at one level above their current experience level

*Wizardly note*:- see Appendix 4 if you're having difficulty deciding which spells to acquire with your character's magic points.

Once a calling has been chosen, the character's statistics may be recorded for use during play and a number of talents can be selected to personalise the new hero. All characters controlled by the players begin play with the values listed in **Table 2**. Referee-controlled characters are often summarised by a single number, the foe rating.

Once the statistical values are noted, **the player may swap a single point from one stat to another** with the exception that warriors may not begin play with a score in magic.

*Hits*: whenever a character or foe is wounded, *hits* are lost; armour temporarily increases a character's hits. Once all hits are lost, the character falls unconscious and may die (a foe is also out of the fight at this point and may or may not be dead; this is the referee's decision).

*Talents*: each talent possessed adds +1 to the dice roll for tasks relating to the area of expertise covered by the talent. Talents may be chosen multiple times gaining an additional +1 each time. However, no talent may have a value greater than the character's experience level. So a Level 2 character could have a

+2 talent but a first level character would be limited to a maximum talent level of +1. There are exceptions to this rule detailed above; for example, a first level warrior is eligible to possess a single +2 combat talent if desired.

*Magic*: the number of power points a character has to fuel spells of a particular colour. Points of the magic statistic must be permanently assigned to one of the four *colours of magic*. There are many different types of magical and supernatural effects but they are all associated with a specific colour; for example, spells that result in physical damage are associated with the colour red, those that cause a physical change are green.

Initially, magic wielding characters are restricted to a maximum of 3 points of magic of any one colour. Once play commences and the character starts gaining experience, this limitation no longer applies.

For each point of magic the character has, the player must choose one spell of that colour.

*Note*: players with spell casting characters should choose their spells very carefully – whilst it may be nice to have a powerful level 3 spell, taking one or 2 lower level spells offers more flexibility.

### Choosing Talents

For each point in the *talents* statistic, the player may choose one specific talent. All rogues, for example, can begin their careers with up to 4 different talents but it's unlikely that two players choosing the rogue calling for their character will choose the same 4 talents.

Almost as much as the character's calling, talents define the character and once selected cannot be changed (unless the referee is willing to give the player a second chance), so choose wisely.

The following is a sample list of possible talents to fuel the imagination. The player is free to choose any ability or make up his or her own, providing it can be described in one or two words or perhaps a short phrase.

Actor, acrobat, alchemist, alluring, axe fighter, archer, armourer, artist, bowyer, brawler, cartographer, dancer, disguise artist, farmer, fast-talker, rider, haggler, healer, herbalist, keen observer, knife-thrower, leader, librarian, lock-cracker, mace man, merchant, minstrel, mountaineer, nimble, outlaw, priest, quick-witted, quick-on-the-draw, researcher, seducer, shadowy, sling, sneaky, spearman, spell-casting (green, red, grey or blue magic), spelunker, stealthy, steward, streetwise, strong, survivalist, swimmer, swordsman, theologian, tracker, ventriloquist, vintner, weapon smith or woodsman.

### Initial Adventuring Equipment

In addition to normal travelling clothes characters of all callings begin play with the following items of equipment:

- A sturdy cloak to protect against the elements
- A pouch of tinder and flint
- A knife, leather sheath and belt
- A standard weapon (choose either an *axe*, *mace*, *spear* or *sword*, wizards receive a walking staff that serves as a standard weapon)

Furthermore, each character receives **100 silver coins** that the player may spend to acquire additional items from **Table 3**. Coins not spent at this time represent the character's starting stake or pocket change.

You may notice that some items are noted as being *very heavy* whilst some weapons and armour are identified as *heavy*. A single character may only carry or wear 2 heavy items unless he has a talent which would assist, in which case, the talent level is added to the number of heavy items which may be carried. A normal character may only carry one very heavy item but beasts of burden treat very heavy items as merely heavy.

Other types of coin exist; the rare gold coin is the equivalent of 20 silver coins and 20 copper coins equate to 1 silver. Merchants often exchange gold ingots valued at 200 gold (12 ingots equal one heavy item) and rich or noble families might simply use a letter of credit as legal tender.

### Common Expenses

**Table 4** lists items and services that are often sought after by weary adventurers. A price listed with the notation 'c' represents the cost in copper coins rather than silver.



### Character Creation Example

Durk is a first level rogue with 6 hits and 4 talents, his player Brad, considers swapping one point from hits to magic (allowing the choice of a level 1 spell) but sees Durk as more of a bravo than a *rogue wizard*. His talents are *stealth* +2; *sword* +1 and *climbing* +1. Durk begins play with the clothes on his back, a travelling cloak, flint and tinder, a knife and one weapon (Durk is a sword kind-of-a-guy). Durk's player now buys 100 silver coins worth of gear as follows: lock pick tools (60 silver coins), a backpack (10), oil lantern and oil (17), and a large belt pouch for storing the treasure he

will earn from his adventuring career (2) leaving 11 coins for food and ale at the local tavern. Sadly he has no money left for armour but Durk plans on keeping out of trouble; or at least not getting caught.

### ***Durk the Daring***

Level 1 rogue

Hits: ☐☐☐☐☐☐ Armour: nil

Talents: stealth +2; sword +1; climbing +1

Gear: travelling clothes and cloak, flint and tinder, knife, sword, lock pick tools, backpack, flask of oil and lantern, a large belt pouch, 11 silver coins

Table 2: Character statistics

<i><b>Statistic</b></i>	<b>Rogue</b>	<b>Warrior</b>	<b>Wizard</b>
<i>Hits</i>	6	8	4
<i>Talents</i>	4	2	2
<i>Magic</i>	0	0	4

Table 3: The shopping list

Item	Silver	Notes
Axe	80	Standard melee weapon.
Backpack	10	Holds up to 80 kilograms.
Belt pouch, large	2	Holds up to 200 coins.
Belt pouch, small	1	Holds up to 50 coins.
Bow, 12 arrows and a quiver	80	Standard ranged weapon.
Canvas sheet	8	3 metre square.
Chain	40	10 metre length of thick chain; <i>very heavy</i> .
Cloak	12	All-weather protection, with several useful pockets.
Clothes, fine	9	Quality court garb.
Clothes, travelling	4	Sturdy clothing and boots for adventurous activity.
Cuirass, plate	420	Heavy torso armour, +2 to hits; <i>heavy</i> .
Dog	3	Companion, guard, hunter etc.
Flint and tinder, with pouch	2	Used for lighting a fire.
Garlic	1	10 cloves which <i>may</i> unsettle vampires.
Greaves, chain mail	90	Standard leg armour, +1 to hits.
Greaves, plate	200	Heavy leg armour, +2 to hits.
Great weapon	500	Heavy weapon, +1 to combat dice rolls, requires both hands to wield precluding the use of a shield; <i>heavy</i> .
Hammer and iron spikes	18	Includes tool pouch and belt.
Hauberk, chain mail	130	Standard torso armour, +1 to hits.
Healing poultice	40	Restores 1d3 hits.
Helmet, full face	70	Heavy head armour, +2 to hits.
Helmet, open face	35	Standard head armour, +1 to hits.
Holy symbol	4	Made of wood or clay and occasionally tin.
Holy water	30	Blessed water which <i>may</i> harm undead creatures.
Horse, riding	620	May carry 6 <i>heavy</i> items (in addition to the rider).
Javelin	30	Standard ranged weapon.
Knife	30	Utility tool and melee weapon, -1 to combat dice roll.
Lock pick tools	60	Attempts to pick locks suffer a -2 penalty without these delicate tools.
Mace	80	Standard melee weapon.
Net	10	3 metre square.
Oil flask	5	Fuels a lantern for 2 hours.
Oil lantern, hooded	12	10 metre beam or a 5 metre radius depending on how the lens shutter is adjusted.
Pick axe	10	-2 to combat dice rolls, used for excavation.
Restoration potion	60	Restores up to 4 magic points of a specific colour.
Rope	6	10 metres in length, holds the equivalent of two adults; <i>heavy</i> .
Sack, large	4	40 kilogram capacity; may be used to store one <i>heavy</i> item which is then treated as <i>normal</i> rather than <i>heavy</i> .

Sack, small	1	10 kilogram capacity.
Shield	60	Used by rogues (+1 to hits) and warriors (+1 to hits, +1 to combat dice rolls).
Shield, tower	150	Heavy shield used by warriors only; +2 to hits but no combat dice roll bonus; <i>heavy</i> .
Sling and 12 stones (with pouch)	5	Ranged weapon, -1 to the combat dice roll.
Small mirror	10	Wrapped in a soft leather or cloth sleeve.
Spear	60	Standard melee <i>or</i> ranged weapon.
Staff	1	Standard melee weapon, 2 handed.
Sword	80	Standard melee weapon.
Torches, 3	3	Provides light in a 5 metres radius for 20 minutes each.
Vambraces, leather	30	Standard arm armour, +1 to hits.
Vambraces, plate	90	Heavy arm armour, +2 to hits.
Wolfsbane	20	<i>May</i> hold werewolves at bay.

Table 4: Basic living expenses

Item	Price	Notes
A night of drinking at the tavern	1	A night of revelry often enlivens the spirits.
Bed, common room	10 c	Per night.
Bed, private room	2	Per night (depending on quality).
Hot bath at the inn	6 c	A long relaxing soak can often restore lost hits.
Meal at the tavern or inn	4 c	A single hot meal is a preferable replacement to an entire days worth of trail rations.
Repairs, minor	5	Depending on the repairs, this may take 1d6 hours or more.
Stabling for a common horse	1	Food, water and care for one day.
Trail rations and a water skin	1	Unappetising dried food sufficient for one adult for one week.

# Fighting the Good Fight

Combat takes place in *rounds* lasting as long as 15 seconds of *game-time* and as short as perhaps just a few heartbeats. Each player makes a single choice of action for his or her character and this will often be an attack of some form. A combat dice roll represents the character's best attempt to land a telling blow and avoid being struck in return.

When a successful roll is made in combat against a foe, the target's hits are reduced by 1 point. Most foes have 3 hits and rarely more. Three strikes and they're out; whether you're up against a dragon or a lion. At zero (0) hits the creature is defeated (which might mean death, unconsciousness or retreat, the referee is at liberty to adjudicate).

If the combat roll fails, then it is the character that suffers a hit. At the referee's discretion (recommended) any roll of a double one (1) will result in a hit taken by the character regardless of the foe's rating or the character's bonuses. Additionally the referee *may* also rule that a roll of double one results in the loss of 2 hits. *The double-hit loss is only suggested when the character faces a particularly powerful foe.*

Note however that a character who fails to score a hit in combat can only suffer damage if it is possible for him to do so. A typical foe can only retaliate against one attacker so if two heroes engage a nasty goblin and both characters fail their roll, only one loses a hit. Of course, some creatures have special abilities that allow them to wound multiple heroes!

In situations where more than one player character may lose hits, the referee should assign damage in a logical fashion after all players have made their combat dice rolls:

*For example*, Durk and Yuon are locked in a dangerous combat with Gilgamel the ogre. Gilgamel can only hurt one of the player characters even if both fail their combat dice rolls so the referee waits for the outcome of the rolls before narrating the events. This time, both players miss their rolls and the referee decides that since Yuon has proven to be the more reckless combatant, he should take the wound. Of course the referee could have just as easily flipped a coin to decide which character was injured.

## The Combat Dice Roll

When a character attacks a foe, the player rolls 2d6 and adds circumstantial or talent modifiers to the dice total. If the combined total of the dice roll and the relevant modifiers equal or exceeds the foe's rating (FR), the target is struck and loses a hit.

## Combat Dice Roll Modifiers

- Experience level
  - Warriors add their level at all times
  - Rogues add their level if they have 2 or fewer magic points
  - Wizards never add their experience level to a combat dice roll
- Shields
  - Warriors add +1 to the dice roll when using a standard shields
  - Rogues and wizards gain no dice roll bonus when employing a shield
- Circumstance and talent
  - Attacking with a melee weapon from an advantageous position (such as the rear of your foe) +1
  - Making a ranged attack in strong winds or heavy rain -1
  - Poor visibility (such as night time) -1
  - Possession of an appropriate talent (such as sword +1 when fighting with a sword) allows the player to add the character's talent level to the dice roll
- Weapons
  - Standard weapons do not modify the dice roll
  - Heavy weapons add +2
  - Standard shields add +1 hits when in the hands of a warrior
  - Knives and improvised weapons modify the roll by -2 or more (unless employed against unarmed foes)
- Left or right hand
  - Rogues and warriors are usually right-handed, wizards are always left-handed
  - Using the *off-hand* incurs a -2 penalty
- Unarmed combat
  - An unarmed character fighting an armed foe (whether the enemy is armed with a sword or a paw full of sharp talons) suffers a -4 penalty.
  - Unarmed fighters engaged with unarmed foes do not suffer the penalty

## Shield Damage

Shield-users must keep track of the condition of their shields. After the warrior or rogue has suffered 3 hits in any one battle whilst using their shield, the shield is broken and must be repaired with a successful talent roll or replaced. A repaired shield is destroyed if the character suffers a further 2 hits in a single combat. A destroyed shield may not be repaired but does make excellent fire wood.

Record a *good* shield as follows: Shield ☐☐☐

Record a *repaired* shield like so: Shield ☐☐

*Example:* Yuon the Barbarian readies his shield to face down two bandits in the hills outside of town. In the ensuing battle, Yuon takes 2 hits; his player places a check mark in two of the three shield boxes on Yuon's character sheet. If Yuon had taken another hit, his shield would have been damaged, requiring repairs. Later that day, Yuon stumbles across a giant scorpion and must use his shield again – since this is a different battle to the scuffle with the bandits, Yuon's shield can once more take 3 hits before needing repair.

**Unarmed combat option:** the referee may decide that characters suffering 3 or more hits from unarmed foes must roll 6 or more on 2d6 or pass out for 1d6 combat rounds.

### Surprise and Ranged Weapons

Hitting a foe who is unaware of the character or who cannot fight back (perhaps the character is throwing a javelin or shooting an arrow) means that even if the attack roll fails, the character is not harmed by the foe.

*Missile example:* Yuon spots a goblin fleeing from the scene of a recent battle, no doubt running to alert reinforcements. Yuon draws his bow and lets off an arrow – it may not be honourable but the barbarian can't afford to let the goblin bring more enemies. His player rolls the combat dice and adds +2 (+1 for Yuon's level and +1 for *archery* talent). Alas the referee applies a penalty of -1 as the goblin is now quite a long way off. The player fails to equal the goblin's FR and the shot misses. Yuon doesn't lose a hit since there is no enemy nearby to wound him but the goblin gets away...

The exception of course, is when the foes also have missile weapons or are also able to attack by surprise. In the event of an ambush, ask players with vulnerable characters to make a dice roll using any appropriate talents with [foe rating + 2] as difficulty (warriors and rogues may add their experience levels), if successful, the character avoids the attack, otherwise he suffers one hit of damage.

### Movement

Characters and foes are constantly moving during the combat encounter but TunnleQuest doesn't concern itself with the exact positioning of characters. Movement is an issue of narrative and dramatic importance but not usually of *tactical* note. It is quite acceptable for the player to say: 'Durk vaults over the up-turned table landing deftly behind Velker the half-orc spy.' The referee might even grant a small bonus to wound the nefarious villain but playing pieces won't be juggled across a hex map to make it happen – it just does.

However, a player may, on occasion, narrate a particular move with a view to *specifically* gaining an

advantage. If Durk's player had described his combat move as: 'Durk vaults the up-turned table deftly knocking the half-orc spy unconscious', the referee should request a suitable talent roll – if successful, the character gains the bonus, if not, the move didn't quite come together as planned and perhaps the character is now at a disadvantage.

### Multiple Foes

When the characters are outnumbered by their foes, the referee increases the FR by +1 for each additional foe. Whenever there are more combat-ready foes than characters, the player characters are outnumbered. Track hits lost as normal, knocking a foe out of the fight when 3 hits are taken.

When characters face multiple foes, even one extra enemy can create a difficult situation. The referee should ensure that his description of the combat scene is sufficiently ominous that the players have time to re-think their plans if necessary.

*Example:* Durk and his warrior companion Meldrissa have encountered a small clan of orcs. Each of the 5 orcs has a FR of 8. Since Durk and Meldrissa are outnumbered (by 3), they must make their attack rolls against foe ratings of 11. When, or if, Durk and Meldrissa despatch 3 of the orcs, the FR of the remaining 2 will drop back to 8. This will be a long and bloody battle; well worth an *experience point*. (see below for information on experience points).

### Armour

Warriors may wear one set of greaves, vambraces, a helmet, a hauberk (a cuirass may be worn instead but counts as *heavy* armour) and a shield. Standard armour provides the wearer with +1 bonus hits, so a warrior with a full set of standard armour, including a shield gains an additional 5 hits. However, a warrior cannot use armour hits to activate his or her *mighty blow* ability.

**Optional armour damage:** at the referee's discretion, a piece of armour may be damaged or permanently destroyed during a battle in which the character suffered a loss of hits. Roll 2d6 at the end of the battle, a roll of 2 indicates a piece of armour is destroyed, on a roll of 3 it is damaged and will not provide additional hits until repaired.

Heavy armour ignores *damaged* results and if *destroyed*, it merely reduces the protection it offers from +2 to +1. Heavy armour reduced to +1 protection is now vulnerable to being damaged and destroyed just like standard armour. Heavy armour may still be repaired until it receives a second *destroyed* result.

Rogues may gain a maximum of +2 hits from armour and/or a shield no matter how much they wear; wizards receive no benefit from armour or shields.

## **Healing**

Hits are restored to normal with the application of a healing poultice or two, after several hours of rest, or as indicated by the referee. Armour hits are recovered immediately after the combat encounter has concluded, unless individual pieces of armour have been damaged or destroyed.

Particularly savage wounds or those caused by poison or disease may take much longer to heal if not treated with the appropriate medical talents (as determined by the referee).

***Optional healing rule:*** if the referee would prefer some rough guidelines, allow characters to recover one lost hit per level per 6 hours of rest.

# The Opposition

All foes have a numerical rating, a foe rating or FR. This number determines the difficulty of scoring a hit against the enemy and in turn, the likelihood of suffering a wound at the hands of the foe. The referee must use careful judgment when rating foes.

In all but the rarest of circumstances, foes have only **3 hits** and sometimes less. The higher their foe rating, the more difficult it is for them to lose hits.

**Table 5A** provides a few sample foe ratings suitable for low to mid-power characters, to whet the referee's appetite.

## Groups and Multiple Foes: a Clarification

A clear distinction is drawn between a foe rating that represents a *group* of enemies and *multiple* foes. For example, the referee might describe the foe as a group of unruly goblins with a rating of 7. The *group* of goblins has a rating of 7 regardless of how many player characters they face and will be out of the fight after the group takes the normal 3 hits. Groups of foes never *outnumber* player characters; it's a descriptive term with no game effect.

On the other hand, multiple foes such as six battle-hardened outlaws each with a FR of 7 represent a *variable* challenge based on the number of player characters they engage. If the outlaws outnumber the player characters by 3, their FR will be effectively 10 until their numbers begin to diminish and the battle won't be over until all 7 of the outlaws are defeated.

## Special Abilities

If the enemy possesses a particular special power, which could impact on the battle, it is activated at the referee's discretion or when the player rolls certain numbers on the combat dice. In the case of *standard* powers, the ability is activated when the character fails to equal or exceed the FR *and* rolls a double.

*Major* abilities activate more frequently based on the numbers rolled by the player; perhaps if either die comes up a '6' or if the dice total is 5 or less, and so on.

Powers can range from the mesmerising gaze of a vampire, poisonous fangs, a dragon's fire-breath, being swept into the air by a griffin, and so on. Note that not every special power will cause loss of hits and the referee will be called upon to adjudicate the effects of such powers.

*Example:* Randell the Kirklander is locked in battle with a fearsome *manticore* which has a FR: 13. Randell is experience level 3 with the *sword* talent +2 but has lost his shield in an earlier combat; his standard attack roll is 2d6 + 5 and will fail a combat dice roll if

the dice total is between 2 and 7 inclusive. These are good odds but the manticore has a poisonous sting (a standard power), which will hit Randell on a roll of double 1, 2 or 3. Randell doesn't know what effect the poison may have but he certainly doesn't want to find out (the referee has decided that a sting from the creature will weaken Randell, reducing all dice rolls by -2).

*Example foe:* Abnec the swamp troll has a Foe Rating of 12 but sprouts additional limbs as required, which means he is effectively considered to be two opponents for the purposes of determining whether the characters are outnumbered. Additionally, Abnec can regenerate lost hits when a character fails a combat dice roll with doubles. Swamp trolls are completely immune to change (green) magic but reduce their FR by one (1) when facing any type of red magic.

## Henchmen

Some monsters are weaker than others and can't necessarily stand up to the full 3 hits before collapsing. Such foes are termed *henchmen*; they have a normal FR but are out of the fight as soon as they suffer at least one hit.

Henchmen are good for representing the rabble employed by the enemies of the heroes. Characters typically plough through henchmen at an alarming rate and it is often a good feeling!

***Henchmen option:*** at the referee's discretion, henchmen are not able to outnumber player characters. This allows for classic swashbuckling scenes where one player character bests a dozen foes without a scratch!

## A Note on Opposition Strength

The referee should bear in mind that a level 1 warrior with standard equipment (including a shield) and a level 2 combat talent will gain a maximum bonus of +4 to the player's combat dice roll giving a best possible result of 16 and an average result of 11. If pitted against a foe with an FR of 17, the warrior is going to be in trouble. So being outclassed is entirely possible but it's not as bad as it sounds; players should be able to work out when to fight and when to run – that is part of the *skill* of play.

**Table 5B** lists the maximum and minimum values that a player may generate with a combat dice roll at each character level (the values assume a warrior equipped with a shield and maximum talent level).

A good challenge for the character described above would be a foe with a rating of 10, 11 or 12. A foe with a rating of 6 or less will only wound the warrior if his

player rolls snake-eyes (double one). As characters gain experience and levels they are better able to deal with more powerful foes whilst weaker enemies become nothing more than an annoyance.

It also helps to remember that a healthy, unarmoured first-level warrior with unmodified statistics can lose 7 rounds of combat and still fight at full capacity; the eighth loss will put him out of the battle. Rogues can lose for 5 rounds and wizards only 3.

This increased capacity to sustain damage clearly stacks the odds in the player character's favour but repeated losses combined with powerful foes will whittle tough heroes down to size.

### Saving Throws

Often a situation will arise that obstructs, opposes or presents danger to the characters. In these cases the

referee may call for a saving throw to overcome the problem. A saving throw is just like a difficulty number or foe rating, the player must roll 2d6 and equal or exceed the assigned saving throw (ST) number to avoid the penalty, escape from the death trap, leap the chasm and so on.

The referee should consult **Table 1** when assigning saving throw values, posing the question: 'is this task; Challenging; Foolhardy, Heroic' et cetera. The talents of the character and quick thinking of the player should be taken into consideration.

If the character is greatly imperilled and failing the ST has dire consequences, the referee should award an experience point for a successful dice roll if the required roll was 8 or more.

Table 5A: Sample foe ratings

FR	Examples
3 to 5	A single ornery guard dog
4 to 6	A pack of large rats (treat as a <i>group</i> ) or a feisty goblin
5 or 6	Weak orcs, tough goblins or common soldiers and guardsmen
7 or 9	A well-trained soldier, trained orc warrior, huge wild boar
9 to 12	A wily swamp troll with savage tusks and claws
13 to 16	A mighty ogre with a huge club or a vicious manticores with a scorpion's tail
15 to 19	A towering giant or huge wyvern
22 to 25	A young dragon

Table 5B: Combat dice roll range

Level	Maximum	Minimum
1	16	6
2	18	8
3	20	10
4	22	12
5	24	14
6	26	16



# Experience Points, Levels and Advances

Characters who survive many adventures gain experience points, advance in level and become more powerful. The experience level serves two functions; it limits the maximum bonus that may be gained from a single talent and is itself applied as a bonus to dice rolls that relate to the character's calling.

At the end of each game *session*, the characters accrue experience points as follows:

**1 point** for each character that survives the game session

**+1 point** for each significant battle or encounter in which the character participates in some meaningful way

**+1 or more points** awarded by the referee for locating special items and clues, cunning plans and general good play

*Some referees may choose to award experience points as the game progresses to ensure they don't miss any noteworthy events and short-change their players.*

A character that was present at the beginning of the session and still alive at its end is said to have *survived* despite any injuries he or she may have sustained. A *significant* battle or encounter is defined as one in which the character must roll 8 or more to score a hit or achieve success.

In a typical gaming session lasting **2 to 4 hours**, the referee will most likely award 3 to 5 experience points,

of which 1 or 2 points will be discretionary points rewarding inventive play or good role-playing. The referee can control the rate of character advancement by setting a *cap* for each session. For example, to create a game where characters advance slowly and face great danger frequently the experience point cap might be set at 4 points per session - even if the players earn more points for their characters the most they can add to the character sheet will be 4 points.

## Advances

Every time the character accumulates **10** experience points, the player may increase *hits*, *talents* or *magic* by one point; this may require the player to choose a new talent or spell for his character. Increasing a statistic in this way is referred to as ***taking an advance***. The total number of experience points accumulated indicates the character's *level of experience* as shown in **table 6**.

A character that increases his magic statistic is eligible to learn a new spell but must first find a teacher willing to pass on the necessary knowledge; often money changes hands (about 50 coins per spell level).

Characters that reach experience level six continue to gain experience points and advance statistics but their level will increase no further. Note that by the time the character reaches level six, he or she will be a major player in the game world with over 30 statistic advances.

Table 6: Experience points

Experience Points	Level	Advances
0 to 39	1	0 to 3
40 to 69	2	4 to 6
70 to 109	3	7 to 10
110 to 169	4	11 to 16
170 to 299	5	17 to 29
300 or more	6	30 or more

# The Use of Magic

In the fantasy worlds of TunnelQuest magic exists in four distinct colours (an optional fifth type of magic, *prismatic*, which incorporates all colours, is described at the end of this section). Magic that can *change* the material world is green; if the spell causes *damage* in some way, the magic is usually red; grey magic is used to control and empower the *mind* and blue magic causes physical objects and beings to *move* by supernatural means.

Spells are divided into levels; the level dictates the complexity and the number of magic points of the appropriate colour required to cast that spell. Additional points of magic, of any colour, may be added after the minimum spell cost has been met; this increases the chance of successfully casting the spell and reduces the chance of the spell being *countered*.

Once a spell is cast, the points of magic used to fuel the magic are temporarily lost but recover fully after a good rest of 6 hours or more. In effect, the character recovers one sixth of his or her total magic power points per hour. A *restoration* potion will automatically restore up to 4 magic points of one particular colour. Potions and preparations that restore any colour of magic are also known to exist but they are rare and costly (perhaps 3 or 4 times the price of a regular potion).

## Casting Spells

The wizard or rogue must make a casting roll using 2d6, adding modifiers in much the same way as a warrior does when rolling to hit a foe. The spell casting roll replaces the combat dice roll for the round of combat in which magic is cast.

Some spells allow additional points of magic to be spent to achieve additional effects or increase the spell's range and duration. Additional points spent in this fashion **do not** add bonus points to the spell casting dice roll.

If a spell targets a foe, the difficulty of the casting roll is equal to the FR; otherwise the difficulty of the casting roll equals **6 + (spell level x 2)**; some spells have a difficulty specified in the spell's description, in which case, ignore the formula. Note that any spell casting roll automatically fails if the unmodified dice score is **2** or **3**.

A failed casting roll indicates that some part of the formulae was omitted, the spell is not completed and no magic points are expended.

For the spell to take effect, the target must be within the range specified in the spell's description.

## Spell Casting Dice Roll Modifiers

- Experience level
  - Wizards add their experience level at all times
  - Rogues add their level if they have 3 or more magic points
  - Warriors never add their level to a spell casting roll
- Talents and magic points
  - Appropriate talents (example: *cast red magic*) add their level if appropriate
  - Spend additional magic points of any colour to gain a +1 casting bonus per point spent
- Fate
  - Spell casting rolls *always* fail on a roll of 2 or 3
  - The casting DN is equal to the target's FR or 6 + (spell level x 2) or the DN specified in the spell's description
- Equipment
  - Certain magic items may reduce the chance of automatic failure from 2 and 3 to just 2.

## Countering and Loading Magic

Spell casters may spend their own reserves of magic points to counteract an existing spell. The defending mage must spend magic points equal to the magic invested in the existing spell – the defender *must* match the colours of the original spell. No dice roll is required to resist or defeat the opposing spell but the wizard may take no further action during that combat round *or* the following round if they have already acted.

*For example:* Nym the sorceress is the target of an *Energy Drain* spell (level 2, red magic) that was cast with an additional point of grey magic to increase its power. If Nym can expend 2 points of red magic and 1 of grey, the *Energy Drain* spell will fizzle harmlessly.

Note that the ability to counter magic is intuitive and reactive, even a wizard taken by complete surprise will still have the opportunity to counter a spell.

Wizards may also *unravel* spells that have been cast on an individual other than the countering wizard or an area or object if the wizard possesses the appropriate magic. Even *permanent* magical effects can be reversed through the use of this technique.

Naturally, powerful wizards will frequently **load** their spells with extra magic points to not only increase the chance of successfully casting the spell but also to guard against countering. Neophyte wizards rarely have much success against grand masters...

## Foes that use Magic

The easiest way for the referee to handle magic wielding foes is to assume and narrate, that hits

inflicted on the characters are from magical sources; beams of energy, crackling lightning and so on.

A more satisfying method is to pick one or two colours of magic and assign the foe one spell of each level. Spells will most likely be activated when a character is due to suffer a hit of damage but the referee may also allocate a dice-roll result or range of numbers that will bring forth the magical effect or simply allow the foe to cast one spell of its choice per combat round.

When characters must resist the effects of an enemy spell, use the casting difficulty of the spell as the target number:  $6 + (\text{spell level} \times 2)$  or the DN specified in the spell's description.

### **Magic Crystals**

Wizards and some rogues may attune themselves to magic crystals that they might find whilst adventuring. Such powerful items are never offered for sale by those who know their true value but may be given as rewards by a generous benefactor.

Any wizard or rogue with a magic statistic of 1 or greater automatically attunes to a crystal after spending one hour in its presence – warriors may never gain the benefit of attuning magic crystals.

Each crystal is assigned a magnitude of 1, 2 or 3 by the referee; for each point of magnitude the player rolls 1d6 to determine the number of magic points stored within. Stored points may be used *only* for paying the minimum casting cost of spells, not for boosting the probability of successfully casting the spell or countering other magic. However, stored magic

points are *colourless* and can be used to power *any* spell since they only take on the required colour as the spell is formed. Once a stored magic point is used it is lost permanently and an *empty* crystal ceases to be magic.

### **The Prismatic Leap**

When a player character wizard reaches a score of 4 or more in each colour of magic he or she has the option of taking the *Prismatic Leap* and becoming a *prismatic mage*. This is a mystical transition which immediately and permanently halves the total number of magic points the wizard has *but* the remaining points become prismatic magic – comprised of all colours (multi-coloured) Any additional magic points the character gains are also prismatic magic.

Prismatic magic may be used to cast or counter any spell as if it were the appropriate colour, in fact as the spell is cast it *becomes* the appropriate colour; however, prismatic magic *cannot* be spent to increase the chance of casting a spell. On the positive side, many wizards include a single point of prismatic magic with many of their spells, it doesn't alter the chance of success but it does make the spell very difficult to counter – only a prismatic wizard may counter such a spell.

Note that there are very few prismatic wizards – most are loathe to relinquish the power they have accumulated even though prismatic magic grants greater flexibility.

Many erudite thinkers are of the opinion that there exists a powerful group of spells that can only be cast by expending prismatic magic... And they'd be right!

# The Spell Book

## A note on spell book entries:

in the following catalogue, each spell description begins with the common name attributed to the spell (many wizards personalise their repertoire with more fanciful names) followed by symbols indicating range (↗) and duration (⌘).

Range is restricted to either a specific distance measured in metres; touch - indicating that the target of the spell must be close enough to be touched by the caster (the target can also be the caster) and *caster only*.

Some spells last forever, indicated by the permanent duration. The Provisions spell, for example, creates edible food; although the food may spoil if not consumed, it remains *real* food and the spell has a permanent duration. Other spells last only a matter of minutes, hours or days; a die roll is often used to establish the exact time.

In some cases, the effect of certain spells may be enhanced through the expenditure of additional magic points (of a different colour), this is noted after the basic spell description.

## GREEN MAGIC: CHANGING WAYS

When cast in support of other spell colours, green magic most often increases the duration or life of the spell.

When casting a green magic spell, onlookers often notice the wizard's image shimmer or warp for the briefest moment.

## LEVEL 1 GREEN MAGIC

### Claws

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster's fingers transform into knife-like talons allowing him to fight as if armed with a *standard weapon*. +1, even when unarmed. If the caster's foe is unarmed, the bonus increases to +3.

### Eyes of the Cat

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 hours

The caster's eyes become cat-like enabling him to see well in near-dark conditions.

### Gills

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster may breathe underwater.

+1 *green magic* to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Provisions

↗ touch

⌘ permanent

A handful of dirt is transformed into enough food and water to feed a single adult for one day. +1 *blue magic* to create enough food to feed 4 adults for one day.

### Shifting Tracks

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 hours

The caster masks any trace of his passing making it difficult for even the most skilful tracker to follow his trail (-3 to tracking/following talent rolls).

### Suit of Colours

↗ 20 metres

⌘ permanent

The caster can change the colours of one subject's clothing.

## LEVEL 2 GREEN MAGIC

### Magic Coins

↗ touch

⌘ 1d6 minutes

A handful of dirt becomes a handful of coins (2d6 + 6 silver coins).

+1 *grey magic* to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Mask

↗ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The ultimate disguise, the subject's face changes completely, even his own wife won't recognise him.

+1 *grey magic* to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Misshapen

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster may alter the shape of his own body, without altering his mass. He could, for example, turn his arm into a very long thin snake-like appendage.

### Regeneration

↗ touch

⌘ instant

The subject immediately recovers up to 2 lost hits.

### Swamp Foot

↗ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

Solid ground (5 square metres) becomes a thick mire of mud and water.

### Unseen

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 hours

Light bends around the caster's body making him invisible until he attacks or casts another spell or the Unseen spell expires.

### LEVEL 3 GREEN MAGIC

#### Cleansing Touch

✶ touch

⌘ instant

The subject is instantly cured of any disease or poison effect.

+3 grey magic to cleanse all within a 10 metre radius.

#### Feather Light

✶ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The subject becomes as almost weightless and will move with a strong breeze.

+2 blue magic to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

#### Fearful Visage

✶ 20 metres

⌘ 1 combat round

The subject is stricken with fear and cannot act for one round, halving the foe's rating for the next combat round.

#### Poisoned Challis

✶ touch

⌘ instant

The wizard turns a cup of liquid into deadly yet undetectable poison causing 1d6 hits.

+1 grey magic to cause the imbiber to fall into a deep sleep for 1d6 hours instead of causing damage.

#### Skin of the Beast

✶ caster only

⌘ 1d6 hours

The wizard transforms into a natural animal of a similar size.

+1 green magic to choose an animal of any size.

#### Unseen Sphere

✶ 5 metre radius (centred on the spell caster)

⌘ 1d6 minutes

A globe of invisibility centred on the caster and 5 metres in radius.

+2 green magic to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### RED MAGIC: ARCANE MIGHT

Red magic most often causes harmful effects but it is also inextricably linked to the plane of

fire and grants mastery of that powerful element. Even characters with no knowledge of magic usually notice the temperature increase slightly in the vicinity of the wizard during spell casting.

### LEVEL 1 RED MAGIC

#### Arcane Bolt

✶ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A sizzling bolt of energy strikes a nearby foe.

#### Arcane Flame

✶ touch

⌘ 20 minutes

A handful of dirt becomes a flickering magical flame which illuminates as torchlight.

+2 green magic to increase duration to 1d6 hours.

#### Energy Spark

✶ 20 metres

⌘ instant

Combustible materials may be ignited.

#### Fire Crafter Cloak

✶ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster's cloak becomes completely fireproof. For the spell's duration he cannot be harmed by fire, no matter how powerful the blaze.

+1 green magic to increase the duration to 2d6 minutes.

#### Warming Glow

✶ 5 metres

⌘ 8 hours

The caster creates a zone of warmth equivalent to a campfire.

+1 grey magic and the warmth is uncomfortable causing one enemy to lose 1 FR point.

#### Weakening Gaze

✶ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The subject loses 1 FR point.

### LEVEL 2 RED MAGIC

#### Blister

✶ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 combat rounds

A patch of skin on the subject's arm or leg blisters with intense heat. Reduce FR by 2 points.

+1 grey magic to reduce the FR by 3 points.

#### Energy Drain

✶ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 hours

The subject is sapped of their energy and immediately falls into a deep sleep. The caster temporarily gains 2 points of grey magic which dissipates after 1 hour if not used. *Note that this spell will not work on a subject actively involved in stressful endeavours such as combat.*

#### Fire Blade

✶ 5 metre radius of caster

⌘ 1d6 combat rounds

The caster's staff or sword is cloaked in an eerie fire that soon spreads to the weapons of his nearby comrades. This allows the characters to ignore the FR increase imposed by being outnumbered.

#### Lightning Strike

✶ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A bolt of energy strikes one foe within 20 metres.

+1 blue magic per additional foe to strike additional foes. The casting roll must be sufficient to strike higher rated foes.

+1 green magic to double the spell's range.

#### Sunlight

✶ 50 metre radius

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster creates a ball of light centred on his hand or staff that provides light equivalent to daylight in a 50 metre radius.

+1 grey magic to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Withering

✦ 10 metres

⌘ instant

A bolt of black energy destroys one weapon, shield or piece of armour or other item of apparel; the subject is otherwise unharmed.

## LEVEL 3 RED MAGIC

### Arcane Inferno

✦ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A magical explosion erupts within 20 metres of the caster causing 1 hit to all within the 5 metres blast radius. Inanimate objects are unharmed.

### Immolation

✦ 10 metres

⌘ instant

A single foe with an individual FR of 8 or less bursts into flame and dies instantly. Foes with a rating of 9 or more suffer 1 hit of damage.

### Injurious Sigils

✦ 10 metres

⌘ instant

A single foe suffers a painful wound (originating from magical symbols that appear on its body) causing 1 hit and reducing its FR by 1 point.

+2 *grey magic* to reduce FR by 2.

### Searing Bolt

✦ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A blast of arcane energy destroys one man-size inanimate object (casting difficulty 14).

### Vampiric Sphere

✦ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 hours

All subjects of FR 10 or less, within 5 metres of the point specified by the caster fall into a deep slumber. The caster temporarily gains 1 point of grey and 2 points of red magic for each subject drained. The additional magic is lost after 6 hours if not used (casting difficulty 16).

### Vengeful Warrior

✦ 5 metres

⌘ 1d6 + 1 combat rounds

The caster nominates a nearby ally that then gains +3 to their combat dice roll when attacking the foe or foes specified by the caster.

## GREY MAGIC: WISDOM OF THE AEONS

Grey magic deals with the secrets of the mind, knowledge and natural talent. It is largely focused on non-combat endeavours but can produce harmful effects at higher levels. Spell casting is often accompanied by the soft keening of a distant bell.

## LEVEL 1 GREY MAGIC

### Concentration

✦ 5 metres

⌘ instant

Add +1 to any non-combat dice roll.

### Decipher

✦ touch

⌘ 1d6 hours

The caster can read any text regardless of the language.

### Fathom the Unfathomable

✦ touch

⌘ instant

The caster may decipher the purpose or use of a magical item (items with multiple powers call for multiple castings of the spell).

### Instant Recall

✦ caster only

⌘ instant

The caster instantly remembers a fact that the character should know but the player doesn't.

### Mood Sense

✦ 5 metres

⌘ 1d6 combat rounds

Detects feelings in general and lies in particular...

+1 *red magic* to increase the duration to 1d6 minutes.

### Scribe

✦ touch

⌘ 1d6 minutes

With quill and parchment, the caster can scribble down detailed notes in 1d6 minutes that would normally take hours to complete.

## LEVEL 2 GREY MAGIC

### Comprehension

✦ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster may understand and converse in the language to which he is currently exposed.

+1 *green magic* to extend the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Distant Memory

✦ 20 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The subject completely forgets that he's ever met the caster before.

+1 *green magic* to increase the duration to 1d6 hours.

### Mind Scan

✦ touch

⌘ 1d6 combat rounds

The caster can read the recent thoughts and memories of the subject.

+1 *green magic* to double the spell's duration.

### See the Unseen

✦ 10 metres

⌘ 1d6 combat rounds

The caster can see any hidden object, door or invisible character or foe.

### Talent Mastery

✦ 5 metres

⌘ instant

Add +4 to any dice roll.

### **Twist Thought**

↗ 5 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

“These aren’t the droids, *erm*,  
adventurers you’re looking for...”

## **LEVEL 3 GREY MAGIC**

### **Augury**

↗ caster only

⌘ instant

The caster may ask one question of the referee that can be answered with a yes or no.

### **Create Thought**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ 1d6 hours

The caster plants a thought in the mind of another. This thought must comprise of 20 words or less; the subject will believe the thought is his own.

*+1 blue magic allows the caster to permanently transfer knowledge of any spell he knows to one willing subject. This is the most common way wizards exchange knowledge of new spells with each other.*

### **Glib Tongue**

↗ 5 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The subject will believe the next sentence the wizard utters no matter how bizarre.

### **Mind Wipe**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ instant

The subject will completely forget everything that has happened in the last hour.

### **Talent Transfer**

↗ 5 metres

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster may temporarily transfer a single talent of up to level 3 from one subject to another (which could be the caster).

### **Suspended in Time**

↗ caster only

⌘ varies

The caster falls into a death-like slumber. Whilst suspended, the

wizard does not age. The spell expires after a period of time determined prior to casting.

## **BLUE MAGIC: MYSTIC MOVEMENT**

The magic of movement is often accompanied by a light breeze passing through the area of spell casting, often catching the wizard’s hair and robe.

## **LEVEL 1 BLUE MAGIC**

### **Invisible Pocket**

↗ touch

⌘ instant

The caster opens a pocket in this cloak that connects to the void. Anything slipped into the pocket is gone for good... Probably.

### **Mighty Leap**

↗ touch

⌘ instant

The subject is empowered with the ability to make a single leap of up to 20 metres horizontally or 6 metres vertically.

*+2 green magic to double the distance jumped.*

### **Open Portal**

↗ 5 metres

⌘ instant

Opens one normal door... usually.

### **Phase**

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 + 1 combat rounds

The caster blinks in and out of existence and cannot take damage while the spell is in effect.

However, he may only act once every other round while *phasing*.

### **Pry Lock**

↗ 5 metres

⌘ instant

Opens one normal lock... usually.

### **Telekinetic Hand**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ 1d6 + 1 combat rounds

The caster magically moves any object that he could move normally.

*+1 grey magic to double the spell’s range.*

## **LEVEL 2 BLUE MAGIC**

### **Bar Passage**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ instant

Locks a portal.

### **Impossible Strider**

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster may move on walls and ceilings as though he or she were walking on level ground.

### **Mist Form**

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

The caster is transformed into vapour. He reforms when the spell expires but while in Mist Form can only move with the prevailing wind.

### **Passing Through**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ 1 combat round

Allows the caster to pass through solid material of no more than 30 centimetres thick.

### **Speed**

↗ 10 metres

⌘ 1 combat round

The subject moves at double normal speed, acting twice each combat round.

*+3 grey magic to increase the duration to 5 combat rounds.*

### **Telekinetic Fist**

↗ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A distant foe is attacked with an invisible hand. Treat the attack as a normal ranged attack.

## **LEVEL 3 BLUE MAGIC**

### **Blink**

↗ caster only

⌘ 1d6 + 1 combat rounds

An advanced form of Phase allowing the caster to act every combat round rather than every

other round. The spell's casting difficulty is **14**.

### Teleport

✦ caster only

⌘ instant

Instant travel over 50 metres.

+2 *red magic* to increase the distance travelled to 500 metres.

### True Telekinesis

✦ 10 metres

⌘ 1d6 +1 combat rounds

Any object, person or foe may be lifted and moved within the spell's range.

### Voided

✦ 10 metres

⌘ instant

A single foe with a rating of 14 or less is cast into the *void*. What happens to it or when it should return is anyone's guess.

### Water Striding

✦ caster only

⌘ 1d6 minutes

Allows the caster to walk on water as if it were solid ground. Obviously walking across a still lake will be much quicker than crossing a choppy ocean.

### Wings of the Eagle

✦ caster only

⌘ 1d6 hours

The caster flies at running speed.  
+2 *red magic* to increase the spell's duration by +6 hours.

## PRISMATIC MAGIC

The following rare spells are an evolution of magic – only a wizard that has taken the prismatic leap (see above) may acquire these spells but doing so requires no tutelage from another – the wizard just *knows* the new spell (after spending 10 experience points). However, to gain such power, the character must permanently sacrifice a point of magic. In effect, when gaining a

new prismatic spell, the player spends 10 experience points and his or her character gains the new spell but *not* the additional magic point.

When casting an enhancement spell (those identified with a ★), the cost of the enhancement is added to the cost of the *carrier* spell. If the casting difficulty is based on cost (the standard being cost x 2 [+6]) then the prismatic points spent also increase the difficulty; if the difficulty is based on FR, the prismatic points spent increase the FR for the purposes of the dice roll.

Prismatic spells do not have levels as other colours of magic do; instead the casting cost of the spell is listed just below the spell name (next to the ⋈ symbol). Enhancement spells have a cost of one point per step or increment of enhancement.

### Enchantment

⋈ 1 point

✦ touch

⌘ 6 hours

A single weapon becomes imbued with the wizard's power. It is now considered magical and can harm creatures that can only be wounded by magic weapons. Permanently sacrificing a point of magic increases the spell's duration to *permanent*. Sacrifice a second point to permanently grant the weapon a magic +1 bonus. The spell will only fail if the player rolls **2** or **3** on the dice.

### Gift of Power

⋈ 1 point

✦ touch

⌘ 24 hours

A single mundane item becomes imbued with the power of one spell known to the caster (excluding prismatic spells). Sufficient magic must be spent to cast the spell at a later time. Sacrifice a point of power to

permanently grant the *Gift of Power*, allowing the user of the item to cast the spell once per day without cost. The imbued spell is always successfully cast unless the player rolls **2** or **3** on the dice.

### Prismatic Reach ★

⋈ 1 point per step

✦ NA

⌘ NA

Each point of prismatic magic spent to enhance another spell increases the range of that spell by one *increment*. The increment is always equal to the *base range* so a spell with a base range of 20 metres has a range of 60 metres when increased by 2 increments.

### Prismatic Sight ★

⋈ 1 point per step

✦ NA

⌘ NA

Each point of prismatic magic spent to enhance another spell increases the duration of that spell by one *step*. For example, a spell that lasts for 1d6 rounds now lasts for minutes, or hours, or days, or weeks. The final step is *months*.

### Complete Restoration

⋈ 8 points

✦ touch

⌘ instant

A wounded but still living subject is restored to full health. Lost limbs are regrown in an instant and all traces of illness and disease vanish. This miraculous spell has a casting difficulty of **18**.

### The Many Coloured Doom

⋈ 8 points

✦ 20 metres

⌘ instant

A spray of colour explodes from the wizard. All foes within 20 metres of the caster with an FR of 12 or less are immediately destroyed. More powerful foes suffer 1 hit. The spell's casting difficulty is **16**.



# Appendix 1: Sample Foes

The following characters and enemies are presented to give the game master a head-start when creating his or her own interesting and challenging foes. With just a little imagination the TQ foe system can be used to good effect.

## General Notes

An ability or power described as *standard* is only activated when the player fails the combat dice roll *and* rolls doubles. *Hit* abilities always take effect when the player character loses a hit regardless of the actual dice roll and the very rare *constant* abilities and powers activate every single round.

*Major* powers activate under special circumstances detailed in the foe's description.

Foe ratings (FR) are always listed in **bold** text. Note that *henchmen* are defeated after losing only one hit and unless mentioned otherwise cannot outnumber player characters.

## Fire Mite

These weird goblins are found only in volcanic regions or deep, deep underground. The mites are around one metre tall with thick ruddy skin, beady white eyes and long hooked noses. They are savage creatures that go about unclothed living off bugs and moss. These unique beings are able to release gouts of flame from gill-like flaps that cause an additional hit in combat (standard power).

Warrior mites have **FR 7** and carry wooden spears with fire-hardened tips. There are a few wizard mites, (**FR 9**) referred to as *thinkers* that are able to cast a level 1 or 2 red magic spell each round instead of using their fire ability. Warriors and thinkers usually travel in pairs when exploring far from their hive.

Hunter mites look very similar to the warriors but are treated as henchmen. They are usually encountered in packs of 4 or more.

Thinkers are sometimes found with magnitude 1 or 2 magic crystals in their possession (roll '6' on 1d6 for a crystal to be present).

All mites are immune to **red** magic unless the spell has a component of another colour – so a 1 point red spell will always fail when cast against a mite but the same 1 point spell cast with a point of magic from another colour will work providing the casting dice roll is successful.

## Ogre

Massive bestial humanoids, often growing up to 3 metres tall; they use basic tools such as huge wooden or stone clubs and clothe themselves in animal pelts. Many file their teeth to sharp points and are not past eating the flesh of men.

Due to their great size and strength, ogres may inflict hits on up to 3 adjacent characters each combat round.

Even weaker ogres have a **FR of 12** with larger creatures weighing in at **FR 16** or more. Durmath the Red, a gigantic and venerable warrior-ogre was reputed to have a rating in the region of **FR 28**. If he still roams the hills, steer well clear of him!

Ogres are singular creatures; they don't even get on with other ogres and are therefore always encountered alone.

## Meredark

Centuries ago, a local clan fell under a terrible curse; it's not known whether they'd angered the gods or raised the ire of a black wizard but each was transformed into a tall, dark-leaf tree. The meredark trees are now found in many temperate climes, in the darkest depths of the oldest forests where they quietly wait to spread their curse.

When the meredark senses the presence of a large creature – anything bigger than a goat – it waits for the target to draw near before raising a tangled wall of magical roots to trap its prey. Any attempt by the prey to escape will allow the meredark to fire a poison thorn – to determine if the target is hit roll 2 dice and subtract 1 for each armour or shield hit possessed by the target. If the roll is 8 or more, the target is hit (see below).

If a character is caught in the meredark's trap but chooses not to flee, he or she will face one attack from the mighty branches that surround the huge trunk. For the purpose of the attack, the meredark has **FR 12** and can wound as many characters that fail their combat dice roll. Characters who do miss their combat roll suffer 2 hits instead of the usual 1 and must roll 10+ on 2 dice to remain standing; those that fail are subject to a thorn attack as described above.

If the meredark sustains 3 hits, it loses sufficient branches that it can only wound one attacker per turn, after another 3 hits it falls dormant (the root-cage retreats below ground) and looks dead but over the next 6 months it will regenerate to its former size. The only way to defeat the meredark permanently is to burn it to ash.

Once infected by a poisoned thorn, the curse starts to take hold. In the first week, the character's skin become rough and stiff (granting an extra +1 armour hit); in the second week, the infected character becomes lethargic, feverish and not inclined to move around much (-2 to all dice rolls). Finally, at the end of the third week the character will be drawn to woodlands where he will stay and sink roots becoming a full meredark by the close of the fourth week.

At any stage prior to the fourth week, the curse of the meredark may be countered as if it were a 4 point green magic spell; after the first month, the character is lost.

Note that for the purposes of granting experience points, an encounter with a meredark tree is always considered *significant*.

### **Reardon, captain of the town guard**

An uncompromising man with no love for mendicant adventures; he is a skilled soldier with many years of campaigning experience. He has **FR 12** but is tougher than he first appears; heavy armour grants him an extra hit (giving him a total of 4) and he has a major power allowing him to disarm one attacker on a roll of snake-eyes. Incidentally, if anyone should offer Reardon a bribe, his FR increases to **14**!

The captain is most often encountered with a handful of fiercely loyal militia. These men are often **FR 7**

henchmen but on a special mission he will enlist the aid of skilled warriors (also **FR 7** but not henchmen).

A practiced wrestling champion, Reardon has challenged many a tough-talking adventurer to a contest of skill in the ring. When fighting unarmed against a single unarmed opponent, Reardon employs a second power – when the player fails and rolls a double, the captain gets the hapless soul in a head lock (or similar) which serves to increase Reardon's **FR by +1** for the duration of the battle.

### **Player Characters as Foes**

On very rare occasions, one of the player characters might find him or herself the target of hostile actions by other player characters; perhaps one of the heroes has been possessed, hypnotised or framed by an arch enemy?

When the characters fight each other they each make a combat dice roll; adding any and all necessary modifiers. The character with the lowest total is wounded and loses one hit.

When a character is the target of hostile magic, it may be necessary to calculate a foe rating for that character. For ease of play, assume characters have a nominal foe rating equal to 12 + (level x 2); a first level character will therefore, have FR 14 and the sixth level veteran will be rated 24.

## Appendix 2: Non-Human Characters

I often enjoy role-playing games where the non-human characters take a backseat to the human player-characters; the dwarves live far underground and are seldom seen; elves are spirit-like creatures that reside in the darkest woods and go unnoticed unless they choose otherwise... But other players want to play something different.

The preferred way to for players to take on the role of a non-human character is to make a regular character of a particular calling and then announce that the character is a dwarf, elf or whatever and play the character in a unique and interesting way. You don't need different stats to play a *different* character.

Alternatively, here are a two sample player character modifications to represent different races:

### The Elfin

These are ancient creatures of the earth and wood; they live for centuries and often fall into a deep slumber lasting years. On occasion, one of the elfin will take a sabbatical from pondering the wonders of nature, leaving the forests to explore the world at large and sample life as the mortal races do. This flight of fancy can last years or decades before they retreat once more to the invisible world of the fey.

When they become explorers, the elfin refer to themselves as *elves*. Elves are slender humanoids about the size of a young man; they have narrow, angular faces and dark eyes.

Although elves think of themselves as *explorers* they are built with the statistics of a warrior and all of the warrior's abilities with the exception of mighty blow. Instead, elves may use hits as magic points to cast the

level 1 green spells *Claws*, *Eyes of the Cat*, and *Shifting Tracks*. Each time an elf gains a level they add one additional green spell; the new spell must be of a level equal to or lower than the new experience level.

### The Low Men

The dwarves of the *Bellow Lands* rarely venture topside. In fact, many of their kind consider the daylight world to be a myth, designed to scare their young pups; those that do journey above do so to gain new talents and wares.

Low men are short, usually no more than 1.2 metres, with pale skin and startling 'pupil-less' eyes. There hair, if they have any at all, gathers in thick beards and moustaches on the males and a fine pelt on the females. They use the molten rock to heat and light their underground domain and are no strangers to the element of fire and red magic.

Player character low men are based on the *rogue* template but if they choose to pursue magic endeavours they are limited to gaining red magic spells. However, when casting red spells they may substitute red magic for any of the other colours to gain the specified benefits of doing so.

*Example*, Hegley the low man has 3 points of red magic and knows the *Blister* spell. Blister is more effective when cast with a single point of grey magic but Hegley can achieve this effect by spending an additional point of his red magic.

Daylight does not bother the low men but the prefer night or twilight. They also have an acute sense of direction that defies explanation.

## Appendix 3: The Rewards of Adventure!

The following steps provide a simple way to allocate manageable rewards for the player characters. These random procedures should not replace the referee's sound judgment when it comes to granting wealth and powerful magical items. Remember, as the characters become more and more powerful, the foes they face must be greater to provide a continued challenge.

**Step 1:** Begin by selecting the size of your random treasure; choose from *small*, *medium*, or *large*. A small treasure might be the hoard collected by a small group of bandits; a medium treasure is a substantial haul no doubt protected by a fearsome monster whilst large treasures are the stuff of legend.

**Step 2:** Once you have selected the overall size of your treasure, roll the dice indicated in **Table 7A** to determine the number of coins and jewels found. Consulted **Table 7B** to determine the presence of a magic item and the multiplier for the number of coins and jewels based on the size of the haul. For example, a small treasure contains at least 2d6 x 5 copper coins and never a jewel. For magic items, roll the number indicated or higher on 2 dice to determine if a magic item is present.

**Step 3:** once we know the content of the treasure haul, roll two dice on **Table 8A** for each jewel (if any). A roll of 12 indicates that an *item* set with jewels is found. Roll **1d3** to determine the number of jewels in the item. The value factor column is used to determine the jewel's actual value in silver coins.

**Step 4:** for each jewel located roll 2d6 on **Table 8B**. Multiply the base value by the value factor from **Table 8A** to determine the worth in silver coins.

**Step 5:** for jewelled items roll 2 dice on **Table 9** to determine the type of item found then **1d3** to learn the number of jewels set into the item; if there is less than the rolled number of jewels in the hoard, use the number remaining.

**Step 6:** in step 2 we established whether or not the random hoard contains a magic item; now we roll 2 dice on **Table 10A** to find out what it is. Note that, magic items are all unique to some degree and the referee may be making a rod for his own back by handing out random items. It's always better to design a permanent campaign fixture from the ground up.

Where a range of numbers is indicated, record the number you roll as a higher number always indicates a more powerful item; for example a talent bonus item has a modifier of +1 if you rolled 2 and +2 if you rolled 3.

### MAGIC ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

**Talent bonus:** the item provides a discrete bonus to a specific talent or type of talent (+1 or +2) when using the item for the specific task it was created to accomplish. A +2 lock pick will always increase dice rolls to pick locks by 2 points. The item is more durable than a non-magical version but can be broken. Such items are rarely if ever sold by their owners but a value of 200 silver per *plus* might be appropriate.

**Spell power (charged):** any magical item might be enchanted with the power to create the effects of a specific spell. The most common type is the spell stone which can be used just once. Other items have a store of magic points which can be used by the owner (even warriors) to cast that spell. Roll one die on **Table 10B** to determine the colour of the stored spell then **1d3** to determine the level. Select an appropriate spell from that level or roll one die to choose randomly.

If the roll on **Table 10A** was a '4' the item is a one-use spell stone; the magic power is released when the stone is thrown to the floor – it is then consumed and destroyed. If the roll was '5', the item contains 2 magic points per spell level. Spent points are restored in full, at dawn of the day after they were used.

If such items are available for sale, use the following formulae to determine the price:

$$100 \text{ silver coins} \times [\text{number of magic points}] \times [\text{spell level}]$$

Spell stones are worth 20% of the value of charged items.

**Spell power (permanent):** these items may cast a spell 1 to 6 times per day (roll 1 die each day the power is first used, 24 hours must elapse before a new roll is made) rather than having a certain number of magic points. If the spell in question has varying effects based on the number and colour of magic points spent, the powered item only produces the minimum effect. The referee should ensure that the spell chosen makes sense as a permanent power but where possible use the guidelines discussed for charged items above.

If available for sale, permanent spell power items are worth 1,000 silver coins per spell level.

**Weapon:** a roll of '6' indicates the weapon is *marked by fate*. The player may choose to reduce the value of one die by one point after making any combat dice

roll, allowing the player to avoid the activation of certain enemy powers. This power may only be employed once per session for each level of experience possessed by the user. Fateful weapons may be found for sale; roll 2 dice and multiply the total by 100 silver coins to determine the price.

On a roll of '7' the weapon is truly magical. Roll one die, on a roll of 1 to 5 the weapon adds +1 to the player's dice roll during combat; on a roll of 6 the weapon also has a permanent spell power (as described above). Weapons with the +1 enchantment are worth an extra 1,000 silver coins over the price of a standard weapon.

**Shield:** a basic magic shield is identical to its mundane counterpart except that it will never break under normal conditions – there is no need to keep track of shield's condition. Of course dropping the shield into boiling lava or having it chewed to splinters by a mighty dragon *will* destroy the shield.

Some magic shields (roll '6' on one die) add an extra +1 hit when employed by warriors. Magical shields may be purchased for +1,000 silvers if available at all.

**Armour:** magic armour provides an additional +1 hit when employed by rogues or warriors. A rare few pieces of armour (roll 12 on 2 dice) also possess one permanent spell power as described above. Magical armour may be purchased for +1,000 silvers where available.

**Unique:** such items should only be granted by the referee on very rare occasions and can have any imaginable effect. For example a unique item might summon a genie that grants three wishes, a pair of seven league boots, a cloak of invisibility, a girdle of giant strength or sex-change, and so on. Unique items are never available to be purchased by wealthy adventurers...

Table 7A: General treasure type

Treasure Type	Roll
Coins (any)	2 dice
Jewels	1 die
Magic items	roll this number or more on 2d6

Table 7B: Specific treasure type

Treasure Type	Small	Medium	Large
Copper	x 5	x 10	x 20
Silver	x 2	x 5	x 10
Gold	x 1	x 3	x 7
Jewels	x 0	x 1	x 1.5
<b>Magic items</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10 +</b>	<b>8 +</b>

Table 8A: Jewel sizes

Roll	Jewel Size	Value Factor
2 to 4	Chip	x 1
5 or 6	Small	x 5
7 or 8	Average	x 10
9 or 10	Large	x 50
11	Huge	x 100
12	Jewelled item	Roll for each jewel

Table 8B: Jewel values

Roll	Jewel Type	Base Value
2	Quartz	1
3	Amber	3
4	Onyx	5
5	Turquoise	7
6	Amethyst	9
7	Aquamarine	11
8	Jade	13
9	Opal	15
10	Pearl	20
11	Sapphire	25
12	Diamond	30

Table 10B: Magic colour

1	Green
2 or 3	Red
4	Grey
5 or 6	Blue

Table 9: Jewelled items

Roll	Jewelled Item Type
2	Head-adornment or helmet
3	Torc
4	Necklace
5	Bracelet
6 or 7	Ring
8	Weapon
9	Armour
10	Shield
11	Belt buckle
12	Earring

Table 10A: Magic items

Roll	Magic Item Type
2 or 3	Talent bonus
4 or 5	Spell power (charged)
6 or 7	Weapon
8	Shield
9 or 10	Armour
11	Spell power (permanent)
12	Unique

## Appendix 4: Wizard Templates

New players sometimes struggle to create useful wizard characters because almost any spell is available, even to brand new adventurers.

The following suggestions might assist new players in selecting a useful selection of spells. Each of the following templates assumes that the player swapped the allowed statistic point granting the wizard 5 magic points. If this is not ignore the last spell and point of magic.

Rogues begin play with either zero (o) or one magic point and should probably avoid the urge to take combat magic as they already have ability in that area. Instead, focus on Blue (movement) and Grey magic (Mind).

### **The Trickster**

*Green: 2; Grey 2; Blue 1*

Green 2: Magic Coins  
Grey 2: Distant Memory  
Blue 1: Open Portal

### **Combat Mage**

*Red 3; Blue 2*

Red 1: Arcane Bolt  
Red 2: Fire Blade  
Blue 1: Phase  
Blue 1: Telekinetic Hand

### **Mind Mage**

*Grey 4; Green 1*

Grey 2: Mind Scan  
Grey 2: Twist Thought  
Green 1: Eyes of the Cat

### **Phase Wizard**

*Blue 4; Green 1*

Blue 1: Phase  
Blue 2: Passing Through  
Green 1: Claws  
Blue 1: Pry Lock

### **Diverse Spell Caster**

*Green: 2; Red 1; Grey 1; Blue 1*

Green 1: Provisions  
Red 1: Weakening Gaze  
Grey 1: Concentrate  
Blue 1: Mighty Leap  
Green 1: Shifting Tracks

### **Peaceful Wizard**

*Green 2; Grey 2; Red 1*

Green 2: Regeneration  
Grey 2: Talent Mastery  
Red 1: Fire Crafter Cloak

### **Weather Wizard**

*Red 2; Green 2; Blue 1*

Red 2: Lightning Strike  
Green 1: Gills  
Blue 1: Mighty Leap  
Green 1: Shifting Tracks

## Appendix 5: Of Mice and Men

### Introduction

What follows is an introductory adventure for first level characters; it should take one or 2 sessions to complete and is very much in the old-school dungeon-crawl vein. At various points during the adventure text, the referee will be directed to call for a dice roll against a specified difficulty level (abbreviated DL); should the characters have any relevant talents, remember to let the players add the *talent level* to the roll; the character's *experience level* should also be added if the action relates to the character's calling.

### The Adventure Begins!

Soon after arriving at Miller's Hollow, a small logging community just a few days from a nearby city, the characters are approached by *Meldrin Dunderholme*. The encounter will likely take place at Mel's inn – the *Treasure Trove*.

Mel will first offer them a mug of ale 'on the house' (fully expecting them to purchase more or even take lodgings at the Trove) after exchanging a little small talk, he will make them a proposition – it's clear to him and others in town that the armed and armoured characters are a cut above the usual transients.

Mel will take the characters aside so as not to alert his locals and explain the following:

'Friends, of late, the Trove has been suffering from minor but nevertheless annoying thefts. I know for a fact that none of the locals are involved. I recently visited Ellegar; she's an old magician that lives all alone deep in the woods. She read my tea leaves and told me that the Trove's problems lie beneath my very feet.'

'As soon as she told me I knew what she meant. It's my understanding that the site on which the village now stands was once something else entirely. I don't know even the half of it but I think there's something in my cellar. Yesterday morning I went down to fetch a new keg and there was only 8 where the day before there'd been 9. In its stead was a withered looking rat-man, standing no higher than my hip.'

'I have a little magic about me so I cast a fiery spell on it, when the magic faded; the rat-thing was gone.'

'Explore my cellars, put an end to this rat problem of mine and I'll give you my *Snake Bite*, a special knife given to me by the lord of the manor. Furthermore, if you get hurt down there, I can fix you good as new.'

As the characters talk with Mel, they notice a rather ugly jade statuette of a rat on the shelf behind the bar.

The rat is rearing up on its hind legs. If asked about the rat Mel will confess that he has no idea where it came from but that he has 2 others just like it that he found in his guest rooms.

**The Reward:** Snake Bite is a normal looking dagger with a keen blade inscribed with a delicate snake design topped with a leather-bound wooden handle. The dagger's crossbar is of sturdy steel fashioned to look like a curling snake; a single silver coin is set into the lead pommel. The dagger adds +1 to any user's combat dice roll providing they possess one or more magic point; if not, Snake Bite is just a normal dagger.

Mel, was once an adventuring rogue before buying the inn and settling down; he knows the spells *Arcane Bolt* (level 1 red magic) and *Regeneration* (level 2 green magic) and has access to 4 healing poultices. Mel won't hand them out (in case someone in the village needs one) but will administer aid if wounded adventurers make it back to the surface. If it becomes necessary, Mel has access to 2 red magic points and 4 points of green magic).

*[Referee's Note: this adventure is designed for novice characters and novice players. However, experienced players may enjoy this small 'dungeon quest' and will surely acquire treasure and experience points for their characters.]*

Assuming the characters accept Mel's proposition (and they're hardly heroes if they don't), he will show them to the cellar door. Within is a small ledge then a stout ladder leading some 25-feet down. Mel will give the characters a lantern and a clay pot of oil whether they have such equipment or not. If they ask about more freebies he will refer them to Widderwent's Storehouse in the village market place to purchase supplies.

If the characters do visit Widderwent's they will find 6 other jade rat statuettes on sale for a very reasonable 2 coins each. Widderwent can't remember where he got them from but isn't happy that they're not selling! Widderwent will happily sell any equipment he has at half price for normal gear and double the price for weapons and armour.

### Referee's Background

Many years ago, *Ortugu* the rat god arrived with his followers in this area. They set up shop below ground and recruited many humanoids to their cause. They were ultimately flushed out by a heroic band of adventurers.

But gods don't die, they just fade away. Ortugu didn't wither away entirely and now seeks to re-assert his presence on the material plane. If Ortugu can get



enough people to worship him (or even just believe in him), his power will return.

The first stage in his 'master plan' is to distribute his own idols to as many people as he can. He does this through a network of loyal ratmen operating from the semi-abandoned rat god temple below the Trove. The idols aren't particularly attractive but anyone who keeps one causes Ortugu's power to increase by one *point*.. If his power reaches 1,000 points, he will recover his *god status* and once again become a power in the world; albeit a minor one.

By exploring the tunnels below the Trove, the characters may uncover Ortugu's plan and put a stop to it; for now at least.

### Exploring Below

The cellar (room 1) is lined with damp limestone flags; the ceiling is about 2.5 metres high. The areas beyond the secret door are generally dimly lit by candles resting in shallow alcoves at approximately shoulder height along most walls. The ceilings are most often vaulted and 3 metres high with heavy beams supporting the same grey slate tiles that line the walls and floors. Doors are of sturdy oak 2 by 1.5 metres in size.

Certain rooms and corridors indicate the *possible* presence of treasure or creatures. For example, an entry may read: "Roll 1 die, on a roll of 1 or 2 a random treasure will be found by those searching who succeed in making a DL 10 roll." The text indicates that there is something to be found only if the referee rolls 1 or 2 on a six-sided die. Tables at the end of the adventure list possible found items and encountered creatures.

A locked door can be battered down by those using blunt weapons or axes (swords and daggers are of little value against wood); the task requires a DL 11 roll. Breaking down a door will almost certainly make a great deal of noise and is likely to attract interested parties. Iron and stone doors will not yield to normal weapons.

A map of the underground complex is presented at the end of this section. Each square on the map represents 2 metres.

### ROOM 1: THE TROVE'S CELLAR

At the bottom of the ladder, at waist height is a small ledge on which rests a brass candle holder and a box of long matches. The main cellar area contains wine and spirit racks stacked against the north wall and seven large kegs against the east wall. To the south stands a woodworking bench where Mel can fix old barrels.

The centrepiece of the room is a broad and long oak table, which seems far too large to have been lowered down from the room above. Six high-backed padded chairs are gathered around the table, which is littered with wine bottles, and tasting glasses.

After the characters have been in the room just long enough to survey its contents, a narrow and previously unseen door between two barrels in the east wall swings halfway open. A rat-like head on a small humanoid body is briefly seen before the critter mutters 'Oh bugger!' and slams the door shut!

Now that the door is closed again, it is *almost* impossible to pick out from the stones in the wall but having seen it open once, the characters can pry it open with any sharp object.

*[Referee's Note: As strange as it may seem to experienced players, gamers on their first dungeon expedition might never think to look for secret things and hidden doors. Hopefully they will now! Alternatively, the referee may insist on a more worldly group discovering the door themselves, if so this will take a DL 11 roll and require at least 2 minutes.]*

### Exits

- The secret door is only 1.5 metres high and 1 metre wide so it will be difficult for larger characters to move quickly through.
- The characters may also return to the Trove, above.

### ROOM 2: THE RAT DEN

Assuming the delvers quickly follow the rat man through the secret door they will find him here, desperately wondering what to do about being spotted. If they delay following him for more than 1 minute, he will have gone for help.

This large room is the equal of Mel's cellar in size but much more impressive, the floor is tiled with black marble, the walls and ceiling with grey slate. A large burgundy rug takes pride of place in the centre of the room and a low table sits on the rug.

It smells particularly bad in this room; a mixture of alcohol, acrid urine and faeces. Sniveller and his rat kin frequent this room to enjoy the things they steal from the tavern. Their master doesn't know of their illicit activity and would not approve (since it doesn't want to be discovered... yet).

**Sniveller (rat man): FR 7**, fights with a short sword and wears mismatched pieces of leather armour (neither sword nor armour have any game effect – they are already factored into the FR). Rat men stand about 1 metre tall and weigh about 20-25 kilograms; they are slender and sinewy – built for speed. Rat men are humanoid with three fingers and opposable

thumbs, they also have metre long hairless tails; the rest of their bodies are covered in a light fur.

Sniveller is between a rock and a hard place, his rat god master doesn't want rat men being seen by humans but he must go for help and warn his clan!

If the characters are quick through the secret door they will find Sniveller dithering about what to do, if they take longer, he will *bite the arrow* and go tell his kin that the rat temple has been breached!

If attacked outright, he will surely be defeated and his passing will net the characters a only a useful sword. If they attempt to interrogate him, they won't get too far. He is so frightened that he can barely think straight; he will lie outrageously as follows:

1. 'I'm not a rat man, I'm just a rather handsome goblin.'
2. 'I'm here on my own, no other goblins down here.'
3. 'Never stole a thing from the tavern. There's a tavern up there?'
4. 'What secret door?'

And so on...

Even when threatened with death Sniveller will not offer any assistance – after all, he risks compromising his god!

If the characters didn't attack him, Sniveller is now their prisoner; what the characters do with him may well set the tone for the rest of the adventure. How cold-blooded are they?

Do they kill him? Tie him up? Let him go free? Take him to Mel? If Sniveller is tied up he will attempt to wriggle free at the earliest opportunity; whether he succeeds or not, is up to the referee (the referee may also wish to roll one die every 10 minutes – on a roll of 1 or 2, Sniveller does indeed escape).

### Exits

- A wide archway leads to a passageway to the east.
- An alcove in the north wall houses a stout black door bound with iron. The door is locked but can be *picked* with a DL 12 roll.

### ROOM 3: THE TRAPPED TUNNEL

Several of the candles have burned down in this passage, and Ombur the ogre has yet to replenish them.

At the points indicated on the map by the number '3' are two pit traps. The traps look no different from the rest of the black marble floor. However, either side of the 2 metre square traps are 3 small depressions in the

floor, each large enough to insert the tip of a staff or the butt of a spear.

If the traps are set (usually they are not but Ombur is testing them from room 5 so as the characters enter the dungeon, the traps are primed), any man-size character stepping on the trap will activate a swinging door in the floor dropping one or more characters (depending on how they're travelling down the passage) into the pit below.

Sniveller doesn't know about the traps as he's not heavy enough to set them off (also, this area of the dungeon was largely for the use of human worshipers, rat men rarely came here).

A character triggering the trap may make a DL 9 roll to avoid plunging into the darkness below, if one or more characters are following closely behind, they might fall too. However, those following are allowed a DL 7 roll to avoid the drop.

A second way to avoid the trap is to fit a staff or spear into the centre depression either before or after the pit trap. As long as the middle depression is blocked, the trap is safe. To block both traps, two staves or poles are required.

Characters falling into either of the pits won't suffer any damage as they will land in waist-deep brackish water. A trough of water runs the length of this passage but there are no other useful exists and it is therefore not marked on the map. A single bloated giant water-rat lives in the water passage – it is roughly the size of a Rottweiler and easily as vicious!

### The Water-Rat: FR 11

Due to the confined space and lack of light, only the character(s) in the water pit can fight and defend against the water-rat and only one at a time.

If a trap has been triggered, the delvers now have a 2 metre obstacle in their way (and Ombur will surely come to investigate). A DL 9 roll will allow a hero to leap across the pit but failing the roll (without suitable precautions – like roping yourself to your fellows) will land the hapless adventurer in the drink!

Getting out of the pit might pose problems too. The pit is only 2 metres deep however, so even if the characters haven't thought to bring rope, two heroes can work together to rescue a third.

### Exits

- The tunnel extends to the south, branches to the east and west and of course, returns north to room 2.

#### ROOM 4: OMBUR'S DEN

The passage opens into a large store area. There are racks of candles on the north wall, pots of tallow, coils of thread for wicks and lots of matches. On a low table against the west wall can be found 2 pots of oil and a lantern (the pots of oil are each good for 2 hours of light). On a hook on the south wall is a 10 metre coil of hemp rope; leaning next to it are 4 sturdy 2 metre poles.

On the floor before the table is a pile of blankets and old pillows. The area smells quite badly but no worse than room 2. Ombur is usually found in this room getting ready to replace old candles or just resting. He can also be encountered tidying up around the tunnels and doing minor bits of maintenance. As the characters enter the dungeon however, he is in room 5. Testing...

##### Exits

- None bar the passage through which the adventurers entered.

#### ROOM 5: TEMPLE OF THE RAT GOD

This huge chamber with a 6 metre high vaulted ceiling differs considerably from the rest of the dungeon. The walls are covered with reeds and dried grasses, as is the ceiling. The decor gives the temple a 'nest-like' atmosphere.

*[Referee's Note: There is a fair amount of combustible material in this room. If a battle breaks out here, it might be a nice dramatic touch for a stray spell or fallen candle to start a blaze!]*

The floor is covered with dozens of reed prayer mats but the dominant feature is a great marble dais on which rests a huge bronze statue of a rat (2 metres high), rearing on its hind legs, the rat has 2 coin-sized rubies for eyes (worth 80 silver each). At the base of the statue are dozens (over 100) of jade replicas of the bronze statue. The jade might be worth 2 silvers per statuette but few would be interested in owning their very own rat god.

*Investigating the statue reveals three pieces of useful information:*

1. The right arm can be moved up or down through roughly 45 degrees. Raising the arm sets the traps in room 3, lowering the arm deactivates the traps.
2. At the base of the statue a single word is engraved in the marble dais: O R T U G U.
3. The stomach of the rat statue opens like the door to a giant bronze oven. Inside the characters will find a single jade idol, identical to those at the statue's feet. If the idol is removed and the door closed, beams of light shoot out from the statue's eyes (the light will be red if the rubies are still in

place). If the belly-door is opened again, a fresh new jade idol will be sitting there, if it is removed and the door closed again, a new one will be created. There is no limit to the number of idols that can be generated in this fashion.

*[Referee's Note: Inventive players may at some stage decide that the bronze statue of Ortugu needs to be destroyed; without this statue, Ortugu can't create his magic idols! Destroying the statue may be much more difficult; it's huge and made of bronze. However, if the PCs present a compelling explanation of how they could destroy it – let it happen and award them each an extra experience point.]*

Ombur the rat-ogre is charged with maintaining the temple area for that time when human followers can be swayed to the will of the rat god once more. He is currently counting the idols (again) and realigning the prayer mats. If delvers avoid triggering the traps in room 3, they will be able to sneak up on Ombur with ease. If they choose to attack him, allow them one free round of attacks before Ombur can retaliate.

If, however, the delvers do set off one or both traps, Ombur will snatch up 5 idols and run to the entrance of this chamber. Once there, he will quickly assess the situation then begin lobbing the idols down the corridor. For a character to avoid being hit by Ombur, the player must make a successful combat dice roll against **FR 13**.

##### Ombur the Rat-Ogre: FR 13

Ombur has numerous steel piercing in his lips, nose and ears including two large gold loop earrings (worth 16 silvers for the pair). He is small for an ogre at just over 2 metres tall but broad and muscular. He has a short snout with tusk like teeth

**Special:** Ombur has been blessed by his god and while in the service of his ratty deity, Ombur is immune in every way to any kind of magic spells or items.

**Treasure:** Gold earrings worth 16 silvers. Ombur also carries a large iron key to the door of room 8 on a thick chain around his neck.

If Ombur does speak common tongue, we will never know since he does not talk with adventurers; he kills them and feeds them to the water-rat or delivers them to the rat god.

#### ROOM 6: THE STAIR TO NOWHERE

To the south a stone stair case rises to the ceiling but this entrance must've been bricked up many years ago.

Roll 1d6 on a roll of 1 or 2, there will be 3 rat men cowering here. They are huddled together at the base

of the stair waiting to see what happens. If approached they fight like cornered rats!

### Rat men

**FR 6** (but may gang-up on 2 or few adventures and gain an *outnumber* bonus)

**Treasure:** each rat man carries 2d6 copper coins.

### Exits

- A passage to the east leading to room 3
- A stone door leading to room 7, it is slightly ajar.
- An iron door leading to room 8, it is locked.
- A wooden door leading to room 9, it is unlocked.

### ROOM 7: THE STONE ROOM

Beyond the stone door is a bare limestone room with just a row of plain wooden benches against the south wall. In years gone by, the human devotees of the rat god would use this area to don their ceremonial robes in private prior to a ritual gathering.

If Sniveller was able to flee the characters, the secret door lies open.

### Exits

- An open stone door to the west.
- A secret door in the east wall; a DL 12 roll will locate the opening mechanism (a loose stone on the floor).

### ROOM 8: THE STORY ROOM

The room is shrouded in thick webs mostly obscuring the plain grey walls which are engraved with many detailed images including those of humanoids bowing before giant rats; the images seem to tell a story. rat men skeletons can also be seen hanging among the webs.

A giant spider has made its home in this room (once Ombur realised the beastie had arrived, he locked the door) it will pounce as soon as the door is opened.

Due to the webbing and the spider's speed, no more than 2 characters may attack the creature in hand-to-hand combat. Randomly determine which two lucky characters are the targets of the spider.

### Giant Spider: FR 11

The spider's standard power is poison which adds an additional loss of one hit to a character when the player fails a combat dice roll and rolls doubles.

Furthermore, the spider has a major power, a jet of webbing which coats the character with sticky goo giving him a penalty of -2 to any dice rolls for physical activity (like fighting) until washed off with oil. This major power is activated on an dice roll of 2, 3, 4 or 5 but a single character may only be affected once.

**Treasure:** One of the skeletal rat men has a purse containing 8 silvers; while another has a small stoneware jar containing a healing poultice that will restore 1d3 lost hits.

If the wall engravings are examined further the delvers will be able to make out the history of the dungeon in a series pictures...

1. The first shows a ruined fort (the base of which looks very similar to the Treasure Trove).
2. A number of giant rats with rat men in attendance feasting on humanoids.
3. An image of stern faced humans carrying torches. In the ground beneath the men, the giant rats huddle in the darkness.
4. An ogre working tirelessly to build the complex.
5. The temple chamber full of worshipping humans.

### Exits

- The door to the east.
- If the adventurers spend a full hour clearing the webs they will find a wooden trapdoor in the northwest corner of the room. The hatch is not locked; within is a deep dark pit which leads to a water filled cavern. Ombur used to dispose of the temple's detritus through the hatch until the arrival of the spider.

*[Referee's Note: The trap door is a dead end, a long drop with nothing at the bottom. But it needn't be - referees can add their own rooms and adventures in the areas below if they wish but may need to make the hatch easier to find!]*

### ROOM 9: HOBNAIL THE HOBGOBLIN

The room contains a number of overturned tables and chairs, a few animal skins are scattered across the floor and a fat hobgoblin, squatting in the northeast corner next to one of Mel's stolen cider kegs.

Hobnail on a foraging expedition he chanced upon the rat men's *emergency exit* (see room 18) in the woods and followed the smell of cider (and less savoury ratty smells) to this room. He has so far gone undetected by the rat men and intends to drink his fill before leaving. He *does* like his cider.

### Hobnail: FR 10

**Treasure:** The Amulet of the Mighty Arm (a bronze disc on a leather cord, the disc carries an image of a short-haired impossibly muscular man – it is *Arnbold*, patron of the Mighty). The magical amulet adds +1 to rolls concerned with feats of strength and endurance but only when worn by a warrior.

Hobnail also has a backpack containing a 10-metre length of rope, 4 iron spikes, a tin water flask, 6 wax

candles and a box of 4 matches. At the bottom of his pack is a small wooden box containing 16 silver coins and a collection of 30 teeth from various donors.

As you can see, Hobnail would be a considerable challenge for a lone low-level hero but a group of three or more would make mincemeat out of him. The referee has (at least) three options with this encounter:

1. Let the heroes make mincemeat out of him – they might need an easy win to boost their confidence.
2. Hobnail is a ‘hook’ that will lead the PCs to another adventure site – in exchange for his life he may tell them about his secret stash of treasure (which may lead to another adventure).
3. Make Hobnail a canny fighter. He kicks over a table, which now acts as a shield increasing his **FR to 12** – if more than 2 characters wish to join the attack against him, someone will have to make a DL 11 roll to move the table – if they fail, they must take 1 hit of damage. Either way only 2 characters can attack Hobnail whilst the table is in place!

#### Exits

- An unlocked door in the west wall.

#### ROOM 10: THE SPENT SPEAR TRAP

Roll 1 die, on a roll of 1, 2 or 3 a random monster lurks in this passage (see the appropriate table at the end of this adventure to learn which creature challenges the heroes).

An 8 metre **unlit** passageway ending in an unlocked wooden door. At the point marked 10, five rusted but sturdy iron spears extend across the corridor from small holes in the wall. The spears pin an ancient skeleton to the wall. The spears are *spring loaded* so a DL 12 roll is required to hold them back far enough to allow others to pass. Of course the character holding the spears will need someone to do the same favour for him.

The presence of this trap might give the characters cause for concern. Are there other similar traps in this or other corridors? How will they be detected? Who’s got the 10-foot pole? However, there are no other similar traps but anticipation is 90% of the act, or so they say...

#### Exits

- A door in the far south wall, it is unlocked.
- An unlocked door in the east wall.

#### ROOM 11: THE BATH FROG

A vile stench rolls out of this **unlit** room as soon as the door is opened. In the darkness beyond a wet slapping sound can be heard. When that quickly subsides, a croaky voice utters the following warning:

*‘Sod off! Find your own slop hole to wallow in.’*

Then there’s a shallow ‘splash’.

As the characters examine the room with their own light source they notice grimy blue tiles on the wall and ceiling. Strings of green mucus stretch across the floor and the smell gets worse.

Against the east wall is an ornamental bath or trough. It’s quite large and would accommodate several bathers. As the delvers approach two huge frog-like eyes surface in the sickly black water, quickly followed by a huge blue frog-head the size of a large shield.

It opens its mouth as if to speak again but instead a thick, pink tongue darts out!

Randomly pick a character and have that character’s player make a combat dice roll; if the roll is failed a drawn weapon, shield or piece of armour (or other exposed item of equipment) is snatched away by the tongue.

Any items swiped are quickly dissolved in the frogs stomach juices. Even if the characters quickly hack the dead Frog to bits they will only find unidentifiable chunks of fused metal (or whatever bits the frog *tongued*).

If the players start discussing what to do, or try to talk to the beast, the tongue lashes out again – randomly select another character. However, as soon as they attack the frog, he retaliates!

#### Giant Blue Bath Frog: FR 13

Once combat begins, any character that takes a hit also loses a piece of armour or a weapon; this could be a very costly encounter!

If any of the heroes have the stomach to search in the trough they’ll need to wade in up to the waist. Make a DL 5 roll or suffer one hit due to violent vomiting. Whether there’s vomiting or not, the character in the bath will find a length of chain on the bottom. Pulling the chain, will release a *plug* about 12-centimetres in diameter causing the water to drain out and reveal a hidden doorway – roughly 1 metre high. The door leads to room 12. If anyone takes the time to clean the plug it is found to be made of solid gold and worth upwards of 20 silvers.

#### Exits

- A hidden door leading to room 12.

- An unlocked door leading west.

### ROOM 12: THE PATROLLED PASSAGE

This tunnel is well lit with candles and torches placed throughout its length.

Roll 1 die, on a roll of 1 to 5, roll once for a random monster. On a roll of 6, roll twice. After the battle, roll 1 die to see if there is any treasure nearby; on a roll of 2 to 6 there will be. Roll on the Found Item table.

#### Exits

- A hidden door in the North West passage leading to room 11.
- An arched alcove in the North East passage leading to room 13.
- An unlocked but closed door leading to room 14 in the south west passage.
- A heavy stone door with a bass-relief of a giant rat in the south wall of the south east passage, it leads to room 15. There appears to be no way of opening the door...

### ROOM 13: THE RAT MEN'S NEST

A huge stone-domed room, it is **unlit**, very quiet and smells terrible.

The outskirts of the room are choked with debris of all sorts; bits of wood, clumps of damp earth, broken chairs and tables, old bones, rotten bookshelves, old blankets and cushions et cetera; and the rubbish is piled several feet high.

This is the rat men's lair and they are lurking in the garbage piles, watching the PCs. Waiting.

#### The Alter

The centrepiece of the room is a huge stone slab cut with deep blood-gutters. It is heavily stained by recent sacrifices for the rat god. Something can be seen resting on the slab; it might be a weapon or tool of some sort.

There are large numbers of rat men lurking in this room, if they all attack at once, they would surely overwhelm the PCs. Although a mass attack would be realistic, the game would end here.

So instead, the cowardly rat men will initially attack in multiples of 4 (don't forget to use the *outnumbered* rules if appropriate). As the first squad attacks the PCs, the other rat men will rise up from their nest, chanting and cheering!

If the first group of rat men is quickly defeated the second wave will include 5 troops, then 6 and so on. If

the battle is relatively even, the rat men attack numbers do not increase.

If the heroes successfully fend off 4 waves of attacks, the rat men hordes retreat to the safety of their nest, effectively calling off the attack. They will still chatter, screech and generally hurl abuse at the interlopers though!

#### Taking the High Ground

If at any time during the battle, one or more heroes leap atop the sacrificial slab they will enjoy a substantial height advantage allowing them to increase their combat dice rolls by +1.

#### Rat men: FR 6

There is one item of obvious value in the room (although the rat men think all their junk is precious): the **Rat Paw Relic**. It rest atop the altar stone and is used for slitting the throats of sacrifices and opening the *Guardian Rat Door*. The relic is a length of bone ending in a giant rat's paw clutching a pitted grey river stone. The paw's index-finger is extended and a razor-sharp sliver of steel has been attached with twine.

Using the Rat Paw Relic to *knock* on the Guardian's door will allow the characters to meet the rat god himself!

If the rat men can somehow be controlled or subdued, a brief search of this room will allow three rolls on the Found Item table.

#### Exits

- An archway to the west leads to room 12.
- At the referee's option there may be numerous holes leading out of this room – obscured by the vast quantities of junk.

### ROOM 14: THE ABANDONED ROOM

This dank smelly room is accessed by an unlocked wooden door. It was originally used as a store room but now contains nothing but a few empty crates and a pair of work benches.

If Sniveller fled from his first encounter with the PCs or later, managed to escape, he will have headed straight for room 13, collected a handful of his trusted rat-kin (1d3 + 1, FR 7 rat men) and be waiting here to see if the heroes will come this way or be building up the courage to go looking for them.

If Sniveller did not escape for any reason (such as being dead), roll one random monster to encounter the PCs here. After the battle, roll on the Found Item table to see if there is any loot to be had.

### Exits

- A secret door in the west wall leading to room 7.
- A wooden door in the east wall which leads to room 12.

### ROOM 15: THE RAT GOD'S ANTECHAMBER

#### *Getting in.*

A heavy stone door bars the way to this room. The door has a detailed bass-relief image of a giant rat, rampant. There is only one way through the door (or 2 if you want to spend 2 to 3 hours smashing it down with pick and hammer). The Rat Paw Relic from room 13 must be used to tap once upon the door.

A tap from the relic will summon the Guardian Rat Spirit. The relief image upon the door, slowly twists and turns until it is fully animated, it then leaps into the passageway, as substantial as any of the characters.

The rat spirit is of a similar size to Ombur but the Guardian is a magnificent example of rodent-kind. Its snout is long and heavily whiskered, its ears broad and its body rippling with muscle. The fur and tail is snow white and its eyes ruby red. With a voice like a sly whisper it asks:

*'Are thee worshipers of the one great rat god, good and true?'*

If the answer is no, the Guardian will leap back to the door where he returns to his inanimate state. He can be summoned again at any time.

If the answer is yes, he continues.

*'By what name is the one great rat god known to his followers? Answer me this and I shall know you speak the truth.'*

The answer of course is 'ORTUGU' and should be pronounced OR-Too-Goo. Hopefully the players would have noted this from the statue of the rat god in room 5.

*[Referee's Note: If you think it's time for another fight, let the Guardian be unimpressed with the delver's pronunciation of the rat god's name. If they need a break and did make a note of the name, let them through however they say it.]*

If the delvers name the god correctly, the Guardian merges with the door once more and it swings open.

If they get the name wrong or try to bluff their way through, the Guardian attacks, with lightning speed! If he is subsequently defeated, his body crumbles to dust at the delver's feet. A moment later a ghostly breeze gathers the dust and reassembles the relief design on the door, which then swings open.

### The Guardian (guardian rat spirit): FR 14

#### *Inside the Room.*

The room is decorated with wheat coloured tiles and well lit by oil lanterns. The floor is a detailed mosaic showing the rat god's many forms; a field mouse chewing an ear of corn, a black and oily sewer rat floating in a dark stream, an armoured rat man gladiator with a bloody sword and a bloated, disease plague rat.

*[Referee's Note: Make a mental note of how the players respond to your descriptions of the rat god's forms. If any of the players react particularly to one image or another that is how the rat god will appear to them in room 16.]*

### Exits

- A stone door in the north wall leading back to room 12.
- A rough cut tunnel in the east wall (room 18).
- Two identical bronze doors in the south wall leading to rooms 16 and 17.

### ROOM 16: THE CHAMBER OF THE RAT GOD

This is a well-lit opulently appointed room. The wheat-tile and mosaic theme from room 15 continues here and is complemented by well stuffed sofas, low tables bearing fruits, grain and raw meat. At the rear of the room, the rat god reclines on a long leather chaise-lounge next to a large oak chest bound in iron. He is not entirely surprised that he has been discovered but not too happy about it either.

His form is determined by the players and how they reacted to his various images depicted in the mosaic. If there was no definitive reaction, the rat god assumes his favourite guise – the bloated plague rat; over six-foot long and something of a *Jabba the Rat*!

Ortugu currently has a power rating of 439 (+1 for each idol the characters may have taken). Fortunately for the PCs he does not actually 'exist' on the mortal plane... Yet. If Ortugu can get enough people to believe in, or worship him (initially by taking possession of one of his jade idols) he will be able to manifest in the real world. He needs at least 1,000 points to manifest and each idol adopted adds one point to his rating.

If the PCs attack the rat god, their weapons and spells have completely no effect (he's not really there, although it appears to the characters that they are attacking something real and solid) and he waves their blows away like annoying flies. However, if they talk to him he will reveal something of his plan while he takes the time to summon his rat champion.

*'So, you have found me! Have you so little in your world that you must seek out the god of rats and defile his sacred places?'*

*'My power has waned since ancient times but it will rise again.'*

*'You will see the face of Ortugu in many places now, smiling back at you with jade fangs. As my image multiplies, my power grows. Soon my might will return to its peak and my army shall be legion!'*

He will enter into a brief discourse with the characters but as soon as he grows bored of them he will summon his Champion. He claps his paws and a mighty rat-warrior appears.

'Kill the foul spawn of the over-worlders!' Shouts Ortugu and stabs a claw in the direction of the adventurers.

The champion is a huge rat monster towering 3 metres high and covered in great slabs of muscle. He wears gladiator-style armour and carries a short sword in each paw. He attacks immediately.

**Bloodsplat the Gladiator Rat: FR 12** (able to wound 2 characters each turn)

During the battle, Ortugu will shout encouragement to his champion, throw insults at the adventurers and clap his paws like a true sports fan! *'Kill them. Bloodsplat, kill them all!'*

After the battle (assuming the heroes win), Ortugu's look of dismay will turn to horror as he starts to fade away. Summoning Bloodsplat reduced his power by 60 points, dropping it below 400. He no longer has sufficient energy to project an image on the mortal plane and vanishes with a cry of anguish!

With Ortugu gone, the ratmen will slowly return to their woodland homes. Ombur will remain however and await his god's return – which is inevitable unless the delvers ensure all of the jade idols are destroyed which is neigh-on impossible.

But for now, the rat god is defeated and the character's mission is over. Mel is true to his word and will hand over Snake Bite to the party and offer them free board at the Trove until they are fit to travel again.

Give each surviving character 1 extra experience point for completing their inaugural adventure.

### **The Treasure Chest!**

Ortugu's mighty chest is of course locked *and* trapped! A DL 10 roll reveals that there is some kind of trap on

the lock. To safely disarm the trap a hero must make a DL 11 roll.

If the roll fails a purple light shoots out from the chest and engulfs the thief. There is no apparent effect but within (1d6 + 6) hours the character will start to grow a hairless rat tail! The tail can be disguised but if revealed will subtract 1 point from any attempts to interact with or influence normal folks but adds +2 points if dealing with followers of the Rat God.

Once the trap is out of the way, a DL 11 roll will see the chest opened. Inside are many goodies that have been offered as tribute to the rat god over the years.

1. An ornamental black wooden box (worth 10 silvers) containing 4 gauze-wrapped rubies of a similar size to those in the bronze statue and worth 80 silvers each.
2. A bow and a leather case containing 12 arrows. The bow always scores 1 extra hit against cats and other feline-type critters.
3. A black draw-string bag. It's a fabled *Bag of Holding*. Any item may be placed in the bag provided it weighs less than 20 kilograms. There is no limit to what the bag can hold other than this one restriction.
4. A leather satchel containing 3d6 x 20 silvers.
5. A plain ivory Ring of Fortitude which adds one point to the wearer's dice rolls for the purposes of making poison or disease resistance rolls.
6. Assorted gold and silver jewellery amounting to 160 silvers.
7. A magic sword that adds +1 to combat dice rolls when wielded by a rogue with 2 or fewer magic points. Treat the weapon as a normal sword when wielded by warriors or wizards.
8. A potion of Enhanced Restoration. This clear glass bottle contains a fiery red liquid. If consumed, the imbiber's magic points (all colours) are instantly restored to its maximum value.

### **Exits**

- The bronze door to the north leading to room 15.

### **ROOM 17: THE CHAMBER OF THE FALSE GOD**

Beyond the plain heavy bronze door lies a dank unlit dungeon cell. The odd shape of the room results in the formation of deep shadows as the heroes light the way. Rivulets of water run down the walls and moss patches can be seen here and there. From the far south-east corner can be heard a faint cry of: 'Help me...' the voice sounds like a young, somewhat *squeaky* human female.



As the characters approach they will see a tiny rat huddled in the corner. It raises a paw, it looks wounded. 'Help me.'

If the PCs attack the tiny rat (shame on them) it vanishes and iron bars drop from the ceiling, near the door, blocking the exit. Characters near the door must make a DL 7 roll to avoid being hit by the bars and taking a hit. The referee must decide whether the character is inside or outside of the room...

If the PCs get close enough to touch or speak to the rat it looks up with big baleful eyes then grins evilly: "Welcome to your doom, foolish mortals!"

Then the bars descend as described above and the rat vanishes!

At least some and possibly all of the delvers are now trapped in this room. It would take a roll of 18 or more to raise the bars now blocking the exit and it is impossible to tunnel out of the room or knock down a wall without construction (or destruction) equipment.

A search of the area will reveal a series of loose cube shaped stones in the south wall. The stones cannot be removed but can be rearranged by sliding them up and down or left and right. The faces of several of the stones are marked with a letter of the common alphabet as follows:

### **M E L T U T E O**

Of course, the stone cubes can be rearranged to read 'let me out'. A blank stone must be placed between

each word and at the beginning and end of the phrase. Once this is done, the bars rise into the ceiling and the characters are free to leave. The rat god isn't that smart so his cunning puzzles are somewhat limited!

*[Referee's Note: This easy puzzle isn't intended to baffle the characters or the players, it's simply here as an example of the kind of things that new adventurers may encounter in their dungeon-exploring careers. The puzzle can be presented to the players easily by preparing squares of paper with the appropriate letters printed on them before the game begins.]*

### **Exits**

- The bronze door to the north leading to room 15.

### **ROOM 18: THE LONG PASSAGE**

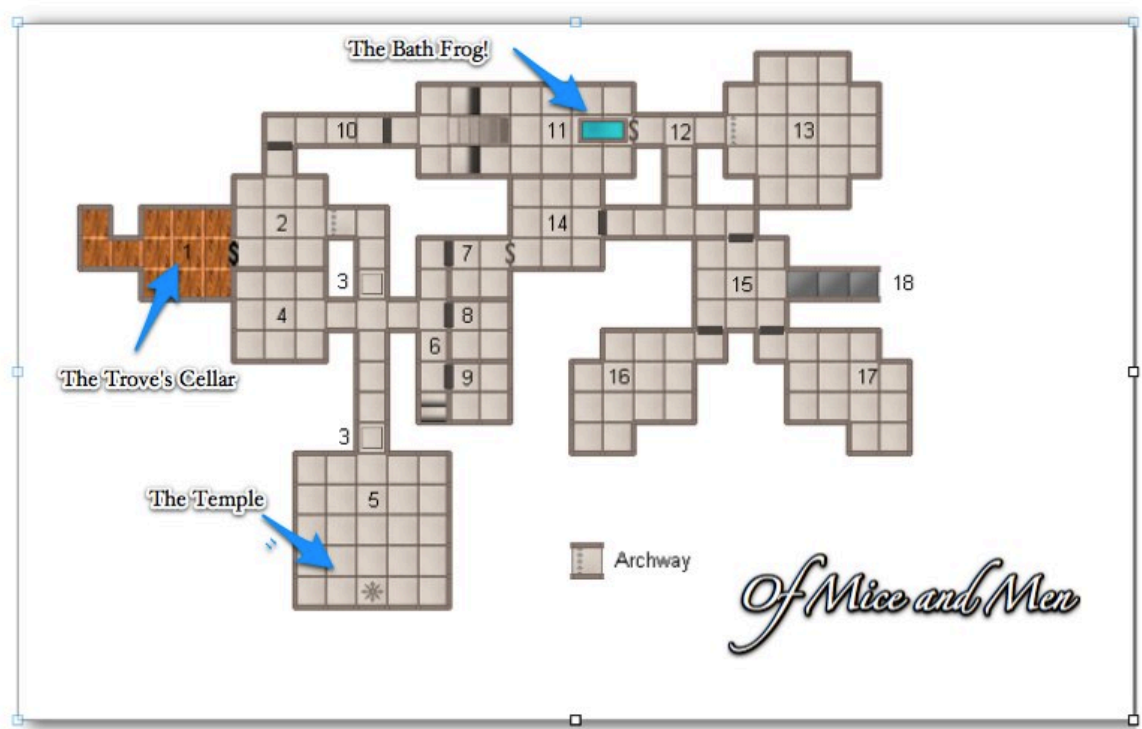
Roll one die, on a roll of 1 to 4 randomly select a critter to be wandering down the tunnel as the characters are about to explore. On a roll of 5 or 6, a piece of loot may be found with a successful DL 7 roll. Use the Found Item table to determine what the heroes have located.

A rough hewn passage extends into the darkness. It runs for more than two miles before emerging in a damp hollow in the woods. This is how the rat men move to and from their lair, delivering the idols to unsuspecting recipients.

### **Exits**

- The tunnel to the East leads to the woodlands beyond the settlement.
- The West-end of the tunnel terminates at room 15.

Dungeon Map



## Found Items

Roll 2 dice and consult the following table. Each item is unique and can only be *found* once. If a roll indicates the same item a second time, then no item is located.

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 2  | A discarded empty coin purse.  |
| 3  | *A single, green leather boot of elfin origin (it's the left boot), very nice but not much good on its own.  |
| 4  | A broad-brimmed black hat with a peacock feather stuck in the hat-band   |
| 5  | A battered but serviceable shield bearing the image of a ram's head.   |
| 6  | A heavy iron key. At the referee's discretion it may open a door in this dungeon or another location of his or her choosing.   |
| 7  | A hand full of grimy silver coins (roll 2 dice to determine the number of coins).  |
| 8  | A well crafted sword with a snake skin scabbard (worth 150 silvers as a set)<br>A thick leather belt set with bronze studs and a very impressive lion's head motif on the buckle. This is the  |
| 9  | Belt of Courage. Any character wearing the belt gains +1 to any roll involving courage or avoiding the effects of fear.  |
| 10 | A dented iron ring set with a small emerald. It is one of the 8 'Mind Rings' and the wearer may add one point to their grey magic point total while the ring is worn. Note this magic item only functions for characters that already have 1 or more magic points.   |
| 11 | A yellowed skeleton lies in a far corner with a javelin sticking out of its rib cage. The javelin is the much feared and greatly cursed 'Fool-maker'. When thrown it turns about in mid flight striking the thrower. In effect, Fool-maker causes one hit of damage to the thrower each time a combat dice roll is made. |
| 12 | *A single, green leather boot of elfin origin (it's the right boot), very nice but not much good on its own.   |

\*If both boots can be located, the wearer will enjoy +1 to stealth related rolls.

## Encountered Monsters

Roll 2 dice and consult the following table. Each monster may only be encountered once. If a roll indicates the same entry a second time, treat the result as 'no encounter.'

2	A fat centipede slithers out of the wall; it's as large as a human forearm. Anyone suffering damage from the creature must make a DL 8 roll or take a further hit from poison. <b>FR 8</b>
3	Pack rats. A swarm of rats pour out of holes in the walls and floors. They attack as a <i>group</i> . <b>FR 7 (group)</b>
4	An animated skeleton. This mindless thing creaks out of the shadows to attack. It was once sacrificed to the rat god and the rising power of Ortugu has brought it back from the earth. <b>FR 8</b>
5	Ratchet the goblin (he's been sent to look for Hobnail). Ratchet uses a small bow in combat <b>FR 7</b> (attack from a distance)
6	The heroes notice a near mummified rat man in the corridor. It's tightly wrapped in spider webbing. The body is desiccated and has no possessions.
7	3 feisty rat men attack from the shadows. <b>FR 6</b>
8*	A flea infested rat man corpse. With the exception of an old leather purse containing 3 silvers all possessions have been picked from the body. Anyone searching the corpse must make a DL 9 roll to avoid contracting Corpse Itch (see below).
9	A loose block of stone falls from the ceiling. Randomly choose half of the heroes present and request a DL 7 roll to avoid the falling debris. Failure results in a loss of one hit. It's not possible to tell whether someone set off a trap or it was a <i>natural</i> event.
10	Baby Bath Frog! A fat dog-sized frog hops around the corner. Each round of combat it will use its tongue to steal one item from a random character whenever the player rolls 2, 3, 4 or 5. <b>FR 8</b>
11	Rat Pig. It's the size of a wild boar – as giant rats go, this one's a biggie. <b>FR 12</b>
12	A huge troll has wandered into the dungeon from the woods above. <b>FR 12</b> (regenerates one hit each time a hero takes a hit)

\*Corpse Itch is a nasty rash that develops in the armpits and crotch. It causes extreme discomfort resulting in a penalty of -1 to any and all rolls for the duration of the disease. The standard duration is 2 to 12 days.

