

# Claw Marks



Adrius Flus





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He cast WHAT ?  
E Gartz

Five Magic Missiles a day please...  
E Gartz

Classified

## Claw Marks Credits

Out thanks to

- 1) The Claw Committee  
A Steele - Chair-THING  
G Embleton - Scriviner  
R Pruss - Holder of the purse strings  
J Hoffenberg - Guldmaster  
N Russman (Big Nick) - Warlord
- 2) A Strydom - Bushman Painter  
J Tiffen - Contributions  
W Lauden - Contributions  
E Gartz - Contributions  
R Beerman - Contributions

## Sage and Onion Advice

Greetings Claw-Things,

Welcome to the first edition of Clawmarks. The world famous magazine that started the 2012 AD Orc revolution and the only publication to surpass the 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy' in sales, but maybe I am getting ahead of myself. This is no Yeti Footprint It's Clawmarks a magazine for gamers of all shape, description, vice and alignment and it aims to be oozing black slime for a long, long time.

Now many people have been worried by the world shattering, karma breaking, down right weird question "What is CLAWS?". Claws is a UCT society aim to bring all the various game players on campus together. Claws provides a variety of services to the aspirant gamer such as organizing tournaments, providing venues, magazines, parties, help meet other players, groups form and circulating new ideas in the world of gaming. Claws currently runs regular lunchtime games of Diplomacy and Civilization. These regular games will increase with the coming new room as then we can leave the games set up on campus. Claws also subscribes to Dragon Magazine and these are available to be read, as is other material.

On a more serious note, there has been a lot of sensationalistic journalism in the last few months on the "evils of role playing games". Anybody who has played in a fantasy role-playing game knows that there are no "Satanistic Rituals" or great introductions to the occult. I would like to level the reverse accusation at these so called journalists and that is that we know how to differentiate between our fantasy and reality, something they have not mastered yet.

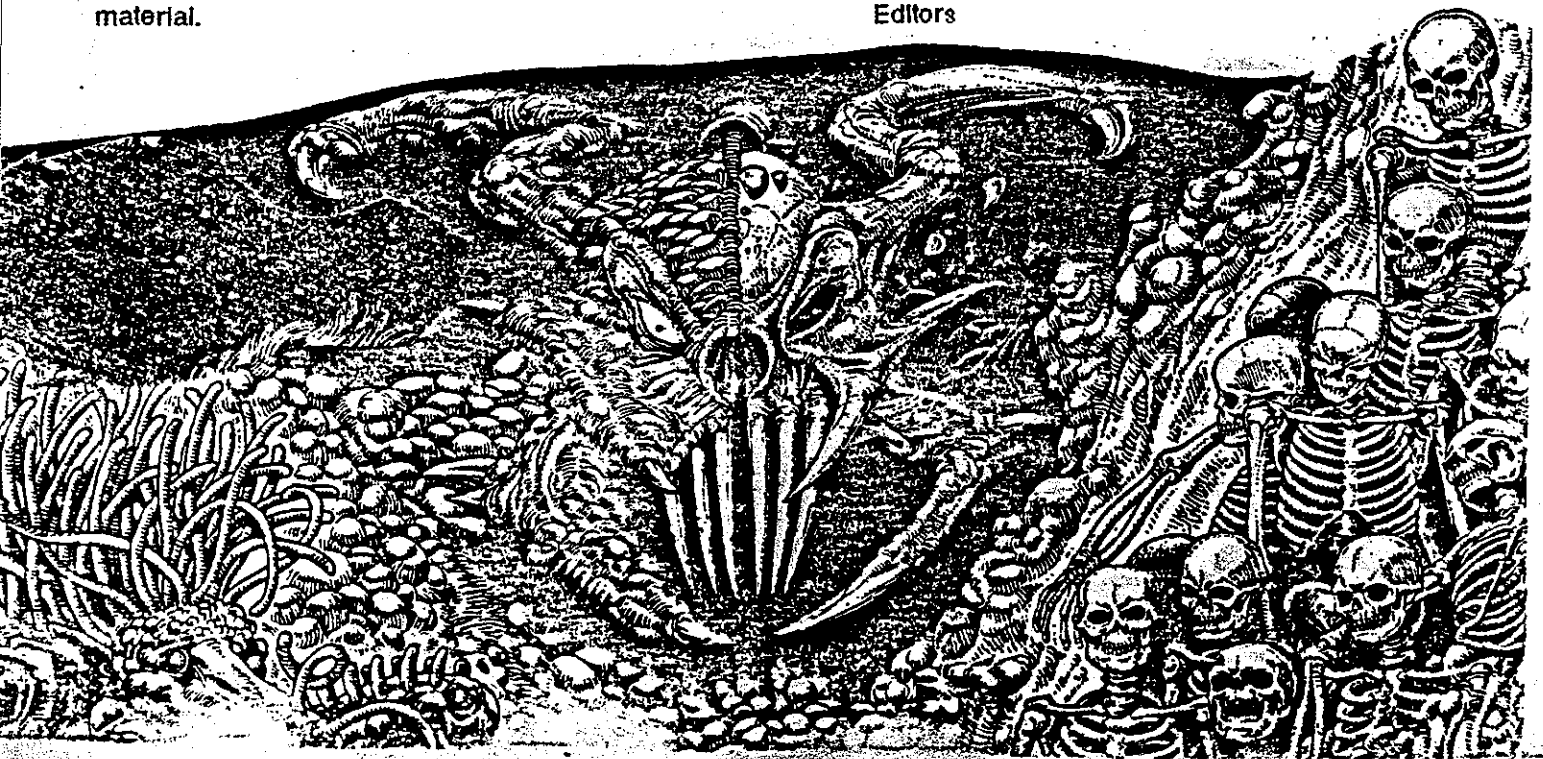
Thanks to all deviants who contributed the : letters, articles, classified ads, artwork and most importantly time, that made this and future magazines possible.

Yours Sincerely

Richard

Giles

Editors



# LETTERS

Dear Editor

I write for all non- or semi- D&D players who are fortunate ( ? ) enough to to be involved (!) - romantically or otherwise , with an esteemed member of the most sacred institution of the C.L.A.W. committee . Beware - this is my warning - are you prepared for endless nights of battlecries , pacts made and broken , blood & guts & gore ? Round upon round of coffee for countless numbers of Halflings , Wizards , Barbarians , Thieves , Necromancers ? - not the sort of people to take home to meet the folks !! And finally , the cleaning up during the early hours of the morning , when suddenly everyone decided that maybe sleep would be a good idea , and vanished before " who would like to wash up " is halfway out your mouth : If you're already coping with this , or psychologically prepared for this - could you tell me your secret ??? If not , come and commiserate with me !!

Yours ,  
Flagging Energy.

Dear Flagging Energy :  
If you can't stand the heat , leave the kitchen - or else !

Dear Sir

HELP! due to an unwise choice of cards I have been in the void for the last 15 months . My player does not seem concerned . In fact he has even started another character . What can I do ?

Yours Sincerely  
TRAPPED

Dear TRAPPED :  
You should have known better . But never fear , things could be worse . You might have been forced to listen to Kyle Minogue while in there .

Dear Sir

My D20 never rolls 20's ! What should I do ? All my family are dying out .

Yours Sincerely  
Thud XXIV

Dear Thud :

You have several choices :  
1) Buy a new D20 at vast cost from Wolf ( 10% off ) .  
2) Use the pizza trick : stick half-eaten pizza on one side , to weigh  
it down  
3) Use 5D4

Dear Sir ,  
Along with Liewe Hexie and the Gummi Bears , your magazine is one of the most evil influences on our campus . You must mend your Satanistic ways . i will warn all concerned mothers to guard their unsuspecting children .

yours Sincerely  
Mrs. Grundy

Dear Mrs Grundy :  
Thanks , we will remember you at the next meeting of N.A.C.O.T. ( Narrowminded and Conservative Old Twats )

Dear Editor (clawthing)

I like Clawmarks , I like Claw and you are all doing a fantastic job .

Thanks  
Clawmember

Dear Clawmember  
-Great ! ( Who says we don't write to ourselves ? )

Dear Sir  
I am a lonely female player ( blonde hair , blue eyes , 5'7" , 36' 24' 36 " ) looking for a good time . please help .

Yours \*\*\*\*\*  
( Name and address withheld )  
Editors

Dear Editor

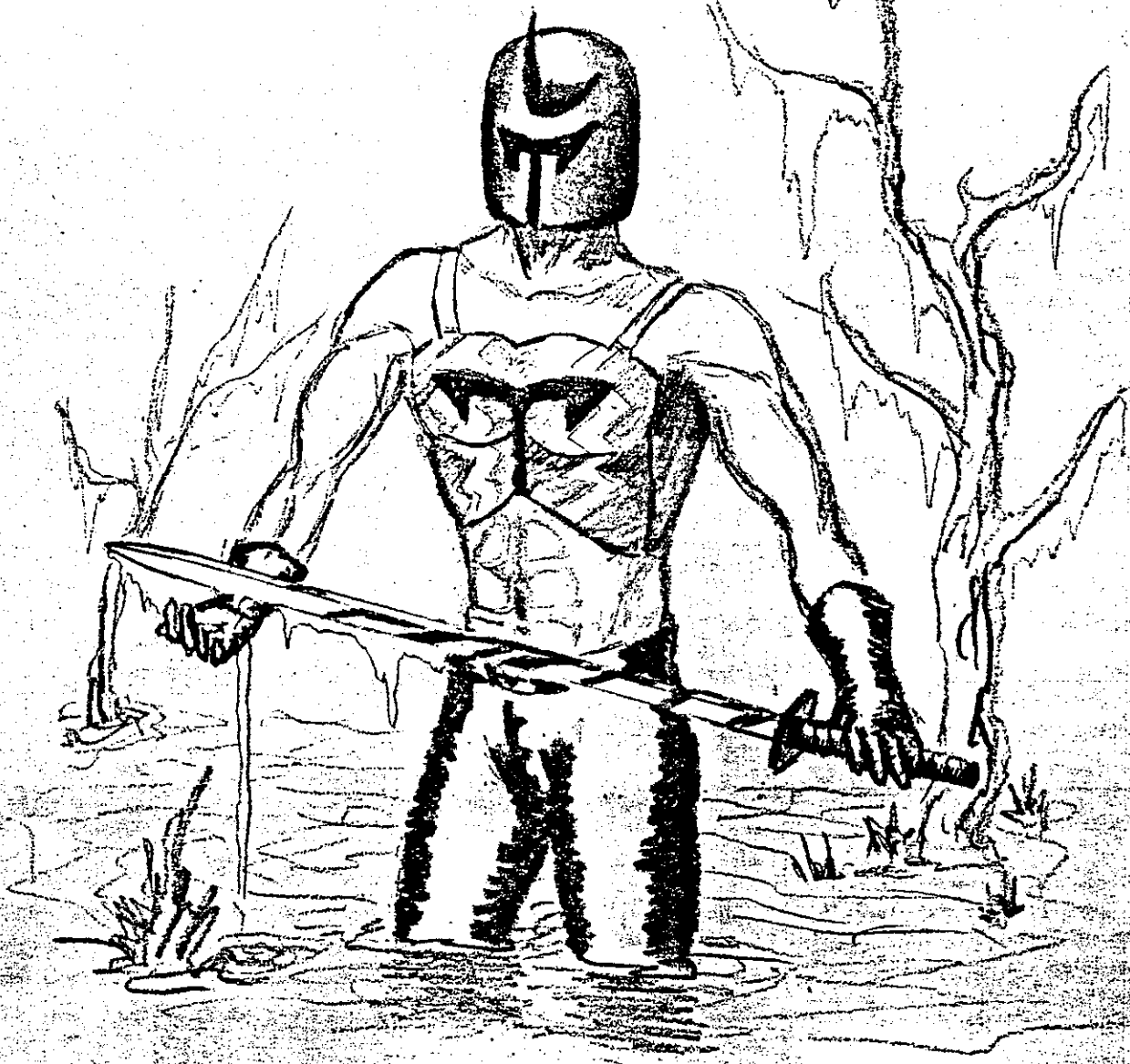
I am now on campus and would like to join a campaign . I have played D&D , A.D&D etc.

Yours sincerely

.....  
We have had many such letters . If you wish to form a group , join a group or get to know others , contact Jonathan at Rosebank Res.







# The Weapons Master

"There he is, a silly lone traveller in our terri. terrio. I mean land! And aha! he has GOLD! We of the Spikebone Orcs is brave and mighty, and send all suckers on our land down to hell (after taking their stuff, naturally). Of course, I's just a little old scout, so I just zip me off to our cave and get the other twelve to wipe that guy out.

The others won't believe me. 'What?' says Grool, our captain. 'No idiot'd travel alone, with GOLD, and only just merely with a lil' pig-sticker an' two nitty-witty useless lil' daggers!' Grool always speaks like that, thinking himself is a great inte. intel. I mean clever guy.

Anyway, me finally get to conv. covi. I mean get 'em to believe me, and us crawl down to the guy. And there he still lies, curled up like he has no worries in the world! 'Course, he wears black leather and has a nice lung sword (which Grool will probly take fer hisself), but us is five.. no, I mean nine.. what the heck, us is enough! An so us jump him.

I stays back. I's no great fighter, and some guy must keep watch, eh? I sees that Grool is first on him. An' he lands flat on him face as that guy just rolls away lazy-like-you-like and chops Grool with his bare hand. Well if Grool don't live, some other guy'll get the sword.

Anyhow, I sees that Druz and Mith are suddenly down as well, squirting blood all over the show, and that guy now has his bloody sword an' a dagger in his hands. I thinks I better stay far back and keep good good watch.

An' I see this guy just rolling away from Bork's axe like he is having fun, and slicing up Bork into quarters like he was lightning hisself. Well that don't matter, me never liked Bork that much.

Hey this is going BAD, me real. reli. I mean see, real sudden like.

De other Spikebones can't even get near that bloody guy, an' he just cuts them to pieces like they're pigs on a butcher's slab!

Oops! There goes the last of the Spikeys! That means ME is captain now! An I gets all the treasure of Grool! Just lemme get back to the cave. An' hopes I can run faaaaaaastttttt....."

The Weapons Master is an extremely specialized fighter practising a highly focused discipline with complex training, giving them excellent attack abilities, as well as certain acrobatic skills. Weapons Masters travel throughout the lands, their only desire the refinement of their fighting skills until they are unparalleled.

The Weapons Master is a Fighter Subclass, but the main requirement is Dexterity, not Strength. A Weapons Master relies on his speed to catch opponents off-guard, and is quick rather than strong. Thus, he does not gain percentile Strength, but receives additional "to hit" and damage bonuses for Dexterity.

A character wishing to become a Weapons Master must first find a Master to teach him, which mostly presents some difficulty, since no Master stays in one place for long. All known Weapons Masters are men, but this does not prohibit women from entering the class.

After a Master has been found, the character is taught the basics of the skill. Up to 7th Level, the character has to be trained by his mentor (only his; no other Weapons Master would train him unless the circumstances were exceptional). At 7th Level, the character is deemed ready to learn on his own. Thereafter, the character does not need to be trained but gains the experience through his travels. When a new level is reached, a certain amount of time is required to refine old skills and train in new ones.

## Basic Characteristics

Alignment: A Weapons Master may be of any non-Lawful alignment, though most will be Chaotic.

Minimum Statistics: Strength 12, Intelligence 9, Dexterity 15, Constitution 12 are required. A Weapons Master with 16 or above in Strength and 17 or above in Dexterity gains a 10% bonus on earned experience points.

Races and Multi-Classes: A Weapons Master may be Human, Half-Elf, Elf (High, Grey, Wild, Dark), or Half-Orc. A Weapons Master cannot be multi-classed.

Saves and Magic: Weapons Masters save as Fighters of the same Level, but with a +1 on any save where the speed of reaction is of importance (eg diving aside from a Lightning Bolt).

Any magical items permitted to Fighters can be used by Weapons Masters. However, a Weapons Master will not use potions such as Heroism, Super Heroism etc to gain an advantage during combat, since this would mean he lacks skill. Neither will a Weapons Master use a Stoneskin spell to protect him, or an Invisibility spell to sneak up on opponents.

There is no limit on the number of items a Weapons Master may carry with him.

Hit Dice: Since a Weapons Master is not a simple head-basher as the Fighter is, he gains slightly less hit points per level, although the average is the same, and he later gains more. For every level up to and including the 9th,  $d8 + 1$  hit points (plus constitution bonus) are gained.

After 9th Level, 4 hp per level are gained, except when Levels 12 and 16 are reached, at which time another  $d8+1$  hp are gained (plus constitution bonus).

The large overall number of hit points is due to the stamina and the ability of the Weapons Master to twist aside from blows, thus taking relatively less damage.

**Percentile Dexterity:** Instead of percentile Strength, a Weapons Master gains percentile Dexterity, which can be increased in the same way as Cavaliers may increase their abilities, ie a percentile score is created at 1st Level, and every Level thereafter up to 12th Level, 2d10 are added to this score. If this increases to above 100, the hundred is discarded and the main score is increased by 1, eg 16/102 becomes 17/02. Dexterity can never be increased beyond 18/00 in this way. Percentile Dexterity will not make a difference until 18 DEX has been reached.

### Followers

At 9th Level, a Weapons Master may begin to train others, but never more than three students at a time, and mostly only one is taken. Although a Weapons Master will never have henchmen, and only very seldom will have hirelings, his students will serve him faithfully.

### Combat

**Armour:** Weapons Masters can use any type of armour, but usually will not wear anything bulkier than Chain Mail, since this hinders their movement too much. Ideally, they will wear no armour but will rely on magical protection. Shields will not be used since they are in the way too much.

**Weapons:** A Weapons Master can be proficient in but five weapons: Longsword, Shortsword, Staff, Dagger, and Throwing Dagger. He is not able to specialize as a Fighter does. At high levels, however, a Weapons Master is able to use nearly any type of weapon without penalty. A Weapons Master will prefer melee to missile combat.

**Proficiencies:** The initial number of weapon proficiencies is two. An additional proficiency is gained every

four levels thereafter. The non-proficiency penalty is -2.

Non-weapon proficiencies will be initially one, and an additional one is gained every five levels thereafter. This low rate is due to the fact that a Weapons Master has to spend most of his time training with his weapons. A Weapons Master can never take up a craft such as smith etc.

**Melee:** Weapons Masters attack on the same table as Fighters. They will not use oil, and poison may be used only by Evil Weapons Masters. Due to their special training, Weapons Masters can attack more often than Fighters:

LEVEL	" ATTACKS/ROUND
1-3	1/1
4-7	3/2
8-11	2/1
12-15	5/2
16 and up	3/1

In Unarmed Combat, Weapons Masters fight as Monks of half their Level, up to a maximum equivalent of 10th Level Monk, but they gain none of the special abilities of Monks except for stunning or killing opponents with bare hands.

Weapons Masters cannot specialize as Fighters do, but for weapons of proficiency their Dexterity gives them a bonus to their hit roll and to the damage done. This bonus is in addition to all other bonuses, including those for Strength, but does not enable a Weapons Master to hit creatures which would normally only be harmed by magical weapons.

These Dexterity bonuses are gained only if the Weapons Master is proficient in a weapon (Staff, Longsword, Shortsword, Dagger, Throwing Dagger).

**Dual Weapon Combat:** Weapons Masters may attack with one weapon in each hand at a penalty of -3/-1 (secondary/primary) instead of -4/-2. Both primary and secondary weapons must be ones the Weapons Master is proficient in, otherwise the penalties are as normal (-4/-2). In addition, the secondary weapon must be either a Dagger, Throwing Dagger, or Shortsword.

Dexterity adjustment for dual weapon combat are as follows:

DEX	HIT ADJUSTMENT
15	-3/-1
16	-2/-1
17	-1/0
18/01-18/35	-1/0
18/36-18/70	0/+1
18/71-18/90	+1/+1
18/91-18/99	+1/+2
18/00	+2/+2
19 up	+2/+3

"To Hit" bonuses for Strength or Dexterity (as given later) are not counted if a Weapons Master fights with two weapons, but damage is normal.

At 7th Level, a Weapon Master with Dagger Proficiency also has the possibility of throwing two daggers at the same time (one from each hand). Thus, a Weapon Master is able to throw four daggers per round instead of only two (since throwing rate for a dagger is two per round). The 'to hit' chance is calculated as if he were using a weapon in both hands, with the usual penalties for distance. At 11th Level, a Weapons Master may throw six daggers per round, and at 15th Level, eight daggers may be thrown in a single round. Note that this many daggers can only be thrown within one round if they can be readily grasped. Thus, if the Weapons Master has eight daggers in the backpack, this will not help much, but if they are laid out on the ground in front of him, he can throw them nearly as fast as he can pick them up.

**Parrying:** If two weapons are used, the Weapons Master can opt to use the secondary weapon as a parrying device, in which case the AC is lowered by 1 for attacks from the left and front only (or front and right if the character is left-handed).

If the attacker's hit roll comes within 1 of hitting the Weapons Master, ie would have hit had he not parried, the blow is assumed to have been halted with the secondary weapon. In cases where the attacker is not using weapons, eg Monks with open hand etc, the Weapons Master may make a hit roll, and if the unadjusted num-



ber indicates a hit, the secondary weapon does half damage on the opponent (no bonus for Strength or Dexterity, but magic is counted).

### Weapon Skills

At 5th Level, a Weapons Master may use any sword-type weapon at no penalty. Sword-type weapons are Dagger, Knife, Scimitar, Bastard Sword, Broadsword, Falchion Sword, Khopesh Sword, Longsword, Shortsword, Two-handed Sword, and all other related swords.

At 7th Level, a Weapons Master may use any staff-like and axe-like weapon at no penalty. These weapons are Bo Stick, Ju Stick, Staff, Battleaxe, Hand Axe, and Baidiche.

At 9th Level, a Weapons Master may use any mace-type weapon at no penalties. These weapons include Club, Flail, Hammer, Mace, and Morning Star.

At 11th Level, a Weapons Master may use any spear-type and missile weapons at no penalty. These weapons are Javelin, Lance, Partisan, Ransour, Spear, Spetum, Trident, Blowgun, Dart, Crossbow, Bow, Sling, and Staff Sling.

At 13th Level, a Weapons Master may use any pole-arm without penalty. Pole-arms are Bec-de-Corbin, Bill GUISARME, Fauchard, Fauchard hook, Glaive, Glaive GUISARME, GUISARME, GUISARME-Voulge, Halberd, Hook Fauchard, Man Catcher, Pike, Saw Pike, and Voulge.

At 16th Level, a Weapons Master is able to handle any other weapons at no penalty provided 1-4 months of intensive training with the new weapon are undergone.

### Special Skills

In his travels, a Weapons Master picks up certain skills similar to those of a Thief-Acrobat. A Weapons Master uses these skills in combat, however, not for burglary.

#### Description of Skills

**Vaulting** is similar to the Thief-Acrobat's Jumping and Tumbling manoeuvres. It enables the Weapons Master to dodge/roll aside from missiles and blows, or to vault over sweeping blades etc (see Reaction). Note that it would be nearly impossible for a Weapons Master to vault over a Giant's head, but it will be easier to duck beneath a Giant's blow than beneath a Goblin's. In such cases, the DM has to make the necessary adjustments. Dodging or rolling aside from blows can only be done if the Weapons Master wins the initiative.

**Stealth** is basically the same as the Thief's 'Move Silently', and is the Weapons Master's chance of 'creeping up' on an opponent and taking him unaware.

**Balancing** skill enables the Weapons Master to fight in places such as narrow ledges, windowsills etc. If there is a situation in which a character would normally fall, the Weapons Master may make a Balancing Check, and if this is passed, he retains his balance.

Balancing also gives the Weapons Master the ability to walk tightropes as a Thief-Acrobat does, but at a 20% chance. Encumbrance factors are calculated as for a Thief-Acrobat.

**Reaction** is the speed with which a Weapons Master can analyze a certain situation and act thereon. For example, if a Weapons Master sees a missile coming, he may check his Reaction Speed, and if successful, attempt to dodge the missile by making a Vaulting Check. The same principle applies to blows, which can be evaded by twisting or ducking.

Note that if the d% roll is within 20% of the maximum for success, half damage is still taken (indicating a partially successful manoeuvre).

When a character becomes a Weapons Master, 4d12 are rolled. These points may be distributed amongst the skills as the character wishes, but never more than 12 on one skill. To this are added the adjustments for Race and Dexterity, and the results are the percentages chance of success in the various abilities.

For every Level up to 12th that a Weapons Master achieves, another 4d10 are rolled, and these points may be added to the skills, but never more than 10 points per skill at a time.

Effects of Laziness on Abilities: If a Weapons Master does not continually train in his skills, he will slowly lose some of his abilities. A life of laziness will soon begin to tell on the Weapons Master.

After one month of living in comfort, the Weapons Master will lose 2% per week from each of his skills. After four weeks, this will increase to 5% per week, so that after a few weeks of lazy life, a Weapons Master will have no skills left. Note that the percentages can never be lowered below the adjustments for Race and Dexterity.

If a Weapons Master loses his skill and then begins to train again, he will require one week of hard training to restore 1% to one of his skills. The score can of course never be raised above the previous maximum. Since this training is very slow, it will take the Weapons Master a long time to regain his skills.

Effects of Armour on Abilities: If any armour but Leather is worn, certain penalties apply to the success chances of a Weapons Master's skills. If Banded, Splint, or Plate Mail is worn, Stealth, Balancing, and Vaulting Abilities cannot be used, and Reaction is reduced by 1% per 10 pounds of encumbrance of the armour, eg Plate Mail has an encumbrance of 450, thus Reaction is reduced by 45%.

Elfin Chain Mail is considered equal to Studded Leather. Magical Armour is typically considered one class better than its non-magical counterpart, but never better than Padded Armour. Eg Ring Mail +1 is considered as Studded Leather, but Padded Armour +1 is still taken as Padded Armour.

Magical protection devices such as Cloaks of Protection or similar bulky items are counted as Padded Armour due to their encumbrance factor.

#### Ability Adjustments for Race

SKILL	HALF-ELF	WILD ELF	OTHER ELF	HALF-ORC
Stealth	-	+8%	+5%	-5%
Balancing	+5%	+5%	+5%	-
Vaulting	-5%	-12%	-10%	+3%
Reaction	-	-1%	-	+2%

#### Ability Adjustments for Armour Worn

ARMOUR	STEALTH	BALANCE	VAULTING	REACTION
No Armour	+5%	+4%	+6%	+6%
Padded Armour	-5%	-7%	-8%	-4%
Studded Leather	-10%	-12%	-15%	-9%
Ring / Scale Mail	-15%	-17%	-22%	-14%
Chain Mail	-20%	-23%	-29%	-19%

## Dexterity Adjustments for Weapons Masters

DEXTERITY	HIT	DMS	DEF	STEALTH	BALANCE	VAULT	REACTION
16	-	-	-2	-	-	-	-
17	-	+1	-3	-	+5%	+1%	+3%
18/01-135	+1	+2	-4	+4%	+10%	+5%	+7%
18/36-170	+2	+3	-5	+6%	+13%	+7%	+10%
18/71-190	+2	+4	-6	+8%	+16%	+9%	+13%
18/91-199	+3	+5	-7	+10%	+19%	+12%	+16%
18/00	+3	+6	-8	+13%	+22%	+15%	+20%
19	+4	+7	-9	+16%	+25%	+19%	+25%
20 up	+4	+8	-10	+20%	+30%	+23%	+30%

Note that these Dexterity Adjustments are valid for Weapons Masters only, ie a Cavalier with percentile Dexterity or a character with 19 DEX will not gain these bonuses to AC etc.

## Level Limits for Non-human Weapons Masters

DEXTERITY	DARK ELF	HIGH/GREY ELF	WILD ELF	½-ELF	½-ORC
15	8	5	7	5	6
16	8	5	7	6	7
17	10	6	8	6	8
18/01	11	6	9	7	9
18/36	12	7	9	7	9(1)
18/71	13	7(1)	10	8	10(2)
18/91	14	8(2)	11(1)	9(1)	10(2)
18/00	15(2)	9(2)	11(1)	10(2)	11(3)
19	15(2)	9(3)	12(2)	11(3)	13(4)
20 up	15(2)	10(3)	14(3)	12(4)	15(4)

(1) 16 Strength also required

(2) 17 Strength also required

(3) 18 Strength also required

(4) 19 Strength also required

## Weapons Master Experience Point Table

LEVEL	XP NEEDED	d8	GAINED	TITLE
1	0	1+1	d8+1	Probationer (1st)
2	4001	2+2	d8+1	Probationer (2nd)
3	8001	3+3	d8+1	Probationer (3rd)
4	16001	4+4	d8+1	Initiate Combatant
5	35001	5+5	d8+1	Lesser Combatant
6	70001	6+6	d8+1	Junior Combatant
7	150001	7+7	d8+1	Prime Combatant
8	300001	8+8	d8+1	Senior Combatant
9	600001	9+9	d8+1	Expert Combatant
10	1050001	9+13	+4	Master Combatant
11	1500001	9+17	+4	Weapons Expert
12	1950001	10+18	d8+1	Weapons Master
13	2400001	10+22	+4	Weapons Master (13th)
14	2850001	10+26	+4	Weapons Master (14th)
15	3300001	10+30	+4	Weapons Master (15th)
16	3750001	11+31	d8+1	Grand Weapons Master
17	4200001	11+35	+4	Grand Weapons Master (17th)
18	4650001	11+39	+4	Grand Weapons Master (18th)

450000 XP per Level are needed after 16th Level. 4 hp are gained per level after the 16th.



A. Strydom

# DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS - A GUIDE TO THE UNINITIATED

Many unfortunate victims introduced to D&D for the first time, find the terminology of play rather confusing. While confusion is a fairly normal state for a player, the condition can be alleviated to some extent if certain basic ideas are explained. A brief guide follows.....

## D.

The single most important letter in the alphabet. As in D&D, DM, DMG, DRINK (scratch that), etc. Also vital in key DM concepts such as Disaster, Death and Destruction, Deception, Domination and Doom.

## DM.

God. Alias the Dungeon Master. A small but well-supported school of thought holds that the letters actually stand for Devious Mind. There is much evidence in favour of this theory.

## DICE.

Small, many-sided malignant entities which conspire to land your character in the maximum amount of trouble of maximum destructiveness as often as possible. While some Dice are less dangerous than others, as a general Rule, the Player's First Principle of Survival can be applied: You probably won't! A further phenomenon has been noted: increase in the numbers you throw, is proportional to the likelihood that the character is about to die.

## DEVIOUS GRIN.

The very small, very quiet, very evil grin which can be observed on the DM's face just before he does something unspeakably horrible to:

- (a) you

- (b) your whole party
- (c) your whole world.

## The DMG effect.

A remarkable phenomenon which the thoughtful player will often observe. The DM's Girlfriend:

- (a) is always the most attractive member of the party
- (b) never fails a saving throw
- (c) always survives.

Scientists and psychologists are at a loss to account for this effect; players, however, have several theories on this subject.

## DEATH.

An artform perfected by Dungeon Masters all over the world (and other worlds). Usually preceded by monumental and completely futile efforts on the part of the character to survive at any cost. As a general rule, you can assume that DEATH will be attended by tearful suffering in proportion to the blamelessness for your character. This is known as "Lawful Good is Boring" effect.

## DIPLOMACY.

The small snowstorm of paper in which the DM habitually operates. Such secret communications from desperately cloak and dagger characters are usually incompetent, irrelevant, indecipherable and futile, anyway, under the Player's First Principle of Survival.

In actual fact, most players have a pretty fair idea of the situation, despite the M15 atmosphere. The storms of paper are mostly motivated by the futile hope that an irrelevant communication will distract the DM's attention from the 200ft Dragon/swarm of locusts/looming void which threatens the character at the time. This never works - see the Player's First Principle of Survival.

DMs do not appreciate, and tend to resent, futile distractions. Unless, of course, the DMG effect is in operation.

## DM POWER POLITICS.

A fascinating effect brought about by the social meetings of DMs who are players in each others campaigns. Conversations are carried out in some obscure 'DMs code', while veiled threats and information trades takes place. Players with super-high intelligence scores and a high armour class may possibly learn useful facts these Clash of the Titans encounters, but crossfire can be dangerous.

## DESPERATION.

An all-too-familiar feeling arising from too many attempts to communicate with the DM.

Trying to get any sort of information out of a DM is a more subtle form of banging your head against a brick wall. It isn't even nice when it stops.

## DOUBLES.

One of the more interesting and obscure internal phenomena off a campaign, dependant heavily upon male/female ratios in a group. Party unity is often disrupted by spading factors, and the issue may be further complicated if the DMG effect is operative (ie. he who spades the DM's girlfriend, dies horribly) On the other hand, the DOUBLE factor does tend to liven up proceedings considerably.

## DOUBT.

The usual state of mind of a player, carefully and malignantly fostered by the DM. Most DMs have a stock selection of doubt-inducing phrases, among which the following may be noted:



(1) "Do you really want to do that? Are you sure? Are you absolutely positive...?" etc.

These phrases may alternatively and arbitrarily be followed by (a) "OK, it worked", or (b) "OK, you're dead!"

(2) "You don't know..." (evil grin) in answer to the innocent query "Can I do this?"

(3) "I hope for your sake that you roll high"

(4) "Saving throws, everyone!" In conjunction with the Devious Grin, some DMs can turn this simple phrase into a masterpiece of sadistic art.

DOUBT frequently leads to DESPERATION - see above.

### THE LINGO

D&D players are much addicted to strange and mystical exclamations in moments of extreme stress - ie. through about 90% of the campaign. While most are short, sharp and unprintable, others are individual. A selection follows:

#### "WHOOPEE TWANG"

Anton

This strange yodelling utterance is characterised by complete meaninglessness. It is used with profound satirical effect, usually as a player's fifth character in 2 days slips slowly and irrevocably into the void.

Variations on the theme have been noted, among them "Whoopee Flapdoodle" and "Whoopee fiddles-ticks". Origins of the expression are unknown to linguistics.

#### "MULTIPLE EEK"

Bane

An exercise in masterly understatement, this exclamation replaces the more forceful expletives on occasions of low to medium danger which is suddenly revealed. Instances include the discovery of a vast army massed in your path, or the sudden failure of engine power in a winged steed several hundred feet up.

The restraint exercised in such exclamations operates with sarcastic force.

#### "OCCULT, OCCULT!"

Giles

A sarcastically motivated squeak applied to anything 'PERSONALITY' would disapprove of.

#### "YOG YOG SOTHOTH"

DT

An incantation to the god, usually inspired by the desire to overhear a secret conference while appearing not to (See DIPLOMACY).

This expression is a closely guarded secret, and must under no circumstances reach the ears of 'PERSONALITY' magazine.

#### "PUKETY - PUKE"

Anton

A reaction to any situation which falls below the DM normal of DEATH and DESTRUCTION. This is one of extreme cynicism, induced by the characteristic absence of sweetness and light from your average campaign.

### ALIGNMENT

Basically, alignment is what motivates the character you've trusted throughout the campaign to suddenly cast the entire party irretrievably into the void. The moral is sufficiently pointed, and gives rise to the Player's Second Principle of Survival: TRUST NOBODY, least of all the DM.

Some common Alignments:

#### CHAOTIC EVERYWHERE

Very common - the player continues to direct operations from 20 miles away/ the other side of a 20ft wall/ the void. The DM's favourite person.

#### CHAOTIC CHAOTIC

Otherwise known as chaotic disorganised.

A fair description of almost any party or campaign you care to mention.

#### LAWFUL STUPID

Closely related to lawful confused: rarely survives for very long. Lawful stupid characters are very open to manipulation, and tend to die performing quixotic actions engineered by a cynical party - eg. attacking a Kraken with a Swiss Army knife.

#### LAWFUL BORING

the backbone off the party, good to the core, just keep on slugging. So deadly dull that the DM usually kills them off spectacularly in sheer frustration.

#### CHAOTIC INEPT

chaotic evil intentions. The only thing that saves the party is the character's total inability to get things together. Such evil characters usually end up killing themselves in one last monumental backfire.

#### NEUTRAL SELFISH

I'm OK Jack! Concentrates on staying alive, whether at the expense of the characters or of the whole quest. Particularly merciless in manipulating lawful stupid or confused characters.

#### CHAOTIC CUDDLEY

Usually under 2', furry and "cute" characters who will frequently be found to pack quite a punch power-wise and/ or alignment-wise. (ie. often adorably and absolutely evil) Refer to the Player's Second Law of Survival.

#### LAWFUL CONFUSED

hey, what's happening?? Players of this alignment may bumble through an entire campaign without ever knowing the party's objective - they consequently live in a state of continual surprise. May suddenly wreck a party's quest by killing off key characters under the

impression that they are evil. Tend to die at the hands of infuriated parties.

### CHAOTIC INNOCENT

I'm just a fighter usually an attractive, apparently powerless individual who is later found to have demigod powers and chaotic evil alignment. See "CHAOTIC CUDDLEY"

### EQUIPMENT

the way that player's see it !

For any player wishing to survive a campaign, certain items of equipment are essential :

(1) An object in a double - reversal super - refractive temporal time/ space warp.

This is essential. The idea, when confronted by a situation which requires a certain piece of equipment, is to produce that equipment triumphantly from ones back - pack, airily telling the DM "Oh, I had it all the time." Since no amount of forethought will ever circumvent DM fiendishness, and there will be many occasions when the desired equipment is not on your list. Hence, some kind of refractive time - projecting power is essential, if you can possibly get away with it, since the object should have been in your pack from the last place you could have obtained it. DMs, unfortunately, very seldom let you get away with it.

(2) A patent Player's Vanishing Horse

This, too, is a vital piece of survival gear. While horses are necessary for traveling quickly, they can also be a problem : they require feeding and are often inconceivably large. The Player's Vanishing variety eliminate most of these problems, as the player can forget about the animal when it is not actually in use. Vast deserts can be crossed without need for fodder or water. The player will also still have the use of his mount after emerging from a 3ft high 50

mile tunnel, having left his horse on the other end. DMs conduct a highly vindictive irritable campaign against these useful quadrupeds - the wise player simply perseveres in their use.

(3) The Bottomless Neverending Ration - pack

An obvious item - players frequently need to travel long distances, and many characters find it convenient to die of starvation on the way. It is simpler to rely on supplies which never give out, and many players do indeed follow this labour - saving course of action, once again, DMs are strangely unenthusiastic.

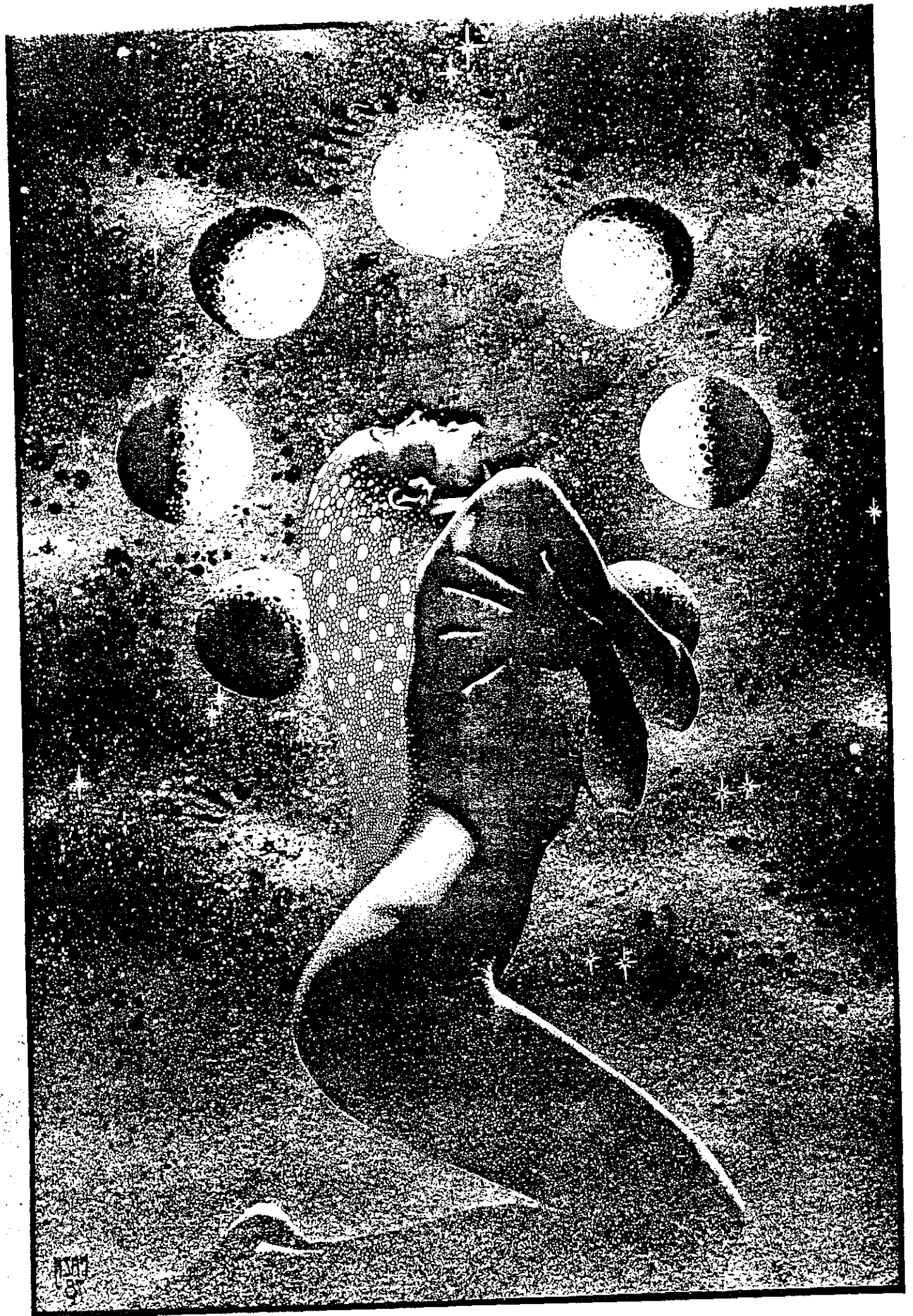
(4) The Amulet of Perpetual Motion

Surprising number of parties would not survive without this unique device. Individuals under it's protection are miraculously able to ride several hundred leagues, fighting off marauders at intervals, take part in a major battle, spade a desirable party member and the spend the evening brushing up on their spells, without ill effects. DMs, in suppressing this invaluable aid, obviously, just want to make things difficult for the party.

### ABILITY

The things the DM allows the character to do. This should, however, not be confused with the things you would like your character to do.





1911  
BY

# Black Illusions

*Two toms recently discovered bring light to the shadowy realm to shadowmagic*

**Shadow Shaping - a grey volume of illusionist spells by Strykmir the Shadowmage, describing the Plane of Shadow as well as its inhabitants and their powers.**

## Contents:

Cantrips: 1. Dim2. Haze3. Shadow Dance  
Level 1 : 1. Shadowbolt2. Darkness3. Light  
4. Phantom Armour\*5. Spook\*6. Wall of Fog  
Level 2 : 1. Blur2. Shadow-Form  
Level 3 : 1. Continual Darkness2. Continual Light3. Delude\*  
4. Fear5. Non-Detection6. Phantom Steed  
7. Phantom Wind8. Wraithform  
Level 4 : 1. Shadow Monsters2. Solid Fog  
Level 5 : 1. Chaos2. Demi-Shadow Monsters  
3. Shadow Door4. Shadow Magic5. Summon Shadow  
Level 6 : 1. Demi-Shadow Magic2. Death Fog3. Shades  
Level 7 : 1. Shadow Walk2. Shadow Stuff

New Spell

\* Unearthed Arcana Spell

## Descriptions of New Spells:

### **Shadow Dance**

Level : Cantrip  
Duration : ConcentrationComponents : S  
Range : 30' Casting Time: Segment  
Area of Effect: 10'x10'/Level Saving Throw: None

This simple, yet useful spell allows the shadowmage to manipulate the shape of shadows on any surface within 30' of him. He can cause the existing shadows to change shape, move or vanish entirely, or can cause new ones to appear.

The spell will not work in complete darkness or in bright, shadowless light, and will not affect the undead Shadows or other creatures of shadow.

### **Shadowbolt (Phantasm)**

Level : 1  
Duration : SpecialComponents : V, S, M  
Range : 1"/Level Casting Time: 1 Segment  
Area of Effect: 1 Target/Bolt Saving Throw: Negates

This spell conjures a bolt of shadow akin to a Magic Missile, unerringly striking its target for 1d8 damage, although a save vs Magic the damage utterly negates. As the bolt is but a phantasm, it does no damage to non-living objects.

One bolt is gained for every two levels of the caster, ie 2 at 3rd, 3 at 5th etc. The material component is a small piece of jet, 10gp value for each bolt conjured.

### **Shadow-Form**

Level : 2  
Duration : 1-6 Rnds+1/Lvl Components : V, S, M  
Range : Touch Casting Time: 1 Round  
Area of Effect: 1 Creature Saving Throw: None

This spell turns the recipient into a creature of shadow which is partially insubstantial. Only a shadow of the creature can be seen, and alert creatures must make a saving throw vs Magic to notice it. The recipient can attack or act normally, but can only be attacked by spells or magical weapons. The spell is cancelled by total darkness or bright, shadowless light. The material component is a life-size cutout of the illusionist made of black velvet (cost 20-100 gp).

### **Shadow-Stuff**

Level : 7  
Duration : 1 Hour/Level Components : V, S, M  
Range : 20" Casting Time: 1 Turn  
Area of Effect: 1" Cube/Level Saving Throw: None

This potent spell allows the mage to channel the very essence of shadow from the Plane of Shadows. This Shadow-Stuff can be woven into whatever shape the mage desires, although this shape cannot be overly complex. Thus a bridge, wall or tower could be formed (and even given permanency with an Alter Reality or Shadow Permanency spell). The object is as solid or insubstantial as the illusionist desires, ie solid and hard, solid yet resilient and soft, like Solid Fog, or totally illusionary. Thus a shadow bridge can be solid to the illusionist and his party, while being insubstantial to others, or a shadow wall can be solid except to the illusionist, who can move through it as through Solid Fog.

The material component for the spell is a black opal worth at least 10000gp.

The grey book has a sablewood spine and a silver clasp and lock. It has a Shadowdemon guardian which is summoned when the book is opened for the first time by the new owner.

Each page of the book is masked by illusionary script, and the last few pages, a bibliography, are actually 'secret pages' hiding the formula for the creation of Shadow Venom, how to make a Shadow Lantern, and (protected by a Symbol of Insanity) the steps to becoming a shade.

**Shadow Venom:** This virulent magical poison is slow-acting, but deadly. One hit point is lost each round unless a saving throw is made for each and every turn. Even if the save is made, the victim is slowed. If the victim dies as result of the poison, he rises as a Shadow in 1-6 turns.

Cost: 10000 gp per dose

**Cloak of Shadows:** This is a black, hooded cloak, allowing the wearer to hide in shadows (90% chance), assume Shadow-Form 3/day, and use Shadow-Walk once per day. It also gives its wearer Ultravision and 25% Magic Resistance.

Cost: 15000 gpXP Value: 2000 XP

**Shadow Wand:** A Shadow Wand is a black, bony wand with ivory ends. At the cost of 1 charge, it can cast a Shadow Bolt, while an expenditure of 2 charges enables the user to cast Phantom Armour (at 3th Level). Using 5 charges allows the user to Summon Shadow.

The wand can be recharged by an Illusionist of 10th Level or higher.

Cost: 10000 gpXP Value: 3000 XP

### The Shadow Art

This volume is a black and silver tome of Dark Elven origin, written in Elven. It contains black illusionist spells of the Drow Askelon, 'He who Walks in Shadow'.

### Contents:

- Cantrips: 1. Shadow Dance2. Dim  
Level 1 : 1. Shadow Mask2. Night Scar3. Shadow Bolt  
Level 2 : 1. Black Light2. Dark Mist3. Shadow-Form  
4. Shadow Fire  
Level 3 : 1. Mailed Might2. Shadow Shard  
Level 4 : 1. Shadow Portal2. Shadow Hound  
Level 5 : 1. Shadow Sword  
Level 6 : 1. Turn Shadow2. Shadow Beast  
Level 7 : 1. Shadow-Staff2. Shadow Permanency  
3. Shadehood

New Spell

### Descriptions of New Spells:

#### **Shadow Mask**

Level : 1  
Range : TouchComponents : V, S  
Duration : 1 Turn/LevelCasting Time: 1 Segment

Area of Effect: up to 1' RadiusSaving Throw: None

This useful spell is often used by illusionists wishing to travel incognito. The subject must be wearing appropriate headgear, ie a large hat or hood. The spell gathers the shadows so as to mask the subject's head

and face, even if a light source is used (although the spell is dispelled by magical light).

The spell can be used in conjunction with other spells to create a very mysterious or frightening effect; the cantrip Two-D'lusion can be used to give glowing eyes or a hideous visage, and an Audible Glamer can distort the subject's voice - low and growling, a snakelike hiss, or an eerie moan. Used wisely, this one really impresses the locals.

#### **Dark Mist**

Level : 2  
Range : 1"/LevelComponents : V, S, M  
Duration : 2 Rnds+1 Rnd/LCasting Time: 2 Segments

Area of Effect: 10' Radius/LvlSaving Throw: Special

This spell creates a swirling grey area of illusionary mist. It reduces visibility to 3' and muffles sound like real fog. The mist is completely under the caster's control. It can be moved to the limit of the range (at 10' per round), can be shaped (area of effect is maximum area), or it can be dispelled at will.

The swirling mists cause unease in those who do not realize its illusionary nature, as movement can be noticed out of the corner of the eye, and faint eerie sounds can be heard at the limit of hearing (footsteps, chattering, evil laughter etc).

A Phantasmal Force spell can be used to shape the mist into forms. Due to the strange mist, creatures will save at +2 against illusions. The material component is some black, translucent gauze.

#### **Shadow Fire**

Level : 2  
Range : TouchComponents : V, S, M  
Duration : See belowCasting Time: 2 Segments  
Area of Effect: One TorchSaving Throw: None

This spell creates a flickering, dancing silver fire which is under the mental control of the caster, or any sentient being within 10' which mentally commands it, although the caster's command always takes precedence.

The fire burns without sound, heat, or consumption of fuel or air, but gives light like a normal fire. Due to its constant flaring and dancing, the area lit is very shadowy (+10% to any Hide in Shadows attempt).

The flames can be commanded to flare up to torch brightness, reduce to candle brightness, dim to a slight flickering glow, or to extinguish. The spell lasts until the flames are commanded to extinguish. The light provides an ultra-violet source for Ultravision use underground.

One torch or like-sized light source can be created. The material component is a drop of mercury and a drop of mineral oil.

#### **Shadow Shard**

Level : 3  
Range : 6"Components : V, S, M  
Duration : SpecialCasting Time: 3 Segments per Shard

Area of Effect: SpecialSaving Throw: Special

This spell creates fragments of shadowstuff, paper-thin triangles of blackness, one for every three levels of



the caster (ie 1 at 1-3, 2 at 4-6 etc). The shards will adhere to any object it is pressed against prior to throwing, and will come off at the caster's touch, so it can be easily carried on belts, shields, sleeves etc. Up to three can be thrown per round to a distance of 6". When thrown, the shards become insubstantial, so hard cover is treated only as concealment, and targets are AC 10 less Dexterity bonuses and magical pluses. Thus a warrior with no Dex bonus, +1 Full Plate and a +2 shield will be AC 7.

On impact, the shards do 1d6 damage and unless a save vs Death Magic is made, the victim will start to lose Strength at a rate of 1 point per round. The shard will remain imbedded for 3 rounds before dissipating, unless removed. Shards are insubstantial to anything except silver and magical weapons, holy water and fire. Lost Strength returns in 1-20 rounds. If a creature is reduced to 2 Strength it collapses immediately. At Strength 1 it becomes comatose, and at zero Strength the creature dies, and will rise as a Shadow under the caster's control in 1-6 turns (and cannot be Raised thereafter).

If a shard is not thrown, it will remain for 3 rounds per level of the caster before dissipating. The material components for the spell are an engraved paper triangle for each shard and one black pearl.

#### Shadow Portal

Level : 4  
 Range : 0 Components : V  
 Duration : Special Casting Time: 1 Segment  
 Area of Effect: Caster Saving Throw: None

This spell is similar to Dimension Door in that the caster can teleport up to 90' per level, either to a stated or sighted location, or a set distance in a set direction. The caster steps into the shadows, and emerges from the shadows at the destination. This is not without risk, for if a solid object is at the destination, or no shadows exist (total darkness or light like that of a Light or Continual Light spell), the teleport fails and the caster is stunned and trapped on the Plane of Shadows until rescued.

#### Shadow Hound

Level : 4  
 Range : 50' Components : V, S, M  
 Duration : 1 Turn/Level Casting Time: 4 Segments

Area of Effect: Special Saving Throw: None

This spell summons creatures from the Plane of Shadows to aid and protect the caster. The caster can summon up to 1 Shadow Mastiff for every two levels of experience, and the pack arrives in 1-4 rounds. The pack will be led by an intelligent Shadow Mastiff with maximum hit points. This leader can take orders from the caster, and it and its fellows will carry out these to the best of their ability.

The material components are large bones (1 per hound) and a black leather collar with silver spikes.

#### Shadow Sword

Level : 5

Range : 180' Components : V, S, M  
 Duration : 1 Round/Level Casting Time: 5 Segments

Area of Effect: Special Saving Throw: Special

This spell causes a jet-black sword of shadowstuff to flicker into existence, and attack targets decided upon by the caster. The sword strikes as if wielded by the caster, but it is insubstantial, so armour or cover is useless (unless it is magical), although Dexterity and concealment bonuses still apply, eg a target with 16 Dex (-2 on AC) and Chain Mail +3 has an effective AC of 5.

On a successful hit, 1-10 points of damage are done, and the target must save vs Death Magic or lose 1-4 Levels for 1-6 turns. The sword can be moved 60' per round and so can attack different targets (one per round).

The material component is a small sword made of black iron and silver, with a diamond set into the hilt.

#### Shadow Beast

Level : 6  
 Range : 100' Components : V, S, M  
 Duration : 1 Hour/Level Casting Time: 7 Segments

Area of Effect: Special Saving Throw: None

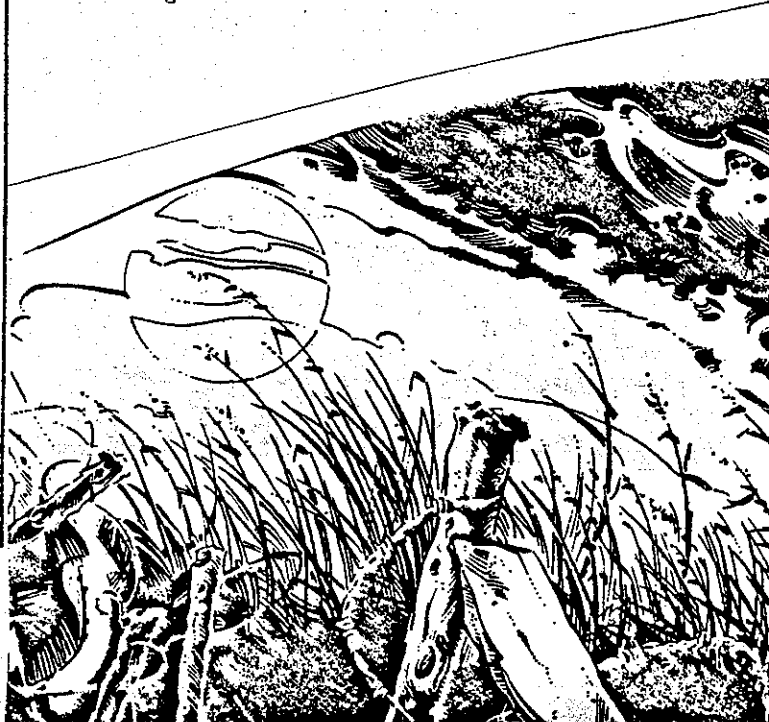
This spell summons powerful creatures from the Plane of Shadows, and these creatures will arrive in 1-6 rounds. The caster can decide which of the following creatures he wishes to summon:

- Tenebrous Worm / Gloomwing (50% of either)
- 1 Shadow Dragon
- 1-6 Yeth Hounds
- 2-9 Shadows
- 1 Shadow Demon

The creatures thus summoned will obey the caster's commands. The material components are a diamond, a black pearl, and 100 platinum pieces wrapped in black silk.

#### Shadow Permanency

This spell acts like the Magic-User spell Permanency, but it works only on Illusions, Phantasms, and Shadow Magic.





## The Truth behind the Myth

Any player will agree that D&D, or indeed fantasy role-playing in general, is an exciting and challenging pastime, an unparalleled outlet for the imagination. Yet the game has been the subject of much media attack lately, from both Christian and secular perspectives. It is seen as an occultic and satanic influence, making use of "forbidden" practices such as magic or demonism; psychologists argue that it encourages dominance and schizophrenia, while moralists denounce it for equating good and evil. Yet D&D is not inherently evil: like any activity, it is open to abuse, but it is possible for a Christian to play without hypocrisy or compromise, and without ill effect.

The primary argument against D&D is that of satanism: the elements of magic and horror in the game are seen as first steps towards Satan-worship. This view takes no account of context. D&D borrows from the vocabulary of myth, ancient religion and the occult to use it in a vastly different context to twentieth-century reality. In the D&D world, magic is not a religion but a science or skill, another form of power to use for good or evil. Those who use it for evil, allying themselves with the powers of Hell, must, as in reality, take the consequences.

The representation of evil in the fantasy world is also a matter of media concern, but in fact it can be one of the most exciting and positive aspects of role-playing. As in the real world, morality is a question of choice: both good and evil exist, and the player must align himself with one or the other. If only good forces were employed, the D&D world would become unbalanced and unrealistic, no true reflection of the difficulties of existence. As it is, good still remains the desirable choice, while evil necessitates damnation. The difference to reality lies in the clearer definition of good and evil, and in the powers given to the individual to fight the forces opposing him. The player can feel that he has a concrete objective, and that his efforts in fighting evil do actually have some effect.

D&D offers countless opportunities for positive mental and social development. Group interaction and social skills are encouraged, and the game increases decision making abilities. Players are forced to exercise their imaginations; they also obtain a broader perspective in exploring worlds other than the here and now. Yet the psychological effects of role-playing are another area of concern. It can be argued that any activity taken to extremes can be harmful, and D&D need not be taken to extremes. The cases of schizophrenia and obsessive behavior reported of D&D players are not the norm: it could be argued that such individuals are unbalanced anyway, and would show abnormal responses to any activity.

D&D is an escape from reality, but no more so than reading or watching a film. The difference lies in the fact that the player can be more than a spectator: by imaginative interaction with others he can become a part of the alternative world created. There is nothing immoral or dangerous in this participation, nor is the alternative world any more evil or violent than our own. Like our own world, decisions have to be made in a situation offering alternatives, and the player must accept the consequences of such decisions. We do not play D&D for the occultic elements, or the chance to be evil, or even for the escape - we play for the imagination.



## Strain Energy and ancient weapons of war

Modern soldiers might scoff at "Ancient weapons of war", yet, as far as projectile weapons using strain energy are concerned, ancient weapons were far more efficient in converting strain energy to kinetic energy.

Use of strain energy in ancient weapons can be divided into two groups, siege artillery (such as Greek and Roman catapults) and infantry or antipersonnel weapons (such as the longbow and crossbow).

The longbow, an awesome weapon, can be considered to be the main reason why small English armies were able to defeat four to five times their numbers at the battles of Crecy and Agincourt, thereby enabling a small country, England, to control much of France. The longbow, and with it England, was finally defeated in 1450 when the French, at Formigny, were able to apply superior technology in the form of two Culverins which decimated the English archers from beyond bowshot, thereby defeating the English, signalling the end to England's power over France, as well as the end to the longbow's dominance of the battlefield.

The longbow was traditionally made from yew staves ( $\pm 6$  foot long, with a diameter of  $\pm 1$  inches at the center and  $\pm 1$  inch at the ends). It was made from yew not because of a local abundance of the tree (most of the bow staves were imported to England from Spain), rather because of yew wood's ability, unlike most other woods, to absorb a large amount of strain per unit volume ( $5 * 10^5$  Joules/cubic meter) while weighing relatively little (600 kg / cubic meter). In spite of the effectiveness of the longbow, it never gained popularity in the rest of Europe due to the fact that

yew's mechanical properties deteriorate rapidly with increasing temperature, and therefore cannot be used reliably at over 35 C.

The amount of energy imparted to an arrow by a longbow is demonstrated by what Gerald de Bari wrote of "an arrow penetrating the skirt of a hauberk, the gambeson beneath it, the mail hose beneath that, through the wearer's leg and out through the hose on the other side to pin the man's leg to his saddle".

For this reason the "composite bow" was developed for use in the hotter Mediterranean countries. A "composite bow" was made up of a core of wood (near the middle and therefore lightly stressed) to which was glued, on the tension side, a surface made from dried tendon, and on the compression side, a surface made from horn. Tendon was used because of its ability to absorb an enormous amount of strain energy per unit volume ( $2.8 * 10^6$  Joules / cubic meter), almost six times greater storage capacity than yew wood, thereby allowing a shorter bow to have the equivalent effect of a longbow. To gain a greater amount of energy the bow was pre-stressed when strung (i.e. when unstrung it was bent the wrong way).

Although the composite bow was, in most respects, superior to the English longbow (it was used as late as 1812 against Napoleon's armies) it was, unlike the longbow, expensive and complicated to manufacture.

The crossbow (using a composite bowstave) and the arbalist (using a more powerful steel bowstave) act in the same way as the bow, but due to the greater stiffness of the bowstave, the thick bowstring had to be wound back using a windlass. Although it had a much greater range ( $\pm 380$  yards compared to the bow's range of  $\pm 300$

yards), both the bow and the crossbow were really only accurate to at  $\pm 200$  yards. Because of the crossbow's lower rate of fire ( $\pm$  of the bow), unlike the bow, never became a battle-winning weapon in itself, rather being used to shield infantry. Its flat trajectory and "trigger" method of firing made it easy to teach and use.

Strain energy was also used to great effect in siege warfare. The first form of artillery was basically an enlarged crossbow, but the Greeks, who did most of the initial experimenting, found that this type of catapult was not powerful enough to breach fortresses, so they began to store strain energy in twisted skeins of tendon (as was mentioned before, tendon has a great ability to absorb strain energy). Probably the most effective siege weapon created which works by strain energy was the Greek "palinton" or what the Romans called a "ballista".

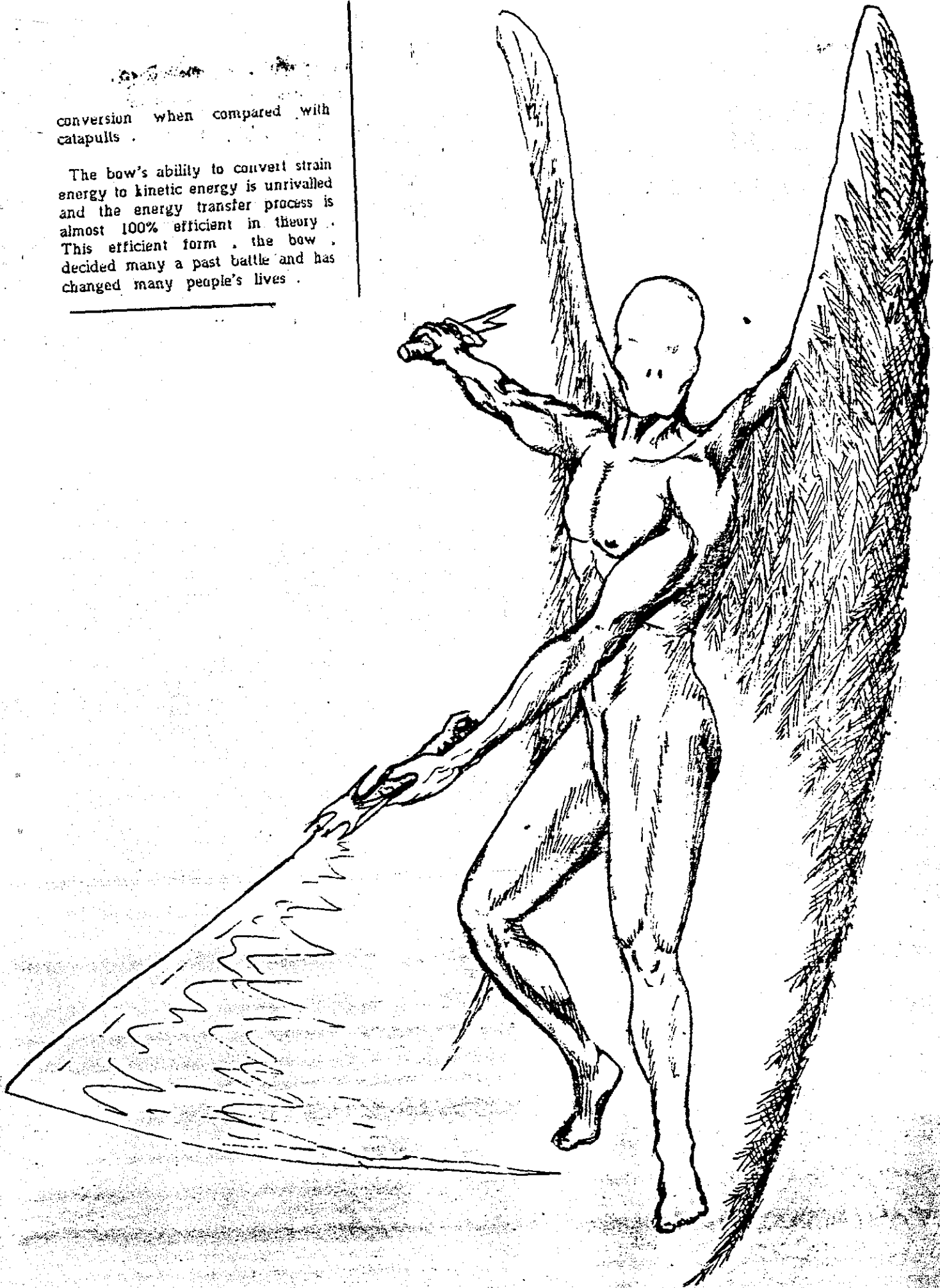
The ballista consisted of two vertical tendon springs, each of which was twisted by a rigid arm. The ends of these two arms were joined by a heavy bowstring (the whole device worked very much like a bow). A windlass was needed to operate the weapon as the draw force could exceed 100 tons. Different size ballista could throw anything from a 2 kg to a 150 kg missile a distance of  $\pm 400$  meters (The Romans used ballistae to devastating effect when they shot over 6000 40kg stone balls to break the walls of Carthage in 146 BC).

Following the Romans, siege weapons became simple pendulum-like devices with the potential energy of a large raised mass used to transfer energy to a missile of smaller mass. A mechanism called a "trebuchet" was used. It was a highly ineffective form of energy

conversion when compared with  
catapults .

The bow's ability to convert strain  
energy to kinetic energy is unrivalled  
and the energy transfer process is  
almost 100% efficient in theory .  
This efficient form , the bow ,  
decided many a past battle and has  
changed many people's lives .

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A. Strydom



# LETTER FROM THE ARCHMAGE

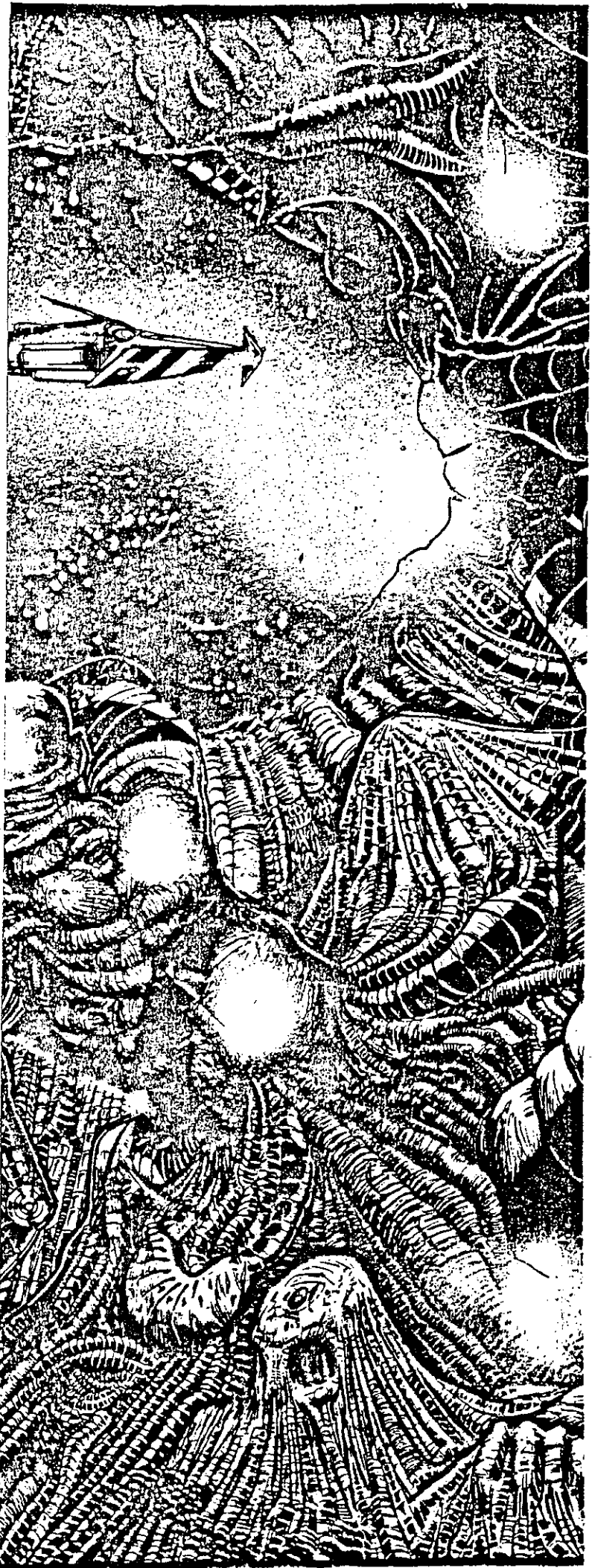
The trumpets blare, the air hangs thick in cliched anticipation as anxious A.D.&D. players scratch their nervous pubic hairs and hum the Hors Wessels song in demonic whispers. All wait on the tepid battlefield of fantasy gaming, corpse bestrewn. Gasps and exclamations expound for there over the hill comes their new leader ...

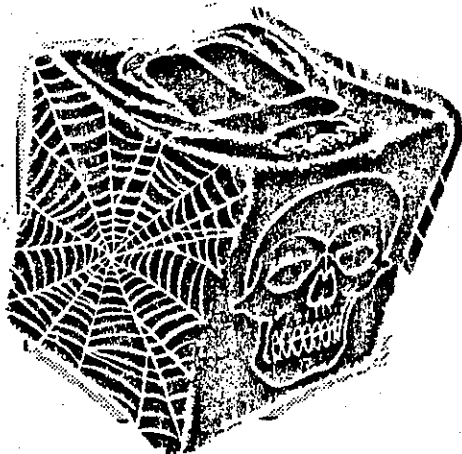
A.D.&D. Second Edition the Real thing!

So it seems for many of us the old battlefield have been overrun by the proverbial "new juggernaut on the block" and we turn our backs, all be it with hesitation, or regrets, on the faded print of D.M.G., Players Handbook, Unearthed Arcana etc, for the list is long that lie in a shallow grave. At least we can be comforted by the grace of having a lighter load to carry to each game session, for only three books are advertised in the glossy pages of Dragon or on the Gamma poster advertising the new mighty arsenal. I do however have a 1978 issue of Players Handbook, that proudly advertises itself as "giving you all the background you require on the game system, as well as the information you'll need to go adventuring." Possibly perceptions have changed but to my mind TSR is no longer the family business of Daddy Gygax, intent to go out and save the kids of the world from reality's boredom and choredom. This multidollar corporation has come a long way but so should it's subscribers. By now you should have your own mighty arsenal, painfully handwritten or stamped out on a typewriter. That is what this magazine and it's material represent. The rules are a reference: a backbone that too few flesh out. So before embarking on the expensive 2nd Quest think closer to home, for as veterans we have learnt the tricks of the trade. Let the youngsters empty their purses.

I hope you ride your own winds of imagination.

The bumbling Zolt  
Archmage of Anmarth





'Are you ready to die?' sneered the Blue Wizard and prepared his Lightning Bolt. 'Not quite,' replied the Red Wizard, and from his outstretched hand sprang a blast of crackling fire, striking the Blue Wizard full in the chest. The Blue Wizard was so astonished that for a moment he forgot to die. Then he slowly keeled over.

The dream of many a Magic-User is to design his own spells, which only he has and no-one else knows of. Unfortunately, there is often a lot of argument between players and DM about how powerful the spell is, its level, range, duration and other factors, and, most important, whether the character is able to design such a spell and whether he has access to the necessary equipment and items needed for the experiments.

However, access to new spells should not be given only to Magic-Users and Illusionists. Why should not a Cleric be permitted to pray to his Deity for a new? Of course, such a spell would then have to be designed by the DM, with the player only giving suggestions, whereas a Magic-User can attempt to create precisely the spell he needs.

This article gives a few guidelines to assist players and DMs in creating new spells. Since there is an endless variety of possible spells, it is not possible to go into detail, and thus these guidelines are merely a general aid in the design of spells. Ultimately, the DM has final say about which spells are permitted in his campaign, and which spells a Magic-User is able to create.

**Class:** There are basically four classes to which the spell may belong: Cleric, Druid, Magic-User, and

## Spell-Binding Design



Illusionist. Cleric and Druid spells are handled together as Clerical spells, while Magic-User and Illusionist spells are handled together as Magic-User spells.

Clerical spells are granted by a Deity, thus the player is not able to 'design' a new spell himself. All his character can do is to petition to his god for a certain spell, and wait and see whether the god has any such spell. Thus, it is up to the DM to take the player's request and create the spell himself. This means that the player can never be sure whether he will get a spell which fulfills the required function, or whether he will get a spell at all. Basically, the DM is free to design any spell he wishes, as long as it is approximately in keeping with the player's request. A nasty DM can, of course, refuse to create the spell, and merely shrug his shoulders and say, 'Tough luck, your Deity has no spell like that...' It should be noted that a new clerical spell is only available to clerics of the Deity which created the spell. Other gods will be able to grant that spell only if the creator gives them access to it.

Magic-User spells have to be created by the player in conjunction with the DM. The player can write down the description of the spell as he thinks it should be, and the DM may then take his DM's knife and whittle away the pieces which he does not like. Of course, the DM does not have to inform the player of any changes; he can merely wait and say to the player, 'OK, your character expends approximately 50000gp and takes two years to design the spell', and then stun the player with the final, miserable version.

It should be noted that a Magic-User cannot start creating spells as soon as he enters his profession. The precise level at which a Magic-User may begin to design spells can vary from campaign to campaign, but it is suggested (most humbly)

that a character should be at least 9th Level before possessing the necessary knowledge for creation of new spells. Clerics are not restricted by this limitation; since they do not actively create the new spell, there should not be a minimum level at which they may petition to their god for it.

**Level:** The level of a spell is not something which can be decided very easily. In general, it is best to compare the spell with others, and find those which are approximately of equal power. The new spell should then be at least of that level, or maybe one or two higher if the DM thinks it is a difficult or unusual spell. Thus, the spell Ivrien's Fiery Bolt, although in power equivalent to a Lightning Bolt, has been classified as a 4th Level spell due to its somewhat unusual nature. Always keep in mind, though, that a Magic-User is only able to create a spell of a level he can use; ie a 9th Level Magic-User cannot create a 6th Level spell, and cannot even think about creating one because he lacks the necessary knowledge.

**Type:** The type of the spell is sometimes a bit hard to determine. There are basically eight types of spells: Abjurations, Alterations, Conjurations/Summonings, Divinations, Enchantments/Charms, Illusions/Phantasms, Invocations/Evocations, and Necromantic spells. Actually, the type of the spell is not too important, unless you are using the 2nd Edition System. For the pedantic, however, the classifications are explained below:

Abjurations are basically protective spells, shielding the caster against certain creatures, weapons, or spells.

Alterations, as the name implies, change the nature or properties of an already existing item or creature.

Conjuration/Summoning spells cause creatures or items desired by the

caster to appear. Commonly, these items or creatures are taken from another place or plane.

Divinations give the caster the ability to discern facts about an object, creature, or place. Sometimes, they also enable the caster to know the future.

Enchantments/Charms mostly affect creatures or persons, although they sometimes also act on objects. These spells are used to influence the behaviour and attitudes of creatures, or to enchant non-magical items.

Illusions/Phantasms are 'mind spells', affecting only the mind of a creature, thus being useless against creatures with no real minds (Undead being a good example). The effects of such spells are completely real for those who believe in them, although they do not necessarily last long.

Invocations/Evocations are those spells which channel energy to create an item or effect, in contrast to Alterations, which merely change inherent properties.

Necromantic spells include those which affect the body and life-force of a creature, causing life to be restored to the dead or to animate them as Undead.

Those who are interested in the different types of spells will find most of the above in the 2nd Edition Player's Handbook, under the heading 'Schools of Magic'.

**Range:** The range of a spell should always be within line-of-sight distance unless the nature of the spell prevents this. Thus, the target of a Teleportation spell need not be in sight, but the target of a Fireball has to be.

The maximum distance of a line-of-sight spell should not be excessively greater than that of spells of comparable level or effect. So, the range of Ivrien's Improved Fireball is the same as that of a normal Fireball, but Ivrien's spell is of higher level due to its power.

**Duration:** When the duration of a spell is considered, it should be kept in mind that the spell has to be balanced. For some spells, of course, the duration is easy to find: the effects of Ivrien's Healing Magic are permanent, as are

the effects of Dalath's Spell of Recharging. Other spells, however, require more careful consideration. Commonly, a spell will last for a round or two per level of the caster, with some minor positive modifications, or it will last for turns instead of rounds. Again, comparison with existing spells comes in handy. Thus it is that Faer's Starlight, although weaker than a normal Light spell, has a far shorter duration, since it has an additional power against Undead.

**Area of Effect:** The area which a spell can cover is mostly not too difficult to determine. In a touch-delivered spell, the area can be only one creature. In other spells, the nature of the spell has to be considered. A spell with a burst radius, or a spell creating a globe of some kind, will typically cover a sphere of about 2" diameter, although a more or less powerful spell can of course be designed. In spells such as Lightning Bolt, the Area of Effect will be long and narrow, while Burning Hands affects only a small area, but with a wide angle. In most cases, the description of the spell will have to be consulted to determine the precise Area of Effect.

**Components:** This can sometimes stretch the imagination somewhat, especially if material components are involved. The specific components involved in the casting (V, S, M) may be decided upon by the creator, but balance should be considered, since the components can easily influence the spell's level (consider, for example, a Power Word, Kill. Had more components been involved, it could easily have been a level or two lower).

Material components can be a headache. The spell's creator may, of course, simply choose any components, but it is preferable by far that the components have some connection with the spell's desired effect. Thus the material component for Ice Spray was selected to be a sharp metal needle, which reflects the penetration ability of the ice.

**Casting Time:** The casting time should either be several segments or several rounds. In a relatively uncomplicated spell, the casting time typically is one segment per level of the spell, although it is sometimes longer, and very seldom is shorter. However, difficult and complicated spells such as the conjuring of creatures from another plane will often require lengthy preparations, such as the drawing of protective pentagrams and runes. Since these should be done carefully and as perfectly as possible, they will increase the casting time greatly.

**Saving Throw:** When a spell causes damage, a saving throw should be permitted for half damage, unless the spell is supposed to act only against certain creatures, in which case a penalty or maybe even no save could be given.

Spells summoning other creatures should, likewise, enable the creatures to avoid the spell's effects by making a saving throw.

Certain spells do not require a saving throw. These are those spells which affect material unable to resist, such as the spell Faer's Fabulous Fire, which merely causes a fire to appear.

**Description:** This is the hard part, the crux of the whole matter. And here, unfortunately, least of all can be said. There are so many endless variations of possible spells that it is nearly futile to even list categories except in the broadest sense.

Firstly, consider precisely what the spell is supposed to do. Is it protective, offensive, defensive, utilitarian, divinatory, or maybe related to movement? The answer to such a question often aids in determining its type.

When the main idea has been found, the details can be filled in. If it is protective, against precisely what does it protect, and how does it do this? If it is offensive, against which creatures is it most effective, which ones can resist it better, and does it cause damage? If it causes damage, how much, and of what type? If it is divinatory, which agencies

does it call on, how does it do this, and what risks are involved? If it is related to movement, how many people or what mass can it affect? As can be seen, there are many possibilities.

Cost and Length of Research: This applies only to Magic-Users and Illusionists, and is basically left to the DM to decide. A character might find it easy to create a new spell, but he could also work for months without success.

Generally, research for a spell should be at least a month per level of the spell, maybe more if arcane volumes and rare texts have to be consulted. A Magic-User might be forced to search for a long time (maybe even go on a quest or two) before finding tomes with the information needed.

After the research part has been completed, the design phase begins. During this time, the character has to sort through all the information he has gathered and attempt to construct the basic structure of the spell. This will take at least another month per level of the spell, sometimes even two or three times as long if the spell is very powerful, and it could very well be that during this time the character finds that he does not know all he needs to know - and back he goes to re-searching.

Finally, the experimentation phase can be begun. This is the most dangerous part of spell creation (for the character at least), since there may be hidden flaws in the spell, or merely conditions which the creator has forgotten to consider. Such a flaw can often lead to an untimely (and sometimes uncomfortable) end, especially if the spell involves the summoning of creatures from the nether planes...

The costs for research, design (parchment and ink is EXPENSIVE!), and experimentation are left up to the DM. However, creating a new spell should not cost the character less than several thousand (10-20, or even 30-40 thousand) gold pieces per level of the spell to be created. This price may increase if experimentation requires rare or exotic substances, or if the charac-

ter fumbles and has to do each experiment several times over.

Lastly, the DM has to consider the chance that a spell created by a Magic-User will either not work properly or fail completely, or maybe even have a reverse effect (spells created by gods are assumed to be foolproof). Here, again, no precise rules can be given, for much depends on the complexity and level of the spell. If the spell is very simple and uncomplicated, the DM may assign only a 1%, or even no chance of failure. Conversely, if the spell is high-powered and intricate, the chance for failure may rise sky-high. Naturally, the Magic-User creating the spell should not know whether his design works. (This gives the DM a nice opportunity for surprises!)

When everything has been completed to the character's satisfaction, and the final version of the spell has been neatly written out, the spell can finally be recorded in the spellbook as a completely new spell. The creator can now amaze other Magic-Users with it, or even sell it for excessive prices. However, care should be taken that the spell is recorded at least twice, for as every Magic-User knows, spellbooks sometimes have nasty habits of disappearing, burning up, being stolen, or simply 'losing' some of their spells. And once a unique spell is lost, the Magic-User has to start right at the beginning again...

All the above are only examples, of course. The most important part in designing new spells is to be as creative as possible, while maintaining a balance in the spell's power: making it do what you want, while not making it too powerful. Hopefully, these guidelines will help a bit in surprising other casters in your campaign.





## Five Magic Missiles for the day, please !

**Are you being forced to choose your spells ?  
No variation ? Here's a new system to give you  
bored spell-casters some leeway !**

A problem which every spell-caster has encountered, and which is one of the great limitations of every cleric, druid, magic-user, and any other spell-caster is the fact that once a spell has been cast, it vanishes from the mind, and has to be re-memorized the next day if it is to be used again. This means that a magic-user of 12th Level will spend a whole day merely memorizing spells, which is very inconvenient if you're stuck underground somewhere with a horde of Drow at your heels.

The other point is that a memorized spell can be used only once, and this limits choices immensely. Think of your average 3rd Level Cleric, Spellist: 2 Cure Light Wounds, 1 Silence 15' Radius. Sound familiar ? The system described here removes those problems (although it can be argued that it makes spell-casters very powerful at high levels).

A spell caster (including Clerics, Druids, high Level Paladins etc) may memorize up to his maximum number of spells per day, and select any of these spells to cast without losing memory of it. Up to the maximum number of spells can be cast before rest is needed.

Example: A 5th Level Magic-User can memorize 4 1st Level, 2 2nd Level, and 1 3rd Level spell per day. He can now cast any one 1st Level spell four times, or any two 1st Level spells two times. He can also cast both 2nd Level spells once, or one of them twice. The 3rd Level spell can be used only once.

If more than the maximum number of spells are cast, the constitution of the character drops a number of points equal to the spell level, and if 0 is reached, the caster falls into a coma, after which a Restoration is required to bring him to consciousness again (Constitution is raised to 1). If Constitution drops below 0, the character dies of the strain. Otherwise, the loss of Constitution is permanent until a Heal is cast upon the character.

A basic eight hours of sleep are required to put the caster up to full potential again. During this time, memory of the spell is not lost, and thus they can be used again without re-memorization. Alternatively, if the caster wishes to use other spells, he can select those not needed, and 'forget' them, ie clean his mind of their memory. This requires 5 rounds per spell, no matter what the level. Memorizing of a new spell requires roughly 5 Rounds plus 5 Rounds per level of the spell.

After a spell has been cast, the caster needs a certain amount of time to recover magical energy before being able to cast another spell. The recovery time is equal to the BASE casting time, ie after casting a Fireball, a Magic-User would need 3 segments of recovery time before being able to cast another spell, even if he had Fire Aptitude. An exception is the First Level Magic-User spell Magic Missile, where the casting time is 1 segment only, but recovery time is 1 segment per missile shot.

If a spell is cast while the caster is still recovering from the casting of an earlier spell, the new spell will automatically fail and the recovery time will be doubled.

### Elemental Aptitude for Magic-Users

The elemental aptitude of a Magic-User is the ease with which he can handle certain spells. The aptitude is divided into the four elements of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. In most cases, a Magic-User will have aptitude in but one element, though some have it for two (never opposing elements, however). A Magic-User with no elemental aptitude gains none of the benefits described below, but neither will he be hindered by the disadvantages.

A Magic-User with aptitude in a certain element gains the following benefits for spells of that element (a list of the Elemental Spells follows):

- 1.The chance to learn the spell is increased by 1% per point of Intelligence.
- 2.Casting Time is reduced by 1 segment/25% (whichever gives a shorter casting time).
- 3.For every three levels of the Magic-User, he is able to memorize an additional spell level of the same element.

For example, a 9th Level Magic-User with Fire Aptitude can memorize an additional 3 spell levels of fire-related spells, ie either 3 1st Level spells, 1 1st and 1 2nd Level spell, or 1 3rd Level spell.

- 4.The time to memorize a spell is reduced by 50%.
- 5.There is a 1% chance per level of the caster that he can intentionally achieve a double effect, eg a Fireball can be twice the size (though still doing normal damage).

The disadvantages for spells of the opposite element (ie Air Earth / Fire Water) are as follows:

- 1.The chance to learn a spell is reduced by 1% per point of Intelligence below 24.
- 2.Casting Time is increased by 1 segment/25% (whichever gives the longer casting time).
- 3.Spells can be learnt only after the minimum level required to cast the spell has been exceeded, eg a Magic-User with Earth Aptitude can learn Lightning Bolt (Air) only at 6th Level or above.

4. The time required to memorize a spell is increased by 25%.

5. There is a 1% chance per level of the caster below 19th, and a 1% chance in any case, that the spell will only be half as effective (where this is possible; a Flesh to Stone spell might not be affected, or might act as a Slow spell).

Table of Magic-User Aptitude

Month of Birth	Air	A+F	Fire	F+E	Earth	E+W
Water	W+A	None				
January 8384-9091-00	01	4041	4647	5657	5859	6667-6869
February 8384-9091-00	01	4344	4950	6061	6263	7071-7273
March 8485-9091-00	01	4041	4748	6263	6465	7273-7475
April 8889-9091-00	01	1516	2223	6263	6869	7879-8081
May 8081-8889-9091-00	01	1112	1819	6162	6768	7879
June 8889-9091-00	01	1011	1617	5657	6364	7879-8081
July 8889-9091-00	01	0809	1011	2526	3233	7273-7879
August 8889-9091-00	01	0809	1011	2122	2829	7172-7778
September 8889-9091-00	01	0809	1011	2021	2627	6667-7374
October 8485-9091-00	01	1011	1213	2021	2223	3738-4445
November 8485-9091-00	01	1112	1314	2122	2324	3435-4142
December 8384-9091-00	01	1516	1718	2526	2728	3738-4244

Special Day      Air    A+F    Fire    F+E    Earth    E+W  
Water    W+A    Any

Spring Equinox 8283-9091-00	01	4849	5556	66	67	68-70	71	72
Summer Solstice 90 91-00	01	1112	1920	6768	7475	85	86	87-89
Autumn Equinox 89 90 91-00	01	03	04	05	1516	2324	7172	7879
Winter Solstice 8384-9091-00	01	11	12	13-15	16	17	2728	3536

If ANY is rolled, a random month is selected by dice and a new d% roll is made, and the result for that month is taken.

Elemental Spells

Here are listed those spells usable by Magic-Users which fall into one of the Elemental Categories of Air,

Earth, Fire, and Water. Those spells not listed here are of no definite element, and are not affected by a Magic-User's aptitude.

Elemental Spells of Air:

1. Feather Fall; Jump; Unseen Servant
2. Invisibility; Levitate; Stinking Cloud; Zephyr
3. Fly; Gust of Wind; Invisibility 10' Radius; Wind Wall; Lightning Bolt
4. Ball Lightning
5. Airy Water; Cloudkill; Conjure Air Elemental
6. Invisible Stalker; Chain Lightning
7. Duo-Dimension; Mass Invisibility; Lightning Sphere

Elemental Spells of Earth:

1. Mending
2. Fool's Gold
3. Material; Slow
4. Dig; Stoneskin
5. Conjure Earth Elemental; Passwall; Stone Shape; Transmute Rock to Mud; Wall of Stone
6. Move Earth; Flesh to Stone
7. Statue
8. Sink; Symbol of Petrification

Elemental Spells of Fire:

1. Affect Normal Fires; Burning Hands; Firewater
2. Flaming Sphere; Pyrotechnics; Daleth's Weapon of Fire
3. Explosive Runes; Fireball; Flame Arrow
4. Fire Charm; Fire Shield; Fire Trap; Wall of Fire; Ivrien's Fiery Bolt; Faer's Fabulous Fire
5. Conjure Fire Elemental
6. Ivrien's Improved Fireball
7. Delayed Blast Fireball
8. Incendiary Cloud
9. Meteor Swarm

Elemental Spells of Water:

1. Grease; Melt; Precipitation
2. Preserve; Melf's Acid Arrow
3. Cloudburst; Water Breathing
4. Ice Storm; Wall of Ice; Ice Spray
5. Airy Water; Conjure Water Elemental; Cone of Cold; Water Weird
6. Lower Water; Otilkue's Freezing Sphere; Part Water; Transmute Water to Dust
8. Symbol of Cold

The DM, as ever, is of course free to change or add to this, but hopefully the above ideas and suggestions will make play somewhat more interesting for all those spell-casters (especially the Cleric, who now can take other spells in addition to his obligatory CLWs).



# CLASSIFIED!

## For Sale :

I have a great magic sword for sale . All givers welcome .

Contact : High King Elic

At : Melnibone

## For Sale :

One soul - slightly used , in perfect working order , will take best written offer .

Contact : The Chairman , C.L.A.W.

## For Sale :

One D.M. , hardly used .

Contact : Rosebank residence , Room 42

## Wanted :

Ability to make decisions quickly .

Money no object .

Contact : Rowan

At : The hill of Skulls

## Wanted to buy:

Pratty young virgins . Payment in gold . Leave chained up .

Contact : O. Wyrn

At : C.L.A.W. UCT

## For Sale

I \* DM's Guide

I \* Monster Manual II

Contact : A. Strydom

AT : Rosebank hall

## Wanted :

Ring of infinite wishes

Platemail of Invulnerability

Vorpel Sword +10

Contact : D&D players

R.I.P. Richard Kzin : Death is hell and then you die .

R.I.P. Widowmaker the Barbarian : he had to join a party with two magic-users ...

R.I.P. Edition I A D&D : Killed by economics .

R.I.P. World of Greyhawk : The old realm is forgotten . Another victim of economics .

R.I.P. Anton's campaign : say no more .

R.I.P. Eane : He who lives by the sword dies by it .

R.I.P. Sranul the vampyre : He used to go to night school ...

R.I.P. Agwen the witch : You only consult a Darklord once .

R.I.P. The Monsters : What passing bells for those who die as cattle ?

R.I.P. Snarf the halfling :

Epitah : on a much-mourned halfling --

Small in stature , quick in ways  
Wealthy halfling's fun betrays

The thief : besides , could wealth amend

For inert arrow lodged in friend ?

Thus , unmourned , alas , attack,  
His doom is sure , he can't come back .

Pragmatic party feels no woe -

His wealth remains , poor Snarf can go !

R.I.P. Sir Gereatrix Tremblane :  
All good paladins must meet their end .

R.I.P. The High Illithid : " You kill one , and all its brothers come to the funeral ...

R.I.P. Guldur : You can only kill so many ...

( NOTE :  
WHAT!!! Somebody made him a God . )

R.I.P. Dalth : You Stonehead.

R.I.P. Fy Lum "Freddie" : Less than zero !

R.I.P. Snowy : A shocking statement about the party .





