The Finzer Family
a Tale of Modern Magic
by
Harry O. Fischer

The magazine of Fantasy,
Swords & Sorcery and
Science Fiction Gaming
STAR EMPIRES

It is the far future -- a time much different from our own. Space ships of all kinds and sizes -- peopled by all manner of races -- criss-cross the galaxy, searching for and exploring new worlds. In some places across the vast expanses of space, great star kingdoms reach out and collide in cataclysmic cosmic battles for stellar domination.

This is the setting for STAR EMPIRES, the game of galactic conquest by TSR. Long-awaited (and years in the preparation), STAR EMPIRES takes its place as a successor to TSR’s popular STAR PROBE -- and further expands the concepts and possibilities of that game. But STAR EMPIRES stands alone as well!

STAR EMPIRES is jam-packed with fascinating concepts and ideas from the prolific mind of author John Snider (designer of STAR PROBE). It is, in essence, a game “kit” which allows players to use part -- or all -- of its contents to undertake fantastic space campaigns of their own.

Make no mistake about it, STAR EMPIRES is the space gamer’s ultimate game. Only a few of the myriad topics covered in the game include: space exploration, intelligence, financial budgeting, sabotage, production and logistics, hyperspace, starship design, and weapons research. It is a relatively free-structured game, suitable for any number of players and a referee -- and even adaptable to larger games by mail using a gamesmaster and elements of limited intelligence. To be sure, this is not a game that is simply set up and played -- it requires preparation and considerable attention to detail. But it is precisely this aspect that will make STAR EMPIRES appeal to the serious enthusiast!

Besides the 70-plus page game booklet, the complete STAR EMPIRES includes a star map backed with a hex grid, a set of blank unit counters (for tactical game adaptations), and record book outline sheets. For those already having the map along with STAR PROBE, the booklet is available separately.

Available from:
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P.O. Box 756
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147

STAR EMPIRES, complete in plastic zip lok envelope $7.50
STAR EMPIRES, booklet only $5.50
This issue, we’re pleased to present the work of Harry O. Fischer, citizen of Nehwon (not Newlon, as printed in last TD — sorry Harry). The Finzer family could live right across the street from any of us, and might at this very moment. The dandy cover and excellent interior pictures for this story were done by Bill Hannon, whom we are glad to welcome back to these pages. The story will conclude in #9. Hope you enjoy it as much as we did here.

Because of the length of the Finzer story, there will be no installment of the Gnome Cache in this issue. It is expected, however, that that fine tale will resume in #9. The fate of Fineous Fingers, World Renowned Thief, is less certain. I have been unable to get in touch with JD, and as I write this, I am waiting for a reply to my last card. We hope to see him again in the next issue, but as I have no word, I can only assume that semester finals have in some way interfered with Fineous.

Last issue we told you of a game in #11, which is still true, but in last issue’s Rumbles I may have misled some of you. The game coming is not the one known as DIRT, which has some introduction already through the strip of the same name. DIRT has run into some final development snags. The game in #11 will be satirical in tone, but thoroughly playable. The intro to it is in the new comic strip by Tom Wham, also the game’s designer.

Also in #11 will be Ice Magic, by Fritz Leiber. This is a new, original Fafrhd and the Mouser story. It takes off where the latest, Rime Isle, ended in COSMOS magazine. The Rime Isle tale was excellent, and fans of the duo will be well advised to pick up the two issues of COSMOS in which it appears.

In this issue we have started a contest for writers, artists and artist/writers all in one. The details are in the FEATURED CREATURE section.

Harry Fischer, Fritz Leiber and Gardner Fox are all guests at GenCon 10, with Mr. Fox the Guest of Honor. All three will be holding seminars and discussions throughout the con. See you there???

Editor Timothy J. Kask
Staff Artists Dave Sutherland
Tom Wham
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Planes
The Concepts of Spatial, Temporal and Physical Relationships in D&D
by Gary Gygax

For game purposes the DM is to assume the existence of an infinite number of co-existing planes. The normal plane for human-type life forms is the Prime Material Plane. A number of planes actually touch this one and are reached with relative ease. These planes are the Negative and Positive Material Planes, the Elemental Planes (air, earth, fire, water), the Ethereal Plane (which co-exists in exactly the same space as the Prime Material Plane), and the Astral Plane (which warps the dimension we know as length [distance]). Typical higher planes are the Seven Heavens, the Twin Paradises, and Elysium. The plane of ultimate Law is Nirvana, while the plane of ultimate Chaos (entropy) is Limbo. Typical lower planes are the Nine Hells, Hades’ three glooms, and the 666 layers of the Abyss.

Assume further that creatures which can be harmed only by weapons of a special metal (silver, cold iron, etc.) gain this relative invulnerability from having a portion of their existence in either the positive or negative material plane at the same time they exist partially in the prime. Therefore, those creatures which can be struck only with +1 or greater magical weapons exist wholly and simultaneously in two planes (one of which is, of course, the Prime Material). So creatures which require attack of a +2 or better magic weapon then exist in three planes simultaneously, and so on. This brings us to the consideration of the existence of magical weapons in other planes and in multiple planes simultaneously.

If it is accepted that the reason that certain creatures can only be hit by magical weaponry is because the creature exists in two or more planes simultaneously, then it follows that the weapon must likewise extend into the planes in which the creature exists. At the very least it must be that the weapon extends into no less than two of the planes in which the creature exists, and these planes are those in which the creature has vulnerable aspects. This makes for a very complex relationship of planes to planes/swords and other magical weapons to planes. A special sword functioning with bonuses against certain creatures, or a special purpose sword, will have existence on only certain planes with regard to its special bonus, or due to its special purpose, but as most weapons of this type also have a general +1 or better value, they also extend into all planes — or do they?

Perhaps the most reasonable way of handling this matter is to graph the planes which are existent in the campaign in question. Basic bonus weapons extend generally into planes which are once, twice, etc. removed from the Prime Material Plane of play. Those with special bonuses then have a more intense nature in the plane in which the creature they function specially against has its extra existence. And this also explains weaponry which does extra damage to creatures which can be hit by non-magical weapons. Let us assume that these weapons have their special existence on the plane in which the particular creature has its personal existence. Perhaps such planes are more accurately termed subplanes. Each type of creature has its own sub-plane, human, giantish, demoniac, or whatever. Furthermore, similarities of type indicate the same or closely allied planes.

As a side benefit of the use of this system, operation on the astral or ethereal by characters no longer poses such a headache to DMs. As magic weapons exist in those planes which touch upon the Prime Material Plane, any person armed with a magic weapon will be able to attack into the Astral or Ethereal Plane if they become aware that their opponent is operating in one of these planes.

Finally, what of magic swords of special nature or special purpose which are far removed from the Prime Material Plane? I suggest that these weapons can be removed no further than the number of planes from the Prime Material which equals their best bonus stated as a “to hit”, i.e. a +2 can be removed by two planes and still retain its magical properties. Certain swords will have special treatment — the sword of sharpness and the vorpal blade most notably. On the other hand, a sword of life draining ability gains no such consideration, for it operates primarily on the Negative Material Plane. In any event, swords removed beyond the plane limit given will lose all of their magic, becoming nothing more than normal weapons. This same “law” can apply equally to those weapons, swords or otherwise, which have a simple “to hit” bonus.

Continued on Page 28

The OUTER PLANES There are sixteen outer planes. The Outer Planes are a collection of the religious and/or philosophical goals (or anti-goals) of mankind and “the other intellectual species”.

The ETHEREAL PLANES is the transportation “system” of the Inner Material Planes. Travel into the Ethereal is always of a magical nature by using spells or special artifacts. The Oil or Armor of Ethereal, a Wish and the new Vanish spell can be used.

The ASTRAL PLANES is the means of transportation from the Prime Material to the Outer Planes. There are two restrictions for the Astral “Plane”. 1) The traveler must be in the Prime Material in order to travel into the Astral. The Astral cannot be reached from the Elemental, Positive or Negative Planes. 2) The Astral will take a traveler to the first level of the Outer Planes. There are

ABSTRACT ART IN THE DRAGON !? Not really, this is a 2-dimensional diagram of a 4-dimensional concept. The concept is basically a concept of planes or dimensions and how to travel between them. There are two basic “areas” of planes in the diagram. The inner ovoid and the outer rectangle. There are also two ways to travel to these planes. The ETHEREAL will get you to any of the inner planes and the ASTRAL will get you to the outer planer.

The INNER PLANES There are seven inner planes. The first (no. 1) is the Prime Material. The planet Earth and everything on it, all of the solar systems and the whole universe are of the Prime Material. The Fantasy worlds you create belong to the Prime Material. Numbers 2 and 3 are Positive and Negative Material Planes. Numbers 4-7 are the ultra-pure Elemental Planes of air, fire, earth and water.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOWNS IN D&D
by Tony Watson

Introduction:
Most D&D campaigns center around a dungeon and most of the players’ time is spent in exploring the labyrinth and battling the nasties to be found therein. Rightly so; the depths are the place where the most fearsome monsters, trickiest traps and, of course, largest treasures are to be found.

As well, there is adequate coverage of wilderness adventures, with descriptions and rules especially pertaining to above ground quests and encounters.

Yet, though the rules suggest basing players in a town or village, few DMs. (Dungeon Masters) do much to “flesh out” the town and make it a place of interest in itself and not simply a logistics point for characters.

If imagination is used (and there surely should be no dearth of that in any DM), towns can be made enjoyable and worthy of exploration and adventures themselves.

Laying out a town can be time consuming, especially if you are already struggling to find the time to put together your underworld. Yet the effort is certainly worth it. Hopefully the following suggestions can serve as useful guidelines.

Part I. The Town Layout:
Ideally, the town laid out in a manner similar to your dungeon, and if possible, using the same scale. The multi-use of a graphic and scale system will make transference from the town to the underworld much simpler for the referee. I use a 3"x2" sheet divided into 1" squares, further divided into ten sections and call each tenth of an inch 5'. This makes for a highly realistic scale and a large town. However a regular size piece of graph paper will do just as well; again, transfer from your dungeon system.

A small village will do at first; you can save your ideas for a city of wicked splendor for later efforts. In any case, the size of the sheet you are using, and the scale chosen, will dictate the size of your town.

Now on to specifics.

seven levels in Heaven and nine in Hell. The Astral can only bring you to the first level of these Planes. A physical form of travel must be used to proceed to the other levels. Travel to the Astral “Plane” can be done with a wish or the Astral Spell.

Travel from Outer Plane to Outer Plane The Astral Plane can be used to travel from plane to plane, ie, from Heaven to Elysium. A traveler could also move into an adjacent Plane, ie. Heaven to the Happy Hunting Grounds, just by walking. Travel, by walking, could or should be limited to only One Plane to either side of the Plane that the traveler started in. For example, a traveler Astral Placed into Nirvana, so by walking he could travel to Arcadia or to Acheron.

If the town is going to be a fairly large one, you should consider whether it will be walled or not. This would be most likely if it were on the border of your mythical country and a sometimes-hostile neighbor, or if it were astride an important trade route or waterway. Also a town of almost any size would have a keep nearby or inside the town itself to house the ruling lord and his retainers, who would serve as the local law and order.

The designer must also decide the local terrain. A river or stream should be nearby for a water source as well as fields for sustenance farming. Is the town on the coast of a lake or sea? Is it an outpost in a heavily wooded or mountainous area? All these factors will determine the local economy and the type of wilderness adventures that players can have in the town’s vicinity.

Once these primary decisions are made the actual planning may commence. Since most campaigns are set in pseudo-medieval times, a glance through some books of city plans of that era (and most libraries have at least a few) will be helpful.

The buildings themselves need not be large, or their rooms spacious. Avoid the supermarket syndrome. Most medieval dwellings and shops were small and consisted of only a few rooms. A large block could be laid out and contain a number of residences and shops, since this was often the case.

Second and third floors can prove to be a problem. I suggest these two methods: drawing in rooms and such of higher levels on separate sheets, one per level or, alternately, putting them in on the main map, but in a different color. I suppose you could dispose of upper floors entirely, theorizing that the action would take place on the lower floors anyway. Generally there shouldn’t be more than three floors save in the case of a special tower or temple.

As you lay out the various buildings, it is probably easier (and more esthetically pleasing) to group like establishments in the same area. Here are some of the shops that could be included in a business district:

armorers — sells, repairs, and fashions armor and weapons
cobbler — shoes, boots
cartographers — wilderness and dungeon maps available 100-600 gp depending on remoteness of the area
candlestick maker — torches, brands, incense, candles
weaver — tunics, breeches, shirts, cloaks, blankets
barbers — haircut and shave one gp
pawnshop — armor and weapons bought and sold but have a 1 in 6 chance of being defective in some manner; some magic items; prices should be lower than new of course

Various other artisans, such as glassblowers, painters, sculptors and stonemasons might be included if the town is large enough to warrant such types.

Most assuredly there should be a town square that serves as an open air market. Food, wine, packs, rope, household items of metal and wood, perhaps even some magic items should be available. There should be a chance, perhaps 1 in 4, that a foreign merchant or two is in attendance. They might have items of all types that are not available in the village, as well as news and rumors from distant lands. Perhaps they might be interested in finding warriors to serve as caravan guards or rangers to act as guides. Every once in a while a merchant could be hauling something truly bizarre; an artifact, a subdued dragon, etc.

The market place itself should be a hot bed of rumor and local gossip, a good percentage false. It is the meeting place of the common folk, and when your players visit there to outfit an expedition, be sure they hear a few choice bits of information, be they true or not!

Near one of the roads leading into the town, there should be a stable (horses boarded 2-3 gps per week) a smith, and a wheelwright who repairs and constructs wagons and carts. Horses might be available here, for sale or rent.

If your town is on a coast be sure to have a dock section with fishing boats and trading vessels available for hire or seeking crew members or marines. Once again, the gristy old sea hands should be filled with stories and lies about strange lands across the sea or terrible ocean-going monsters, (or maybe even a special island the DM has worked up.) The docks should also be a good place to meet foreigners and visitors. As well as a seaman’s tavern, this section should include an open air fish market, a sailmaker and maybe a shop specializing in naval charts and gear.

Another portion of the town should be concerned with the higher classes, such as rich warriors, merchants or bankers. Their houses should be nicely built and guarded, for these types are sure to have treasure lying about.

Either in a special area, or grouped about the town square a few temples are a must. Of course they will be staffed with their attendant clerics and a character of suitable level as a patriarch or bishop. Player clerics may wish to belong to one of these sects. This will encourage participation in the town as a whole. If the DM has time he can work out some basis to the religion to “flesh” it out. Naturally temples should be large and ornate, and have a few treasures within them.

The most interesting area has been saved for last. This is the darker side of town, a place where honest men are loath to go save in groups (a 1 in 8 chance of encountering a thief or being attacked by a band of brigands, per turn. At least one or two taverns should be located here with their attendant patrons and barmaids. A sleazy boarding house is in order as well. Other points of interest might include:

soothsayer — for 20 gps this woman (or man) will “predict” how a planned expedition or exploit may turn out. Once players give a general idea what they have planned the DM will respond, drawing on his knowledge and an accuracy d20.

magician — simply a non-player magic user who will cast spells for a fee (say 50 x spell level).

brothel — No thieves’ quarter would be complete without one. As well as being a haven for earthly delights it should be brimming with privy information (available for bribes of 10-100 gps). Fees are about 20 gp (35 for the “special”). One to six male patrons of all types and classes will be in the waiting area.

square — an open air square where freelance prostitutes, spies, assassins, and thieves can be met. Another good area to purchase purloined items.
No town or village would be complete without a full complement of taverns and inns. These are the hearth of the town and where the nuclei of adventurers meet and discuss their plans.

It is reasonable to assume that each tavern would have its own particular clientele. For example, in my town, one inn is the only place in town to put up elves, dwarves and hobbits, so that visiting characters of this type would most likely be found there. The exact composition of patrons at a given moment can be obtained in a system such as the following:

**Falgrave’s** — where non-humans frequent and stay when in town. Falgrave is a dwarf himself and up on non-human gossip. 3-18 patrons, 2/3 of which shall be non-human and 1/3 will be warriors; the rest will be townspeople, nonhumans of other classes. 1-4 will be non-human wayfarers or merchants.

Another inn could be frequented by visiting human merchants so half of its patrons would be men of such class. Another tavern might be the meeting place of local warriors and thus a good place to swap tales and find the non-players to round out an adventure (persons also known as monster fodder . . .).

Other establishments might cater only to clerics or the wealthier classes. The possibilities are limited only by the town size and the DM’s imagination.

To round out the town I’ll throw in a couple of ideas best categorized as miscellaneous.

**Surgeon** — for a fee of 25 gps the doctor will attempt to cure 1-6 wound points (50% chance of success); for 35 gps he will attempt to cure poison (a one in six chance for success). Maximum of one attempt per day and one successful healing or cure per week. Money paid despite the success or lack thereof, of the attempt.

**Library** — a number of scholars will seek out knowledge among the many tomes and volumes for a fee. The base value of general information is about 100gps with specific facts increasing the fee. (Types of knowledge might include legends concerning a certain area or dungeon, or DM created monster, Scribes available to identify and write in languages.)

As the DM develops his town he should keep a town directory, listing the address of the establishment as well as its function. A few phrases describing the interior adds to the color. This should be followed by pertinent info on the proprietor, types of patrons or visitors and their number (as in the above, Falgrave’s example). Then as players enter a shop or market the DM can give them a brief idea of the place and make it come alive for them.

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**Part II. The Town Population:**

Once you’ve got the physical aspects of your town laid out, you’re going to need someone to populate it. These non-player characters will provide the needed bodies to serve as shopkeepers, merchants, tavern owners and patrons, warriors and magic users your players will run into. They will truly serve to flesh out the skeletal structure your previous work has provided you.

It is probably best to roll up a large amount of character first and then assign them jobs and positions in the town as seems appropriate. It is not likely that the village smith would be the possessor of a mere 3 or 4 strength, or that a man with an 18 intelligence would serve as a cook’s apprentice. If you can’t find the certain person you need from the pool you’ve rolled up, Fake it! Just supply the needed attributes you want for those particular non-players. You certainly have license as DM to literally create the right man for the job.

The easiest way to keep track of these non-players is to get a small note book and devote it to that purpose. As to the segregation of types, I’ve found that the headings, “warriors”, “magic-users”, “clerics”, “townspeople” and “specialists” (the latter referring to the myriad of new character types that have lately appeared) suit admirably. Be sure to leave room as you will probably wish to on your initial population base later.

All standard attributes should be rolled for in the usual manner. If you wish to reflect the fact that the adventuring types are more likely to be the cream of humanity, throw 3 four-sided dice for townspeople.

Additionally, women, for strength and constitution only (forgive me, any liberated women reading this), and children, for all attributes, can use two standard dice. Other considerations can be determined on the following chart. Roll once for EACH category.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die Roll</th>
<th>Alignment</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Loyalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Law</td>
<td>young</td>
<td>Very cooperative, friendly</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>young</td>
<td>Cooperative, friendly</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>young</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Middle Age</td>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>Disloyal</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chaos</td>
<td>Very Old</td>
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**Die Roll** | **Initiative** | **Level** |
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<td>6</td>
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**Chart Key:**

Level — straight forward, simply the experience level of that character. For “special” roll an eight-sided die and number rolled equals the level of the character.

Alignment — Again, just as it appears. I’ve reasoned that a town is a lawful place just by its nature of structure and emphasis on order in its design. Hence, only a small chance for chaotic alignment.

Age — more informational than functional. I only wanted to provide a characteristic to help tell people apart. Add one to roll for each whole group of two levels above 2nd level the character has gained. Add one always, for magic-users.

Personality — The hardest, and the one the DM will have to add to the most. This will give a basic idea of how a particular person is going to act when players interact with him. A die roll of 1 here would affect subsequent random reaction die rolls with a +2 when the character is asked to do something, go on an expedition, etc. A die roll of 2 would be a +1 while rolls of 5 and 6 would be -1 and -2 respectively.

Loyalty — In a manner similar to personality, this category would affect any rolls for desertion or other tests of loyalty. Low loyalty coupled with a chaotic alignment might result in the character betraying the party to an evil high priest, etc.

Initiative — This is to help the DM mainly. Average initiative will mean a character won’t be particularly bright or innovative, while high initiative might mean a strong character who could be a leader if the players are botching the show. Low initiative characters have to be told to do everything.

After you have rolled up a bunch of people, enter them in your notebook. In addition to the above material, it’s a good idea to list a place or two where the character might be found. To real flesh them out, add a few bits of information about them personally. For example: Blatherson of Hillock


More now than just monster fodder, Blatherson is a real, if somewhat Falstaffian, character. By adding these little bits your die roll generated population will take on a little semblance of real people and become more than bodies attributed with certain mathematical characteristics. Your players will actually be able to make friends with certain townspeople, as well as cross others. With the inclusion of personified townspeople your town will literally come alive.

The development of a town can be a truly rewarding experience for both the DM and the players. Approached in the right manner (and the ideas presented here are only offered as suggestions) can be a place of interest in and of itself, and certainly worthy of one afternoon’s adventuring.

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Magic. A few people will readily admit that they believe in it; many will say that magic possibly existed in the olden time but is no longer practiced today; more will say, “Nonsense!”

The real truth is that magic does exist today and is practiced and that most people (whether they call it magic or not) not only believe in it, but secretly use some sort of magic, if only in very small and hidden ways.

People look any man or boy to turn out his pockets (all of them) and examine the contents very closely; you will be sure to find some sort of charm, token, amulet, lucky piece, or coin, or a picture or diagram of some sort. It does not matter if he is a school boy, a scientist, a mathematician, a teacher, a minister, a politician, an explorer, a business executive, an astronaut, a prizefighter, a plumber, a clerk, a jockey, a politician, an explorer, a business executive, an astronaut, or an oil tycoon. There are many good reasons for this: if a person has something hidden or concealed, it is likely to carry it about with him. It may be hung around his neck or in his pocket or his wallet, but somewhere you will find it. It may even be tattooed on his skin in a hidden place!

Girls and women are a little different; they may show their magic charms openly as decorations or jewelry and carefully carry them in their purses; and they may have many of them. But more often their magic is kept carefully concealed in some secret place at home.

This is just a very small (but important) part of magic. The magicians of today are very careful to hide themselves and the magic they do from the public. There are many good reasons for this: if a person or group of persons become known as magicians and able to perform magical things and help or hinder people in various ways they will at once be bothered to distraction by all kinds of demands and requests. People want power, revenge, love potions, cure-alls, wealth, youth and beauty, and help of all sorts; so many even ask for death — everybody asks for something. When the unfortunate magician refuses (even the most tiny or easily given wish) the wishers begin to hate him, and if they cannot make him do as they wish, they want to make his life so miserable and dangerous that he is lucky to get away with his skin and bones unbroken.

In times past, a lot of magicians (both real and fake) were not able to hide well enough, or to say “No!” firmly enough, or to get away quickly enough when things became dangerous. Some very unpleasant happenings put an end to these poor magicians. Some were burned or hanged immediately (these were the lucky ones!). Others, were imprisoned and tortured by those who wanted their secrets or help for themselves alone. It was even more dangerous for a magician to help some people and refuse others. Sometimes a lucky wizard found himself able to enjoy the protection of a powerful king or warlord and was comparatively safe, but only for a while, for this, too, was very hazardous because the magician was always asked for more and more, and still more, charms and spells and miracles until he was finally faced with the impossible and was forced to flee for his life, if there was an opportunity. Sometimes he got away.

Naturally it was not very long until real magicians became quite hard to find and even harder to persuade to work magic. Nevertheless, magic persisted and today it still flourishes — in secret. In the United States there are many, many people who indulge in magic for their own comfort, amusement or safety. There may be a real magician in the same apartment house you live in, or in the same block, or just across the street; certainly there is one in the same city or town where you live. But who or she is you will probably never find out. Magicians have become very, very clever in hiding themselves from the public.

There have also been wicked magicians, but they only last a short time and are soon taken care of by the public or by other magicians. The evil ones are generally weak and unsuccessful people with little powerful magic. This is fortunate for all of us. Once in a while a powerful and good magician may go mad and do considerable damage before he is controlled or eliminated, but these cases are very rare. So any magicians you are likely to meet or to know, or to perhaps discover, are almost sure to be honorable, peaceful, and wise people — like the Finzers...

The snow was already almost six inches deep, but the Finzer family has a pretty tolerant attitude towards snow. Margo, that’s Mother, likes to rock in her rocking chair in front of her favorite window and watch the snow sift down; or, even better, to see it blow and swirl in great drifty patterns. Of course, the main thing is rocking cozy and warm inside our house. Hal, that’s Father, seems to revel in the idea of deep soft snow (so long as he doesn’t have to go out and fight it). He is forever retelling about the tunnels and igloos of times past, “when the snow was really deep!”

Fifteen year old Andrew looks at a good snow as personal favor. “Money from Heaven,” he says. And well he should since he has several regular customers, all of them aged or middle-aged-old ladies whom he has somehow charmed into paying him handsomely for clearing their walks and steps. Within, who is twelve, can take snow or leave it alone. He likes to make a few snowballs and throw them at various friends, but since he prefers to be indoors that is where he has been doing and get away with it.” Margo is very slow to get mad but when she does it lasts until she is satisfied that the cause is removed or changed for the better. She ticked off a finger at a time as she spoke. “Crumbo has pushed Swithin in the snow, at least once a day, for the last three days. Swinit tried to get away from Crumbo, but Crumbo chased and caught him. He stuffed Swinit’s pockets with snow; he opened his book catchel and stuffed it with snow; he put snow down Swinit’s back and neck, his shirt and boots, and inside his cap. All the time pretending he was picking him up and brushing him off. This is just too much!”

“Forget the gloves!” shouted Swinit. “He tore one clean off and kicked it down the sewer!”

Margo lifted a finger for silence, her eyes like blue sparks, “Hal, this calls for your talents. Tomorrow; right now!” As she finished, Josephine, a beautiful young woman, came from the dark shadows and leaped to the back of Margo’s chair. The cat gently nuzzled her right ear; green sparks, “Hal, this calls for your talents. Tomorrow; right now!” As she finished, Josephine, a beautiful young woman, came from the dark shadows and leaped to the back of Margo’s chair. The cat gently nuzzled her right ear; green eyes peered deeply into blue eyes for an instant, then with a faint meow, the cat returned silently into the shadows. Before Hal could answer Margo said, in a very low voice, “That settles it! Josephine says that Crumbo not only threw snowballs at her but that he buried the Pingleton in the snow. She just barely dug it out. I’m not going to save it!”

A sort of low hiss came from everybody. Margo gave a cold smile, “Josephine says to please turn Crumbo into a mouse! Well, Hal!”

Josephine had pointed a thumb at the wallet of books behind him, “Swinit, third book, third shelf up, left end!”

Swinit made a blur he moved so fast. It was a small, thick, rather old looking book, well used and very ordinary appearing but the title was blurred. Hal stifled through the pages and then closed it firmly. He was wet and cold; he turned his head and slowly slid back the front cover revealing a hollow place inside. There was a jumble of several small objects visible. Hal poked around in them for a moment, lifted one of the objects out and placed it on the table beside him. Everyone was breathing hard and Swinit was
positively fizzing with eagerness as Hal slid shut the book cover and silently gestured to return it to the shelf. Hal picked up the little object. It was a very small, soft leather bag; like a tiny marble sack or pouch. Very gently he finger-tipped open the mouth of the bag and emptied the contents into his left palm.

Hal finger

In his plan lay a Charm, a clenched fist, carved in finest minute detail; you could even see the tiny pink fingernails; it was made of polished stone.

“What is it?” all the children spoke at once, “What does it do?”

Hal shook the pouch gently and a folded wad of paper smaller than a pea fell beside the Charm. “Open it up, son; read it aloud.”

Swithin, trembling with anticipation, smoothed the paper until it was flat; Andrew and Gay both reached for it but Swithin slid like an eel between Hal’s knees, and holding it in the bright light read out, “Double Reaction Protective Charm. Guaranteed if properly used.” He stopped and looked disgusted, “I don’t want to protect Crumbo. I want to mur . . .”

Hal chuckled, “Yes, I know. If you had the Wand of Power you would go ‘zzzzz’ and no more Crumbo! Right? Right! But before you blow a fuse — listen! Everyone sit down and relax. The paper, please, sir.”

The children drew back to where they had been; Margo went on rocking, silently. There was no sign of Josephine.

Hal continued, “This is a pretty good example of why most people should have no knowledge of Magic, especially children: murder; fish-food; melting; mice and some others. All this to revenge Swithin, who probably isn’t so innocent himself. Even the cat!” Hal lifted his thick eyebrows. “This won’t be a long speech.”

The children sighed gently; it had begun like a lecture.

“This Charm dates way into the past; long before the Old House burnt down and this one was built. This little fist isn’t as innocent as it looks.” He juggled it on his palm and then clenched his fist around it, “Hit me on the nose!” he commanded.

The children scrambled to their feet; Margo stopped rocking; everyone seemed almost too eager to obey.

“One at a time,” said Hal. “And easy the first time.”

Andrew had taken a firm stance and cocked his fist. “Let me! Let me!” came loudly from Gay.

“Since it’s my charm I get to go first!” said Swithin.

“Ladies first,” said Hal.

Andrew and Swithin reluctantly stepped aside.

Gay started another swing, her full lips squeezed tightly and her eyes sparkling with joy. About six inches from the tip of Hal’s rather short nose, her fist shot suddenly to one side and she spun off balance. Andrew caught her before she fell down. “I slipped,” she hollered, “Let me do it again.” “Nope. Andrew’s turn.” Hal puffed once on his cigar and sat forward.

Andrew decided on a straight right. He was pretty strong and had oversize hands with big knuckles; he blew on them and measured the distance like a boxer. This was a rare occasion and he meant to make the most of it! He started a powerful punch. His fist travelled about six inches of the foot it was meant to go, stopped as if it had hit a curved pane of glass, turned on him and flashed back. Only a quick dodge of his head saved his own nose. Hal never even blinked. Andrew stared at his treacherous fist with curiosity.

“My turn! My turn!” Swithin was bouncing with excitement. “Let me hold it and you hit me!” He was getting the idea and he liked it.

Hal was getting the spirit, too. “No. Not now. Your turn tomorrow. Try something heavy.”

Swithin, completely carried away, ran around in a little circle looking for something heavy.

Margo intervened sharply, “Everybody quiet; and please sit down.” Her voice, like an icy spray, cooled off the group. They sat. Swithin rolled his eyes, looking for something heavy; he was quite happy.

Hal made a cloud of smoke to hide behind and opened his fist. Margo said, “Swithin, bring me your coat. Gay, get me the sewing basket. Andrew, fetch . . .”

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the popcorn and the popper. Hal, bring glasses and something to drink. This calls for a little refreshment!"

The children scurried out. Hal handed over the Charm with the slip of paper and waved on the over-head lights, as he went to the kitchen. By the time he had returned Margo had replaced the small caravan tist and the paper back into the tiny pouch. She tightened the drawstrings and whipped it shut with heavy black thread; this was placed in another small cloth bag and also sewed shut.

"Which pocket do you want it in?" she asked Swithin.

"Left one," he grunted. He was helping Andrew set up the popcorn popper and trying to watch Margo at the same time.

"Remember," Hal cautioned. "The Charm will only work when you close your fingers around it. If you let go of it — nothing."

Margo basted the bag to the inside of the left coat pocket with more heavy thread. She snipped off the loose ends and stuffed bag and pocket right-side-in again, slid in her hand and smiled, pleased with her own neat work.

"Here, try it on." She held the coat for Swithin who almost jumped into it. He shoved his left hand into the pocket and fisted the Charm.

"Just right," he smirked, "somebody hit me in the nose!"

"Poppers ready, Dad!" announced Andrew.

All of them turned towards Hal who was pouring everyone their own special drink: strawberry for Gay, tangerine for Swithin, pink lemonade for Andrew, black coffee for Margo and tea for himself, all from the same special pitcher.

Popping popcorn was always a treat; almost as good as a fine show on the Viewer. The popper was a big copper bowl about twelve inches in diameter and eight inches high. Over the top of the bowl fitted a cover of coarse copper screen held in place by three clamps. Andrew had already poured in the grains of corn. Everyone except Margo watched Hal intently. How did he do it? (Grandfather Lucy didn’t even bother with the screen.) Hal made a swift motion with his right hand, a finger twiddle, pointed his cigar at the bowl and, Voom-Whem!, a lovely shock-wave of fresh butter-hot popcorn smell swept across every grinning face. All the corn had exploded at once! And each white, fluffy grain was perfect but-...
quite tightly and with all the courage of a scared but
real hero he kept telling himself, "It did work with
the popcorn." In about three more short kicks his
piece of ice would be there and then he, himself.
He gave one extra hard kick, took a deep breath and
plunged, head up, his fist tightly clenched, into the
cracks of Crumbo.
Crumbo made it a point to make sure there were no witnesses to his mean, bully acts. To-
day, however, he failed to notice that the Pringle
house across the street from his prospective ambush
had the living room curtains open and both the old
Pringle sisters were watching Swithin from their
rocking chairs.
Now, the Pringle sisters were not nosey, nor were
they busy-bodies, but they did tend to view all neigh-
borhood affairs as an act put on for their special
pleasure, and thus it was that Penny Pringle and her
sister Prissy became an audience to the confronta-
tion.
Swithin made his last, hard kick, squared his
shoulders and looked straight ahead. Two steps be-
fore he reached the alleyway Crumbo popped out,
sideways and up like a jack-in-the-box, a big grin on
his face, completely blocking the sidewalk. He tow-
ered over Swithin like a Goliath over a David.
"Out of the way, Shrimp; don't make me step on
you!" Crumbo had no sort of plan except a vague
thought of 'give him the old hip and shoulder'. By
just walking towards his victim he could either
knock him down or force him into the shin-deep
snow. The shoulder part wouldn't work unless
Crumbo crouched down quite a lot.
Swithin said nothing; he just looked up into the
close-set greenish eyes of his tormentor and squeezed
his sweating fist a little tighter, without moving an
eyelash.
Crumbo, used to people this size jumping on com-
mand, gave him 'the old hop' — at least he tried to.
The next thing Crumbo knew he was sprawled face
down, elbow deep, in snow. He felt as if a truck had
smashed into a fireplug that had smashed back with
an iron hand much bigger and stronger than his.
Crumbo was minus his left glove and a couple of
buttons.
Now we must give Crumbo some credit: he was no
quitter, nor was he a coward; but he was a glutton
for punishment — he came right back up onto the
sidewalk for more. He shook off some snow, dug
more out of his collar, brushed off his head and
stuck out a big fist, waving it in front of Swithin,
threatening his nose. Swithin clutched his charm
tighter.
"Smell that," Crumbo growled, "I'm gonna sock
you for tripping me that way — I'm gonna let you
have it!" He cocked his fist and glared like a wild
animal.
Swithin, who was beginning to relax and enjoy
himself, resumed his usual jauntiness, "Sure, I smell
It! It stinks!"
This was the one thing that, unknown to Swithin,
Crumbo was super-sensitive about. The somewhat
simple mind of Crumbo had become so addled and
mixed up by an overdose of TV commercials that he
was now using a different deodorant for his mouth,
his armpits, and his feet, as well as a special soap all
over. He would have fooled a smart bloodhound he
had so many different odors. He didn't really need
any of the gunk but he was so filled with fear that he
felt he must naturally have a bad and powerful stink.
If Swithin had kicked him on a boil it wouldn't have
hurt as much.
Crumbo let out a little scream of pure rage and
started his blow. He turned it down towards the
chest. Even in his anger he had sense enough to re-
alyze that to sock a much smaller boy in the mouth
was no good (it would make tell-tale marks), espe-
cially when the smaller boy had both hands in his
pockets and so far hadn't moved (even though he
must have done something to Crumbo).
The Pringle sisters were no longer rocking. They
both sat bolt straight and stared out the window.
"The big one has gone loony, look at him!"
Penny was excited.
"Be still and look yourself," Prissy retorted out
of the side of her mouth like an old convict.
"Wow!" said both together.
Crumbo had heaved himself erect again, jumped
around in front of Swithin, made some wicked mo-
tions with his fist towards Swithin; then all at once
he knocked himself down with a hard left to the jaw
and was raining hard punches on his own mouth and
nose, at the same time grabbing with his right hand
for his left wrist. After several tries he managed to
capture his wild left. He ended sitting flat on the icy
sidewalk, legs apart, in a very shocked state. Noth-
ing like this had ever happened before; and it hurt,
too. He wiped his nose with the back of his hand and
saw a streak of blood.
This performance delighted Swithin; it had been
the first attack he had been able to watch in de-
tail. He laughed out loud with sheer joy.
Crumbo, in pain, bewildered, baffled and angry;
unable to figure out just what had happened, made
his worst mistake of the day. He completely lost his
temper and grabbed up a head-sized chunk of
hardened snow off Swithin's head in such a
way that it split in two and whammed right back into
Crumbo's face. It appeared to be very sticky snow,
because Crumbo was staggering around having great
trouble getting rid of it.
"That was clever of the Finzer boy," Prissy said
to her sister.
"I'm not sure he did it. The Crummle boy threw it!"
Penny answered.
They saw Crumbo sink to his knees, sort of paw-
ing himself all over the face and neck and gently kee
over on the walk; his head pillowed on the heated
snow. Crumbo looked a mess. Swithin noted that in
addition to Crumbo's previous damage he now had
snow packed inside his shirt, his pants, and his
shoes; one eye was swelling shut and his once crisp
hair was wet and dirty. He was short both gloves
now, and the heel of one shoe was gone; several
more buttons had disappeared and the shoulder
seams of his coat were ripped open. He looked sort
of pitiful sitting there, braced with his arms out be-
hind him, his legs sprawled out across the walk, his
eyes crossed and blood drying on his lip, panting like
tired old dog with tears trickling down his smoky
cheeks, too beat even to wipe them away. Swithin
knew better than to feel sorry for Crumbo. He step-
ned between the long legs in the direction of home;
stopped, shifted his books to his left, took his right
hand out of his pocket and patted Crumbo on the
head.
"I take it back. You don't really stink!" and with
a leap like a happy rabbit he ran for home.
was only thirteen years old and not really wicked. He slowly climbed to his feet and, not even bothering to look for his gloves and cap, limped off in the opposite direction. He was so filled with self-pity that no thought of revenge was in his mind — yet.

The Pringle sisters began to rock again.

“I can figure out how he did all but the last one,” said Penny, “but why did he do any of it?”

Prissy poured them both a glass of tea and sipped.

“You tell me when you get it figured out. It’s not the way you look that it worked.” He turned to Gay, Hal smiled. “Off with the coat, so we can return the charm to its proper place. I can tell you by the way you look that it worked.” He turned to Gay, “Better vanish the stairs next time when you take the last step, little one, it’s safer that way. We want no secrecy escaped serious trouble.

Then, in the late 1700’s, Great-great-great-grandfather Finzer decided to come to America. It was in 1771 that the first known Finzer, in direct line of descent, landed at the Port of New York on a dismal 16th of April. It was late afternoon when all the trunks and bags and bales, along with his wife and the little boy, who became the grandfather of Grandfather Lucius Finzer, were safe and sound on shore. Otto Finzer, his wife Rose, and their young son Nicholas, had no trouble settling down and leading a quiet life until Young Nicholas (later known as ‘Old Nick’) passed his twentieth birthday and fell in love. He married Sarah (described as a strawberry blonde of great beauty) against the wishes of her family; and, to spare trouble for everyone, they eloped. They traveled light, both on horseback, and settled in a small town in the Virginia territory. Nick was provident enough to bring along a small pack of magic tools and charms and some powerful spells that made even the rough life quite comfortable.

Here Great-grandfather Jacob was born. When he was three years old the small family moved back towards the East and settled in a small town. That small town grew into the city the Finzers now live in.

It was Old Nick who refined the way of living of the Finzers in his “Philosophy of Protective Mimi-cry,” a book now known to nearly every magician.

Here, in the foothills of ancient mountains, not far from the ocean, he built the first rooms of the Old House where our present place now stands. When the Old House burned down several decades later, Jacob built the first four rooms of our present dwelling. It is now well over a hundred years old and still sturdy and sound as ever.

The house still must appear from the outside much as it did when it was first completed — a little, low, white cottage snuggled against a small rise in the back; porches front and rear with a hedge all around. The house set close to the road (now street) in front, but not too close. It had privacy from neighbors on one side due to space (about fifty feet) and from the street on the other side, being on a corner. Between the slope of the ground, the distance from the neighbors, and the hedges, it is very difficult to see inside, even if someone wished to spy.

All sorts of additions have been made through the years. Most of the magical equipment and books were safely rescued from the fire that destroyed the Old House and it was Jacob, who in the New House, made some of the most wonderful inventions and discoveries that we still enjoy.

By the time Jacob Finzer had grown up and married his wife Jezebel (called Jessie) and fathered a son, Lucius, our grandfather, the Finzers were permanently established as sound, middle-class, non-nonsense, honest, and even rather stodgy citizens of the neighborhood and the town. Due to the teaching and practice of Old Nick, the Finzers were just about the very last family in the community to ever be connected with magic, much less to ever be accused of being magicians; such an idea was laughable. They were considered good neighbors, good, solid citizens, friendly and helpful, and not at all nosy. They were quiet, with well-behaved children, apparently independently wealthy from inherited good fortune, but certainly far from rich — just happy, quiet, and very ordinary people. This, of course, was exactly the goal for which Old Nick had long and patiently worked. Jacob achieved it and Lucius and Hal preserved the status quo until today. If the Finzers themselves were to openly claim to be magicians now, people would only laugh at the idea. Of course there are always individuals like the Pringle sisters who suspect and watch, but since they see something queer in nearly everybody and say so without being asked, nobody pays any attention to them, which is probably just as well for a lot of people.

By the time grandfather Lucius married Grandmother Greta, several rooms had been added to the house by Old Nick and Jacob; Lucius added the Tower Room and the spiral stairway later on. It is very nice and convenient to have all those second-story rooms on one floor; it would truly take a magician to explain the plumbing in that house to an outsider.

Hal says that modern science is just beginning to catch up with some of the practical ideas magicians have known about and used for a long time. The idea of multiple or coinciding rooms is one of them. Modern physics is well aware of the vast spaces between all particles of matter and the fact that these empty spaces are tremendously greater than the so-called solids. It is easy enough for a competent magician to manipulate this space in such a way that two rooms, or even many, can be put in the same space without any sort of crowding or confusion. The same goes for furniture and everything else concerned. It is all in knowing just exactly what to do; like going through a wall or locked door or hiding inside rocks or trees: all very simple with the proper magic.

Hal Finzer was the third son born to Greta and Lucius Finzer. He, as the youngest, elected to stay
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Uncle Otto. They are both big men, over six feet tall, barrel-bodied, with beaks of noses and a sort of gray hair. The other thing they have in common is that a well packaged object, small and carefully proportioned, does not arrive from some place where he is protected, does not belong from some particular area for our benefit; more often we must search them out, use them again.

Otto is also a great collector of artifacts for the Viewer. He was the one who really perfected that device and has always been immensely curious and diligent in trying to find objects that will show the very best scenes possible. He gets most of the benefit of his world-wide collecting; hardly a month (sometimes only a week) goes by that a well packaged small object, small and carefully proportioned, does not arrive from some place where he is traveling. Sometimes he has already tried it on the small Viewer he carries with him and has marked some particular places for us; most often we are the first to get to view whatever there is to be seen.

The Viewer is really a very simple device, in fact it could hardly be dignified by the name of mechanism. Ours looks much like a 24 inch tv set from the front, where there is a curved glass, very clear, about three inches thick, but no one could tell that by just looking at it. Inside it is almost empty. There is a little platform furnished with clamps to hold the object to be viewed, a slim wooden rod held the object to be viewed, a slim wooden rod, into which the object to be viewed fits, and other pieces to hold the object in place. The Viewer is really a very simple device, in fact it could hardly be dignified by the name of mechanism. Ours looks much like a 24 inch tv set from the front, where there is a curved glass, very clear, about three inches thick, but no one could tell that by just looking at it. Inside it is almost empty. There is a little platform furnished with clamps to hold the object to be viewed, a slim wooden rod.

The Viewer works (so it seems) by being able to transport the captured images and sound to which it has been exposed during its existence. The ideal object to place in the Viewer would be a very hard smooth stone (perhaps a flat cut diamond) which had been exposed to very interesting and exciting events. Uncle Otto would like very much to borrow some of the crown jewels of England or the facing statues, buildings and ruins of all periods of history; cutting little chunks of wood (even splinters when he could get it) for carving; and getting a bird to make something that looks promising; and procuring small medallions and ornament from the scenes of movies in famous theaters. In fact nothing is more likely to get us interested than the Viewer and lately we have used it more and more.

But, to get back to the limitations of magic: magic may not be used for revenge or to exercise power over others or to show off — all these things are much too dangerous. Magic may be used for pleasures or to extend knowledge, and for all sorts of little things to make life easier. Above all it is not to be bragged (or even talked about), except within the family, and even that is discouraged. Reasons for serious reasons. Magic is very definitely never to be used in any of the fine arts such as music, painting, sculpture, or dancing, nor is it ever to be used in competitive games or sports or any other sort of creative work. Hal, who is a fair chef, includes cooking in this list and refuses to take any magical short-cuts when he cooks. Simmering, Seasoning, and Skill are the names of this list and refuses to take any magical short-cuts when he cooks. Simmering, Seasoning, and Skill are

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home, mainly because the older brothers, Fritz and Otto II (named, of course after the original Otto Finzer) were such travelers. Both are possessed by the true wanderlust that still keeps them moving around. They seem to take after Lucius who has a very restless nature and must always do something or talk something. He is never satisfied just to stay put and enjoy a quiet life. On the other hand, Hal is very much like Great-Grandfather Jacob and dislikes all the troubles involved in moving around the world and prefers to stay at home and read and cook and just relax and work on new spells, transformations, and recipes. However, it would be quite hard to find a more exciting grandfather than Lucius or more interesting and unexpected uncles than Uncle Fritz and Uncle Otto. They are both big men, over six feet tall and barrel-bodied, with beaks of noses and a sort of Viking-kenness in their grey-blue eyes. On the other hand, they look quite different, since Otto is as bald as an egg while Fritz has a mane of thick iron-gray hair.

Uncle Otto has made a good find and luck is with us today. Hal says the results could be disastrous and to remind him to be several miles away when it happens.

None of the Finzer men are lazy and all have prided themselves on being good, if not excellent, providers. But none of them have ever enjoyed routine or hard physical labor, especially Grandfather Lucius.

The Viewer works (so it seems) by being able to transport the captured images and sound to which it has been exposed during its existence. The ideal object to place in the Viewer would be a very hard smooth stone (perhaps a flat cut diamond) which had been exposed to very interesting and exciting events. Uncle Otto would like very much to borrow some of the crown jewels of England or the facing statues, buildings and ruins of all periods of history; cutting little chunks of wood (even splinters when he could get it) for carving; and getting a bird to make something that looks promising; and procuring small medallions and ornament from the scenes of movies in famous theaters. In fact nothing is more likely to get us interested than the Viewer and lately we have used it more and more.
the Magic Window into a time where present-day clothes will not look right. All that is needed is the material, a fair idea of what is wanted (which she can get through studying various costume books), and one brief look when we are there to make any necessary changes. No questions have yet been asked of us.

I can tell you still don’t really believe me. About Magic, I mean. Well, have you ever heard the story about Aladdin and the Magic Lamp? Just a fairy tale you say? Well, let me tell you another story . . .

Hill Top School was an old school and had many traditions. One was that every year, to raise funds for the football team and other sports, a show was given. All the students from the lowest freshman to the lordliest senior sold tickets to parents, relatives, friends, enemies, storekeepers, strangers, innocent tourists, or indeed to anyone who could be persuaded, brow-beaten, or otherwise enticed into a purchase. This show, through the years, had become the biggest and most important event of the year, both from a spectacular standpoint and a financial one. And it was always a good show. A tremendous amount of time and preparation went into the performance. Some acts had, literally, several years of planning and plotting, that went into a purchase. This show, through the years, had become the biggest and most important event of the year, both from a spectacular standpoint and a financial one. And it was always a good show. A tremendous amount of time and preparation went into the performance.

Of course, everyone wanted a part; a part as big and important as they could get. It would take too much to describe all the planning and plotting, besides the practicing and perspiring, that went into the show. Not only the whole student body was involved, but also the teachers and especially the parents of the various competing acts. This proved to be a very grave mistake. Even after all these years several members of that group still carried scars and wounded memories that were painful and unforgettable, and the Show, that sad year, was so far below the previous level of excellence that Mr. VanZant was begged to return to absolute power the very next week. He accepted with outward reluctance but inward glee and satisfaction. He had not been challenged again.

Andrew Finzer was sitting in the fourth seat from the aisle in the third row — right center. This just happened to be next to the third seat, right center where Mr. VanZant always sat, whether for assembly, performances, or, as now, in judgement. Andrew had no doubts of his welcome there; he and the librarian were old and good friends. Both respected and loved good books, they were determined enemies at chess (so far this year Andrew had not lost a game), and each had a keen appreciation of one another as individuals.

The pianist switched on her music-stand light and sounded a few chords just as Mr. VanZant slid into his seat next to Andrew. He put on a pair of thick-rimmed glasses, signaled to dim the house lights, and gave one pistol-sharp clap for the first tryout to begin. He ignored Andrew entirely.

The footlights went up and a spotlight picked up a tap-dancer at left stage just as the piano crashed into its opening bars. Anddrew could tell the act was good. Mr. VanZant opened a small notebook and poised a pencil without moving his eyes from the stage. Except for the staccato taps and the piano there was no sound. The huge auditorium was empty out front, everyone else concerned was back-stage. This was the way Mr. VanZant wanted it and so it was. The auditorium they were in was very large by any standards, and lavishly equipped. Mr. VanZant had wangled that from the Fifth Fortune of Peter Zorn, the last of the truly independent oil wildcatters, just before he went broke for the fifth time. He had managed the library from fortune number three and was looking forward to fortune number six. He had already applied to Peter for a small atomic reactor, and received a favorable reply from some obscure South American port.

The dancer ended with a flourish and a little mark was made in the book.
Another sharp clap and this time the curtain went up on a partially set stage; the lights changed around and the piano began a soft melody. There was a delay and the curtain came back down again. Mr. VanZant gave a sigh and that was all.

Andrew took a deep breath. "Sir," he began, "I would like your permission to try out."

Mr. VanZant slowly turned his head and looked sadly at Andrew, "Et tu Brute" he murmured, "and what sort of light fantastic do you plan to trip?"

"Something new, I know you will like it." thought as he watched, too. Andrew kept quiet and waited for a decision of Caesar, "All right. One time. Impress me!" He clapped again and waved for some house-lights to give Andrew time to get up stage.

Andrew vaulted into the orchestra pit, paused to whisper to the pianist, and climbed up over the footlights to stage right. All was quiet, the only sound was the footsteps of Hal finally producing an old opera hat, one of the props in the school, and firm admirer of Andrew) float out of Mr. VanZant who munched it up at once.

The levitation act had given a brief moment of fear to Hal when Andrew almost let the girl assisting him (Mamie Potts, the only female chess player in school, and firm admirer of Andrew) float out of reach. But Andrew cleverly snagged her with the hoop used to demonstrate that no wires were attached and finished the act with distinction. No one, not even Mamie, suspected anything unusual.

Andrew’s last appearance was due any minute now. He was in the program three separate and distinctly different places and all the Finzers were proud. The big curtain went down. Andrew was waiting at stage left for his cue from the orchestra conductor; he was feeling more than a little cocky, waiting at stage left for his cue from the orchestra conductor; he was feeling more than a little cocky, and if applause meant anything he was the hit of the show. His favorite magic of all was coming next in just a minute. He clasped his flat hat under his arm and checked the braided black cord that attached it to his shirt. All was well. The cue came and he walked slowly with just the tiniest bit of a swagger out onto stage. A ripple of applause greeted him as he reached centerstage and made a deep bow. He pushed up his clothes and he had carried off two acts without a hitch. And if applause meant anything he was the hit of this show. His favorite magic of all was coming up next in just a minute.

Andrew took a breath and whispered "Watch!"

"Magic. Three acts!" whispered Andrew. A visible shudder convulsed Mr. VanZant. "Oh no!" he said quite audibly. And then, after a pause, "Nevermore!"

Andrew expected something of this sort. He had discussed past performances of amateur magicians with the librarian before, over the chess-board after a game. There had been the unforgettable performance of Tommy Cox who had become so trapped and tangled up with his magic table that a mechanic and a hacksaw were necessary to get him loose. The machinery had devilishly grabbed his fingers at the very first attempted trick and gone into wild action producing bouquets of flowers, streams of paper of all colors, goldfish without bowls, jets of water (plain and colored), several live and stuffed animals, and some startling explosions. In a vain effort to master his monster Tommy somehow entrapped his remaining hand and stood paralyzed in spotlighted desperation until spell-bound operator ran down the stage. Luckily the audience kept quiet. Very few, considered it the best comic act of the evening and kept applauding for an encore. Poor Tommy never even got to take a bow.

Another older, but even more embarrassing, memory was a small one to please Mr. VanZant who munched it up at once.

"What kind of fruit do you want? This seed will produce all the trees you want."

"What kind of fruit to you want? This seed will grow into a Magic Tree and produce any kind you wish for." He held out his hand palm-out, "No, don’t tell me—just think of it very hard." Andrew placed the Magic Seed on the black cloth and wondered what Mr. VanZant would dream up. Andrew made the move marvellous passes over the seed. All he could see of Mr. VanZant was the little white blur where he had left it floating.

Faces were clustered in the wings on both sides of the stage as Andrew reached inside the hat and pulled out a small object. He called to Mr. VanZant, "What kind of fruit to you want? This seed will grow into a Magic Tree and produce any kind you wish for." He held out his hand palm-out, "No, don’t tell me—I just think of it very hard." Andrew placed the Magic Seed on the black cloth and wondered what Mr. VanZant would dream up. Andrew made the move marvellous passes over the seed. All he could see of Mr. VanZant was the little white blur that was his face.

Suddenly the seed popped open like a clam shell and the thin stem sprouted out and up; in a matter of seconds it was higher than Andrew was, tall. It grew, first small, then, rapidly enlarging three-lobed leaves. Green blossom turned into fruits of some sort. Andrew identified them just as they turned blue and then a dark purple—figs!

Andrew was almost as surprised as Mr. VanZant who clapped loudly, had the lights turned up and who was standing up cutting his mouth with his hands—"Throw me back!" Andrew obliged, and, noting that the faces peer- ing though the curtain and peeping from the wings were getting closer, he rapped the tree sharply with his forefinger. It vanished like a pricked balloon into the seed-shell. He picked up the shell, dropped it in to the convenient hat, swiftly folded the cloth and pushed it after the seed. He then reached out, snapped the hat flat, bowed to the wings, the audience, and the open-mouthed musician, and sauntered off stage down the steps back to his seat.

Mr. VanZant flipped pages hopefully when Andrew sat down. He offered the remaining fruit but Andrew could tell he didn’t really mean it, so he refused. Andrew felt pretty smug and even looked it. Mr. VanZant clapped again and the lights went down and the curtain came up. This time it was a small minstrel show and very good too.

Mr. VanZant whispered, "I really am impressed."

How many more acts? And are they this impressive?"

"Two, answered Andrew. "Better, I’ll show you to them later, too many people back there.”

Mr. VanZant agreed with a nod. "How did you know I would choose figs?” he murmured, “the rest I can figure out. O.K., in my office, tonight at seven.” Andrew was slipped into the hat and before the music stopped. He heard another clap just before it locked shut. He felt very confident and happy.
and covered with feathers, and there was a great yellow crest on its little head. This was definitely not his little horse but some other strange magical creature.

Andrew stepped back a pace in sheer astonishment. He heard a gasp from the side of the stage, and, collecting his wits, made a futile gesture over the little monster. Then he realized it was growing! With every heartbeat it got perceptibly larger: cat-sized, small-dog-sized, then the size of a Great Dane. Andrew clapped the hat on his head for no reason. The audience was still quiet, only Hal leaned forward, tense with recognition.

The beast was now the size of a small pony and Andrew felt panic closing his throat, then, instantly remembering that he was the great Magician and that this was his Magic, he did a very brave (or perhaps foolish) thing. He leaped up to the black cloth, that this was his Magic, he did a very brave (or perhaps foolish) thing. He leaped up to the black cloth, flattening. He felt a flash of relief as the enormous wings, still folded, swept far behind the flow of time it was the size of a small horse and the enormous wings, still folded, swept far behind. The tremendous yellow eyes looked clamly into the darkness. The eye came closer and then disappeared.

Andrew, feeling much better, leaned back in his soft chair-like seat and asked in a very calm way, considering everything that had happened, “What or who are you? Where are we going? And why?”

The eye ended on a worried note. Andrew, feeling much better, leaned back in his soft chair-like seat and asked in a very calm way, considering everything that had happened, “What or who are you? Where are we going? And why?”

Andrew heard a faint, small voice and even in his terror he obeyed. He reached up and slapped the hat, which flattened. He felt a flash of relief as the animal stopped growing — at the same time he sensed the gigantic size of his mount. It stepped to the floor of the stage and the whole proscenium seemed to quiver. It lifted a steel clutch of ruby tipped talons and examined them curiously with one monstrous orange-yellow eye. Andrew felt the muscles of the creature tense under him, coiling like huge cables as it crouched down. Then, like a bolt from an unimaginable catapult, it sprang, slanting up to the roof.

Andrew only had time to close his eyes and hope. With less sensation than would come from bursting out of a soap bubble, the monster and Andrew were into the open air high above the city. Then with one great wing beat, no more, they rose up to protect Andrew. The great wings began to flap slowly, then faster and faster; there was a sort of ‘thrummun’ and then complete silence. All Andrew could see was grey fog anywhere he looked, and he wondered where he was going. He felt close to tears but he was excited, too. Then he began to relax. And, then, crazy, snug and warm, he leaned back and closed his eyes; he was a very tired Magician.

Hal Finzer was the only person in the audience who fully grasped what was happening. He had recognized Sharlumanugash almost as soon as the creature had appeared. This visit could only mean one thing: Lucius was in trouble. How Lucius had managed this in such a short time would have to wait; indeed must wait. The spectacular growth and starting disappearance of a gaudy mythological monster, not to mention Andrew, from in front of some two thousand people, was an threat to the Finzer way of life. This episode would have to be explained, covered up, in some way concealed or passed off as ordinary, as part of the show. And since the show must go on, it would have to be done now; immediately!

Hal acted in a split second. He leaned over, grabbed Swithin under an arm with one hand, clapped the other over Swithin’s mouth as a precaution against a squawk, lifted him bodily into the aisle, and hustled him silently to the rear of the auditorium. The spectators sat with staring eyes looking at the empty stage where the spotlight still focused on the black cloth. A few were looking up towards the roof. All were caught in a spell of wonder. Even as Hal pulled Swithin swiftly down the aisle, he spun a persuasive spell at the orchestra conductor to signal a roll on the snare drums. He sent a charm to the light-man to have a spotlight cover the center aisle at the lobby door.

By this time he had managed to explain to Swithin what must be done. “You will look like Andrew for about fifteen minutes,” he whispered very fast and distinctively, “I can’t hold a good illusion any longer with all these people.”

They were under the balcony, past the last row of seats, and Hal pushed Swithin into the archway against the closed lobby door and let him loose. Swithin, eyes gleaming, panting for breath, wiped his mouth on his sleeve and looked eager as Hal sketched several passes with the little Wand.

All this took place silently and very quickly; no one in the audience had noticed anything unusual, yet. Hal said, “walk fast, but don’t run. Go through the orchestra directly to the stage. Take your bows. Be sure and get the black cloth. Get outside. Right away. You’ve got fifteen minutes, or less. Understand?”

Swithin nodded emphatically; he had no doubts. He was a born ham. The drums were rolling louder and faster as Hal stepped behind a post and shoved Swithin forward and center. He conjured a small thunder-clap, a cloud of bright green smoke and a flash of golden light. The spotlight swung and picked out Swithin. Every head turned and eyes peered as he stepped from the dissolving vapor and a rising murmur of approval was heard.

Dapper in his evening clothes as he walked, just short of and felt down to the stage, followed by all eyes, Swithin calmly climbed the low rail, vaulted on top of the grand piano, and hustled him silently to the rear of the audience. He conjured a small thunder-clap, a cloud of bright green smoke and a flash of golden light. The spotlight swung and picked out Swithin. Every head turned and eyes peered as he stepped from the dissolving vapor and a rising murmur of approval was heard.

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Hands patted him; voices congratulated him. “Say Andy, that was cool!” “How did you do it?” “We were watching all the time; how did you get to the lobby?”

Already the memory of the impossible was fading from the minds of those closest to the event. Swithin just grinned, and pushed gently past to the boys’ crouched between Gay and Margo.

In five minutes all the available Finzers were gathered in the book-lined front room for a conference. Gay and Swithin were perched on the edge of the sofa by the fireplace, and Hal stood, leaning an elbow on the mantel, facing them. Josephine was crouched between Gay and Margo.

“Hal, I don’t think there is anything to worry about. At least not yet. Sharlumanugash, or Charly, is an old Servant of the Family, A Slave of the Ring.”

He was seldom called on to serve, and I, personally, am not familiar with him. Lucius is not in the Tower Room. In fact he is nowhere in the house. There is only a short note saying, “Through the Magic Window on the track of important Magic. Back before ten o’clock tonight. Will have a surprise for all of you. Signed, Lucius.” That’s all.” Hal cleared his throat. “We at least know that Andrew and Charly are on their way, somewhere, to Lucius. The question is where and when is Lucius?”

Lucius Finzer, Master Magician, father of Hal and grandfather of Andrew, Swithin, and Gay Finzer, grandson of Nicholas Finzer, had been admiring himself in the full-length mirror that walled one whole panel of the Tower Room. He preened and peered like a vain, courting, love-bird. Actually it was a practical and necessary inspection because he was just about to go through the Magic Window into a different space and a past time and he wanted to make sure his clothing was as near proper as could be.

He felt quite comfortable in the soft, thin-soled, half-boots of dark green leather. They were roomy and snug in just the right places in spite of the pointed and slightly turned up toes. The loose baggy pants of lighter green were belted with a black leather belt clasped shut with a dull-finished silver buckle. The dark-blue shirt, high-necked and collarless, intensified the blue of his deep eyes. Over his lean shoulders draped a white scarf, long enough to be used as a headcloth or wound into a small turban, and overall was a knee-length cape of dark-blue soft wool.

Very handsome; he complimented his good taste and decided he could do no better. There was nothing that would not fit the time he believed he was going to enter. But, there were a few more preparations to make before he started his quest.

Lucius sat at the massive table he used as his desk and looked at the objects neatly arranged on a rectangle of gray velvet: the Wand of Great Power, The Book of Spells (a thick, tin-paged, soft-covered volume), a much smaller, thinner book labeled “The Magic Window — Notes and Comments”, and a heavy gold ring set with a small amber sphere. He picked up the Book of Spells and ran a deft hand and practiced motion and transformed the thick book into an old postage stamp. This he carefully tucked into the smaller book which he flipped open at a marked page.

He read the clear script aloud in an almost soundless murmur: “... and it is wise to instruct The Power of the Window in such a manner that there can be no possible misunderstanding of the exact meaning. The Power of the Window seems to take joy in obeying exactly — no matter how painful, ridiculous, futile or indeed fatal the consequences may be for the giver of instructions.”

Lucius paused and reviewed the exact words he intended to speak through the Magic Window. They seemed to cover what he desired. He leaned back and thought about some of the events and adventures the Finzers had experienced by using the Magic Window: the time Old Nicholas had requested that it open in the palace of Minos, Overlord of Knossus, in Old Crete, in a private, quiet, and unguarded place. It did. Old Nick stepped out into the bottom of a cistern full of water. He had quite a time getting back, but that is a tale in itself.

Many things were known about the Magic Window and each generation discovered new facts; here are a few notes and comments.

I. The Window would not open on any future time.

II. Only those beings and objects that went through the Window could ever return through it. (This was a tremendous safety factor since apparently only the creature could come from the past into the present. The window was closed to heat, cold, moisture, light, and any other sort of life as well as more solid materials. The record showed that several Finzers had escaped mobs, wild beasts, and numerous unpleasant and dangerous things by prompt leaps back through the Magic Window.)

There was a definite disadvantage in that it was impossible to telE what conditions one was stepping into, since, unless the Window was fully penetrated, no clue was given — the silver mist that was its surface blinded the adventurer until the last finger tip was entirely through the Window. The window was now solidly bolted to the a thick steel plate, in turn bolted to beams in the floor.

IV. It was not sure that the past times explored were the same times leading to our particular present. Lucius Finzer (called the Mad) had gone back in a fit of insane rage and beheld his own Grandfather when said Grandfather was a child of six. Upon his successful return to the present he discovered nothing had changed and in attempting to return to that past again he disappeared for good, to the relief of his family.

V. The Power of the Window gives the gift of understanding and of speaking the tongue of where-ever and when-ever it opens. This is true only to the extent of knowledge that is already possessed. The Window does not increase knowledge — it trades only on equal terms. The slow of speech and understandings are not improved in any way, and the colors of the sleek plumage were gorgeous, almost dazzling in their brilliance. Burnt orange and fire-engine red in the wings with lightning jagged streaks of jet black. A long neck with a snow white ruff turning to glistening green lower down. The shiny black muzzle was well furred with sharp, incurved teeth. Up-slanding brows, over the great papilled eyes, pure white and jagged, gave the beast a dangerous look. A crest of almost incandescent yellow flared on the top of its head. It glowed like a faceted jewel.

Lucius was fascinated when suddenly he realized that the gaudy little monster was examining him as he was it; staring just as coldly and intently.

Lucius spoke, “Hail, Slave of the Ring.”

“Hail, Master,” a sweet, surprisingly clear voice replied. “When to?” it asked. “I’m full battle size, my own boss, and there is no need of me. The slave you possess is someone else’s servant.”

“Lucius, you should be happy for a change. Don’t you get it?”

Lucius grunted and gently lifted his fist to eye level and said, “If that’s the way you want it Charly, we will discuss it later, but not now. I called you to tell you that we are going through the Magic Window...”
together. Tell me, if we travel so, you in the Ring on my fist, can you come back carrying me and an object from time past, either thru the Window or otherwise? The records tell that Old Nick once travelled with you.

Charly tapped himself on the breast with a talon, "For me, that's no problem, but anything you bring back you will have to carry."

"Why?" asked Lucius.

"Beats me," said Charly. "I can take anything back but anything there I just can't bring future-wise. Won't work. Reasons? None that make sense; just a fact."

"Then, if I find an object and you carry me, we can return to the future with certainty?" questioned Lucius.

Charly shifted impatiently. "Yes, for the second time. Now, where and when do we go?"

"Later, Charly," Lucius cut him off. "Farewell until you hear my command, O Slave of the Ring. Go!"

Charly gave a little snort of sparks again, as Lucius pointed the Wand at him, and piped, "Look here . . . ," then he shrugged with his wings, "To hear is to obey, O Master." He sprang into the air, flipped and dived and diminished instantly into the amber jewel, disappearing considerably faster than he had come out.

The golden star-light faded as Lucius tucked away the Wand of Power securely in his belt and slowly but decisively stood up. He was ready to try his luck at an improbable venture. He thoughtfully slipped the ring on his finger.

All his long and intensive reading and research about Aladdin and the Lamp had convinced him that there was only one ideal time to gain possession of it. This was the period just after Aladdin had returned home from the cave where his wicked uncle had entombed him when Aladdin had stubbornly refused to pass over the Lamp. All versions of tales and histories agreed that a definite period of time, from several hours to several days, had passed before Aladdin first rubbed the Lamp and so found out about the Jimmi and the Magical Powers it controlled. Lucius had decided that if he went through the Magic Window at a time one half hour before Aladdin discovers the powers of the lamp. He paused and continued, "This must be that same Aladdin described in so many tales of the East; not some pre-historic fire-finder of ancient myth." Lucius thought this last rather clever and stepped cautiously into the silver mist. He held on to the frame with one hand for a moment, grasping the Wand of Power with the other.

to become stranded in the past you were visiting. Whenever possible the outlines were marked with chalk — there was no harm in this and it gave a certain security.

Lucius glanced at himself for one last time. He decided he would look better with a turban; the scarf dangled and it was much easier to convert from turban to scarf than the other way around. He wound a neat twisted flat coil, tucked tightly the ends, and again turned to the Magic Window.

He inserted the bolts that held the frame of the Window immobile. Then Lucius spoke to it in a clear conversational voice, "It is my desire to enter your dwelling place and the next dwelling place if that space is dry, at least three feet wide and free from pitfalls and traps of all descriptions. Also there must be headroom for me to stand upright and a free passage. If the conditions are not so, try at the back of the same house. If none of these places meet the descriptions I would enter, under the same conditions, across the street. The hour of the day shall be exactly one half hour before Aladdin discovers the powers of the Lamp."

"This must be that same Aladdin described in so many tales of the East; not some pre-historic fire-finder of ancient myth." Lucius thought this last rather clever and stepped cautiously into the silver mist. He held on to the frame with one hand for a moment, grasping the Wand of Power with the other.

To be continued in TD 9 —
Available in Sept.
The Black Years

Excerpt from “The Black Years” — Hald Servin, 2562

Man, from Australopithecus africanus and homo erectus erectus to homo sapiens recens, has existed on earth for hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of years. During this time, one skill, one particular talent has set him apart from every other creature — his ability to conceive and create tools. Indeed, man has been defined as “the tool-making animal.”

From chipped rocks and polished bones to neutron bombs and computers, man has constantly been redesigning, improving, and refining his tools to meet his ever-changing needs. Some have been toys for children. Some have improved his life style. Others have been necessary for his survival. A few have nearly caused his extinction.

Late in the 23rd century, mankind’s existence was unparalleled. The rape of the earth’s beauty and resources in the late 20th and early 21st centuries had been halted and reversed, due to man’s tools. Disease, poverty, hunger — all were things of the past, due to man’s tools. Man had reached for the stars, and attained them, due to his tools. And yet, in spite of man’s tools (or perhaps more accurately, because of them), the idyllic life of the 23rd century was marred by one fatal flaw...

With man’s tools having conquered the rigors of simple survival, he was able to turn his energies to more esoteric considerations — religion, political ideology, social and cultural identification, and development of self-awareness. These pursuits were not harmful in themselves, but it soon became fashionable to identify with and support various leagues, organizations, and so-called “special interest” groups. With the passage of time nearly all the groups became polarized, each expressing its views to a degree that bordered on fanaticism. Demonstrations, protests, and debates became the order of the day. Gradually enthusiasm turned to mania, and then to hate of those who held opposing views and ideas. Outbreaks of violence became more frequent, and terrorism started to appear.

Reconstruction of the events from 2290 to 2309 has been difficult due to the lack of intact records, but historians now generally mark September 16, 2297 as the beginning of the period now popularly known as the Shadow Years. On that day, some 5000 members of the League of Free Men had staged a demonstration for the purpose of promoting their concepts of a united world government. At the height of their demonstration, a small neutron bomb was detonated in their midst, killing over 3000 of the demonstrators. Rumors held opponents of world government, a group known as the Autonomists, responsible for the terrorism, but no guilt was proved.

The League of Free Men made no public accusations, but three months later on December 23, 437 known Autonomists were assassinat-ed in separate locations, and in addition, the three main offices of the Autonomists were the targets of the release of a newly developed nerve gas. The nerve gas was responsible for approximately 3,000 deaths, the majority of which were Autonomist office personnel, but at least 120 of those killed had no connection with the Autonomists. Blame for the terrorism, but no guilt was proved. The failure of official investigations to convict the organizers of the mass murders created a wave of vigilante action. Retaliatory efforts only drove the groups further underground. This led many to prohibit and disband suspected terrorist organizations, but the attempts only drove the groups further underground. This led many to declare martial law in a last desperate attempt to control their populations, but the groups had grown too powerful and had too many resources upon which to draw (both economic and political). Although there are no records to substantiate the accusations that some governments gave covert aid to certain groups in an effort to change the balance of power, certain circumstantial evidence seems to indicate that this did occur.

In the chaotic final months of the Shadow Years, in 2309, a new organization calling themselves Apokalypse announced its existence with the now famous Ultimatum:

“Peoples of the world — man appears bent upon destruction of a civilization that has taken centuries to build, and quite likely upon his own extinction as well. If that is his will, so be it! We, the Apokalypse, demand an immediate cessation of this insane violence, or we will end it ourselves — with a violence you cannot conceive. “We have the power!”

“The choice is yours!”

The exact identity of the Apokalypse was, and still is, unknown. Some have theorized the group was composed of scientists, some believe it was a special military group. Whatever its constituency, few believed the Ultimatum when it was issued and the fighting continued — until five days later, on April 17. At exactly 1200 hours, Greenwich Mean Time, the capital cities of each of the 131 nations of the world turned into craters of radioactive slag, by means still not determined.

The Apokalypse spoke to the world for the second and last time:

“Peoples of the world — you have been warned.

“We have the power!”

“The choice is yours!”

Again, due to lack of records, it is not known how the location of the Apokalypse base was discovered, or who initiated the attack. Some evidence indicates the action was a joint effort by nearly all the surviving terrorist factions and vigilante groups — man uniting for the first time in the Shadow Years. In the end, though, on May 1 a massive attack was mounted against the Apokalypse base. In turn, the Apokalypse retaliated with a fury never before witnessed on the face of the earth. Oceans boiled, continents buckled, the skies blazed with the light of unbelievably energies.

And suddenly it was all over.

The civilization of man had been slashed, burned, crushed, and the pieces scattered to the dry winds. Whether or not the Apokalypse had intended to completely destroy all life on the planet and had been crippled in their efforts in the attack mounted against them or if they simply had not had the power is debatable. Some scholars contend that the Apokalypse voluntarily stopped their promised destruction when they witnessed the horror they had unleashed, and then destroyed themselves. At the time, and even now, the question is a moot point.

What did matter was that man survived. The Black Years that followed the Shadow Years were spent struggling to continue to survive in a suddenly savage and vastly changed world. The process was a painful one, filled with nearly as much terror and violence as the Shadow Years.

The devastation wrought on May 1, 2309 had changed the very fabric of life on earth. The weapons and devices of the Apokalypse had completely obliterated some forms of life, mutated others to the point where they could not be recognized as what they had once been, and had developed new abilities in others. Man was not immune to these changes.

But through it all, the death, the pain, and the horror, and facing the prospect of an unknown future, man continued to search for his lost knowledge, struggled to rebuild his self-destroyed civilization, and strove to regain his tools.

For during the Black Years, those who held the tools, held the power... from “The Black Years”

Hald Servin, 2562
A RE-EVALUATION OF
GEMS & JEWELRY IN D&D
by Robert J. Kuntz

The following tables are meant as value determination substitutions for the D&D tables. Those of you gamemasters and players that like realism in your finds of precious gems and minutely carved and crafted jewelry will probably like these tables. They are meant for those sticklers that make D&Ding more interesting, in my mind. For those that like the fast-pace, roll-it-up-and-get-it-over-with type of gaming with no extra added realism to brighten up their gaming day, I suggest that these tables are not for you.

Table A — Carat Determination:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carat Range</th>
<th>Carat Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-60</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-85</td>
<td>6-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>20-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-98</td>
<td>20-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>30-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B — Gems Basic Values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Range</th>
<th>Gems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 G.P.</td>
<td>1. Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 G.P.</td>
<td>2. Carnelian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 G.P.</td>
<td>3. Coral Pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 G.P.</td>
<td>4. Jasper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 G.P.</td>
<td>5. Onyx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 G.P.</td>
<td>6. Turquois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125 G.P.</td>
<td>7. Agate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 G.P.</td>
<td>8. Chrysocolla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175 G.P.</td>
<td>9. Amazon Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 G.P.</td>
<td>10. Adventurines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 G.P.</td>
<td>11. Azurite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 G.P.</td>
<td>12. Bloodstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350 G.P.</td>
<td>13. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 G.P.</td>
<td>14. Chalcedony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450 G.P.</td>
<td>15. Fluorite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 G.P.</td>
<td>16. Malachite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550 G.P.</td>
<td>17. Rhodonite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 G.P.</td>
<td>18. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650 G.P.</td>
<td>19. Rock Crystal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 G.P.</td>
<td>20. Rose Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 G.P.</td>
<td>21. Adventurines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 G.P.</td>
<td>22. Azurite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>850 G.P.</td>
<td>23. Bloodstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900 G.P.</td>
<td>24. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>950 G.P.</td>
<td>25. Chalcedony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 G.P.</td>
<td>26. Fluorite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Roll again: 86-98 = 100-300 carats
99 = 200-500 carats
00 = 500-1,000 carats

Table C — Description/Listing of Types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 G.P.</td>
<td>1. Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 G.P.</td>
<td>2. Carnelian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 G.P.</td>
<td>3. Coral Pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 G.P.</td>
<td>4. Jasper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 G.P.</td>
<td>5. Onyx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 G.P.</td>
<td>6. Turquois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125 G.P.</td>
<td>7. Agate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 G.P.</td>
<td>8. Chrysocolla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175 G.P.</td>
<td>9. Amazon Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 G.P.</td>
<td>10. Adventurines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 G.P.</td>
<td>11. Azurite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 G.P.</td>
<td>12. Bloodstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350 G.P.</td>
<td>13. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 G.P.</td>
<td>14. Chalcedony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450 G.P.</td>
<td>15. Fluorite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 G.P.</td>
<td>16. Malachite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550 G.P.</td>
<td>17. Rhodonite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 G.P.</td>
<td>18. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650 G.P.</td>
<td>19. Rock Crystal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 G.P.</td>
<td>20. Rose Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 G.P.</td>
<td>21. Adventurines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 G.P.</td>
<td>22. Azurite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>850 G.P.</td>
<td>23. Bloodstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900 G.P.</td>
<td>24. Smoky Quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>950 G.P.</td>
<td>25. Chalcedony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 G.P.</td>
<td>26. Fluorite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Burlingame, CA. 94010
Table D — Jewelry Composition (metal):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Range</th>
<th>Metal Description</th>
<th>G.P. Value Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-20</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>10-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>20-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>100-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>500-1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>Gold + Silver Filigree</td>
<td>500-1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>Electrum</td>
<td>1,000-3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-85</td>
<td>Platinum + Electrum Filigree</td>
<td>1,000-4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-95</td>
<td>Mithril</td>
<td>1,500-4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-00</td>
<td>Mithril + Platinum Filigree</td>
<td>2,000-5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table E — Jewelry Composition (# of gems):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Range</th>
<th>Gem Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-25</td>
<td>2-12 gems (may not go over 5 carats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50</td>
<td>3-18 gems (may not over 10 carats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-75</td>
<td>3-36 gems (may not go over 20 carats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-90</td>
<td>2-20 gems (no limitations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>3-24 gems (at least 5 carats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-99</td>
<td>3-30 gems (at least 10 carats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>10-40 gems (at least 20 carats)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table F — Jewelry Types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Range</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>Rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Bracers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Bracelets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Chalices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Tankards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>Earrings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>Necklaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>Candelabra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>Anklets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-85</td>
<td>Neckbands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Mirrors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-99</td>
<td>Snuff Boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-00</td>
<td>Statuettes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of Determining Gems and Jewelry:

Gems — 3 gems are found. The judge decides whether he will roll for them as a group or separately. He decides for rolling them as a group. He rolls the percentile dice and consults table A. A 55% was rolled indicating that the gems are of 75 gold piece value per carat. The judge rolls the dice again consulting table B. The roll is 77% indicating that each of the gems are of 5 carats each. Elementary math solves the rest for 75 G.P. x 5 (carats) x 3 (gems) = 1,125 gold piece value for all three gems. If one wishes to add extra realism he could then proceed to table C and see what type of gems he has acquired by rolling on the 50 G.P. - 75 G.P. table.

Jewelry — 3 pieces of jewelry are found and the judge again decides to roll them as a group. He rolls a 63% and consults table D. This indicates that he has electrum (base) jewelry. He then throws the dice again to see how many gems are set in each piece of jewelry. Rolling for them as a group he throws a 20% on table E indicating each piece of jewelry has 2-12 gems each of no more than 5 carats per gem (though this number could be less it cannot go over five carats.) The judge then refers back to tables A & B for basic values and carat determination of the gems on each piece of jewelry. One might then go to table F for determining the type of jewelry found.

One might say that this could get a bit involved if one ran into a horde of dragon treasure containing 42 gems and 34 jewelry. This contention I agree with and these tables are primarily aimed at the smaller finds of gems and jewelry, not at those that would have you rolling all day. As for myself, just to roll up special jewelry or gems once in awhile is a treat!

So, You Want Realism in D&D?

by Brian Blume

We at TSR have heard several people express a desire for a system which gives more realism and variety to the method for determining the natural abilities of player characters in D&D. After minutes of exhaustive research, we have come up with an optional system which is designed to replace the old method of rolling three dice for each of a player’s abilities. This system is guaranteed to make a player character conform more to the abilities of the actual person owning them and will provide a great variety in these abilities from person to person.

STRENGTH — To determine strength, go to a gym and military press as much weight as you possibly can. Divide the number of pounds you lifted by ten; the result is your strength rating.

INTELLIGENCE — To determine your intelligence, look up the results of the most recent IQ test you have taken and divide the result by ten. This number is your intelligence rating.

WISDOM — To determine your wisdom, calculate the average number of hours you spend playing D&D or working on your D&D Campaign in an average week. Subtract the resulting number from twenty and this is your wisdom.

DEXTERITY — To determine your dexterity, go down to the track at the local High School and run 440 yards. Subtract your time in seconds from eighty, and the result is your dexterity rating.

CONSTITUTION — To determine your constitution, figure out the number of consecutive number of months you have gone without missing a day of school or work due to illness. The number of months is equal to your constitution rating.

CHARISMA — To determine charisma, count up the number of times you have appeared on TV or have had your picture printed in the newspaper. Multiply this number by two, and the result is your charisma rating.

In order to try out this system, I tested it by figuring my own ratings. The results are interesting (I think?).

STRENGTH - 8
INTELLIGENCE - 12
WISDOM - 19
DEXTERITY - 4
CONSTITUTION - 9
CHARISMA - 14

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A comprehensive set of rules for miniature wargames covering all periods of warfare from ancient times to 1650 A.D.!

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The Dragon
**FROM THE FANTASY FORGE**

*top* — The five beauties in the top group shot are by Garrison of England. The Hawkman on the left is reminiscent of Poul Anderson’s Ythri, while the two women figures are apparently inspired by Frazetta, without being steals. All five are worthy additions to the most exclusive of armies. Supplied by THE DUNGEON Hobby Shop, Lake Geneva

*middle left* — Meet the elementals from Grenadier:
R to L Earth, Water, Wind and Fire. This is an area that most manufacturers have steered clear of, but Grenadier has done an admirable job on a different subject.

*middle right* — This wicked-looking miss is the female adventuress from Ral Partha. This figure was the first female/player figure, and has since spawned a host of imitators. Congratulations are in order for Ral Partha for having been the ones to first recognize the large number of lady D&Ders.

*bottom left* — this is the monstrous Stro’, the EPT equivalent to a dragon. This monstrosity is over 100mm tall at the horns, and around 135 mm long from nose to tail! (Remember, the Legions of the Petal Throne line is 25mm) His massive sword hilt is over 50 mm off of the ground/table. Made by The Old Guard, this sextipedal horror is awesome even as a lead figure.

*bottom right* — this is one of the DRAGONTOOTH MINIATURES Rhino Riders, of which there are three or four. The line is billed as 25 mm, but must qualify as the biggest claiming that distinction. The dwarves of this line stand nearly 25mm tall, which makes them perfect for use with 40 mm figures.
Featured Creature

Name that Monster!
(in two notes or less . . .)

On the right is a nasty specimen of monsterhood drawn by Erol Otus, Esteemed Monster Drawer. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to name and identify the monster, give specifications (hit points, attacks, etc.) and no more than 350 words of history, characteristics, habits, special abilities or whatever.

The winner will receive at least $25, in the form of cash and various certificates from TSR and Ral Partha, and there will be at least five additional prizes. All entries become the property of TSR Periodicals, and will not be returned. Any entry deemed usable by TSR Periodicals will be paid usual rates, in addition to any prizes. All runners-up and the winner will be printed in a future issue.

Send entries to FEATURED CREATURE CONTEST #1 c/o THE DRAGON POB 756 Lake Geneva, WI 53147

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE SPACED. HANDWRITTEN ENTRIES VOID.

Next month we will announce FEATURED CREATURE CONTEST #2, for artists or those thinking that they are.
Still More Additions to MA

by James Ward

MUTANTS-PLANTS & ANIMAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Armor Class</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Hit Dice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAWED LILY PAD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNGUS DOME</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED PUFF BALL</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STALKERS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RADIATION VINE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISLAND PLANT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAWED CREEPING VINE</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFLECTOR BRAMBLES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEAR TREE</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POISON THORN GRASS</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIGEROID</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORILLAOID</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BULLEROID</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RABNER</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUMER</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARRIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KERASK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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Mutated Plants

1. JAWED LILY PAD: This mutated plant stands nine feet out of the water, with a jawed flower cup at the top able to swallow a human whole, crushing the life out of them. Hidden under the water, the plant has 5-50 grabber vines with a reach of fifty feet. The plant is fully intelligent, is telepathic, and has the De-evolution mutation. The plant has 1-12 special throwable spear tendrils, also under the water. They have the power to symbiotically attach themselves to beings and the plant can then make a mental attack on the stricken creature. The controlled beings will then drown themselves in the water. When the spear casts miss, they snake their way back to the water and the lily.

2. FUNGUS DOME: This mass of fungus material forms a dome, usually about ten feet tall, with a radius of seven feet. Brown in color, the dome has six 20 feet tall columns of what appear to be sand. These columns are controlled by the dome and will strike, with crushing force, those that approach the dome. A 200 yard radius of sterile earth surrounds the dome and under this earth are 50-1,000 sacs of water, used to fight fires. The dome has the following mental mutations: Mental Paralysis of all within a 200 yard radius, Force Field Generation, Absorption of radiation, and Telekenesis of weights up to 750 pounds. The mutation feeds on all types of protein and enjoys destroying any type of plant life.

3. RED PUFFBALL FUNGUS: These one foot wide balls of fungus release all their spores at a touch when fully adult. The spores react on any iron based substance where they completely rust the metal in seconds. If picked just before the adult stage, they will only break open when struck sharply.

4. STALKERS: Nine feet tall, these mobile plants think of nothing but food. They have one large central maw that emits a constant acid that easily breaks down all protein matter. The mutation has three tendril stingers that have an effective range of six feet from the plant with an intensity 12 poison. Two other powerful tendrils can grasp & hold the beings that the plant stings.

5. RADIATION VINE: This plant is able to imitate exactly any radiation near it and thus be unaffected by radiation damage. Shamans have sometimes used this plant in place of color bands, as the leaves will activate as the band. This mutation is only found within radiation areas and is usually orange in color.

6. ISLAND PLANT: This single creature (plant) covers a 300 yard area having the appearance of a jungle. The outer parts of the creature are tangle vines and poison berries (intensity 8). Within 150 yards of the center are 1-20 squeeze vines every 30 yards, with contact poison sap on them, (intensity 12). Poison throwing thorns and sword bushes guard the last 50 yards to the center of the island, the sword bushes all being stationary. At the center of the plant sits a huge beak that eats all the meat the rest of the plant kills. This is the main mental control area with the following powers: Force Field Generation, Cryogenics, and Telekenesis of weights up to 1,000 pounds.

7. MANY JAWED CREEPING VINE: This mutation has hundreds of thorned jaws along its surface. The adult creeper has a circumference of ten feet and a length of up to ninety yards. The plant is usually found in heavy tropical regions and often burrows into the ground. It will then completely uncoil itself (in a spring action) from the ground to attack its prey. The mutation has eye stalks in the shape of flowers that perceive up to 50 yards away. In judging this creature, treat the coils as ten weapon class three strikes. Each strike does two dice of damage. The creature can be found in several stages of development with the smaller creature having the smaller the number of strikes.

8. REFLECTOR BRAMBLES: This mutated plant has 1-10 squeeze vines, stands 20 feet tall, is 40 feet long when adult, has flowered sensors all through the bush, with a range of 50 yards, and an attraction odor. It has only one mental power magnified many times, the ability to reflect almost anything. It can negate the following energy states: heat, cold, radiation, electricity, protein disruptor blasts, paralysis charges, laser blasts, mental blasts & sonic blasts. Mental attacks have no effect on the thing. When attacking on its own treat the vines as clubs for hitting. When any single vine hits, the being is pinned and other vines will begin crushing the trapped creature.

9. SPEAR TREE: This mutated plant has 2-20 limbs that can shoot from its trunk like spears for distances of up to 60 yards. At the tip of each spear limb is a needle sharp seed pod that always breaks off when the limb penetrates protein material, (treat each hit as doing 3 dice of damage). The plant’s sensing organs are found at the top of the tree. The seeds will sprout in 1-4 days if the body remains undisturbed. The tree seems to be a large pine with no needles on the missile limbs.

10. POISON THORN GRASS: Bright blue grass with barbed tips, these barbs are all poisoned (intensity 9). The grass grows in large ten feet by ten feet patches among normal grass areas.

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Mutated Animals

1. **TIGEROID**: This cat has a unique muscle system that allows it to strike for 8 dice of damage with either paw, run for hours at speeds of up to 100 miles an hour, and leap hundreds of yards in the air. Its fur is resistant to sonics, lasers, protein disruptors and radiation. The tigeroid can also use the sonic mutation. The beast has Heightened Intelligence, the Life Leech mutation and a Telekenetic Arm with the tigeroid’s strength mutation.

2. **MOUNTAIN GORILLOID**: This beast already has heightened strength, it has a poison resistance gland that gives it a 18 for chart use, and its skin reflects radiation. The mutan can Life Leech, has Heightened Intelligence, has the De-evolution power, and the Repulsion Field. Unfortunately for it, the creature’s metabolism has been speeded up forcing it to eat constantly, and it is mentally defenseless.

3. **BÜLLEROID**: This mutation already has the partial carapace and it also has huge outsized legs allowing it to run 150 miles an hour for hours at a time. It has 8 huge horns, forming a crown on its head, and its fur is resistant to poisons and acids. Illusions of any type have no effect on the animal, its first attack is always a Death Field, and it has a Dual Brain.

4. **RABNER**: This mutation was a rabbit, until it lost its legs and head to mutational change. It now appears as a ball of fur from which three tentacles appear when it attacks. The creature has the following other mutations: double Heightened Strength (so that now it hits with this mutation for 4 dice of damage), Heightened Dexterity, and Heightened Precision. The Rabner, while not intelligent, has the following very effective mental abilities: Mental Defense Shield, Will Force, and a Military Genius mutation. The mutation is omnivorous now, moves along the ground with a rolling motion, and will fight any size creature for food.

5. **BLUMER**: This mutated animal appears to be a plot of tulips in thick grass. When beings come within 30 yards of it, the fake tulips cast themselves at the victim at the rate of 1-6 cups per melee round. These cups are razor sharp shells of bone, (treat as swords for damage). The creature levitates (modified into flying) towards any fleeing prey shotting its cups all the while. When the prey is dead the Blumer lands over it and many jaws devour the dead victim, in seconds. The grass is extremely hard, making excellent armor for the mutation. It is not intelligent, but has the flying Levitation mutation.

6. **CARRIN**: This animal stands erect and is about eight feet tall. The mutation is fully intelligent and has the following mental powers: Heightened Intelligence, Telepathy, a Mental Defense Shield, and it is an Economic Genius. It has effective wings and usually weighs about 100 pounds. It can Regenerate itself, and has quills (poison intensity 12) that it casts from its body (at a range of 30 yards while the creature is on the ground). The creature is usually found with a large number of mutated flying followers helping it.

7. **KERASK (WOLVERINE)**: The mutation looks like its non-mutated cousin, but is greatly changed. Its claws are poisoned from a gland in the paws (intensity 9) and it has fangs that are also poisoned (intensity 11). The creature is fully intelligent, and is able to fight with the Mental Blast and the Life Leech mutation at the same time. It always fights to the death in any given battle and likes eating things much larger than itself.

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**Planes (cont. from Page 4)**

As of this writing I foresee a number of important things arising from the adoption of this system. First, it will cause a careful rethinking of much of the justification for the happenings in the majority of D&D campaigns. Second, it will vastly expand the potential of all campaigns which adopt the system — although it will mean tremendous additional work for these DMs. Different planes will certainly have different laws and different inhabitants (although some of these beings will be familiar). Whole worlds are awaiting creation, complete in every detail, and things of all kinds. And ways to move to these planes must be provided for discovery by players. Third, and worst from this writer’s point of view, it will mean that I must revise the whole of D&D to conform to this new notion. Under the circumstances, I think it best to do nothing more than offer the idea for your careful consideration and thorough experimentation. This writer has used only parts of the system in a limited fashion. It should be tried and tested before adoption.

WarCon VIII — July 1-3, Oklahoma City Univ, Smith Chapel (lower level), Okla. City, OK. Many tourneys — Star Guard, D&D, Star Trek, WRG Ancients, Medieval, Western Gunfight, Colonial Skirmish, Gladiators, Video Game competition on Advent Video Beam, more. $7 for weekend, $1 discount for pre-registration. Contact A.H. Albert, 3230-NW 50th St, Okla City, OK 73112

CinciCon VII — July 15-17, 1977. Junior Achievement Hall of Free Enterprise. reservations to motels should be made early. CinciCon VII will have movies and computerized games, besides the not-so-normal spectrum of games, auctions and exhibitors. For info, write: CinciCon VII, c/o Boardwalk, 1032 Delta Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45208

Tacticon II — July 16th & 17th, 1977, Dunfeys Royal Coach Inn, 7000 South-west Freeway, Houston, Texas. Events are Panzerleader, Diplomacy, EPT, D&D, Movies Auction, Seminars, Miniatures, Door Prizes. Contact Dennis Wolff, 915 Silber Rd. #329, Houston, Texas, 77024, 1-713-688-0531

Midwest Military Historical Society — July 16&17, Commons Hall, Park Ridge Inn, Park Ridge, Ill. Sat. 9:00-8:00, Sun. 10:00-6:00. Ancient, Medieval, ACW, Napoleonic, WWII — Armor, Naval & Air — Fantasy & SF. Contact Tony Adams, 301-N. Wille St., Mount Prospect, IL 60056

Origins III — July 22-24 Wagner College, Staten Isl. NYC. Boards, some mini. and fantasy, seminars, workshops, tourneys & exhibits. The East Coast Con, second in splendor only to Gen Con. Reservations, Origins '77, c/o SPI, 44-E 23rd St., NYC 10010

Houston Wargaming Con '77 — August 12-14, Rice Hotel. 12 Tournaments — including; Dungeons & Dragons, Kingmaker, Armor Miniatures, Diplomacy, 1066 — (judged by designer James McMillan). Diorama Competition. Over $300 in prizes! Write Southern Convention '77, 2601 Esther, Pasadena, TX 77502.


Gen Con West ‘77 — Villa Hotel, San Mateo, California, September 3, 4, & 5th. Endorsed by TSR. Contact Gen Con West, P.O. Box 4042, Foster City, CA 94404.

Great Lakes Convention — Sheraton-Lockport Inn, 515 South Transit Street, Lockport, New York 14094, September 17-18. Tentative schedule of events • Opening ceremonies by local re-enactment group • Boardgaming competition • Miniature competition • Seminars & slide show presentation • Modeling contest • Awards banquet. For more info: Richard J. D’Angelo, 395 South Shore Blvd., Lackawanna, New York 14218.

GenCon South — Feb. 9,10 & 11, 1978, Robert Meyer Hotel, Jacksonville, FL. Endorsed by TSR. Contact: Cowford Dragoons, 5333-Santa Monica Blvd., N. Jacksonville, FL 32207

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But what could possibly disturb your contentedness as you warm in the glow of your glass of fine imported cognac?

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Suddenly another guest rushes into the room and grabs your arm with a sense of urgency. “Come quickly! Doctor Fenn is dead!!!” Puzzled and suddenly filled with fear, you rush into the parlor. There are all the guests -- and on the floor, Doctor Fenn’s lifeless body. The other guests eye you suspiciously . . .

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