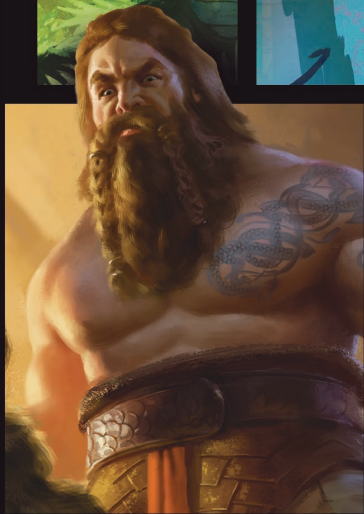
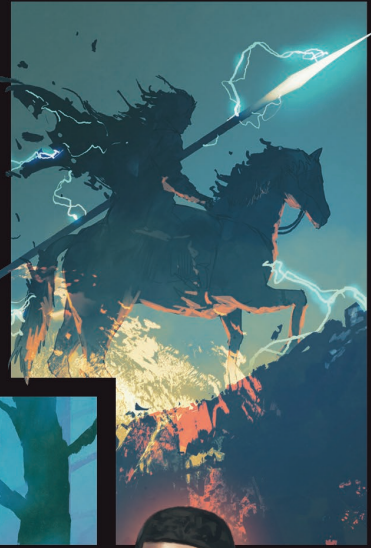


DUNGEON FANTASY™

POWERED BY GURPS®



COMPANION 3

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

PYRAMIDS UNEARTHED!

The earliest *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* content appeared in the pages of *Pyramid* magazine . . . and readers continued to augment crypt-crawling campaigns with new material until that venerable monthly ended its run in 2018.

For the first time, a trove of those *Pyramid* goodies – over 20 articles – have been collected, lightly updated, and enhanced with atmospheric art. Treasures herein include:

- *Professions!* The mage-hunter, shield-bearer, undead-hunter, and wrestler.
- *Character options!* Gear kits, a background generator, and a complete alternate character-creation method.
- *Monsters and traps!* Over a dozen of each, ready to strike.
- *Adventures!* A solo dungeon to teach the basics, one-shots, and even a mini-campaign framework.

. . . and more! Whether you're a first-timer or a veteran, *Dungeon Fantasy Companion 3* is sure to expand your delving possibilities.

Dungeon Fantasy Companion 3 is intended for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* but would work with *GURPS*, especially *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*.



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and Matt Riggsby

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Denis Loubet, Dean Spencer, and others

**STEVE
JACKSON
GAMES**



sjgames.com

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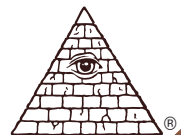
Reviewer: Sean Punch

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES



INTRODUCTION

The Kickstarter for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* launched on September 1, 2016, and ended its very successful campaign on the last day of that month. A couple of months later, *Pyramid* #3/98: *Welcome to Dungeon Fantasy* was released, whetting gamers' appetites for the crypt-crawling delights that would be coming their way soon. The beautiful boxed game itself would ship in the next year, but before that joyous day, *Pyramid* once again showed the way for would-be delvers. *Pyramid* #3/104: *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* was intended as the first look at the final product. It was also designed so that folks could actually start *playing* the game – or at least experience a taste of it – thanks to the included solo adventure: *Trapped in the Living Tomb* (pp. 114-127). So, from a gaming standpoint, *Pyramid* and the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* had an adventuring career together.

For the rest of *Pyramid's* run, through December 2018, the PDF periodical provided regular support for the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG*, with new professions, adventures, and more.

Now – for the first time – a trove of that gaming material is gathered together: two-dozen articles, enhanced with flavorful artwork, and lightly edited and updated in spots.

What's Included

This supplement presents articles that were designed with the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* primarily or exclusively in mind, or that were written more generically in issues devoted to the game. Although *Pyramid* prided itself on applicability to the entire gamut of *GURPS*, these articles, especially, should be appreciated by *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* players.

What's Not Here

Since part of the point of *Pyramid* was to serve as a source of information regarding the progress of the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* (especially when it was in the works), we left out anything that *wasn't* directly related to the game. Past issues also included some “behind the scenes” or updates; since the game now exists and is amazing, there's no need for those articles except as historical artifacts. Fortunately, thanks to the original issues' continued availability as digital downloads, if anyone wants a progress report circa 2017, they can track down the original information.

Similarly, we didn't include introductions from the original issues, nor any advertisements that were placed at the ends of articles.

Basically, we limited our focus to just gaming goodness.

What's Different

Probably the biggest difference is that nearly every article now includes artwork. With the extended time and resources that come from making a full volume, we could ensure that articles “popped” compared to their original versions. They really come to life!

Each article was laid out again, so that it would fit the page format and size of other releases for the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG*. This hopefully isn't very noticeable, although it's possible that a beloved box or table from the original issues of *Pyramid* is presented a bit differently or even shifted to another page.



Text was tweaked slightly as needed, to make sense in its new context as part of a collection. For example, where articles were designed to support both the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* and another system, we pared the details down so that the article referred to just one game. Similarly, some material – especially from *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* mastermind Sean Punch – was tweaked slightly, to reflect later developments in the game.

Thanks to You

The original *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* came to life thanks to the love and support of fans, as have further additions to that game – including this volume. In the same way that the first *Dungeon Fantasy Companion* was a compilation of three separate supplements, so, too, did we want some great material that might otherwise be harder to access to become an accessible and valued addition to your collection. Like heroes rescuing treasures from long-forgotten vaults, the *Dungeon Fantasy Companion 3* amasses some masterful material. Whether you're a first-time player or someone who's looking for deeper and deadlier dungeons, we thank you for making this companion a welcome part of your party!

USING THE *DUNGEON FANTASY RPG* WITH *GURPS*

A *GURPS* player might ask, "How useful would the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* be to me? What would it add that the *GURPS Basic Set*, *GURPS Magic*, and the *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* series don't already give me?"

If you don't own *GURPS Low-Tech* or *GURPS Martial Arts*, you'll get a lot of new weapons and armor in *Adventurers*. Even if you have *GURPS Magic*, the alphabetical

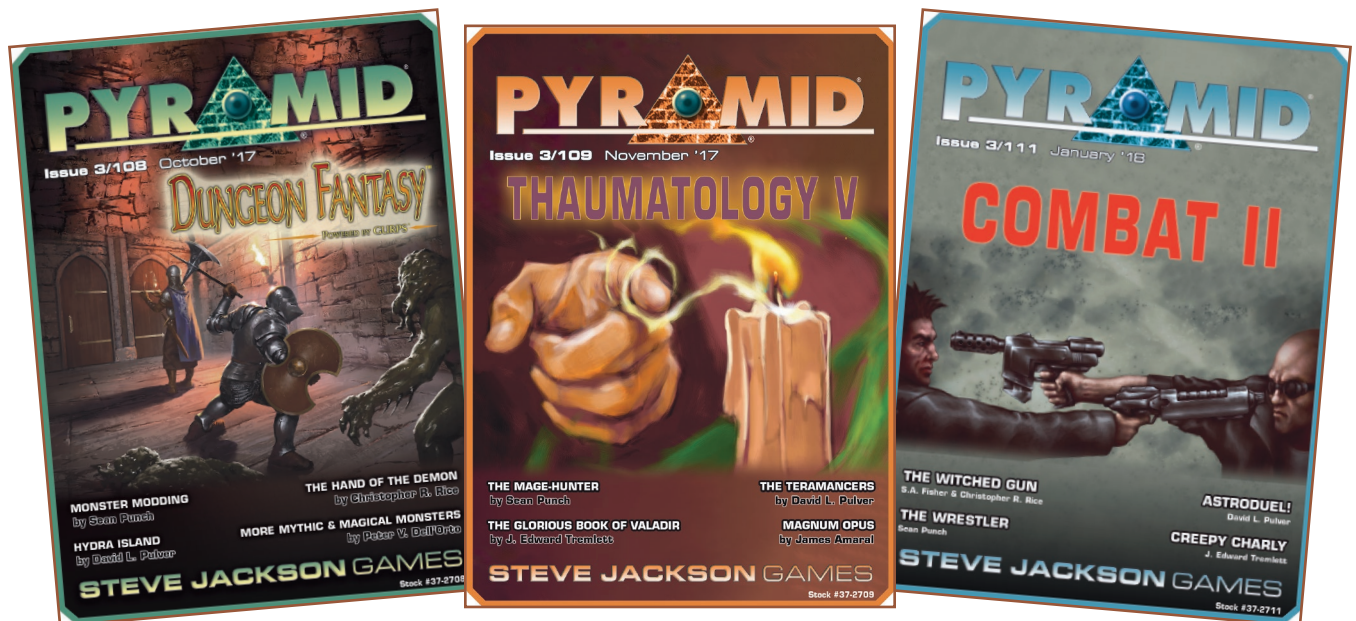
spell lists in *Spells* – and the many spells rewritten for clarity – are valuable. Many of the critters in *Monsters, Monsters 2*, and *Companion 2* aren't found in any *GURPS* book; you can use them as written. The same goes for the traps in *Traps* and the magic items in *Magic Items, Magic Items 2*, and *Companion 2*. The two adventures – *I Smell a Rat* (in the box) and *Against the Rat-Men* (stretch goal) – can be run essentially "as is" for *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* heroes.

Which isn't to say there are no significant differences. Be on the lookout for streamlining!

Templates are simpler; for instance, bards have Bardic Talent instead of that *and* Musical Ability, and use spells and Bard-Song abilities but not Entrhralment skills (as compensation, they get Sound and Knowledge spells as well as mind-affecting magic). Some gear and abilities have been renamed – although basic functions haven't changed, nor have cash or character-point costs. The spell list has been trimmed and prerequisites restructured to suit hack 'n' slash gaming and better differentiate between clerics, druids, and wizards. The game's approaches to Fright Checks, physical feats, and slams are quicker and easier to use. The rules for surprise are *much* clearer.

In all cases, the differences are obvious but you should pick a version and stick with it. You might actually prefer the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* rethinks of many rules – whether because they're simpler or because you feel they're more balanced for dungeon crawling.

If you play *GURPS* but *don't* own the *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* series, you'll be getting a *ton* of new content – templates, special abilities, gear, monsters, rules for dungeon-delving tasks, and a lot of notes on dungeon design and loot. The *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* can't replace the entire series, which has twice as many pages, none of them devoted to simplified versions of the *GURPS Basic Set* and *GURPS Magic*.



However, the game includes many of the highlights and is more than enough to run a campaign – think of it as an epic “genre book,” on a par with *GURPS Fantasy* but better-suited to the hack ‘n’ slash subgenre.

USING *GURPS* WITH THE *DUNGEON FANTASY RPG*

How useful are *GURPS* supplements to *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* players? The answer depends on *which* supplements.

The *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* series should mostly make sense and is the logical starting point for getting into *GURPS*. Don’t bother with *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, or *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Monsters 1* – the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* already contains all that. The rest of the series is worthwhile, but it name-drops traits, professions, and rules that will make little sense because they *didn’t* go into the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG*. You can opt to either ignore this stuff or get the supplements that explain it; those are referred to by title, so it’s easy to figure out what’s needed.

GURPS Magic is fairly straightforward, too. Spell prerequisites differ, but that can be overlooked for any spell also found in *Spells*. The many spells that *aren’t* in *Spells* are what’s most valuable; while not all suit dungeon fantasy, the GM can pick and choose. Reading the prerequisites for these new spells as referring to spells by the same name in *Spells* is safe, even if the prerequisite chain isn’t the same all the way down.

Other fantasy-themed supplements will *mostly* work. Rather than obsess on conversion, focus on world-facing effects. In hack ‘n’ slash fantasy, a creature requires attributes, a roll to hit, damage, active defenses, and DR. Items need effects. If something will never be bought or sold by the heroes, whether for coin or for character points, that’s good enough!

Still, some things *require* the complexity of full-on *GURPS* to implement. Then you must decide whether you *want* that complexity. If so, the best bet is to invest in the *GURPS Basic Set*. Happily, learning the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* makes it much easier to learn *GURPS*.

Introducing elements of other genres into dungeon crawls (some of the first fantasy RPGs did this, so it isn’t as strange as it seems) means branching out with other *GURPS* supplements, such as *GURPS Horror* for “dark fantasy” or *GURPS Ultra-Tech* for technology indistinguishable from magic. This, too, *requires* the *GURPS Basic Set*, because it’s the universal hub of the entire system.

As *Using the Dungeon Fantasy RPG with GURPS* (pp. 4-5) notes, the games are essentially compatible but have differences. *GURPS’* approach is inevitably the more complex or at least more generic one, accounting for considerations irrelevant to hack ‘n’ slash fantasy. When you run into this, choose *one* version to use – double-standards are neither fair nor fun.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Peter V. Dell’Orto was raised in New Jersey. He started role-playing in 1981, with *Dungeons & Dragons*, and has played *GURPS* since *Man to Man*. He has been active as a *GURPS* playtester, editor, and contributing author since 1996. Peter is the author of numerous *GURPS* articles for *Pyramid* magazine; author of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 12: Ninja*, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Denizens: Barbarians*, and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Monsters 3: Born of Myth & Magic*; and co-author of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen*, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Monsters 1*, *GURPS Low-Tech*, *GURPS Low-Tech Companion 2: Weapons and Warriors*, *GURPS Martial Arts*, and *GURPS Martial Arts: Gladiators*.



Peter has run the same hack-and-slash **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** game for over five years and more than 80 sessions mostly using one town and one megadungeon. You can read about it on his blog *Dungeon Fantastic* at dungeonfantastic.blogspot.com.

Steven Marsh is a freelance writer and editor. He has contributed to roleplaying game releases from Steve Jackson Games, Green Ronin, West End Games, White Wolf, Hogshead Publishing, and others. He edited *Pyramid* for over 10 years; during that time, he has won four Origins awards. He lives in Indiana with his wife, Nikola Vrtis, and their son. Special thanks to Jason “PK” Levine, Christopher R. Rice, Emily Smirle, and Sam V. for help, inspiration, and insight with *Trapped in the Living Tomb*.

David L. Pulver is a Canadian freelance author. An avid science-fiction fan, he began roleplaying in junior high with the newly released **Dungeons & Dragons Basic Set**. Upon graduating from university, he decided to become a game designer. Since then, David has written over 80 roleplaying game books, and also worked as a staff writer, editor, and line developer for Steve Jackson Games and Guardians of Order. He is best known for creating *Transhuman Space*, co-authoring the *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* anime RPG, and

writing countless **GURPS** and *The Fantasy Trip* books for Steve Jackson Games and its licensees, including the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**, and the **GURPS Spaceships** series and *Ardonirane: City of the Thorsz*.

Sean Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985 and ended up as **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995. In that capacity, he has written, edited, or contributed to hundreds of **GURPS** releases, revised the game into its fourth edition (2004), and been a regular contributor to *Pyramid* magazine. From 2008, he has served as lead creator of the **GURPS Action** and **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** series; work on the latter led to his design of the **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game**, released in 2017. Sean has been a gamer since 1979, but devotes most of his spare time to Argentine tango. He lives in Montréal, Québec with *son amour*, Geneviève.

Christopher R. Rice has run numerous **Dungeon Fantasy** games in **GURPS**. He’s also authored, co-authored, or contributed to ten **GURPS** supplements (and counting!) on a range of subjects and many articles from old *Pyramid* and new. Of course, if he’s not writing about **GURPS**, he’s blogging about it. Visit his site, “Ravens N’ Pennies” (www.ravenspennies.com), for more **GURPS** goodies. He wishes to thank L.A., for being the wonderful, amazing, inspiring woman that she is – not every man gets his muse personified in the flesh! He also wishes to thank his gaming group – the Headhunters – for alpha testing, his family (especially his mother), and Elizabeth “Archangel Beth” McCoy, his Sith Editrix mentor. Additionally, special thanks go to those who offered insight on the original versions of the articles that appear in this volume, including Jason “PK” Levine, Blake “Nemoricus” Chapman, Euan Hastie, Kyle “Zuljita” Norton, Christopher “Ternas” Dorr, Matt Riggsby, J. Edward Tremlett, Brett Tamahori, Douglas Cole, Euan Hastie, Emily “Bruno” Smirle, Allen F. Schell, and Kyle Norton.

Matt Riggsby has been playing roleplaying games since the only game in town came in three poorly typeset tan booklets in a white box, using cheap dice which slowly converted themselves from icosahedrons to spheres. Having been educated in the lore of lost civilizations, he still kills things and takes their stuff while working a day job for artificers of engines of great healing. The marching order for the rest of his party includes a sorceress, a rogue, and a pack of dogs.

ABOUT THE **DUNGEON FANTASY** ROLEPLAYING GAME

The **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game** is compatible with **GURPS**. Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of players of these and all its games. We can be reached by email at info@sjgames.com. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Resources that we provide include:

New supplements and adventures. **GURPS** continues to grow – see what’s new at gurps.sjgames.com.

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Store Finder (storefinder.sjgames.com). Discover nearby places to buy **Dungeon Fantasy RPG** and **GURPS** items, and other Steve Jackson Games products. Local shops are great places to play our games and meet fellow gamers!

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Additional illustrations by Alex Fernandez, Brandon Moore, and Nikola Vrtis.

SECTION 1

ADVENTURERS

Before an adventure can begin, there must be adventurers.

The core *Adventurers* book deals with this from the standpoint of what are essentially the game mechanics: What can the heroes do? What defines them in terms of core abilities? What are they good at, and what are their weaknesses?

Of course, there's so much more to being a hero than the rules needed to make them work. On the "fluffier" side are more ephemeral considerations: What motivates a hero? Why are they doing what they do? Have they pursued this path just for a pile of gold, or are they looking to fulfill a higher purpose . . . and take home a pile of gold?

One of the secrets of the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* is that – at its core – it requires very little to truly work. Heroes don't need motivations, kits, spell components, or even backstories. But the game continues to work great if you add them (and that might even improve campaign longevity).

Here, then, are some possibilities for what you might add that could be applicable to many of the core professions. Figure out your history, buy some loadouts, get motivated, and get to that dungeon!



PREPARING FOR THE HERO'S JOURNEY

BY STEVEN MARSH

Before you begin your life as an adventurer in the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, it's useful to reflect on the basics. To that end, here is some helpful advice for fledgling players as they begin their crypt-crawling careers.



KNOW YOUR ABILITIES

When you're making your hero, it's good to understand what you're trying to do . . . and whether it'll work. From a design standpoint, it makes sense to have a plan in mind, then see if you're actually accomplishing that. For example, bards start with a level of Charisma, which gives them +1 on all face-to-face Influence rolls. So, when starting out, a bard has a Fast-Talk skill of 15, which Charisma boosts to a 16 for the purpose of getting others to like you. Is that good enough? Check it out! Roll some practice dice. Pretend you've got -4. What if you're going up against someone who's also got a 16? Remember that any bog-standard bard is going to have that skill at that level, so if you have a vision in your mind of being someone who even standard bards find impressive, you'll need to boost that somehow.

The *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* often allows for bonuses from different sources, so you frequently have options for how you might do so. If you only care about doing Fast-Talk well, you could boost that skill by 1 for another 2 points. Alternatively,

bards aren't limited to the amount of Charisma they can have (that's one of the things that makes them cool), so you might consider boosting that, at the cost of 5 points for each additional +1 (which would also cover other situations). Or maybe you want to figure out how to get 20 extra points somehow, so you can boost your Intelligence (IQ) by +1; sure, it's expensive, but then *every* skill and ability that uses it also increases by 1.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

The flip side of knowing your abilities is knowing what you *can't* do. For example, if your hero is going to wield a two-handed weapon, then that adventurer won't be holding a lantern, wielding a shield to block damage, or parrying or blocking while moving and attacking. It may be totally fine to *not* have those options – for example, if your Dodge is mighty enough that you don't ever consider trying to Parry – but being aware of your limitations is a step to overcoming them.

Let's say you're the "tank" of the party, designed to soak up a lot of damage. You're quite possibly slower than other members of the party. That's okay, but it may mean you need to be closer to the front of the group, so you can wade into the battle easier and actually . . . y'know . . . absorb damage when it's incoming. If you are slower, keep in mind that any member of your party who's behind you will either need to move *through* your hex to get into battle (which costs them a bit of their movement), attack *over* you, or go *around* you. If you're planning on the rest of the party going around you, realize that the group may not want two slow members at the front; otherwise, the odds of getting in the way of teammates increases!

Similarly, take stock of your advantages and see if there are any aspects there that may hold you back. A hypothetical barbarian who boosts Magic Resistance may have visions of shrugging off the effects of evil sorcerers. However, that protection also keeps magical effects he *wants* to kick in from doing so! That means clerical healing magic is going to have a harder time helping out. Uh-oh! That's not a deal-breaker, though, *if* you plan around it. Maybe you'll invest some character points into money, so you can start with snazzier armor that will absorb damage (so you need less healing). Maybe you'll buy a few levels of Tough Skin to give you natural protection (again, obviating the need for as much healing).

Step 3. Parentage

You might have some details about your parents. Roll 1d.

Roll Relationship to Birth Parents

| | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Orphaned; your natural parents are missing or dead; roll on the <i>Orphan Table</i> (p. 21) |
| 2-4 | Raised by two parents; roll twice on the <i>Who They Are Table</i> (p. 21) |
| 5-6 | Raised by one parent; roll once on the <i>Who They Are Table</i> (p. 21) |

Step 4. Your Mentor

A classic hero has someone who trained them, or a friend or advisor who led them down the path to adventure. A mentor figure may be someone you studied under, but it does not imply you had the same profession (and template). For instance, your mentor figure may be a wise wizard, but many warriors or thieves in heroic fantasy and swords-and-sorcery stories have wizards as mentors without ever being mages themselves!

Roll once on the *Who They Are Table* (p. 21) to determine their background, proceeding to other sub-tables as indicated.

Step 5. Familial Relationships

For your mother and/or father (if applicable), or foster parents, and your mentor, roll for each one's fate unless already determined by other rolls. Roll 1d: 1-2 – dead; 3-6 – still alive.

To find out their attitude toward you now (if still alive) or just before their death, roll 1d: 1-3 – they love you; 4-5 – the relationship is troubled, estranged, or cold; 6 – they hate you. You may reciprocate or have a different attitude.

Step 6. Siblings

Roll 1d-3 to determine the number of surviving birth-siblings or foster-siblings in addition to any family members who might have been mentioned already. Then roll 1d on this table once for each person.

| Roll | Result | Roll | Result |
|------|-----------------|------|----------------|
| 1 | Older brother | 4 | Younger sister |
| 2 | Older sister | 5 | Identical twin |
| 3 | Younger brother | 6 | Fraternal twin |

If important, roll 1d for the state of the relationship with each person, as with Step 5, above.

Step 7. Omens

A hero's birth, or adoption if of unknown parentage, is often marked by signs and portents! Roll 1d to find out about the remarkable happening at the hour of your birth.

Roll Result

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A natural disaster – a storm, earthquake, flood, or hurricane |
| 2 | A great commotion of animals; roll on the <i>Wild Animal Table</i> (p. 23) |
| 3 | A monster attacked; roll on the <i>Monster Table</i> (p. 24) |
| 4 | A mysterious stranger was passing through, who commented on your birth; roll on the <i>Who They Are Table</i> (p. 21) |
| 5 | A great battle; perhaps you were born on the battlefield |
| 6 | A celestial event (comet, meteor, super nova, or eclipse) |



Step 8. Darkness

Heroes often encounter evil or tragedy in some form during their lives. Tragedy is often part of your heroic past, sometimes shaping your life to this day. Roll 1d.

Roll Result

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Your life was free of evil. Perhaps you adventure to help the less fortunate, – or maybe you're so incredible that no one dared go against you! |
| 2-4 | Someone did you wrong. Roll on the <i>Evildoer Table</i> (p. 24) to find out who it was, and then on the <i>Dark Deeds Table</i> (p. 24) to determine what that person did. |
| 5 | Someone who you were close to you died tragically (or vanished). No person was to blame, but roll on the <i>Relative or Loved One Table</i> (p. 24) to determine who it was and on the <i>Disaster Table</i> (p. 25) for the nature of their fate. |
| 6 | A disturbing prophecy was made at your birth by a local oracle or distinguished visitor; roll on the <i>Dark Prophecy Table</i> (p. 25) to see what that person foretold. |

THE SHIELD-BEARER

BY SEAN PUNCH

In the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, shields are practically the definition of defense. Not that delvers are unaware that you can bash and rush opponents with them – many adventurers add pointy bits for that very reason. But most regard shields as just an adjunct to weapon use.

Veteran warriors know better. In expert hands, the right shield is a respectable all-around weapon, as valuable for offense as for defense. And not just up close: Shields can protect allies and even make ranged attacks! It's just that few fighters take the time to learn this art – the way of the *shield-bearer*.

SHIELD-BEARER

You resemble the knight in that you're a front-line fighter who favors a shield (and possibly armor), but you've made it your mission to learn to use that shield to maximum effect. You consider protecting allies a priority, whether that means blocking for them or hurling a shield at a foe sneaking up on them. While you favor bucklers (that's *how* you hurl the thing!), you've learned to work around their limitations. All of which necessitates a specialized fighting style.



Attributes: ST 13 [30]; DX 14 [80]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 13 [30].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d/2d-1; BL 34 lbs.; HP 13 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 13 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [-15]; Basic Move 6 [0].

Advantages: Enhanced Block 2 [10]; Hold the Line [1]; Sacrificial Block [1]; Shield Familiarity 1 [1]; Shield Mastery

1 [15]; Shield-Wall Training [1]; Weapon Bond (Starting shield) [1]; and Weapon Master (Shields) [25]. • A further 60 points chosen from among:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ST +1 to +6 [10/level] | Hard to Subdue [2/level] |
| DX +1 to +3 [20/level] | High Pain Threshold [10] |
| HT +1 to +6 [10/level] | Luck [15] |
| HP +1 to +4 [2/level] | or Extraordinary Luck [30] |
| Basic Speed +1.00 | Peripheral Vision [15] |
| or +2.00 [20/level] | Rapid Healing [5] |
| Basic Move +1 to +6 [5/level] | Recovery [10] |
| Born War-Leader 1-4 [5/level] | Shield Familiarity 2-3 |
| Combat Reflexes [15] | [1/level] |
| Enhanced Block 3-6 [5/level] | Shield Mastery 2-3 [15/level] |
| Extra Attack 1 or 2 [25/level] | Signature Gear [1/item] |
| Fearlessness [2/level] or | Striking ST 1 or 2 [5 or 10] |
| Unfazeable [15] | Trademark Move [1/move] |
| Fit [5] or Very Fit [15] | Weapon Bond |
| Hard to Kill [2/level] | (A second shield) [1] |

Disadvantages: Sense of Duty (Adventuring Companions) [-5] and Vow (Always fight with at least one shield in hand) [-5].
• -25 points chosen from among these traits:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Bad Temper [-10*] | Honesty [-10*] |
| Bloodlust [-10*] | Impulsiveness [-10*] |
| Chummy [-5] or | Obsession (Finding |
| Gregarious [-10] | a fabled shield) [-5*] |
| Code of Honor (Soldier's or | Overconfidence [-5*] |
| Chivalry) [-10 or -15] | Selfless [-5*] |
| Compulsive Carousing [-5*] | Stubbornness [-5*] |
| Compulsive Vowing [-5*] | Wounded [-5] |
| Greed [-15*] | |

Skills: One of these melee weapon skills (as backup):

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Axe/Mace-14 [2] | Flail-13 [2] | Shortsword-14 [2] |
| Broadsword-14 [2] | Knife-15 [2] | Spear-14 [2] |

SECTION 3

EXPLOITS

You've got some heroes. Now they need something to do.

In the core *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* set, *Exploits* covers doing . . . well, *everything*. If it's not magic or the monsters themselves, it's the domain of that volume.

Of course, "everything that the heroes might conceivably do" is a pretty meaty mandate to explore in *Exploits'* 112 pages, so there is plenty of room for expansion.

On the larger level, those who are inspired by dice have plenty of options. *It's an Encounter!* (pp. 66-76) and *It's a Quest!* (pp. 78-86) examine the micro and macro levels of the same issue: giving the heroes cool experiences and challenges. If, as the GM, you've ever found yourself struggling to come up

with fresh situations that will be interesting to overcome, or want inspiration for an overarching story, the trove of tables and tips will prove invaluable.

At a more-focused level, this section offers new ways to think about individual encounters. What would an "elven dungeon" even *mean*? How can you make an encounter more challenging in the middle of the fray? What are some fundamental elements of a crypt-crawling campaign that you can shake up to keep the heroes on their toes?

Heroes are defined by the adversity they overcome, so give them the best chance they have to shine . . . or die trying!



KEEPING IT SIMPLER, FOR STARTERS

BY STEVEN MARSH

They say that one of the joys of having children is getting to re-encounter beloved experiences, as if they were new. Sharing them with your younglings gives you a chance to see the delight on their faces as they hear one-liners you've adored for decades, witness the excitement as their minds are blown by TV-show plot twists, or watch as they happily play with a toy or game you enjoyed in your childhood.

I can confirm this in my experience, having gotten to see my own son as he's relived elements of my own adolescence. He's gotten to ride the full gamut of amusement park rides at Six Flags Great America with his grandparents (in a way my creaky middle-aged body can no longer endure). As a family, we've shared visits to *The Twilight Zone*, getting to eat in a diner with William Shatner, experiencing an alien invasion with Agnes Moorehead, and learning why beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

I was reminded of this fact when many fans started to see the text of the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* for the first time. It was a wonderful opportunity to look at the set for the first time in months with fresher eyes. Fortunately, initial reactions to the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* seemed to be that those who read it really enjoyed what they saw.

Being at a convention surrounded by folks who are experiencing many games I love for the first time reminds me that jumping off the deep end into a new game can be a scary experience. But – as fortune would have it – dungeon-crawl fantasy RPGs offer arguably the best opportunity to make up rules and experiences with almost a complete buy-in from the audience; it's probably the only genre where saying "a wizard

did it" with a shrug is complete and valid justification for whatever craziness you want to inflict on the heroes.

That freedom means it's possible to make acclimating to the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* even easier, simply by ignoring rules or situations you don't want to deal with immediately. Here is some insight into how to do exactly that, as you prepare – perhaps for the first time – for your *Dungeon Fantasy* campaign.

I NEED A HERO

Character creation can be one of the most daunting elements of many games. Fortunately, the new *Dungeon Fantasy* set streamlines this process considerably, making it possible to follow the easy-to-read templates to generate a hero in a minimal amount of time. Add in some ready-to-buy gear (like the quick equipment kits of pp. 12-15) and you can be playing even sooner.

But lots of folks don't like jumping into the dungeon-delving deep end with their own heroes right away, and some inexperienced GMs can't offer the insight that many new players want when creating exactly the hero they're envisioning.

That's okay! The *Dungeon Fantasy* material that's out there offers no less than *two* ready-to-use options. First, *Delvers To Go!* – the sample characters booklet from the *Dungeon Fantasy GM Screen* – means that players can pick from a baker's dozen of fully realized adventurers (including their gear); players can choose the heroes they want and begin playing at a moment's notice.

But even if you don't have the *GM Screen* set yet, that's okay! The boxed set itself comes with two sample characters in the *Adventurers* book: the half-orc knight Grükuk Kzaash and the human cleric Francesco Zombani. If the idea is just to get players' feet with the basics of the *Dungeon Fantasy* game, then it's certainly possible to run a short adventure or three with two players at a time, using just those two delvers. Maybe they're acquiring the map and keys that will be used by the "real" heroes – that is, the delvers who the players will eventually create – in a few adventures.



*Anybody will face hardship if
cornered or offered sufficient coin.
But seeking out hardship and
taking it on for honor alone – that is
heroism!*

– Sir Yvor Gryffyn, Knight



EXPERT MONSTERS

Not all modifications affect a monster's physical makeup or fundamental nature – some come closer to learned abilities. All these changes are possible only for sapient (IQ 6+) beings. Cannot Learn *doesn't* prevent them, as a creature could start out with such knowledge.

Myrmidon

The creature is an expert fighter! Construct-class monsters are often built this way, Undead-class ones might have become masters while alive, and Faerie- and Mundane-class ones may have gained the knowledge the hard way. Those aren't the only options, but Animal-, Plant-, and Slime-class creatures just about never meet the criteria (IQ 6+ and weapon use).

Applicability: Any monster that wields a weapon.

Modifications: Raise weapon skill by two or to DX+2, whichever is better. ● Add *one* of Combat Reflexes (for +1 to all active defenses) – or Enhanced Parry 1 (+1 to Parry), Extra Attack 1, or Weapon Master (+2 *per die* to damage) with its weapon. ● Multiple applications are possible, each granting another +2 to skill and one additional trait. ● In most cases, myrmidons have better-quality weapons and armor than their peers.

Priest

Tribes of Mundane-class monsters often boast shamans, Undead-class entities might have been clerics in life (Evil ones *becoming* undead using their powers), and Demon-, Divine

Servitor-, and Spirit-class beings may *be* the clerics of Hell, Heaven, the Spirit World, etc. Even Constructs could be temple guardians with priestly powers!

Applicability: Any IQ 6+ monster.

Modifications: Raise IQ to 10 or add +1 to IQ, whichever is better. ● Add Power Investiture 1 (Elder) for Elder Things; Power Investiture 1 (Unholy) for *most* monsters, especially “truly evil” ones; and either Power Investiture 1 (Druidic) or ordinary clerical Power Investiture 1 for creatures that aren't irredeemably evil, depending on whether they're primitive wilderness-dwellers or sophisticated enough to have legions, if not empires. ● If FP are given as “N/A,” add an Energy Reserve equal to the *higher* of HT or HP. ● Multiple applications are possible, each adding another +1 to IQ and Power Investiture (maximum +6). ● Remove any Magic Resistance! ● Add spells at IQ + Power Investiture level. A number of spells equal to that total is fair. For Power Investiture (Elder) and (Unholy), see the lists below.

Elder Spells

Not all of these are useful *against delvers* – but adventurers who somehow manage to control monsters might have spells cast *for* them. Sense Good and Protection from Good work like Sense Evil and Protection from Evil, but affect angels, clerics, holy warriors, etc.

PI 1: Armor, Coolness, Darkness, Death Vision, Debility, Decay, Detect Magic, Dull (Sense), Extinguish Fire, Fear, Find Weakness, Frailty, Night Vision, No-Smell, Noise, Recover Energy, Seek Gate, Sense Good, Sense Life, Shield, Silence, and Simple Illusion.

SECTION 5

DUNGEONS

You've got heroes. They know what they can do – and the GM knows how the world works. Now, you need to put it all together. You need dungeons.

The original *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* set included a complete, ready-to-use adventure: *I Smell a Rat*. But more is always better when it comes to adventuring possibility, and we're here to help.

For those completely new to *Dungeon Fantasy*, *Trapped in the Living Tomb* (pp. 114-127) offers everything a new player needs to learn the absolute basics of the game; only some dice, a pencil, and some paper are required. No GM is necessary – nor even the rules!

Once you're ready to venture forth, *You All Meet at an Inn* (pp. 154-160) provides a quintessential use of a tavern-tinged trope, turning it on its ear enough to make a memorable campaign start.

Assuming they survive, heroes will also have an opportunity to visit a mysterious island and an abandoned mine in two more exciting scenarios. Beyond that, we also present a framework that provides an assortment of interesting encounters for heroes, as well as laying the foundation of a mini-mythology (of sorts) for a *Dungeon Fantasy* campaign. And for those who wish to return to the living tomb, more information is available as well.

The bards will sing of you for years to come – *if you survive!*



TRAPPED IN THE LIVING TOMB

BY STEVEN MARSH

Trapped in the Living Tomb is a solo adventure for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*. However, it's designed so that you don't actually need that boxed set to play it – or even a Game Master (or GM as it's abbreviated). The rules you need to play are contained right in the adventure; we've even highlight key abilities in bold. All you need is a copy of the character sheet on p. 127, three six-sided dice, and a pencil and paper to take notes.

In this adventure, you'll take the role of Redhair the Quick, a swashbuckler. Although the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* thrives on adventuring parties, you'll be going this adventure alone. Fortunately, you have the confidence to fearlessly see your way into any obstacle. You might even make it out alive . . .

A GLIMPSE INTO A WORLD OF ADVENTURE

The full *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* is a complex affair; this solo adventure tries to both teach the basics of that game system and provide a satisfying experience. We had to leave a lot unsaid here . . . lots of tactical options and possibilities, many complications, scads of possibilities for critical successes or critical failures, hex-based movement. There's way more than we could cram into even a meaty adventure like this; the boxed set contains hundreds of pages of great material!

So, please don't think of this as the be-all and end-all of the game. Think of it as a teaser, either to prepare you for the full set (if you've never tried the *Dungeon Fantasy RPG* before), or as a standalone adventure to get you in the hack-and-slash frame of mind.

ROLLING THE DICE

When you're asked to make a success roll – often abbreviated as just "roll" – locate the skill on your character sheet (see p. 127) and roll three dice (always dice with six sides!). Total the dice; if the sum is *equal to or less* than the skill, you succeed. If you roll *more* than your skill, you fail. (The full game

has critical successes and critical failures, but we're not going to worry about those too much for this quickie adventure.)

If there's a modifier – a bonus or penalty – it's applied to the *skill* before you roll.

Example: You need to make an **Acrobatics** roll at -2 to cross a ledge. Your skill is 15, so your skill after the modifier is 13. You roll three dice, getting a 6, 4, and 2 – for a total of 12. You succeed!

A roll of 3 or 4 always succeeds, and a roll of 17 or 18 always fails. However, except when defending against an attack, you cannot even *attempt* a roll unless your skill after modifiers is 3+.

If it's important to know how well you succeeded, subtract what you rolled from your modified skill.

In the example above, you succeeded by 1 point (13 minus 12).

When you're rolling damage, you want to roll high . . . if you're doing the damage, that is! If you see something like "roll 2d+1," that means roll two dice, add them together, and then add 1 more.

IMPORTANT: YOU'RE LUCKY!

In this adventure, your hero has Ridiculous Luck. When you use this ability, you get to reroll the dice. You can use this ability whenever you're asked to roll the dice, after you roll, whether for a skill attempt, injury taken, or whatever. If you use this ability, roll and total the dice *two more times* (that is, three times total) and take the best result (which is usually the lowest sum).

Normally with Ridiculous Luck, you would get to reroll the dice every 10 (real-time) minutes of game play. But since that doesn't make much sense for this adventure, instead you can use your ability a total of **six times** the entire adventure – but only once per action. Check off your progress on the character sheet; you can find this trait under *Advantages*.

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Wait – the end? We accepted a ridiculous quest, lugged an orc-ton of gear, walked forever, took in five strays, crawled a dozen dungeons, dodged skeevy traps, fought hundreds of heinous monsters, and got cursed. But I'm only up to 387 kills!

– Masha Deathfoot, Martial Artist

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