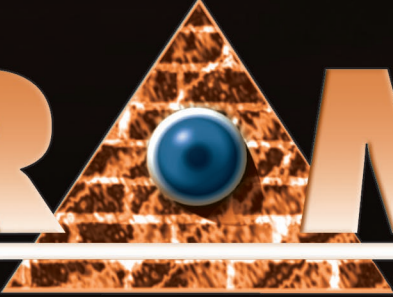


# PYRAMID<sup>®</sup>



Issue 3/98 December '16

## WELCOME TO DUNGEON FANTASY



**YOU ALL MEET  
AT AN INN**  
by Matt Riggsby

**GRAVE OF  
THE PIRATE QUEEN**  
by David L. Pulver

**BUILDING A LONG-TERM  
DUNGEON FANTASY GAME**  
by Peter V. Dell'Orto

**THE MONSTROUS  
MONSTORUM**  
by Christopher R. Rice

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

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*Brown:* In Every Issue

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Matt Riggsby,  
and Nikola Vrtis*

Everyone has to start somewhere! And there's perhaps no better place than this issue to start with a **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** campaign – or to get ready for the forthcoming **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game**. This issue is designed to help introduce you to the wonders of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**!

The most iconic pretense for adventure is when *You All Meet at an Inn*. Yet author Matt Riggsby – mastermind behind **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Adventure 1: Mirror of the Fire Demon** – turns the premise on its head with an adventure where the heroes are under attack at a tavern! Can they survive the onslaught. . . or will their adventuring careers end before they can even begin?

The darkness always seems willing to generate more dangers . . . including many that are worthy of being inscribed in *The Monstrous Monstorum*. Join Christopher R. Rice – co-author of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 19: Incantation Magic** – as he introduces you to over a dozen new monsters well suited for fledgling heroes. Face hellwasps, dire mammoths, sky gliders, and more.

The waters have formed an icy home for many explorers of the sea, yet sometimes that treasure awaits rediscovery, like when the heroes face the *Grave of the Pirate Queen*. This month's Eidetic Memory offering from **GURPS Banestorm: Abydos** author David L. Pulver is a beginning adventure that takes the heroes through a coastal crypt in search of fortune. But the Pirate Queen's sleep will not be so easily disturbed . . . This tale features several new **GURPS** monsters, from pirate-skeletons to octopus-folk to the terrifying guardian of the temple.

Adventure crafting can be daunting, especially the task of *Building a Long-Term Dungeon Fantasy Game*. Fortunately, help is here from Peter V. Dell'Orto, author of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Monsters 3: Born of Myth & Magic**. Learn his tips at how to hold the **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** series true to its origins, and how to devise a campaign that will keep those loot-seeking crypt-delvers crawling back for more.

This issue also features a Random Thought Table that serves as a primer for players looking to optimize their play experience. With this month's *Pyramid*, the world of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** is open to you . . . welcome!

*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers and Dungeons support fast, simple games with a limited number of roles, skills, and options for delvers.*

*– GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## SIMPLY FUN!

This issue was conceived during the pretty-darn successful Kickstarter we had for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*. We knew we were about to have a whole bunch of people pick up the entire *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* line for the first time, since one of the better reward levels included the complete series. So, why not have an issue of *Pyramid* that was created as kind of a “welcome” to those folks?

In that way, this issue is designed for as much of the bare-bones *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* experience as possible. While *Pyramid* is usually on the cutting edge of adding new and interesting rules, incorporating other *GURPS* supplements, and tying the entire product line together, this issue eschews all that to give fledgling gaming groups more of what they can benefit from right away. In fact, most of this issue can be used pretty much as-is by anyone who picks up the *Dungeon Fantasy* boxed set. (Of course – as I type this – that’s not due out for a number of months yet . . .)

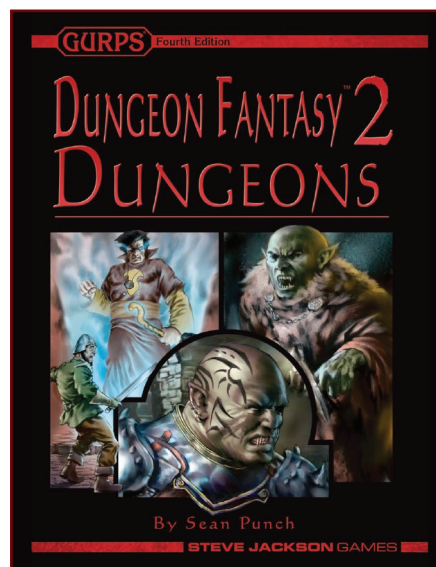
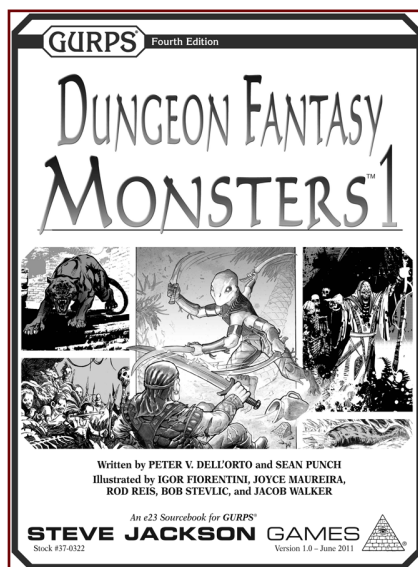
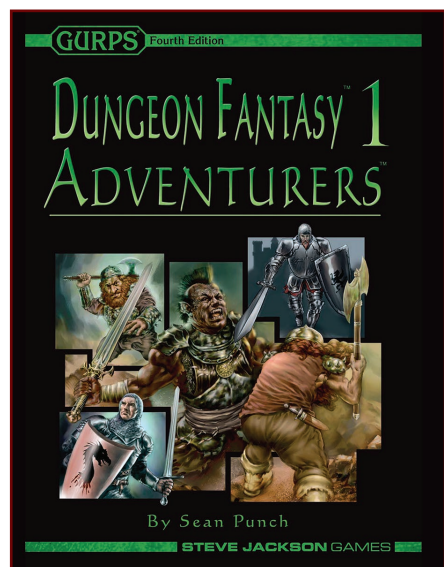
There’s a power to starting from close to square one again. It keeps players and the GM from being overwhelmed or

intimidated, and it helps those gathered around the tabletop to maintain the focus on what the core gaming experience is. (Peter V. Dell’Orto talks about this a bit on pp. 30-33.) With the *Dungeon Fantasy* boxed set firmly in our minds, now seemed like a good time to provide something a bit simpler, to hopefully help all groups – new or old – craft a great game.

So enjoy this trip back to basics. With monsters, adventures, and tips to enjoy, you’ll be on your way in no time to enjoying some company among friends at an inn where adventure begins.

## WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

This is the first time I recall doing an issue like this, specifically designed to be as accessible as possible while still being hopefully useful to a wide number of fans. How did we do? That’s up to you to say! Should we do more issues like this? If so, on what topics? Or do you prefer *Pyramid* to “push the envelope” of *GURPS* goodness? We always welcome your comments, either privately at [pyramid@sjgames.com](mailto:pyramid@sjgames.com), or among the tavern-like revelry online at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com).



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# YOU ALL MEET AT AN INN

BY MATT RIGGSBY

One awkward aspect of starting a roleplaying campaign can be justifying why a diverse group of heroes are trusting one another with their lives. “What are these people doing together?” is not necessarily a question with an obvious answer. If the players haven’t already collaborated on building characters to answer just such a question, the GM may be forced to improvise, declaring that the adventurers are all childhood friends (difficult to reconcile if they include, say, a 200-year-old forest-dwelling elf, a kung fu master raised in a lonely monastery, a barbarian fresh from his desert home and unused to civilization, and a foppish, city-dwelling swash-buckler), that they’re veterans of the same army (again, not great for characters with diverse backgrounds), that they’ve already met and previously agreed to work together (convenient, but ultimately dodges the question). And so on.

Alternatively, the GM can just try to kill them. In this adventure, a group of adventurers are spending the night at a remote inn. The inn is attacked by wave after wave of monsters, and they have to learn to work together in order to survive the night. It doesn’t matter why they’re there; all the players can come up with their own justifications for their presence. Circumstances will force them together – or else.

## N

In order to scale opposition to the adventuring party, this adventure uses the notation “N” to indicate the number of monsters the heroes encounter. N is the number of PCs and combat-useful companions they have with them (fighting animals and armed retainers count; most pets and household servants would not). Experienced groups are tougher. If the adventurers are, on average, worth over 250 points, add 1 to N for every additional 20 points. Round all fractions up.

## THE INN

This adventure is set at an inn in a remote location. The inn, or something like it, has been in place for a very long time. It sits in the middle of a high mountain pass which is one of the few routes between a number of coastal cities to the northeast and productive plains to the southwest. The site

has in the past been used as a small monastery constructed to look after travelers as an act of religious duty, a watchtower functioning as an advance post for a more substantial fortress farther along the pass, and a station serving couriers of a large empire. The inn is a roughly square structure with a partly stone lower floor and a sturdy wooden upper one. The part of the pass it sits in is about 200 yards across; it leads north to south between steep mountainsides. The ground is rocky, with moss, low grasses, and occasional shrubs in the middle, but thick stands of pine trees to either side. The pass can be blocked by ice and snow in the depths of winter, but since the adventurers wouldn’t try to come through at a time it was blocked, the weather is likely no worse than chilly.

Maps of the inn can be found on pp. 7-9.

## First Floor

The outer wall is rough stone and 3’ thick (DR 468, 135 HP), the remains of an old defensive fortification. The west-facing gates open onto a well-swept dirt courtyard with a well at the eastern edge, and a set of stairs to the north lead to the second floor. Old loopholes have been enlarged over time to be functional windows. All windows have shutters, which are average and iron-bound (DR 10, 34 HP). The gate is of similar construction. Internal doors are merely average wood (DR 2, 29 HP).

Starting at the top right corner of the first-floor map (p. 7) and going counterclockwise, the rooms are as follows.

*Buttery/Pantry:* Despite the name, the buttery stores butts, which is to say casks, not butter. There are barrels of ale, some bottles of wine, bags of flour, bunches of onions, and some preserved meats like hams and smoked venison haunches. The food stored here is good for a dozen people for at least a week without resupply.

*Common Room:* During colder and wetter weather, guests inclined to keep company with one another spend time here.

*Innkeeper’s Room:* This is where the innkeeper himself lives, close to the kitchen and the gate. Should adventurers search it, it contains a suitable wardrobe for a middle-class person and about \$500 in cash.

*Kitchen:* In addition to built-in cabinets and fireplaces, the room contains a variety of pots and pans, cheap but durable serving vessels and eating utensils, and some perishable fresh meats and vegetables, but nothing of notable value. The innkeeper’s hired help sleep here or in the stables.

## MIMIC

A rubbery, intelligent form of slime that can shapeshift to disguise itself. Mimics generally rove around looking for prey, and lure prey into touching them so they can snag and kill their victims. They either manifest a hideously toothed mouth to gnaw or a pseudopod with a fist to pound away. They can release their Binding at will, and won't stick to the targets they strike unless they choose to.

**ST:** 30                    **HP:** 30                    **Speed:** 5.75  
**DX:** 13                    **Will:** 12                    **Move:** 3  
**IQ:** 10                    **Per:** 12  
**HT:** 13                    **FP:** 12                    **SM:** +0  
**Dodge:** 9                    **Parry:** N/A                    **DR:** 0

**Munch! (11):** 3d+3 crushing. Reach C, 1. Any hit counts as a grapple, even if it doesn't penetrate DR. This allows the mimic to *worry* the victim – roll damage each turn as a free action! Treat as a weapon (Striker), not as a body part.

**Punch! (13):** 3d+3 crushing. Reach C, 1. Treat as a weapon (Striker), not as a body part.

**Traits:** Amphibious; Binding 15 (Contact; Retractable\*); Dark Vision; Discriminatory Smell; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Sleep; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Disease; Morph

(Mimicry); Injury Tolerance (Homogenous; No Blood); Invertebrate; No Legs (Slithers); No Fine Manipulators; Regeneration (Fast); Vibration Sense (Air).

**Skills:** Brawling-13.

**Class:** Slime.

**Notes:** Willing to negotiate for food. It's too intelligent to be affected by Animal or Plant spells – use Mind Control instead. Morph allows the mimic to duplicate any stone or wood perfectly, and take any shape roughly SM+0 in size. Shifting form takes one second but is a free action.

\* When launching a binding attack, mimics may choose to hold onto a line of it. If so, on any later turn, mimics may use a Ready action to pull a bound subject toward them. A mimic's effective ST is its own ST or its Binding ST, whichever is greater. Note that if a subject's hands are free, or if someone else grabs the line, that person can pull the mimic! Releasing the line is a free action on the mimic's turn.

## MUMMY

They're dusty, smell like grandma's attic, and are *mad as hell* that you are trespassing in their tomb. It's too bad they have such great loot . . . of course, sticking around in the place can lead to some *really* bad dry skin (see *Bandage Rot*, below).

## DUNGEON PATHOGENS

Several monsters carry dangerous diseases and contagious curses. For convenience sake, they are all presented here.

### *Bandage Rot*

**Exposure:** Contact with mummies (above) or anything they've touched requires a resistance roll (+3 for second-hand contact).

**Resistance:** Roll against (HT + Will) / 2 to resist. Resistant to Disease gives only half its usual bonus (round down)! Add your level of Power Investiture (Holy) or Holiness to this roll.

**Schedule:** 1 HP lost per hour until Cure Disease or Remove Curse is cast. Particularly nasty strains resist the spellcasting with a skill of 15.

**Effects:** After HP loss of 1/2, the target's skin is covered in tender boils (treat as Moderate Pain). At 2/3 HP the boils leak putrescent pus (treat as Bad Smell, a level of lowered Appearance, and Severe Pain).

**Recovery:** Once all HP is healed and Cure Disease or Remove Curse is cast.

**Treatment:** Esoteric Medicine (Holy) can be used in place of Curse Disease, but at -5 to the roll. Spells suffer no penalty, but *require* a roll against the better of Diagnosis or Occultism.

### *Festering Fever*

**Exposure:** Raw sewage, manure, etc.

**Resistance:** Roll HT.

**Schedule:** 1 HP/hour until treated.

**Effects:** At 1/3 HP lost, inflicts -1 on all attribute and skill rolls until cured, 1/2 HP inflicts -2 on such rolls, and 2/3 HP lost inflicts -3.

**Recovery:** Once all HP is restored or Cure Disease is cast.

**Treatment:** Cure Disease stops the effect immediately, but HP are still lost. Can be treated with any Esoteric Medicine skill, at -3 per -1 to all attribute and skill rolls currently inflicted.

### *Gold Cold*

**Exposure:** Being bitten by a bandit-snatcher (pp. 11-12) or touching treasure they've previously handled. Thoroughly cleaning the treasure with protective gear (DR 1+) can remove the disease.

**Resistance:** Roll Will at -3; -6 if the target has Greed with a self-control roll of 12 or 15; -9 if they have it at 9 or 6. Note margin of failure.

**Schedule:** Until Remove Curse is cast or 1d weeks has passed.

**Effects:** Acquire Greed with a self-control roll equal to (18 - margin of failure).

**Recovery:** The delver must refrain from touching anything of value that he *didn't* own prior to his infection for the duration. Failure means the target has a relapse and adds an additional 1d days to his recovery time.

**Treatment:** Occultism roll at -3 to determine the cause (it's rare!) or Hidden Lore (Faerie). Success allows an Esoteric Medicine roll to treat the disease. Esoteric Medicine (Druidic) gets +3 to this roll.



The water rapidly becomes much deeper, to 18' just off the beach. Many small caves dot the cliffs along the beach, but most are 5' to 9' deep with nothing more interesting than a dead shark carcass, rotting fish, seaweed, or hermit crabs. The exception is Rory's cave (see below): strewn boulders and debris are scattered about its base, where part of the cliff gave way during the quake. A Tracking roll reveals three sets of footprints along the beach and around the cave mouth: Rory and two friends who ventured inside.

### *The Hidden Entrance*

In addition to Rory's cave, there's an alternative entrance that could be discovered by diligent adventures. Several yards west down the coast from Rory's cave, and eight yards out into the water (where the water is about 20' deep) is a subterranean cave mouth partly hidden by seaweed. This leads to a water-filled tunnel 14 yards long that opens up into Room 7 (p. 24). Finding this entrance requires searching underwater in the right place. A few amphibious monsters still use it to enter or exit the dungeon, to either use it as a lair or to worship at the old sea god's temple.

## THE PIRATE CAVERNS (GM INFORMATION)

This is a cavern complex located inside and under Kraken's Bluff. The caverns have been sporadically inhabited for centuries, first by cultists who worshiped "Tentacle Beard," a now mostly forgotten god of death and the sea, then by a band of sea rovers led by Morag the Pirate Queen, who slaughtered the cultists and seized the temple as her own base. Morag was eventually slain in a sea battle with the King's navy after being betrayed by a jealous lieutenant, Bloody Jack. The few remaining pirates then sailed their damaged ship back to the temple, and buried their captain within it and sealed up the caves behind them. Some treasures they left as grave goods (and because they were too few to carry all the loot away themselves). However, soon after leaving, the pirates broke their sworn vows to hunt down Bloody Jack and instead went their separate ways. Morag's furious spirit was unable to rest peacefully in her grave and has risen as an undead draug, served by the zombie corpses of some of her followers who were interred with her.

In addition to Morag, aquatic monsters also visit the complex, entering through the underwater tunnel. Aside from Rory's unfortunate party, the adventurers are the first land-dwellers to enter it since the pirates sealed it up.

For a map of the cave complex, see p. 27.

### 1. *Rory's Cave*

Squeezing past boulders and debris left by the quake, adventurers will find themselves in a deep, sandy cave. The cave disappears into the darkness.

Two-thirds of the way into the cave, a Vision roll may reveal old graffiti crudely scratched into the western wall. It reads: "The Red-Eyed Dragon rules the waves!" and is accompanied by a crude sketch of a horned skull with bat wings.

### 2. *Side Cave*

This cave has a strong fishy smell. Its floor is covered in sand. Something gleams white in one corner – a pile of half-buried bones. Doubtless these were unfortunate victims of the cave's occupant: an enormous crab who swiftly charges any intruders.

The gnawed bones are from fish and the recent remnants of two humans (Tomkin and Ufgar, unfortunate members of Rory's party) wearing torn clothes like those of local fishers. There's also part of a long rubbery tentacle. Mixed up amid the bits are a pouch with 17 gold pieces, some tattered bits of cloth, a tinderbox, the rusty head of a trident, a broken shortword, and a wooden torch.

### Giant Crab

This fierce giant crab is 6' across, and looking for a new meal. It has tan skin and orange pincers and legs. It enjoys grabbing prey and pulling them apart. It isn't very bright. If reduced to 6 or fewer HP, it will retreat, scampering toward the nearest water.

<b>ST:</b> 18	<b>HP:</b> 18	<b>Speed:</b> 7.00
<b>DX:</b> 12	<b>Will:</b> 10	<b>Move:</b> 9
<b>IQ:</b> 3	<b>Per:</b> 10	
<b>HT:</b> 10	<b>FP:</b> 14	<b>SM:</b> +1
<b>Dodge:</b> 10	<b>Parry:</b> N/A	<b>DR:</b> 5/2 (see Notes)

**Crab Pincers (14):** 1d+4 cutting. Reach C, 1. Any hit counts as a grapple, regardless of whether it penetrates DR. Treat as a weapon (Striker), not as a body part. It can strike with each pincer.

**Traits:** Amphibious; Doesn't Breathe (Gills); Extra Attack 1; Extra Legs (Eight Legs); Horizontal; Injury Tolerance (No Neck); No Fine Manipulators; Peripheral Vision; Ultravision; Vibration Sense (Air); Wild Animal.

**Skills:** Brawling-14.

**Class:** Giant Animal.

**Notes:** If killed but not destroyed, 80 lbs. of succulent crabmeat (\$10/pound) can be salvaged. DR 5 on shell protecting torso and head; DR 2 on other locations.

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

The dungeon is a mix of natural caves and tunnels, and rough-surfaced rooms crudely tunneled out of the rock. Floors are a mix of sand and undressed stone, and are damp. The rocky ceiling is low in the tunnels, varying between 5' and 7' high, and adventurers must often duck their heads. Caves and rooms have 7' to 9' ceilings, often with a few stalactites hanging down, and water dripping from above.

A strong fishy odor wafts through most of the caves, though it is even more intense in some areas, as noted in the room descriptions. The caves aren't populated enough to have wandering encounters, though the GM should take note of what monsters are nearby. The fish-folk and octopus-folk are temporary inhabitants of the dungeon and may move around the complex, be replaced by other monsters, or be reinforced by more of their kin if the PCs encounter them, but retreat without defeating them.

## ABOUT *GURPS*

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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