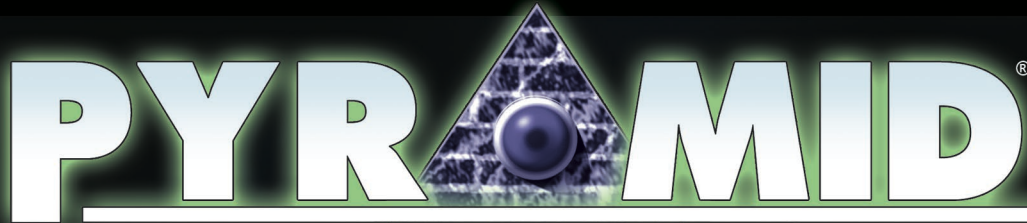


# PYRAMID<sup>®</sup>



Issue 3/118 August '18

## The Fantasy Trip<sup>™</sup>

## DUNGEON FANTASY<sup>™</sup>

POWERED BY CURPS



### ISTVAN'S HOLE

David L. Pulver

### THE SHIELD-BEARER

Sean Punch

### THE 60-MINUTE HEROES

Steven Marsh

### IT'S AN ENCOUNTER!

Christopher R. Rice

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Stock #37-2718

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### ARTICLE COLORS

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

*Pale Blue:* In This Issue

*Brown:* In Every Issue

*Green:* Columnist

*Dark Blue:* *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*

*Orange:* *The Fantasy Trip*

*Purple:* Systemless Features

#### COVER ART

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*Denis Loubet and Nikola Vrtis,  
with Alex Fernandez and Dan Willems*

Getting together with friends, exploring new places, and returning home with loot . . . what could be better than that? With this month's issue of *Pyramid*, we're looking at *two* classics: the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, and – currently on Kickstarter – *The Fantasy Trip*. We've got support for *both*, in some surprising ways!

Sometimes the best offense is a good defense . . . especially when you're *The Shield-Bearer!* *Dungeon Fantasy* architect Sean Punch brings a new profession – the shield-bearer – to your tomb-touring heroes. Protect allies, bash heads, and hurl your shield at unsuspecting enemies! This feature includes new traits, rules, and options for your shield-wielder, plus a sample character and tips for using these possibilities with *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*.

It's a quick challenge to spice up your dungeon-delving heroes' lives . . . it's a delivery system for a key piece of information . . . *It's an Encounter!* *Dungeon Fantasy Traps* co-author Christopher R. Rice offers an assortment of flavorful tables that can be used individually or collectively to craft a memorable random encounter. Designed for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, this article has enough systemless goodness to be equally inspirational for *The Fantasy Trip* adventures.

Worlds collide, and the heroes might not make it out alive when they venture forth to explore *Istvan's Hole*. Acclaimed author David L. Pulver delivers an old-school adventure suitable for both the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* and *The Fantasy Trip*, converting various *Dungeon Fantasy* monsters for use in *TFT* . . . and vice versa! Can the heroes survive the plethora of perils and emerge from the opal mines triumphant? Includes an overview map of the mine.

When things go differently than planned, suddenly the dungeon explorers become *The 60-Minute Heroes*. This adventure outline presents an intriguing dilemma and a ticking clock. Although designed for *The Fantasy Trip* (including a complete, ready-to-use megahex-based dungeon map), it's generic and accessible enough to be useful for *Dungeon Fantasy* fans or any fantasy gamer.

This issue wraps up with a Random Thought Table that looks at old-school fantasy through the eye of modern-day video games. With this issue, the call of classic fantasy is louder than ever!

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## WELCOME TO THE DUNGEON!

As I type these words, the Kickstarter for *The Fantasy Trip* is blazing through its various stretch goals. (According to my cyber-gnomes, pointing your browser to [kck.st/2uUXocg](http://kck.st/2uUXocg) should get you to the right page.) We at *Pyramid* have always been fans of old-school crypt-crawling fantasy fun, and so we felt this was a good time to get behind the excitement with our own celebratory salute to dungeon fantasy.

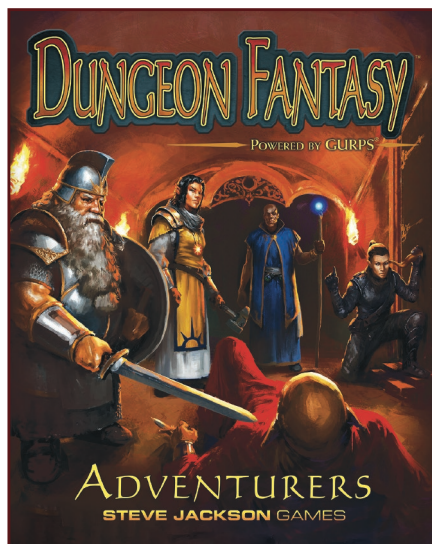
So this issue is a bit different, in that it's designed for both fans of the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* (which is, of course, Powered by *GURPS*) and fans (old and forthcoming) of *The Fantasy Trip*.

Mind you, the new version of *The Fantasy Trip* (*TFT*) doesn't even *exist* yet. Fortunately, it's designed to be super-accessible. So, for example, the adventure written by Your Humble Editor (pp. 34-37) should be eminently readable even without a lick of experience with *TFT*, and GMs should feel comfortable perusing it for inspiration, adapting it to your own campaigns, and whetting your appetite for what *TFT* has to offer.

The amazing thing about the gaming hobby is that each part informs every other. I still use supplements, magazines, and resources from games that are 30 years old. (I have a particular soft spot for the old *Role Aids* line from Mayfair.) And I've adapted tons of great ideas from modern games to use in other areas. This innovative spirit is what keeps gaming fresh, and gives you an excuse to go through your library, explore those wondrous gaming Kickstarters, and exchange ideas with all your gaming friends, new and wizened.

## WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW!

Speaking of exchanging ideas, what did you think of our quasi-experimental issue? Did it spark your interest . . . along with your torch as you gather your henchmen to go clear out that tomb? Or was there something different you wish we'd found in our travels? Let us know, via a private message to our chin-stroking sages at [pyramid@sjgames.com](mailto:pyramid@sjgames.com), or publicly at the talkative tavern that meets online at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com).



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# GRUNTAR

## 247-point Half-Ogre Shield-Bearer

Gruntar's life story is typical of that of countless half-ogres: Somebody noticed him about to be run out of town as a savage, thought "That brute would make a great meat shield!", and recruited him. In this case, though, the recruiter made the error of thinking out loud. Gruntar had always wanted to fit in, and came to the conclusion that he could do so by quite literally serving as a living bulwark. He snatched up a couple of shields and embarked on a career of getting between his captain and anything dangerous.

During his stint in "the army" (actually the house guard of an obscure baron), Gruntar learned to be civil and a model soldier – both within the limits of his intellect and short temper. He also picked up a lot of half-baked ideas about tactics and military thinking. When his captain retired, he was discharged and took his skills on the road.

Gruntar's tactics are predictable but fairly effective: He enters battle with his large shield Lefty and small shield Righty in their respective hands. Both are masses of spiky, razor-edged dwarven steel. He's surprisingly swift – capable of using shield rushes to great effect – but prefers to stand his ground defending his group's leader. Should the situation demand it, he'll hurl Righty and pull his axe, but he'll never willingly let go of Lefty. On the defense, he's downright scary, blocking at 19 factoring in his DB 3, and alternating hands for 19, 19, 16, 16, 13, 13, and so on without retreating an inch; add +1 for Shield Mastery if the attacks are ranged.

Gruntar has traded three quirk points for money – mostly to afford his extremely nice shields! The other two bought more Fearlessness, because it wouldn't do for a stalwart defender to cower in fear.

**ST** 17 [70]; **DX** 14 [80]; **IQ** 9 [-20]; **HT** 14 [40].  
Damage 1d+2/3d-1; BL 58 lbs.; HP 17 [0]; Will 9 [0];  
Per 9 [0]; FP 14 [0].  
Basic Speed 7.00 [0]; Basic Move 10 [15]; Move 8.  
Dodge 9; Parry 10 (Axe); Block 16\*.

### Advantages

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Enhanced Block 3 [15]    | Shield-Wall Training [1]     |
| Fearlessness 2 [4]       | Signature Gear (Lefty) [1]   |
| Hold the Line [1]        | Signature Gear (Righty) [1]  |
| Night Vision 3 [3]       | Tough Skin 1 [3]             |
| Sacrificial Block [1]    | Weapon Bond (Lefty) [1]      |
| Shield Familiarity 3 [3] | Weapon Bond (Righty) [1]     |
| Shield Mastery 1 [15]    | Weapon Master (Shields) [25] |

### Disadvantages and Quirks

- Appearance (Ugly) [-8]
- Bad Temper (12) [-10]
- Chummy [-5]
- Code of Honor (Soldier's) [-10]
- Sense of Duty (Adventuring Companions) [-5]
- Social Stigma (Savage) [-10]
- Vow (Always fight with at least one shield in hand) [-5]
- Always picks *somebody* as "the cap'n," and defends that person. [-1]
- Good about holding formation, unless enraged. [-1]
- Never throws Lefty. [-1]
- Speaks in badly understood military terminology to sound smart. [-1]
- Would do almost anything to be accepted in polite company. [-1]

### Skills

- |                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Armory (Melee Weapons)-9 [2] | Leadership-9 [2]      |
| Axe/Mace-14 [2]              | Push-14 [4]           |
| Brawling-15 [2]              | Shield                |
| Carousing-14 [1]             | (Buckler)-18/20† [12] |
| Connoisseur (Weapons)-9 [2]  | Stealth-13 [1]        |
| Forced Entry-14 [1]          | Sumo Wrestling-14 [2] |
| Hiking-13 [1]                | Tactics-9 [4]         |
| Immovable Stance-14 [4]      | Thrown Weapon         |
| Intimidation-8 [1]           | (Shield)-16/18† [4]   |

*F flank left! Advance  
to da rear! Deploy  
reserves! Cover us wit'  
arrows! Hut hut hut!*

*– Gruntar,  
Shield-Bearer*

\* Includes +3 for Enhanced Block.

† Use higher skill for Lefty and Righty (+1 for balanced, +1 for Weapon Bond).

### Equipment

- \$2,500, 109.62 lbs. (Light encumbrance)
- Axe. 3d+1 cut (reach 1). \$50, 4 lbs.
- Canteen, Full. 1 quart water. \$10, 3 lbs.
- Clothing. \$0, 2 lbs.
- Coins. 3 silver, 18 copper. \$78, 0.42 lb.
- Large Buckler w. Sharp Spike, Balanced, Bladed, Dwarven ("Lefty"). DB 3; 1d+6 imp (reach 1) *or* 3d+4 cut (reach 1). Shield rush at Move 8: 1d+11 imp. \$1,330, 56 lbs.
- Light Leather Armor, Suit. DR 1 (total DR 2). \$150, 18 lbs.
- Personal Basics. \$5, 1 lb.
- Pouch. Holds rations. \$10, 0.2 lb.
- Rations, 6 meals. \$12, 3 lbs.
- Small Buckler w. Sharp Spike, Balanced, Bladed, Dwarven ("Righty"). DB 1; 1d+6 imp (reach 1) *or* 3d+4 cut (reach 1). Shield rush at Move 8: 1d+9 imp.
- Thrown: 1d+7 cut, Acc 1, Range 17/25, Shots T(1), Bulk -4. \$855, 22 lbs.

### Gruntar in GURPS

Gruntar's Tough Skin is Damage Resistance (Tough Skin, -40%), renamed; to interpret his other abilities, see p. 8. His gear comes from the *DFRPG*. If using the *Basic Set*, his light leather armor (DR 1) becomes a leather jacket, leather pants, leather cap, cloth gloves, and shoes (all DR 1). Per pp. B283-284, that's \$177, 9 lbs.; he spends \$27 more (he has enough) but carries 9 lbs. less (which doesn't change his encumbrance). Ignore the coin denominations but keep their \$ value. Shield-rush damage is four points higher in the *DFRPG*, as thrust-2, +4 for Move 8, gives a base 1d+4, while *GURPS* starts from collision damage for HP 17 and Move 8, for a base 1d.

## Dungeon Fantasy Shadowights

In a fight, Shadowights use their Chameleon ability, which grants them an effective Stealth skill of 17 even when moving. Against foes who can't ignore at least -5 in darkness penalties, they may attempt *Backstabbing* (*Dungeon Fantasy Exploits*, pp. 57-58) repeatedly (much as a Demon from *Between the Stars*; see *Dungeon Fantasy Monsters*, pp. 19-20). This requires a Move maneuver accompanied by a successful Stealth roll at -5 (effectively Stealth 12); the turn after, they can strike from behind at +4.

Some Shadowights are mage-acolytes, specializing in spells of darkness and shadow. Burzarina, Mistress of the Hungry Dark (their wizard-priest), has IQ 13, Magery 2, Herb Lore-15, Leadership-12, and Theology-11, and knows several spells, including Armor-14, Blackout-15, Blur-15, Continual Light-14 (this and Light are used to discipline other Shadowights!), Darkness-15, Light-14, and Missile Shield-14. She speaks her race's language, the local human language (learned from Baltza), and that of the gargoyles. She has a magical staff inlaid with obsidian and tipped by a carved black opal that stores six energy points and can also deliver 1d burning damage to anything it touches. She also has four doses of mushroom gas anti-toxin.

ST: 9	HP: 9	Speed: 5.50
DX: 11	Will: 10	Move: 5
IQ: 9	Per: 10	
HT: 10	FP: 9	SM: 0
Dodge: 8	Parry: 8	DR: 0

**Large, Magical Obsidian Knives (12):** 1d-1 impaling or 1d-2 cutting (but break as cheap weapons).

**Mushroom Gas Bomb (13):** Gas grenade. Acc 0, Range 22, shatters on striking anything with DR 3+, such as armor or the ground. The fumes affect a two-yard radius. Living beings who breathe them must roll HT-4 or sleep for 16-HT hours (minimum one hour) and suffer strange hallucinogenic fever dreams.

**Traits:** Chameleon 5 (Only in darkness); Dark Vision (see notes); Vulnerability (Burning x2); Weakness (Sunlight, 1d HP per minute).

**Skills:** Blowpipe-11; Knife-12; Stealth-12\*; Throwing-13.

**Class:** Mundane.

**Note:** This version of Dark Vision allows sight without penalty in total darkness, but imposes vision and combat penalties in any light: a penalty of (10 minus darkness penalty). Thus, in light conditions that would give a human a -2 darkness penalty, the Shadowight suffers -8, but in light that would give a human -8, the Shadowight takes a mere -2. The creature is at -10 in full daylight, but takes no penalty in total darkness.

\* In the dark, this becomes 17 if moving or 22 if motionless.

## TFT Shadowights

See *The Fantasy Trip: In the Labyrinth* for general statistics. The particular Shadowights are as follows.

*Acolytes, Guards, and Scouts:* ST 8, DX 10, IQ 9, MA 10. Armed with fine obsidian daggers (+1 damage, but break on a 17-18). Their talents include Blowgun, Climbing, Knife, Silent Movement, and Thrown Weapons.

*Burzarina, Mistress of the Hungry Dark:* She has ST 8, DX 11, IQ 13, MA 10. Her talents are Priest and Naturalist. She speaks her race's language, the local human language (learned from Baltza), and Gargoyle. She has the following spells: Staff II, Darkness, Image, Blur, Reverse Missiles, 3-hex Shadow, and Summon Apep. Her wizard's staff is inlaid with obsidian and tipped by a carved black opal and holds six points of mana. She carries a knife and mushroom gas bomb, but prefers to use her magic to support her followers.

## TFT Mushroom Gas Bombs

Thrown, and explodes as per *Gas Bombs* in *The Fantasy Trip: Advanced Melee*. The fumes affect one megahex. Living beings who breathe them must roll 4 dice against ST or sleep for 16-ST hours (minimum one hour) and suffer strange hallucinogenic fever dreams.

*This civilization is widely considered lost. Now they are found, but seem uninterested in exchanging lore. From what I have gleaned, a little flame should change their minds. If not, we shall confirm their extinction.*

– Zephyra, Wizard

## Silver Slime

Resembling a blob of liquid mercury, this electrical creature is unrelated to other slimes. It eats silver (first tarnishing it, then very slowly dissolving it). It uses lightning bolts to defend itself, and probably senses the electrical signals of living things.

## Dungeon Fantasy Silver Slime

Silver slime is hard to hurt. It divides penetrating damage received by 2 if impaling or by 5 if piercing, thanks to Homogeneous. It also resists electricity. It can extend a pseudopod to carry things, and will cart off small silver objects it finds to its lair.

ST: 15	HP: 30	Speed: 6.00
DX: 12	Will: 12	Move: 3
IQ: 6	Per: 12	
HT: 12	FP: 12	SM: 0
Dodge: 9	Parry: N/A	DR: 9

**Corrosion (14):** 1 point (affects silver only).

**Lightning Bolt (14):** 1d to 3d burning damage. Each die of damage costs the creature 1 FP.



## 11. Room of Pits

This area contains over a dozen covered spiked pits, as marked on the map (p. 37). They aren't difficult to deal with (3 dice to find, 3 dice to disarm, covers 1 hex, does 4 dice damage), but doing so exhaustively would run the heroes out of time. (It takes at least 120 lbs. to trigger the trap, so the goblins in area 12 haven't noticed them.)

## 12. Goblin Cave

This chamber contains eight goblins, who got trapped in the facility during one of the random periods that the chamber between 3 and 4 opened to release pressure. (They know their way around the pits to the north and reset them as needed.)

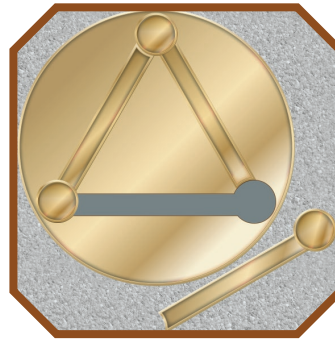
They aren't necessarily hostile; roll for reaction, with +1 if the heroes speak their language, and another +1 if the heroes can somehow convey the idea that this volcano is going to explode. (*If you stay here, you will die* is a powerful diplomatic tack.) If the reaction is good or great, up to half the goblins are willing to accompany the heroes on their quest, provided they're reassured that they're not in immediate danger. (It's okay to lie.)

One of the goblins has a piece of the amulet (another gold bar). She won't think to mention it (she doesn't know its import), but she will relinquish it if asked whether she's seen such an item. She'll also give it up if killed.

## ESCAPE . . . OR NOT?

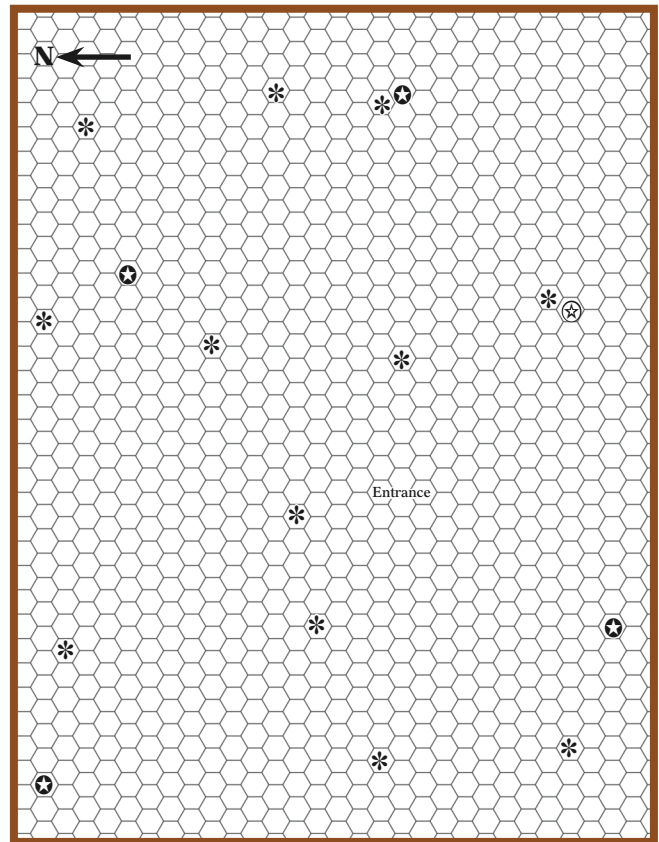
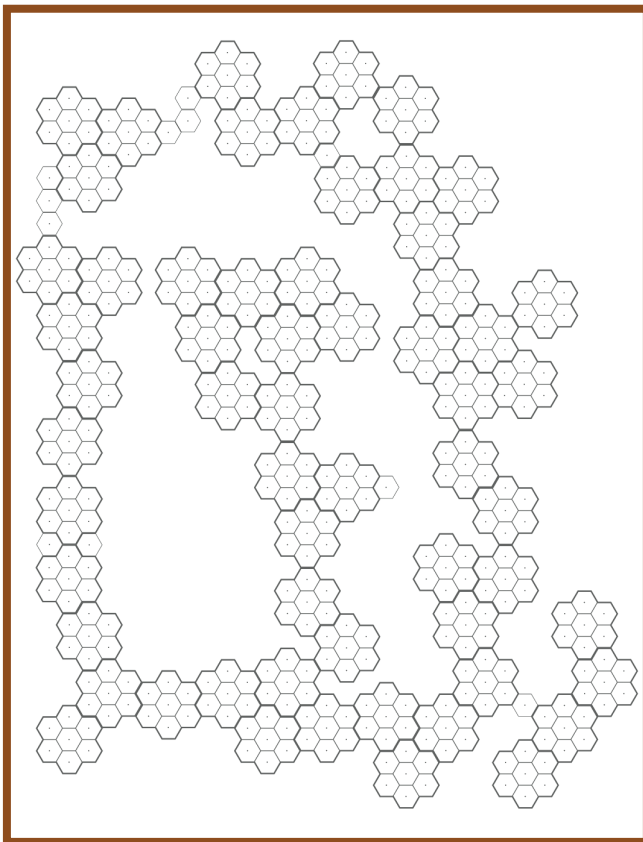
If the heroes don't go through the dungeon beyond area 3, they can retire with their promised money (100 gold per hero). Enterprising GMs might repurpose the rest of the dungeon for a future encounter . . . although rewards (especially the ring of wishes) should be toned down if there isn't a time limit.

Otherwise, this adventure hinges on the time limit (720 turns before boom). There's nothing keeping the heroes from leaving whenever they want, and they probably want to cut corners and avoid conflict when possible. But, conversely, if the heroes are blazing through and in danger of not even worrying about the time limit, it'd be entirely permissible to throw additional encounters or complications at them to make the players sweat.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For more about Steven Marsh, see Random Thought Table, pp. 38-39.



### Map of the Volcano Complex (Player Versions)

Here are two possible player maps. The left one depicts a full map of the dungeon *without* points of interest, while the right one shows *just* the points of interest without the surrounding map (see p. 39 for details on using these). The adventure does not assume either one is used, but you can supply one or the other if you think it would enhance the fun for the players. (Obviously, don't give both!)

## ABOUT *GURPS*

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