

# Θ-OH

## Sorcerer Character Has Warrior Adventure Onanistic Hoodoo

*A Supplement for the Θ Fantasy Role-Playing Game*

*by Oedipussy Rex*

[derivative fantasy-themed artwork]

*“The author obviously has lots of anger issues; it's good they're being channeled this way. Plus, it seems like a nice system.”*

-Anon Therapist

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“It would not have been possible to write this without the wonderful help of...” or “I’m grateful for the loving support of...” or “To <insert initials here>” or some crap like that. Isn’t that what I’m expected to write? Whatever the expectations, this book is dedicated to that guy who comes to the table at every convention and asks, “So what’s this?” and then when I start to explain the game, idly pages through the booklet, gets a distant look in his eye, and wanders off while I’m still talking. Go fuck yourself, buddy.

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# Welcome to Θ-OH

Glad you could make it. Without a doubt the main question I've received when telling people about writing this supplement is, "What the hell is Θ?" followed closely by, "Why?" Usually by family members. My uncle was especially baffled when I responded to his, "How much are you making off of it?" with, "Nothing. I give it away for free online." "That's fucking stupid. Why do something if you don't get anything out of it." Says the guy whose son wants as little to do with him as possible. Hey Oedipussy Avunculus, why bother having a child if all you're going to do is belittle and alienate him?

But to answer the question, "Why?" Because. Because I wanted to; because it helped to pass the time; because it keeps the voices at bay; because a person can't watch internet porn 24 hours a day; because I want to see how far the game can bend before it breaks; because disappointing my uncle is funny. You know, because.

The three of you reading this (Hi, Mom!) will no doubt recognize much of the material presented here. Some of it was pulled from the main book, other parts came from thoughts and musings I posted in the online forums. But fear not, very little made the transition unchanged and there is plenty of new material that is being presented here for the first time.

[cat with a crown]

## New Races

**Half-Ogre** – Dumber than a bag of hammers with almost as much grace. When a Half-Ogre receives damage he must succeed on a Resist S4 or blindly attack the nearest character or monster. No, the player cannot choose. The emphasis is on the word "nearest," not "or."

- Start with 40 Character Points
- Both Sorcerer and Adventure cost an additional CP to increase in Rank per Rank, two additional CP per Rank to increase above 7th, and 4 additional per Rank to increase above 9th Rank
- Gain 10 Health with each purchase
- Warrior rolls outside of combat and Warrior Resist rolls are made with a +4 bonus
- Cannot use Armor or Shields
- Can only use Clubs and Hurled Rocks effectively
- While Half-Ogres can use weapons other than Clubs, they are completely inept in their use and do only d1/d3 damage with them, even if the weapon has magical bonuses
- Half-Ogres use the Warrior die when hurling rocks
- Rocks that Half-Ogres throw are massive 10 to 25 pound sumbitches and each rock counts against encumbrance (See Encumbrance, pg 28)

Warrior Rank	Attacks per Turn	Base Damage	Maximum Damage	Throws per Turn	Damage	Range
1-2	1	d1	d1	1/2	d1	30/60/90
3-4	1	d1	d3	1	d1	30/60/90
5-6	1	d2	d8	1	d2	30/60/90
7	1	d3	d10	1	d2	30/60/90
8	2	d3	d12	2	d3	40/80/120
9	3	d4	d16	3	d3	50/100/150
10	4	d4	d20	4	d4	60/120/180
11	5	d6	d24	5	d6	70/140/210

**Half-Elf** – Unattractive, when compared to Elves, yet still prettier than Humans. Disliked by both for their homeliness and pompous attitude, respectively.

- Start with 40 Character Points
- Gain 4 Health with each purchase
- Increasing Warrior above 7th Rank costs an additional CP per Rank
- Increasing Warrior above 9th Rank costs an additional 2 CP per Rank
- +1 bonus to Adventure when using (non-cross) bows

**Halfling** – Halflings, while affable enough, generally don't like the other races. Mostly because they're tired of being made to feel like the children they appear to be to the taller races and Gnomes' "shortness superiority complex." ("You call that short? I'm on my tippy-toes and you still tower over me." "Hey, Redwood, can you hear me up there?" "Halfling?" More like "Three-quarters-ling.")

- Start with 35 Character Points
- Gain 4 Health with each purchase
- Warrior cannot exceed 7th Rank (d12)
- Cannot cast spells or chain-cast, but can read from scrolls and use magical items
- +1 bonus on Resist rolls for spells and spell-like effects that allow a Resist
- Limited in available armor and weapons
- Thrown weapon ranges as a Gnome
- +1 bonus to the attack roll and 1 extra attack per turn when throwing rocks or Daggers

**Centaurs, Minotaurs, Thri-kreen, Half-Giants, Kender, etc.** – Monsters as Character Races. Yippee!

- Start with as many Character Points as is necessary to fulfill your vision
- Set the Health and Defense costs as you think is needed to fit within the proper scale of the campaign
- Aspects are limited only by what is appropriate to the race, if that
- All characters, after they have been created, are handed in to the GM to be used as NPCs

[monsters entering a forest and forlornly]  
[looking back at a group of weeping adventurers]

### Optional Health Rules

If you don't care for the fixed health values, you can roll for Health instead. For each purchase of Health, roll the indicated die for the character's race. And, of course, a Character Point can be spent to re-roll. Please do so. In fact, I double-dog dare you.

Dwarf	d12	Half-Ogre	d20
Elf	d8	Halfling	d8
Gnome	d6	Human	d10
Half-Elf	d8	Orc	d16

# Attacking and Damage

## Notation & Special Damage

**Aspect Numbers:** The first letter of an Aspect followed by a number means either the Rank of that Aspect or the number to be exceeded by a roll of that Aspect die. Context should make it obvious which meaning applies. A monster S4 is fourth rank in Sorcerer, and a stuck door, W6, requires a roll of 7 or better on the Warrior die to open.

A die type following an Aspect Number, indicates the die used upon success or failure. Again, context matters. An Ogre W9/d4 does d4 damage for each point of success of an attack, while trying to disable a trap A6/d8 will do d8 damage for each point of failure if the Adventure roll doesn't exceed 6.

**Diminishing Damage:** Some damage continues for more than a single Turn, but the damage die decreases over time, such as being on fire or the effects of some poisons. The notation is the Aspect Number and initial die, “-” how many Ranks the die decreases, and how many Turns it takes before the next die takes effect. So a diminishing poison requiring a Resist exceeding 8 on Warrior else d12 Damage per point of failure is taken that decreases one Rank in potency every 2 Turns would be Resist W8/d12-1/2. With Diminishing Damage, the damage die decreases but the degree of the damage remains constant, unless further Resists are allowed.

**Incremental Damage:** Incremental damage occurs in certain Resist situations. The damage die for a Resist failure will increase a certain number of Ranks for every certain number of points of failure, such as a base damage of d1 increasing by 2 Ranks for every 3 Points of Failure. In the example given, if a roll of 4 resulted when trying to beat 16, the 13 Points of Failure will result in 3d1 + 3d3 + 3d6 + 3d10 + 1d16 damage, where the first three points of failure are at d1 damage, the 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> points of failure are at d3 damage, and so on. The notation is similar to that for Diminishing Damage but with addition instead of subtraction: Resist W16/d1+2/3.

[black knight: “’tis but a scratch”]  
[king arthur: “afraid not, old chap. that blow did incremental]  
[damage. combine that with your rather unfortunate resist]  
[penalties and, well, i hate to be the bearer of bad news, but]  
[i'm afraid you'll bleed out within a few turns”]  
[black knight: “i've had worse”]

## Weapon Types

There are three basic categories of weapons: Choppy, Crunchy, and Stabby. Choppy weapons (axes and the like) chop through opponents, Crunchy weapons (clubs, maces) pummel them, and Stabby weapons (swords and arrows), well, stab them. Yeah yeah, large swords do most damage by slicing off body parts (a.k.a. chopping), but that would leave us with just Daggers, Shorts Swords, Spears, and ammunition.

## New Weapons

**Atlatl:** One of the oldest weapons next to the rock and pointy stick. The atlatl extends the length of the arm-lever to propel darts (not the same as Blowgun or Military Darts) great distances.

**Blackjack/Sap:** Effective only against humanoids but ineffective if a helm is worn or if the attacker is unable to reach the head of the victim. Does a fixed d1 damage per Point of Success of the attack (no increase of the damage die for Power Attacks). The victim must roll a Warrior Resist to keep from being knocked unconscious (against 1 plus 2 for each level of a Power Attack) or stunned (against the Degree of Success if larger than the unconscious limit, for a number of Turns equal to the Degree of Failure of the Resist). If the victim is unaware of the attack, he receives a -1 penalty to the resist.

**Blowgun:** Two types: Stealth (less than 2' long) and Hunting (2'+ long). The darts do no damage but depend on the poison they deliver.

**Lance/Kontos:** Lances and kontoi can only be used while riding a moving mount. A lance is held in one hand, allowing use of a shield, while a kontos is a two-handed weapon. The Adventure die is used for the attack roll and the speed of the mount affects the amount of damage and the bonus the defender gets to Defense – d1 damage and d3 to Defense when trotting, d2/d4 for a canter, and d3/d6 for a full gallop. These weapons do not allow special attacks like Power Attacks or Careful Aim, but mounted opponents must make a Warrior Resist vs. the Degree of Success of the attack to remain mounted. (Trot, canter, and gallop are used as generic terms indicating relative speeds, not necessarily the gait the mount is using.)

**Military Darts:** Remember Lawn Darts™? Now militarize them. These are not what you would find in a pub.

**Net:** Opposed Adventure rolls with the result of the Range die being added to the target's roll; success indicating the target being entangled. A Successful Warrior roll against the strength value of the net is required to escape. The attack receives a +1 bonus for each size category of the target below medium and a -1 penalty for each size category greater.

**Quarterstaff/Bō:** “Speak softly, and carry a big stick”? Here's your big stick.

	Dam. Die	Max. Die <sup>1</sup>	Min. Warrior <sup>2</sup>	Type	Races Allowed	Use Shield	Dual Wield
<b>Mêlée Weapons</b>							
Axe, Battle	d2	d8	d6	Ch	H,D,O,He	No	No
Axe, Battle, Great	d3	d12	d12	Ch	H,D	No	No
Axe, Great	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,O	No	No
Axe, Hand	d1	d6	d4	Ch	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	Yes
Blackjack	d1	d1 <sup>3</sup>	–	Cr	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	No
Bō	d1	d3	–	Cr	H,E,O,He	No	No
Club	d1	d3	–	Cr	Any	Yes	Yes
Dagger	d1	d3	–	S	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	Yes
Fist	d1 <sup>4</sup>	d30	–	–	Any	–	–
Hammer	d1	d6	d4	Cr	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	Yes
Hammer, War	d3	d12	d12	Cr	H,D,O	No	No
Hatchet	d1	d3	–	Ch	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	Yes
Mace	d2	d8	d6	Cr	H,D,E,O,He	Yes	No
Morningstar	d2	d10	d8	Cr	H,D,E,O,He	Yes	No
Quarterstaff	d1	d3	–	Cr	H,E,O,He	No	No
Sap	d1	d1 <sup>3</sup>	–	Cr	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	No
Spear, Great	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	No	No
Spear	d1	d6	d4	S	H,D,E,O,He	Yes	No
Sword, Bastard	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	No	No
Sword, Great	d3	d12	d12	S	H,O	No	No
Sword, Long	d2	d8	d6	S	H,D,E,O	Yes	Yes
Sword, Short	d1	d6	d4	S	H,D,E,O,G,He,½	Yes	Yes

<sup>1</sup> Orcs increase Maximum Damage by 2 Ranks

<sup>2</sup> Orcs can use mêlée weapons one Warrior Rank early

<sup>3</sup> Power Attacks increase the Resist number for the victim, not the damage die. The only limit to the level of a Power Attack is the attacker's Rank in Warrior

<sup>4</sup> One die for every 2 full PoS, 3 for Gnomes and Halflings, with a Minimum of 1 point of Damage with success. Increase Damage die by 1 Rank for each Warrior Rank above 7<sup>th</sup>

<b>Ranged Weapons</b>	Dam. Die	Min. Adv.	Attacks /Turn	Type	Races Allowed	Range in Yards
Atlatl	d1	d8	1	S	H,D,E,He	100/200/400
Axe, Hand	d1	d4	2	Ch	H,D,He	10/20/30
Blowgun, Hunting	–	–	1	S	H,D,E,He,G,½	15/30/45
Blowgun, Stealth	–	d4	1	S	H,D,E,He,G,½	10/20/30
Bow, Great	d3	d12 <sup>3</sup>	1	S	H,E,He	100/200/300
Bow, Long	d2	d8	2	S	H,E,He	70/140/210
Bow, Short	d1	d4	2	S	H,D,E,He	50/100/150
Club	d1	d4	1	Cr	H,D,E,He	10/20/30
Crossbow, Heavy	d3	d4	½ <sup>4</sup>	S	H,D,E,He	80/160/240
Crossbow, Light	d1	–	1	S	H,D,E,G,He,½	60/120/180
Dagger	d1	–	2	S	H,D,E,G,He,½	10/20/30 <sup>2</sup>
Dart, Military	d1	d4	2	S	H,D,He	15/30/60
Hammer	d2	d4	1	Cr	H,D,E,He	10/20/30
Hatchet	d1	d4	2	Ch	H,D,He	10/20/30
Javelin	d2	–	2	S	H,D,E,He	30/60/90
Kontos	d1-d3	d8	1	S	H,E,He	–
Lance	d1-d3	d8	1	S	H,E,He	–
Net	–	–	1	–	H,D,E,He,G,½	10/20/30
Rock, Hurled	d1 <sup>1</sup>	–	2	Cr	H,D,E,G,He,½	10/20/30 <sup>2</sup>
Sling, Bullet	d2	d4	2	Cr	H,D,E,G,He,½	40/80/160 <sup>2</sup>
Sling, Stone	d1	–	2	Cr	H,D,E,G,He,½	40/80/160 <sup>2</sup>
Spear	d2	–	2	S	H,D,E,He	30/60/90

<sup>1</sup>Cannot increase in Rank, except for Half-Ogres

<sup>3</sup>Also requires a d8 in Warrior

<sup>2</sup>Ranges are halved for Gnomes and Halflings

<sup>4</sup>Requires a full Turn to reload

## Conditional Bonuses to the Range Die

	Short	Medium	Long
Breeze	0	0	+1
Evasive Target	0	+1	+1
Forest	+1	+2	+3
Hurricane	+3	+6	+11
Shooting into the Sun	+1	+1	+2
Full Moon	+1	+1	+2
Running Target	0	0	0
Starlight	+1	+2	+3
Stationary Target	0	0	0
Twilight	0	+1	+1
Walking Target	0	0	0
Strong Winds	+1	+2	+2
Woods	0	+1	+2

To be able to shoot the enemy in an open field on a clear day with the sun at your back is a rare occurrence, and unless you're Sun Tzu, terrain, weather, and lighting conditions will almost invariably provide an advantage to the enemy.

Adjustments to the range die are cumulative where it makes sense. Shooting a bow in the woods on a windy, moonlit night will result in +1/+5/+11, but shooting at twilight with a full moon is still twilight.

While relative elevation (having the high ground) can provide modifiers to the attack, it has no affect the range die.

## Attacks on Charging/Fleeing Opponents

Ranged attacks are rarely made against stationary targets. When attacking a target that is moving directly toward or away, the character/monster runs 10' for every point on a roll on Adventure each Turn. Half of the Ranged attacks that Turn will be against the beginning distance with the other half, plus any remainder, being against the ending position. This only makes a difference when the runner crosses range boundaries. If the final position is within 5' of the attacker, no end-position ranged attacks are allowed. Caution: ranges given in the Ranged Weapons table are in yards, not feet.

*Stanto (S4/W5/A8) is charging on a goblin with a short bow. The charge starts 200' away and his first roll is 12 on a d16 for movement of 120'.*

*The goblin is using rapid fire so the first attack is made against the 200' location (medium range) and his next two are made at the 80' (short range). Stanto's next roll of 9 means the goblin gets only one attack.*

## Know Your Polearms

As almost everyone knows, an Arming Sword and a Gladius can be hand-waved as simple Short Swords and a Shillelagh is basically just a Club. But if there is one thing Gygax taught us, it's that polearms are a system unto themselves and require careful attention to the ever so subtle nuances of the differences between them. Artwork has been provided as an aid.

<b>Polearm</b>	<b>Max. Dam.</b>	<b>Min. Dam.</b>	<b>War.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Races Allowed</b>	<b>Use Shield</b>	<b>Dual Wield</b>	<b>Picture</b>
Arbir	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[arbir]
Bardiche	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[bardiche]
Bec de Corbin	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[bec de corbin]
Bill	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[bill]
Bisentō	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[bisentō]
Corseque	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[corseque]
Dangpa	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[dangpa]
Ear Spoon	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[ear spoon]
Falx	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[falx]
Fauchard	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[fauchard]
Glaive	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[glaive]
Guan dao	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[guan dao]
Guh	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[guh]
Guisarme	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[guisarme]
Halberd	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[halberd]
Jangchang	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[jangchang]
Jeddart Staff	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[jeddart staff]
Ji	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[ji]
Langdebeve	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	yes	no	[langdebeve]
Linstock	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[linstock]
Lochaber Axe	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[lochaber axe]
Lucerne Hammer	d2	d10	d8	Cr	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[lucerne hammer]
Military Fork	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[military fork]
Naginata	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[naginata]
Nangseon	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[nangseon]
Ngaw	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[ngaw]
Partisan	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[partisan]
Pike	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[pike]
Pollaxe	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[pollaxe]

<b>Polearm (cont.)</b>	<b>Max. Dam.</b>	<b>Min. Dam.</b>	<b>War.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Races Allowed</b>	<b>Use Shield</b>	<b>Dual Wield</b>	<b>Picture</b>
Pudao	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[pudao]
Quandao	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[quandao]
Ranseur	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[ranseur]
Rhomphaia	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[rhomphaia]
Sarissa	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[sarissa]
Sovnya	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[sovnya]
Sparth	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[sparth]
Spetum	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[spetum]
Spontoon	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[spontoon]
Svärdstav	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[svärdstav]
Touppjang	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[topchang]
Xyston	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[xyston]
Voulge	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[voulge]
War Scythe	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[war scythe]
Woldo	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[woldo]
Yari	See Yari table (next page)							

## Silver and Cold Iron Weapons

To damage creatures that traditionally are hurt only by silver (e.g., werewolves) requires weapons that are made out of silver. Not silver-tipped or silver-edged or silver-lined. Silver. And silver weapons suck – they're expensive; they're heavy; they can't hold an edge; and let's face it, there's a reason silver is used in jewelry – it's soft.

Steel isn't cold iron. The sword your character carries isn't cold iron. I don't care about historical weaponsmithing techniques. ☹ isn't an historical re-creation with some fantastic elements thrown in. A hoe is cold iron, as are a shovel, coal pick, and pitchfork. You want a cold iron weapon? Pay a blacksmith to make you a cold iron weapon. But be forewarned, 1) blacksmiths are not weaponsmiths; 2) cold iron sucks almost as badly as silver for weapons; 3) cold iron rusts; and 4) making a cold iron weapon takes time away from duties a hell of a lot more important than running around trying to get yourself killed, like fixing broken equipment or forging nails, so it's not cheap.

Cold Iron and Silver weapons have a built in -1 penalty to hit and -1 Damage Reduction to a minimum of d1. So a Silver Dagger will still do d1/PoS but a Power Attack will only increase the damage die to d2.

Yari Variations	Max. Min.			Races Allowed	Use Shield	Dual Wield	Picture	
	Dam.	Dam.	War. Type					
Bishamon	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[bishamon yari]
Fukuro	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[fukuro yari]
Hoko	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[hoko yari]
Jūmonji	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[jūmonji yari]
Kagi	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[kagi yari]
Kama	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[kama yari]
Kata kama	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[kata kama yari]
Kikuchi	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[kikuchi yari]
Omi no	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[omi no yari]
Ryō-shinogi	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[ryō-shinogi yari]
Sankaku	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[sankaku yari]
Sasaho	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[sasaho yari]
Su	d2	d10	d8	S	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[su yari]
Tsuki nari	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[tsuki nari yari]
Yajiri nari	d2	d10	d8	Ch	H,D,E,O,He	no	no	[yajiri nari yari]

## Weapon Specialization and Mastery

Specialization is focus and training with a single weapon to the exclusion of all others. To specialize in any weapon for which a character is qualified to use, Warrior must be the highest ranked Aspect. When a specialized character gains Ranks to qualify for a new group of weapons (3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Ranks) the player may choose another weapon for specialization, forgoing the previous weapon, or increase the specialization on the current weapon. When specializing, apply a cumulative -1 penalty to all attack rolls for every other weapon for each level of specialization.

If a specialized character achieves 8<sup>th</sup> Rank or higher in Warrior, he may choose to attain or increase Mastery in his weapon up to Grand Mastery at 11<sup>th</sup> Rank. A Master using any weapon outside his specialization gets only one attack per Turn that does only d1/d3 damage with it at a cumulative -1 penalty on attack rolls.

## Phalanx

When three or more fighters form a line while using the same type of weapon and shield, all fighters not on the edges gain a +1 bonus to their Armor die. When in a phalanx, Power Attacks and spell-casting eliminates that fighter's bonus as well as the bonus for the fighters to either side of him

## Drop Attacks and Damage

Not to be confused with falling damage, drop attacks are when an object is dropped from a height onto a target. A drop attack is an opposed Adventure roll that causes incremental damage. The size of the increase in the damage die and range distances are dependent on the weight of the object being dropped. The frequency of the increase in Rank of the damage die is dependent on the Range of the attack, where the die increases every 4/3/2/1 points for S/M/L/XL Range. For every part of the base distance over Short Range, a -1 penalty is applied to the Adventure attack die. The Range die is not used in drop attacks and ranges are given in feet, not yards.

Dropped Mass	Short Range	Medium	Long	X-Long	Increment
< 1 lb	10	11+	–	–	+1
1 – 4 lbs	10	20	21+	–	+1
5 – 10 lbs	10	20	40	41+	+1
11 – 25 lbs	20	40	80	81+	+2
26 – 50 lbs	30	60	120	121+	+2
51 – 100 lbs	40	80	160	161+	+2
> 100 lbs	50	100	200	201+	+3

A quick method to determine the penalty to the attack: divide the distance of the drop by the upper limit for Short Range, dropping any remainders.

*Penelope (S7/W5/A8) has found a perch high in a tree with a nice view of the ground 75 feet below. In her sack she has a collection of stones of various sizes. With the 3 lb. Stone, she would do incremental damage of **d1+1/2** with a -7 penalty to the attack roll. An attack with the 20 lb rock would do **d1+2/3** damage at only a -3 attack penalty.*

## Falling Damage

A fall is unexpected or unwilling – purposefully jumping or diving is not a fall – but in both cases, it's not the descent but the landing that causes problems. The landing does Incremental Damage requiring an Adventure Resist, with the target number increasing by 1 for every 10' fallen, and the landing surface determining the frequency of the increment. When jumping, the target number is 1 for every 20', ignoring the first 10'. Diving can only be done into water that is at least 10' deep for every 30' dove. (Dove? Dived? Diven?) The target number when diving is 1 for every 30' past the first 30'.

Landing Surface	Initial Die	Increment	Frequency
Bramble/Briar	d2	1	3
Dirt/Grass	d1	1	3
Gravel	d2	2	2
Mud	d1	1	4
Sand	d1	2	3
Spikes	d2	3	2
Stone	d3	3	1
Water	d1	1	5

## Fire, Acid, and Poison

**Fire Damage:** Fire does one-shot damage. Being on fire does Diminishing Damage. Adventure Resists are allowed each Turn so long as attempts to extinguish the fire are made (Stop, Drop, and Roll; slapping the flames; running around, screaming like a little girl; etc.)

*Dreyfus is hit with a 5<sup>th</sup> Rank Elemental Stream spell. After failing his Resist, he takes a one-time d8/PoF fire damage. A few Turns later Dreyfus is hit with flaming oil (Resist A6/d3-1/1). Rolling a 3 for his Resist, he takes 4d3 damage. The next Turn, he decides to ignore the fire to attack the man who burned him and takes 4d2 damage. The following Turn, with the arsonist dead, he tries to smother the flames. The Resist roll is a 2 so he takes 5d1 damage before the fire burns out.*

Notice how Dreyfus took more damage in Resisting than he otherwise would have. Sometimes attempts to help result in doing more harm than just standing there with your hands in your pockets.

**Acid and Caustic Damage:** If you don't know the difference between an acid and a base, you need to start paying attention in alchemy class. Acids and bases do Diminishing Damage and the damage doesn't allow additional Resists to end the process, but a successful Cure spell vs. the Resist number will.

**Poison and Venom:** First off, venom is not poison. Venom is a product of venom glands in animals and *must* be injected into the victim in order to be effective. Poison, on the other hand, can be injected, absorbed, inhaled, or ingested, depending on the poison. The effects of poisons and venoms, whether damage, paralysis, or some-thing else, depends on the type of toxin; there are no hard rules for them.

*Urntik finds a keelback snake in his boat and unconcernedly picks it up, knowing that it's non-venomous, and puts it in the water. Unfortunately for Urntik, this is a Rhabdophis keelback which secretes the poison it ingests from the newts it eats through its skin. He dies within 3 hours.*

## Item Damage

Sometimes what needs killing isn't a monster. Door in the way? Kill it. Immured on the false promise of good wine? Kill the wall. Trapped by a cave-in? Time to murder some rocks. The "Defense" to beat is 1 for every Base Thickness of the item, 0 if thinner, and the "Health" of the item in question is for each square foot of Base Thickness of the item. For example, a one-foot square book, two inches thick has a Defense of 2 and needs 2 Damage to destroy it. However, many materials have Damage Reduction, making the situation a little more difficult.

The following table is designed with hand-held tools and weapons in mind, not heavy equipment. It cannot be used for siege warfare with battering rams, trebuchets, or cats. (Yes, there is a siege weapon called a cat.) Also, just because metals are included does not mean you can target the enemy's armor or weapon. Try that shit in my game and you'll find out just how quickly each and every monster encountered learns that little trick and does it better than you do.

~Item()	Base	vs			
	Thickness	Health	Choppy	Crunchy	Stabby
Book	1"	1	–	**	–
Brick	6"	4	-2	-1	-2*
Coral/Concrete	6"	8	-3	-2	-4*
Dirt	1'	2	–	-2	–*
Glass	1"	3	–	–	–
Metal, Hard	¼"	24	-3	-5	-2*
Metal, Rigid	½"	12	-1	-2	–*
Metal, Soft	1"	6	–	-1	–*
Rope	1"	5	–	-2	-2
Stone, Igneous	½"	32	-6	-4	-8*
Stone, Metamorphic	¾"	16	-4	-3	-6*
Stone, Sedimentary	1"	3	-1	-1	-1*
Wood, Hard	1"	7	–	-1	-2
Wood, Soft	2"	3	–	–	-1

\*In addition to Damage Reduction, all Stabby tools, except picks on dirt and stone, do only the Rank of the adjusted damage die in damage per Point of Success, or just 1 point per blow for an adjusted d1.  
\*\*Crunchy tools cannot do any damage.



Notes and example material:

**Book:** Includes leather and scrolls of paper, parchment, or vellum. Must be at least an inch.

**Brick:** Adobe, Cob, Mudbrick, Taipa, Rammed Earth

**Concrete:** The stuff's been around for thousands of years. Seems a little foolish not to include it.

**Coral:** Usually found as building material in coastal regions

**Dirt:** Sod, Peat, etc.

**Glass:** Includes Crystal, Ceramics, Bone, and Porcelain

**Metal, Hard:** Steel, Titanium

**Metal, Rigid:** Brass, Bronze, Iron

**Metal, Soft:** Gold, Silver, Tin, Copper

**Rope:** Also Bracken, Bramble, and the like

**Stone, Igneous:** Granite, Basalt

**Stone, Metamorphic:** Gneiss, Quartzite, Slate

**Stone, Sedimentary:** Limestone, Sandstone, Dolomite

**Wood, Hard:** Elm, Oak, Teak, Mahogany

**Wood, Soft:** Pine, Cedar, Spruce, Bamboo

[tomb raiders prying open a sarcophagus]

## Armor and Defense

### Types of Armor

**Banded Armor** – Historically, the thing called Banded Armor never existed but is, in fact, a fabrication of Victorian era, so-called "historians" who wouldn't know scientific methodology if they encountered it upside their head in a peer-reviewed, double-blind study. However, Banded Armor has become so iconic in Fantasy RPGs that it would be a shame not to include it. See Laminar Armor for an armor that really existed. Also, don't let me get started on the Victorian Era as a whole. What a colossal shit-stain on human progressivism. Not that any other era was, or is, any better, but *god damn*, the arrogance and hypocrisy completely boggles the mind.

**Bezanting** – Used on Leather and Hide Armors. It's like studding, but the studs also hold a washer. See Studding and Ring Armor.

**Brigandine** – Canvas or leather garment with metal plates riveted into the lining.

**Chain Mail** – A redundancy in terms. Again, leave it to 19th century historians to not know what the hell they are talking about. It's because of those idiots that we now have to differentiate between Mail as mail and Mail as generic armor. This is the last you'll see the term "Chain Mail" from me.

**Coat of Plates** – Similar to Brigandine except the plates are sewn into place instead of riveted.

**Cord Armor** – A light armor made from tough vines or rope. Used in low technology regions with little available metal.

**Cuir Bouilli** – Take leather, boil it, then stretch it out over a form. Creates a harder, but more brittle armor than plain leather.

**Field Plate** – This is the mental image you should get when you hear the phrase "Knights in Shining Armor," although the armor usually didn't shine all that much and knights were very rarely all that knightly.

**Full/Jousting Plate** – This is probably what comes to mind when said "shining armor" phrase is uttered. Jousting Plate is used for just that: jousting. It's big and heavy and designed to prevent, as much as possible, injuries incurred from being violently pushed off a horse at full gallop by a long pole held by someone also on a horse at full gallop. Anyone who uses Jousting Armor in combat is an idiot. Have you ever seen a tortoise on its back? (Double encumbrance and -1 to all Adventure rolls)

**Half-Plate** – Field Plate from which, to reduce the weight, bits and pieces are removed that protected body parts less vulnerable to a direct blow.

**Hide Armor** – Exactly like Leather Armor, but different.

**Jack of Plate** – There probably are differences between Jack of Plate and Coat of Plates, but I don't really care. I'm just trying to fill space here to give you guys something to create superficial differences between characters. Really, when you get right down to it, all that matters is that writing "Jack of Plate" on a character sheet translates to "4.5 fewer Degrees of Success against the character, on average."

**Lamellar Armor** – Take Scale Armor and attach the scales to each other instead of just a backing and you get Lamellar. I found this little gem on a website: "Lamellar armor, also known as splint armor...." What? No it isn't. Whoever put that website together knows as much about armor as the Victorian historians mentioned earlier.

**Laminar Armor** – Think armadillidae (roly-poly bug) or armadillo. Read up on *Lorica Segmentata* for a common example of Laminar Armor. You know, armor that actually exists.

**Leather Armor** – Animal skin that's been treated to keep it from stinking to high heaven when wet. Often used as a base for more effective armors.

**Lacquered Leather** – Actually, lacquered leather could give some plate armors a run for their money. Not in this game, but still. Too bad it weighs a ton (double the encumbrance).

**Linen Armor** – Not really an armor, but several layers of linen are better than nothing.

**Mail** – Note: Mail is a specific type of armor, like Brigandine and Scale are specific types of armor. It is not a generic term for armor. Mail is a mesh of small interlinking rings. When someone says "Plate Mail" they are speaking gibberish; plates are plates, not rings. The rings will either be butted (the ends of the ring meet but are not connected) or riveted (the rings are closed by a rivet.)

**Padded Armor** – Quilted clothing stuffed with more cloth. About as effective as a pillow and wishful thinking.

**Plated Mail** – Oh, shut up. There's a big difference between what one means when saying "Plate Mail" and Plated Mail. Plated Mail is Mail with plates incorporated into the mesh.

**Ring Armor** – Bezainted armor without the studs. Also, historical evidence of its existence is questionable, but again: RPGs. See Earlier Rants and Bezainting.

**Scale Armor** – Small pieces, usually metal but sometimes leather or, in a pinch, wood (although, who's to say that in a fantasy world there doesn't exist a wood that's tougher than metal?) are attached, over-lapped, to an underlying garment in a pattern reminiscent of the scales of a fish or snake. Ooh, or a pangolin. In fact, a pangolin is a much better example. Let's go with that one.

**Splint Armor** – No such thing. Oh, splint was definitely used, usually to complement Brigandine as vambraces (forearms) and greaves (shins), and to a

lesser extent for cuissis (thighs) and rerebraces (upper arms), just not as a full armor, but, well, you know. So what is Splint? Long strips of metal sewn or riveted longitudinally to a cloth backing.

**Studding** – Okay, so you take a relatively poor material for armor and then weaken its structural integrity by punching holes in it so you can put a piece of metal into the holes. I don't know. Maybe the thought is that it's good revenge making the guy who chopped you down have to sharpen a nicked blade. Whatever. It looks pretty.

**Woven Armor** – Yes, this is a real thing. The armor is woven from coconut leaves or other fibrous material. It's difficult to move in and falling over and not being able to get up while wearing it is a very common occurrence. (-2 to all Adventure rolls and spell casting can only be done motionlessly.)

## Weapon vs Armor

Throughout the history of interpersonal violence, advancements in weaponry led to advancements in defense against that weaponry, which in turn led to even more advancements in weaponry to overcome the new armors. And so on.

**Fractional Damage Reduction:** There are, amazingly, 11 Ranks of Fractional Damage. They are, in ascending order,  $\frac{1}{6}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{2}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{5}$ ,  $\frac{2}{3}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{4}{5}$ , and  $\frac{5}{6}$ . The effect of this damage reduction is that the stated fraction of damage dice, rounded down, on a given attack have a -1 penalty.

*Prentele strikes Ungar for 8 Points of Success on a Power Attack with a Long Sword (d4/PoS). Ungar is wearing Lacquered Leather Laminar so instead of 8d4 damage, he receives only 6d4+2d3 damage. Jemnar also strikes Ungar for an 8 point Power Attack, but with a Mace, not a sword. Ungar takes the full 8d4 damage.*

[armored fighters looking over a variety of]  
[weapons while appraising their opponents' armor]

Armor Table	Armor Die	vs		
		Choppy	Crunchy	Stabby
Clothing	–	–	–	–
Cord Armor	–	–	1/6	–
Linen Armor	–	–	–	1/6
Padded Armor	–	–	1/5	–
Woven Armor	–	1/5	–	–
Leather Armor	d3	–	–	–
Cuir Bouilli	d3	–	–	1/5
Hide Armor	d3	–	1/6	–
Hide, Bezainted	d3	1/6	1/6	1/6
Hide, Ringed	d3	1/6	1/6	–
Hide, Studded	d3	–	1/5	–
Leather, Lacquered	d3	1/5	1/5	–
Leather, Bezainted	d3	1/5	–	1/6
Leather, Ringed	d3	1/5	–	–
Leather, Studded	d3	–	1/6	–
Scale Armor	d4	–	–	–
Scale, Bronze	d4	–	1/4	–
Scale, Copper	d4	1/4	–	–
Scale, Iron	d4	1/4	–	1/4
Scale, Lacquered Leather	d4	–	–	1/4
Scale, Leather	d4	–	1/5	–
Banded Armor	d6	–	–	–
Banded, Bronze	d6	–	1/4	–
Banded, Copper	d6	1/4	–	–
Banded, Iron	d6	1/4	–	1/4
Banded, Steel	d6	1/3	1/3	–
Lamellar Armor	d6	–	–	–
Lamellar, Bronze	d6	–	1/3	–
Lamellar, Copper	d6	1/3	–	–
Lamellar, Iron	d6	1/3	–	1/3
Lamellar, Lacquered Leather	d6	–	–	1/3
Laminar Armor	d6	–	–	–

Armor Table (cont.)	Armor Die	vs		
		Choppy	Crunchy	Stabby
Laminar, Bronze	d6	–	1/3	–
Laminar, Copper	d6	1/3	–	–
Laminar, Iron	d6	1/3	–	1/3
Laminar, Lacquered Leather	d6	–	–	1/3
Laminar, Steel	d6	1/4	1/4	–
Mail Armor	d8	–	–	–
Mail, Bronze, Butted	d8	–	1/3	–
Mail, Bronze, Riveted	d8	1/6	1/3	1/6
Mail, Copper, Butted	d8	–	1/4	–
Mail, Copper, Riveted	d8	1/6	1/4	1/6
Mail, Iron, Butted	d8	1/4	1/3	–
Mail, Iron, Riveted	d8	1/3	1/3	1/6
Plated Mail Armor	d8	–	–	–
Plated Mail, Bronze, Butted	d8	–	1/3	–
Plated Mail, Bronze, Riveted	d8	1/6	1/3	–
Plated Mail, Copper, Butted	d8	–	1/4	–
Plated Mail, Copper, Riveted	d8	1/6	1/4	–
Plated Mail, Iron, Butted	d8	1/4	1/3	1/5
Plated Mail, Iron, Riveted	d8	1/3	1/3	1/5
Plated Mail, Steel, Butted	d8	1/3	2/5	1/4
Plated Mail, Steel, Riveted	d8	2/5	2/5	1/4
Splint Armor	d8	–	–	–
Splint, Bronze	d8	1/4	1/3	–
Splint, Iron	d8	1/3	1/3	1/5
Splint, Steel	d8	2/5	2/5	1/4
Brigandine	d10	–	–	–
Brigandine, Bronze	d10	2/3	2/3	1/2
Brigandine, Iron	d10	2/3	3/4	1/2
Brigandine, Steel	d10	2/3	3/4	3/5
Coat of Plates	d10	–	–	–
Coat of Plates, Bronze	d10	3/5	3/5	1/2
Coat of Plates, Iron	d10	3/5	2/3	1/2

Armor Table (cont.)	Armor	vs		
	Die	Choppy	Crunchy	Stabby
Coat of Plates, Steel	d10	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Jack of Plate	d10	–	–	–
Jack of Plate, Bronze	d10	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Jack of Plate, Iron	d10	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Jack of Plate, Steel	d10	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Plate Armor	d12	–	–	–
Field Plate, Bronze	d12	$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{1}{3}$
Field Plate, Copper	d12	$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{1}{3}$
Field Plate, Iron	d12	$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{2}{5}$
Field Plate, Steel	d12	$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{5}$
Full/Jousting Plate	d12	$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Half-Plate	d12	$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{1}{3}$

**Special Materials:** By this point, I know what you wish you were thinking. *What about Dwarven Steel, or Elvish Silver, or Halfling Hemp, or Dragon Scales, or any number of materials with which to create armors?* Hey, go for it. Do what I did (or, for that matter, everyone who has ever written any RPG) and pull some numbers out of your ass and create the armor.

## Barding

Just as a fighters wear armor for protection, mounts have barding.

Leather	d4
Scale	d6
Banded	d8
Mail	d10
Brigandine	d12
Field	d16
Jousting	d20

**Why does barding provide better protection than armor?**

What the hell is wrong with you? Why would you ask about harming a perfectly innocent animal for the simple fact that you don't care for the person riding it? Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency? I like to think I am a gentle man but your forgiveness will have to come from someone other than me.

[armored knight on a barded horse charging down the tilt]

## Magic

### Elementalist

An Elementalist specializes in one elemental type – Earth, Fire, Air, or Water. The Elementalist gains a +2 bonus to all spell-casting attempts and Resists when casting a spell using their element of specialization, no bonus for non-opposing elements, a -1 penalty for all non-elemental spells and effects, and cannot cast spells of the opposing element in addition to a -2 penalty on Resists. Elementalist casters must have Sorcerer as their highest ranking Aspect. If another Aspect is raised higher, then the character loses all benefits for their element but retains all penalties, even if Sorcerer is later raised to the highest Rank. Note that this is the actual Rank, not effective Rank.

### New Spells

#### Curse

Spell Base: 4  
Min. Rank: d12  
Resist: Yes

Places a hex on the victim touched when casting. The Curse is a short statement of description by the player, not a statement of game play; the GM decides how the Curse works. The caster declares, "May you have boils on your ass," and the GM decides whether that the recipient has to roll on Adventure to ride a horse or something else. The Degree of Success and Degree of Failure of the Resist can be a determining factor on the severity of the Curse.

As anyone who has ever read, heard, or watched a fairy tale knows, all curses have a means of being broken. That's no different here. If the caster does not specify an out, the GM will make one.

The target number to break a Curse using a Cure spell is the Degree of Success of the spell, plus the caster's Sorcerer Rank, plus the Degree of Failure of the initial Resist. A Cursed person cannot cast Cure on himself to break a Curse. Curses can only be cast on a single person per casting, cannot be cast during combat, and a person can have only one Curse on him at a time.

*Roger has his character cast Curse on a town guard. "You shall be a bad marksman." After a couple of explosions on Roger's Sorcerer die, and a 2 for the guard's Resist, the GM determines that any attack roll that doesn't explode automatically misses. If the guard makes three consecutive ranged attacks, the Curse will be lifted.*

### Elemental Barrier

Spell Base: 4  
Min. Rank: d12  
Resist: No

Create a vertical wall composed of one of the four elements. The Barrier is 1 foot thick and the spell creates up to 100 cubic feet of material (e.g., 10'x10'x1' or 20'x5'x1'). The Barrier has a "strength" of d1 for each Point of Success of the casting. When casting the spell, the caster must be able to touch some part of the barrier upon completion.

**Fire:** The flames do not prevent anyone from passing through, but inflicts d1/PoS per foot of thickness of the barrier to anyone who tries. The barrier will dissipate in a number of Turns equal to the Success of the spell plus the Rank in Sorcerer of the caster. A fire Barrier can be formed into a ring. (The radius of the ring is

$r = \frac{S_a}{2\pi h}$ , where  $S_a$  is the Surface Area, and h is the height of the barrier)

**Water (Ice):** While a Water Barrier will eventually melt, losing 1 strength point per Turn, those who don't wish to wait that long can break it down by inflicting an amount of damage to it equal to its strength for each foot of thickness. The wall has a Defense equal to the Rank of the caster.

**Earth:** An Earth Barrier is permanent but can be easily climbed. It can also be torn down as per a Water Barrier, but it has Damage Reduction equal to the Rank of the strength die. The Barrier will be made of earth or stone appropriate for the Damage Reduction (see pages 14-15).

**Air:** An Air Barrier is completely impenetrable and impervious to both physical and magical attacks, but only lasts a number of Turns equal to the strength of the spell plus the Rank of the caster. Air Barriers can be shaped into a ring or dome

( $r = \sqrt{\frac{S_a}{2\pi}}$  for the radius of a dome).

Modifiers:

- +1 for each additional 100 cubic feet
- +1 to increase strength die by 1 Rank
- +2 to increase thickness 1 foot

[gnomes hiding in ferns]

### Fictis Mundi

Spell Base: 0  
Min Rank: See Description  
Resist: Sorcerer; See Description

Create a locus or area of false sensation, vision, sound, smell, etc., including the non-grammar school senses. The Minimum Rank to cast *Fictis Mundi* is 3 (d4), but this creates an illusory effect for only one sense. For each Rank higher than 3rd, the caster can add another effect. If the spell is to be interactive, the caster has to concentrate on the spell, unable to do any actions that would require an Aspect roll: attack, cast another spell, etc. Normal activities that do not require a roll do not adversely affect a caster's concentration. A Resist vs Sorcerer Rank is required to maintain the spell when disrupted. While *Fictis Mundi* can be used in combat, it cannot be cast during combat.

The spell can be cast either upon an object, or upon a space – up to 10' cubed (10'x10'x10'). To Resist the spell, a person has to have a reason to suspect something is not as it seems, whether it's because the zombie smells of lilacs or because there's no noise coming from the swarm of wasps.

Casters can only create fictions of what they know. If they've never seen a minotaur, they cannot create a minotaur, only what they think a minotaur is. If the person resisting has the experience the caster does not, then Resists against this type of fiction are made with a +2 bonus.

Non-interactive castings will last the shorter of 1 day per PoS of the casting, until the caster dismisses the spell, or until Dispel Magic is cast.

Modifiers:

- +1 to add an additional sense to the spell (limited by Rank)
- +2 for each doubling of base length of the volume of effect (+2 for a 20' cube, +4 for 40', etc.)
- +2 for each doubling of the duration

### Overgrowth

Spell Base: 0  
Min. Rank: d4  
Resist: Adventure

Creates a thick groundcover composed of thorny vines. The vines do no damage, but impedes progress through the growth that increases the time to pass through it by a number of turns equal to the failure of an Adventure Resist versus the Degree of Success of the casting plus the Rank of the caster. The spell affects up to 100 square feet.

Modifiers:

- +1 for each addition 100 square feet of cover. Requires an additional Resist for each increase.

## Summon

Spell Base: 4

Min. Rank: d12

Resist: No/See Description

The caster summons one or more creatures worth d1/PoS CP, as per the Monster Building rules (Appendix C), to perform one task, upon the completion of which the creature(s) leaves. In casting, the character makes a brief statement of what he hopes to summon and what its task is, which must have a duration of less than a day: "Mounts to take us to camp," "A kitten to play with," or "A rat swarm to run down the corridor." A poorly-worded summons results in a failed casting, including all penalties. This statement is made before the Sorcerer roll. The intent of the summons is important, but the GM may make adjustments for situational factors, such as the location, season, Degree of Success, etc. Summoned creatures have 1 Rank in each Aspect and 1 Health at minimum, regardless of the number of Character Points available. Summoned intelligent creatures ("A Tracker to lead us through the woods.") may Resist the summons, resulting in a failed casting if successful. All creatures summoned are unaware of it, believing that their task is of their own volition. And who knows? Maybe it is. Who's to say that the magic didn't flow back in time, arranging circumstances and causation in such a way that you had need of what the creature was doing.

Modifiers:

+1 increase the size of the die by 1 Rank

*Galvin (S9/W5/A7) casts a Summons for "A large attack dog to fight the goblins," with the hopes of either a Molloser or a Mastiff. But with the 2 Character Points from the casting, he got a Dachshund that, while very eager to nip at some heels, was quickly dispatched by the goblins.*

[war dachshund in full battle gear baring its teeth]

## Creating Scrolls

Scribing a scroll is a between-adventures activity. Because of this, the downside to making your own scrolls is the cost – as in money. But don't worry, trying to pay someone else to make one for you will be even more exorbitant. The reason for the high cost is resource management; the justification is that the materials to make a spell scroll must be of the highest quality to be able to hold the mystical energies of the spell.

After careful preparation (a.k.a. subtracting the amount the GM said the scroll would cost from your treasury), roll the Sorcerer die as if casting a spell. The Spell Number to beat is the Rank of the spell plus all modifiers for the spell. The Degree of Success of the creation is applied to the DoS of the spell. The Spell Number for the completed scroll is half of what the Spell Number would be to cast the spell, rounded up.

*Cyril creates a plain Lightning Bolt scroll. The Spell Number to beat is 7, as LB is a 7th Rank spell and no modifiers were added. The Sorcerer roll was 12, so the end product does 5d2 damage. The Spell Number for the completed scroll is 2.*

*He then scribes a Magic Dart scroll that creates 5-d6 Darts with a range of 100 feet. The Spell Number to create the scroll is 3 for Magic Dart, plus 4 for the increased damage, plus 8 for the additional Darts, plus 4 for the additional range, for a total of 19. The Sorcerer roll, again, was a 12 so the scroll creation fails and all the materials burn up in a big ball of disappointment.*

## New Magic Items

### Boots of Joyous Comfort

Provides the wearer a +1 bonus to movement and non-combat fatigue checks, and reduces the time of rest to alleviate fatigue by 1 Turn for each point of fatigue to a minimum of 1 Turn.

### Boxes of Random Storage

These boxes can look like a jewelry box, a small chest, or even a trunk, and are highly prized by smugglers, despite their drawback, because of the "extra" storage they provide. This extra storage is not in the form of extra-dimensional space or some similar Dr. Who concept – it's not bigger on the inside – but rather that each box has extra interiors. Each time the lid closes on a box, the interior randomly resets and the next time the lid is opened, what has been stored in the new interior is available. The drawback to a Box of Random Storage is that if the box resets to the interior on which the lid had last been closed, whatever was there disappears. To where, no one knows. The number of interiors a box has ranges from 2 to 30.

### **Canoe of Pleasant Journey**

This short canoe reduces penalties to movement rates by 1 and its portage encumbrance is half normal.

### **Cursed Weapons of Self-Immolation**

These cursed weapons have a +1 bonus to the damage die. However, if the attack misses, it damages the wielder with a +2 bonus to the damage die for each Point of Failure of the attack. Target number to remove curse: 3 for each Rank of the base damage die of failure.

Examples:

#### **Cursed Dagger of Self-Immolation**

Does d2/d4 damage for each PoS but does d3/d6 damage to the wielder for each PoF.

Target to remove: 6

#### **Cursed Great Battle Axe of Self-Immolation**

Does d4/d20 damage, but does d6/d24 damage to the wielder.

Target to remove: 12

### **Crossbow of Friendlier Fire**

When firing into mêlée, roll the attack die twice and use the better of the two rolls, e.g., if both rolls indicate a friendly being hit, use the roll that does the least damage.

### **Fire of the Greek**

This incendiary liquid ignites when its phial breaks. Unlike normal fire, Greek Fire doesn't do diminishing damage (Resist A10/d3), but does the same amount of damage each Turn until it is extinguished or no longer has any fuel to burn. Water does not extinguish Greek Fire, but instead makes the fire burn hotter (+1 to the Damage die for each attempt to douse).

### **Quill of Thaumaturgic Penmanship**

+1 to Sorcerer when creating a scroll. As an addition bonus, ordinary missives written using this quill are free of smudges, drips, and smears.

### **Quiver of Massive Capacity**

Holds twice the capacity of a normal quiver without increasing encumbrance.

### **Scale Armor of Stiff Opposition**

If using weapon vs armor rules, each fractional damage reduction is increased by 1 Rank. If not, treat as +1 (d6).

### **Stone of Accuracy**

Gives a +1 bonus to Adventure when hurled or used for drop attacks.

## **Magic Item Creation**

Maybe in the next supplement, *Sorcerer Character Has Warrior Adventure: Hypo-Uberous Hexing* (Θ-HUH).

## **Movement, Storage, & Monsters**

### **Time**

Θ uses a nebulous unit of time, the Turn, the time it takes to accomplish an action, but just as there are different measures of Equality on the Animal Farm, there are different measures of Turns in Θ, and while it would be fitting to have 11 Ranks of Turns, sadly there are only three: Combat, Adventure, and Travel.

The Combat Turn is quick, using just enough time to make an attack, cast a spell, move a short distance, etc.

Adventure Turns take a bit longer. Searching a room, disabling a trap, climbing a tree, walking down a hallway, or swimming across river are actions measured in Adventure turns. There is no direct correlation between Combat and Adventure Turns. An entire fight can occur as most of a group holds off the city guard (many Turns) in the Turn the remaining member takes to search the room for the trigger to open the door to the secret passage. Or any number of battles might take place – the city guard could be poorly-trained or it could be a large room.

The longest, and most nebulous, category of Turns, Travel, measures more than just going from one location to another. Anything that takes a long time and requires doing not much of anything else to do it is measured in Travel Turns: running a mile, walking a league, reading a chapter in a book, and forging a horseshoe are all examples.

### **Encumbrance**

A character is limited in how much he can carry; that limit is 1 encumbrance point for each Rank in Warrior. In general, if you roll for it, it has 1 encumbrance point; if it's valuable, it has 1 encumbrance point for each 100 gold of value (or whatever the monetary standard is in your game); if it's a coin, it has  $\frac{1}{100}$  points encumbrance, regardless the denomination of the coin, so 25 copper has the same encumbrance as 25 gold; and if it's very heavy it can have an encumbrance value at the discretion of the GM.

Examples of items that have an encumbrance value: Weapons, Armor (including a Shield), potions, anvils, injured characters.

Examples of items that don't have an encumbrance value: paper, firewood, lunch, Shields (if used with Armor), costume jewelry.

Exceptions: scrolls and ammunition. These do not count toward encumbrance limits, unless in a container.

## Fatigue

Not to be confused with Spell Fatigue, fatigue occurs when a Fatigue Resist on Warrior fails, incurring a cumulative -1 penalty to all subsequent actions. The base number to beat is 1 plus 1 for each Rank of Armor greater than Leather. The GM may increase the number further for various factors such as encumbrance, terrain, weather, etc. To eliminate fatigue, either complete rest for a number of Turns equal to the size of the penalty or a Cure spell with a Degree of Success of the same number is required to reduce the fatigue by 1 point. No benefit is gained if a rest period is cut short, so if a character with a -4 fatigue penalty has rested only 2 Turns before he starts fighting again, no benefit is gained from the rest.

If the fatigue penalty takes a relevant Aspect to 0, or is equal to the Rank in Warrior, regardless, the character is completely exhausted and must rest or be Cured before he can do anything at all.

Caution: Do not mix Turn categories during rest. A character fatigued from a long run cannot rest for a couple of Turns in combat and then join in the fray well-rested. The fatigue occurred in Travel time and requires Travel-length Turns of rest to relieve.

## Fatigue in Combat

When a 1 is rolled for either mêlée or ranged combat, a fatigue check must be made. Failure results in a cumulative -1 penalty on all mêlée *and* ranged attacks as well as any spell-casting attempts. This penalty to spell-casting, unlike Spell Fatigue, is temporary and goes away with the fatigue.

[large army fighting a barbarian]  
[horde at the foot of a mountain]

## Running/Forced March

As everyone knows, there are two types of running: sprinting and pacing. And if you don't know this, hit the gym, lard-ass. Your heart will thank you. [*Oh god, the fucking irony.* -OR] When it comes to running in  $\Theta$ , Adventure is speed and Warrior is endurance. In general, a Turn in a race is an Adventure Turn and a forced march is measured in Travel Turns, but there can be exceptions.

**Sprinting and Races:** The result of an Adventure roll correlates to distance run in a Turn. If a 1 is rolled a fatigue check is required with failure resulting in a cumulative -1 penalty to Adventure.

**Pacing/Forced March:** If a player opts to run at a steady pace, the character runs a number of units per Turn equal to the character's effective Rank in Adventure and a fatigue check is made after a number of Turns equal to his Warrior Rank minus 1 for each Rank of armor worn above Leather. For each additional unit of distance run in a Turn, decrease the number of Turns between checks by 1, to a limit of a check every turn, and increase the Resist value by 1. Moving more slowly does not decrease the Resist value.

*Andrew (W3, A6), in his Plate Armor, is doing a forced march back to civilization. He could move 6 units a Turn, which the GM has determined to be a league, making a fatigue check every 3 Turns. But because he is wearing Plate, which is 4 Ranks better than leather, he makes a check every Turn. After failing his first check, he can now only travel 5 leagues a Turn. After a couple more Turns of failed checks (-3 penalty), Andrew has no choice but to rest. After 2 Turns, he is set upon by a hungry bear. Because the size of Andrew's fatigue penalty is equal to his Warrior Rank, his only choice is- well, long story short, the bear is not hungry much longer.*

Gnomes and Dwarves halve all distances, Halflings travel only two-thirds the distance covered by the rest of the Races in a Turn.

[orc and half-ogre chased by a lion watching a halfling pull]  
[away from them: "adventure's just a dump stat,' you said.]  
['missile weapons are for pussies,' you said. 'you don't need']  
[to disable traps if you have enough health,' you said..."]



## Containers

A container is something that can contain something, or some things. Containers have fixed encumbrance values, no matter what they are containing, even if that something has a greater encumbrance value than the container itself – within limits. A barrel full of goose down will have an encumbrance value of 3, as will one full of Daggers, but a barrel containing ten anvils (5 encumbrance points each) will not.

Container	Enc. Value	Coin Limit	Notes
Backpack	1	100	
Barrel	1-3	var.	
Chest, Large	8	5000	Only Half-Ogre can carry solo
Chest, Small	4	500	Requires two hands to carry
Pannier, Large	3	400	Enc. is doubled if not carried by a mount
Pannier, Small	1	200	Enc. is doubled if not carried by a mount
Pouch, Belt	½	50	
Quiver	1	–	
Sack, Large	2	200	
Sack, Small	1	100	
Saddle Bags	1	100	Enc. is doubled if not carried by a mount
Scroll Case	½	–	

**Backpack** - A sturdy pack made of heavy cloth or leather with shoulder straps that leaves the bearer's hands free.

**Barrels** - Includes casks, drums, and tubs of any size including tierce, hogshead, pipe, butt, tertian, tun, puncheon, firkin, and kilderkin. For our purposes, a barrel has bulging sides intended for dry goods; a cask is a water-tight barrel for holding liquids (so technically, a water barrel is really a water cask); a drum has straight sides and can store either wet or dry goods; and a tub is conical. A barrel of any type may or may not have a removable lid.

**Belt Pouch** - Made of heavy cloth or leather that fastens to a belt. Usually has ties to keep the flap shut, but can have hasps or clasps.

**Chest** - Includes coffers, kists, cassones, and trunks. A chest has a lockable, hinged lid and can only be carried with two hands. Large chests require two people to carry when full.

**Panniers** - Paired bags, baskets, boxes, etc. designed to be slung over the back of a beast of burden to distribute the load evenly while maintaining a low center of gravity. If not on an animal, double the encumbrance unless the yoke is designed for human(oid) use.

**Quiver** - Typically used for arrows, the definition is expanded to include bandoliers and ammunition pouches. The capacity by type is: Arrows (20); Bolts/Quarrels (30); Bullets, Sling (50); Darts, Military (5); Darts, Atlatl (10); Darts, Blowgun (15)

**Sack** - Made of heavy cloth, sacks can be carried over the shoulder, occupying one hand, or tied onto a cart, saddle horn, or sometimes a spear with a quick-release knot.

**Saddle Bags** - See Panniers

**Scroll Case** - Not just for scrolls anymore, a scroll case is a long cylindrical tube made of leather, metal, or bone with a latched, stoppered, or sealed end to protect the contents from the elements.

## Transport

**Canoe** - Leather or animal hide stretched over a wooden frame. Short canoes can carry up to two people and can be paddled by only one. Long canoes can carry 4 people and be handled by no fewer than two. Canoes carved from wood are treated as rowboats for portage purposes.

**Cart** - Carts are two-wheeled vehicles that are generally pulled by one (either size) or two animals (large carts), although a crossbar shaft allows humanoids to do the hauling. Carts do not have seats.

**Catamaran** - Includes outrigger canoes. Double-hulled craft that can be sail-powered or paddled. Requires a minimum of two people to operate. Can only be used in open water or very wide rivers.

**Ferry** - A raft/barge-like conveyance of people and cargo over bodies of water.

**Kayak** - Unlike a canoe, which has an open top, a kayak is completely covered with only a hole that the kayaker sits in. Usually single-person, some two-person kayaks exist.

**Raft** - Logs or reeds tied together to form a simple floating platform usually propelled by the current or by using a long pole.

**Rickshaw** - A human(oid)-drawn, two-wheeled transport designed to carry one or two passengers.

**Rowboat** - The difference between an oar and a paddle is that an oar is a lever mechanically connected to the boat at a pivot point, usually by means of an oarlock which acts as a fulcrum.

**Sled/Pulk** - Not to be confused with what many consider a child's winter toy, a sled is a towed transport that can be either flat-bottomed or have runners. Using a sled on surfaces other than snow or ice can increase the effective encumbrance of the load to full value. Analogously to carts, sleds do not have seats.

**Sleigh** - A large sled that may or may not have seats.

**Travois** - Two sticks and a net. What could be simpler?

**Wagon** - Includes carriages. Better than a cart in that it has four wheels for greater stability, the driver can sit in the wagon, and the use of teams allows greater loads to be transported. Small wagons can be pulled by a single animal if the load is small enough. Large wagons use four or more draft animals and require a teamster for proper use.

Vehicle	Maximum Load	Effective Enc.	Vehicle Enc.	Notes
Canoe, Long	12	½	0	
Canoe, Short	6	½	0	
Cart, Large	18	⅓	2	
Cart, Small	9	⅓	1	
Catamaran	16	¼	0	
Kayak	6	½	0	
Raft/Ferry	4/25 sq ft	½	0	
Rickshaw	5	⅔	1	
Rowboat	3+3/seat	⅓	0	
Sled/Pulk	6	½	1	Only on snow or ice
Sleigh	12	½	2	Only on snow or ice
Travois	4	½	0	
Wagon, Large	48	¼	5	Requires a teamster
Wagon, Small	24	¼	3	

**Maximum Load:** The total encumbrance value of passengers and cargo that the vehicle can carry without adversely affecting the speed of travel or having to make regular performance checks.

**Effective Encumbrance:** The fraction of the vehicle's load's encumbrance that is counted against the encumbrance limit of the person or animal providing locomotion.

**Vehicle Encumbrance:** Encumbrance value of the vehicle itself, including the driver where applicable. This value is added to the Effective Encumbrance.

Terrain Modifiers to Movement Rates	
Bog/Marsh/Swamp	-4
Broken Terrain	-2
City	0
Desert	-2**
Forest	-2
Grassland/Prairie/Savanna	0
Hills	-1
Ice	-3*
Jungle	-4
Maintained Trail/Road	+1
Mountain	-4
Muddy Ground	-1
Snow	-2*
Woods	-1
*Sleds and Sleighs reduce penalty by 1; no penalty if pulled by dogs or reindeer	
**Camels are unimpeded by Desert terrain	

Modifiers to Water Movement Rates	
Bog/Marsh/Swamp	-3
Calm water	0
Choppy water	-1
Downstream, fast current	+1
Downstream, slow current	0
Troubled Waters	Lay me down
Turbulent water	-5
Upstream, fast current	-2
Upstream, slow current	0

Portage Enc. of Watercraft	
Canoe, Long	6
Canoe, Short	2
Canoe, Wooden	2/seat
Catamaran	12
Kayak	2
Raft	4/25 sq ft
Rowboat	2/seat

**The differences between a swamp, marsh, bog, and bayou:** A swamp is a forested wetland, a marsh is a wetland dominated by grasses instead of trees, a bog is a wetland that has accumulated peat, and a bayou is a slow moving waterway. Swamps and marshes can have bayous running through them, bogs will not.

**High Altitude:** The thin air causes a -1 penalty to Adventure for travel purposes. It also creates the need for regular fatigue checks, made at a -2 penalty to Warrior.

[two adventurers sinking in]  
[quicksand: "where are your]  
[terrain modifiers now?"]

## Beasts of Burden

**Ass/Burro** - Know the difference between an ass and a donkey? The same difference between a pussy and a cat: Prudery. Burros are the smallest breed of the ass family.

**Bullock/Ox** - Big and slow. Bullocks and oxen can work well in teams after they've been castrated. They tend to get very territorial, otherwise.

**Camel** - Heavy loads combined with good speeds make camels an ideal pack animal. Too bad they're ill-tempered, obstinate, and just plain pig-headed. That and the fact that they only live in climates that most people try to avoid. But hey, if you're running an adventure in a Saharan-type desert, a team of dromedaries is just the ticket. Or a team of Bactrian camels and a couple of yak is a good start for your own Silk Road. While both types of camel can go for a week between waterings, they still need to drink enough water to make up the difference at the end of the journey. Bactrians are unaffected by high altitudes.

**Carrier Pigeon** - Fly only to one location and unable to carry anything weighing more than 2 ounces.

**Dog** - Can be used for pack using specially-designed "saddle" bags. Can only be used for draft as a pack with sleds, although large breeds can be used for small carts with the proper harness.

**Dolphin/Porpoise** - Dolphins, long and slim; porpoises, short and stout, both require a special harness to tow a boat or raft otherwise, as a pod, they will nudge the load with their snouts. Far too playful to be used as mounts or pack animals.

**Elephant** - Able to carry and haul massive loads, too bad they're hampered by trees, hills, water, mountains, foothills, etc. Cannot be used for draft teams.

**Giant Eagle** - These intelligent birds are sometimes willing to give a traveler a ride if given a compelling reason. Will not agree to be used for pack.

**Giant Sea Horse** - A mount that's no good if you cannot breath underwater.

[mass-transit bactrian camel with eight humps]

**Hippogriff** - Ill-tempered, nigh untrainable, and vicious, hippogriffs are used as a show of power, usually by people even more vicious than the hippogriff.

**Horse/Pony** - Yeah, you know what they are, 'nuff said.

**Llama** - Only good as a pack animal, and not very good at that, llamas encounter no adverse effects in high altitudes.

**Moose** - Only used for draft, and then only with the great reluctance of the handlers. Cannot be trained for wagons or carts; can only be used with a travois, sled, or just tying a rope to the drag the load.

**Hinny/Mule** - Hybrid of a horse and an ass. A mule has an ass sire and a hinny has an ass dam.

**Ostrich** - Useless for pack and draft, rumors persist about underground halfling-mounted ostrich races.

**Pack Ape** - As the name indicates, only used for pack. And no, Gnomes and Halflings cannot ride them in a special harness, so your elaborate plans for a Master-Blaster will have to rely on convincing a friend to play a Half-Ogre.

**Pack Goat** - Yes, they really exist. Excellent in mountains as a pack animal; Pack Goats suffer only a -2 penalty to movement in mountainous terrain.

**Pegasus** - Can be harnessed if they allow it, but that is a very rare event, and they definitely will not accept being used as a pack or draft animal.

**Reindeer** - Indigenous to areas of permanent winter or very short summers. Used for both pack and draft. Although young children, Gnomes, and Halfling can ride them, they are not trained to the saddle. The difference between reindeer and caribou: what continent they're on, but for our purposes, caribou have not been domesticated.

**Unicorn** - Cannot be harnessed, cannot be saddled, will violently refuse to carry anything or anyone. The only reason unicorns are listed is because of the highly mistaken myth that a female virgin of great purity can tame them. Point of fact: virgins are gored just as easily as the most wanton of whores.

**Water Buffalo** - Swamps and Marshes reduce travel rates by only -1.

**Yak** - Unaffected by high elevation, Yaks suffer identical penalties at low elevations. Although Yak racing is a common pastime, Yaks make lousy mounts and suffer a -2 penalty to Adventure. Yaks do not eat grains or hay and must be allowed to graze on fresh grasses.

**Zebra** - Advantage: Immune to many diseases of the area where zebras are indigenous. Disadvantage: temperamental and easily spooked.

**Zebroid** - Generic term for a zebra hybrid, includes the zorse, zebrass, zony, horbra, pobra, and assbra. Preferred over the zebra for having a calmer demeanor while maintaining zebras' immunities. Although never reported by reliable sources, stories circulate about the zenicorn, zebrasus, pegabra, and unibra.

Beasts of Burden	Stats <sup>†</sup>	Type <sup>††</sup>
Ape, Pack	S3/W9/A3	P
Ass	S2/W5/A5	DPM
Buffalo, Water	S2/W7/A4	D
Bullock	S2/W7/A4	D
Burro	S2/W4/A4	DPM
Camel, Bactrian	S2/W9/A7	PM
Camel, Dromedary	S2/W7/A7	PM
Dog	S4/W3*/A5*	DP(M)
Dolphin/Porpoise	S5/W3/A0-A5	D
Eagle, Giant	S6/W4/A0-A8	M
Elephant	S3/W11/A5	DPM
Goat, Pack	S2/W4/A5	DP
Hinny/Mule	S2/W6/A5	DPM
Hippogriff	S6/W8/A4-A6	DM
Horse, Draft	S2/W8/A6	DPM
Horse, Riding	S3/W5/A9	(DP)M
Horse, Sea, Giant	S2/W4/A0-A3	M
Horse, War	S4/W6/A6	(DP)M
Llama	S2/W4/A5	P
Moose	S2/W5/A4	D
Ostrich	S1/W2/A8	M
Ox	S2/W7/A4	D
Pegasus	S7/W4/A7-A5	M
Pigeon, Carrier	S1/W1/A0-A10	P
<p>*Can vary by ±2, depending on breed  <sup>†</sup>If two Adventure Ranks are given, the first is for on the land and the second for air or water, depending on the animal  <sup>††</sup>Parentheses indicates that while the animal can be used for the indicated purpose, they do so at a -1 penalty to Adventure</p>		

Beasts of Burden (cont.)	Stats	Type <sup>††</sup>
Pony	S4/W5/A5	DPM
Reindeer	S2/W3/A5	DP
Unicorn	S9/W4/A6	M
Yak	S2/W7/A4	DP(M)
Zebra	S2/W4/A5	DPM
Zebroid	**/**/**	DPM
<p>**Use the higher Rank between dam and sire  <sup>††</sup>Parentheses indicates that while the animal can be used for the indicated purpose, they do so at a -1 penalty to Adventure</p>		

**Draft Animal** – An animal that pulls a load. Requires the proper gear.

**Draft Teams** - Horses and asses can be combined in a single team and hybrid draft animals can be placed in teams of either of their parentage. Otherwise, a team must consist of a single type of animal. Add the Warrior Rank of each member of the team to determine the encumbrance value the team can pull. A team can only move as quickly as the animal with the lowest Rank in Adventure.

**Mount** – An animal that is ridden as transportation.

**Pack Animal** – An animal for transporting goods by bearing the load on its back.

[giant seahorse trapped on the ocean floor under]  
[the drowned corpse of a knight in full armor]

## New Monsters

### Amphisbaena

S: d6 Defense: 3/d6  
 W: d10/d2 Health: 60  
 A: d8 Size: Large

Often mistaken for a Double-headed Serpent, the Amphisbaena has a head on each end and can move in either direction. While the Amphisbaena doesn't have a venomous bite, each head can attack every round and it is impervious to cold. Its glowing eyes allow it to see even through a Darkness spell.

### Amphisbaena, Winged

S: d12 Defense: 3/d6  
 W: d10/d2x2(bite)/d1(claw) Health: 250  
 A: d10 Size: Large

Special: Venomous bite (tail end only) Resist W6/d8 each turn until successful for each bite. Grapple with claws on creatures/characters of Small size or smaller (Halflings, Gnomes, and children)

Do you know anyone who likes cockroaches? I don't. I know people who aren't bothered by cockroaches but they don't like them. Then there's the American cockroach (often mistaken for the Palmetto bug), a particularly large species of cockroach. That flies. Turn on a light and normal cockroaches will scatter for cover. Drop a brick on an American cockroach, which came here in the late 1600s from Africa, by-the-way, and it will wait patiently until you remove the brick then fly into your hair out of spite. That's the relationship between Amphisbaena and the Winged Amphisbaena. Amphisbaena will, for the most part, avoid combat if it's unnecessary. Winged Amphisbaena will seek it out.

[row of archers firing at a flying winged amphisbaena,  
 [dead child in its grasp. armored warriors, poised]  
 [and ready to strike, await below]

### Bucentaur

S: d6 Defense: 2/d3  
 W: d20/d2 or by weapon Health: 250  
 A: d6 Size: Large  
 Special: Stampede: Resist A12/d6 for each cow of the Bucentaur's herd encountered.

Bucentaurs are the flip-side of the Minotaur. Short of temper and tough as hell, it's best not to get on a Bucentaur's bad side. Bucentaurs are always male with a herd of 20 to 200 cows. If two Bucentaur are encountered, stay far, far away until they've settle their dominance issue.

### Creep Vines, Omnivorous

S: d12 Defense: 1(4)/0  
 W: d16/d3 Health: 15/vine, 150 bud  
 A: d8 for attack otherwise d1 Size: Large  
 Special: Physical Damage Reduction (see description); Sleep Spores

These slow, semi-mobile plants grab anything that stays still long enough to be grabbed. Omnivorous Creep Vines have up to ninety vines that radiate outward from a central bud 20' to 40'. When a vine is disturbed, two things happen: each Turn, d16 (Warrior die) vines try to grapple the intruder (the Degree of Failure indicates how many vines grabbed the victim), and the central bud emits spores (opposed Sorcerer with the DoF being the number Turns unconscious). To escape the vines an opposed Warrior roll is required, with a -1 penalty for every three vines holding the character. The Degree of Success of the Resist determines how many vines were escaped.

When a character is grabbed, the vines start dragging the victim toward the maw of the central bud at a rate of 3' per Turn. If dragged in, the maw starts "chewing."

Stabby weapon attacks have a -1 Damage Reduction and are made against a 4 Defense; Crunchy weapons are made against the normal 1 Defense, but all damage is reduced to d1/PoS, regardless of Power Attacks; and choppy weapons attack as normal.

### Howler

S: d2 Defense: 1/0  
 W: d2 Health: 10  
 A: d2 Size: Small

Nobody knows just what a Howler is, whether animal, plant, or fungus. They look kind of like stones, but not really. Some think they look like melted mushrooms, well, if you squint and cock your head a little. All anyone really knows is that you do not want to step on one. Not only is a Howler's howl annoying to the point of pain, but it shakes the concentration such that spells cannot be cast. Worse, Howlers tend to live underground in geologically unstable areas where their howls often cause cave-ins.

### **Huldrefolk**

Solitary and seductive forest creatures often with the tail of a cow or fox. From behind they are hollow "like an old tree trunk." Huldrefolk have a natural glamour that make them appear to be very attractive Humans. This glamour is negated when the Huldre (male) or Huldra (female) is seen from directly behind and the hollowness is seen. ("Directly behind." Not "from the back" or "kind of behind but a little to the side.") Even with the glamour in effect, it is possible to know these creatures for what they are, especially if their tails become exposed (a very touchy subject best mentioned discreetly).

### **Huldre**

S: d10                                      Defense: 2 + possible armor  
W: d10/d1 or by weapon                Health: 75  
A: d8                                         Size: Medium  
Special: Glamour; -2 Physical Damage Reduction (Cold Iron does normal damage)

Very little is known about Huldre, but many believe them to be seducers of married women.

### **Huldra**

S: d20                                        Defense: 2/0  
W: d8/d1                                    Health: 75  
A: d10                                        Size: Medium  
Special: Glamour; Charm (as the per spell); -2 Physical Damage Reduction (Cold Iron does normal damage)

More is known about Huldra, mainly because men are generally too stupid to keep their mouths shut about their indiscretions. Often appearing as a farmer girl, a Huldra can return kindness for kindness but is fierce in retaliation. Huldra have been known to Charm and keep men for years at a time until they are released, somehow escape, or are killed for displeasure of their service.

### **Leeches (Swarming Pest)**

S: d2                                         Defense: 0/0  
W: d12/1                                    Health: 1 each  
A: d2                                         Size: Tiny  
Special: Anemia: Resist on Warrior with a target number of 1 for every ten points of damage taken by leeches, cumulatively. The Resist is made after all leeches have been removed. Characters will continue taking d12 points of damage each turn until the Resist is made or a Cure spell is successfully cast with the same target number as the Resist.

As a swarming pest, leeches don't attack individually but en masse. If a leech is hit with a weapon, it takes only one point of damage and all remaining damage is taken by its host.

### **Serpent, Double-headed**

S: d4                                         Defense: 2/d3  
W: d8/d1                                    Health: 80  
A: d8                                         Size: Large  
Special: Grapple; Venomous bite: Resist W6/d4 each turn until successful for each bite (If bitten twice, roll twice.)

Distant cousin of the Hydra, the bifurcation point of the Double-headed Serpent's is at 1/3 its length. The standard attack method is to grapple a victim and bite each turn with one head while the other head keeps watch, attacking anything that gets close enough to threaten it. Double-headed Serpents are not constrictors and the grapple does no damage, just the bites and poison. Once the serpent has received damage totaling half its Health, one head is killed regardless of where the blows fell.

### **Squirrel, Flying, Carnivorous**

S: d3                                         Defense: 3  
W: d6/d1                                    Health: 10  
A: d4 (d20)                                Size: Tiny  
Special: Surprise

At some point in their evolution this breed of flying squirrel developed a taste for flesh. Dropping from trees and ledges, their gliding range is 5' for every foot of altitude. These squirrels travel in packs of 6 to 20 and will attack only if they outnumber their target(s) by at least 2 to 1. Unless the person attacking a Carnivorous Flying Squirrel is unconcerned about who or what the squirrel is on, all attacks made against it are made with a -3 penalty to a minimum of a d2.

### **Stalac-Mites**

S: d4                                         Defense: 8  
W: d12                                        Health: 15  
A: d12(d24)/d3                            Size: Small  
Special: Surprise

Stalac-Mites live in caves and caverns where their long, narrow, rock-like carapace provides camouflage in natural formations. The Mites hang from the cavern ceiling, upside-down, waiting to drop onto creatures passing beneath. If the drop attack doesn't kill its target, the Mite will retract into its shell and wait until the target leaves, then begin the slow crawl back up to the ceiling. Other than the drop, Stalac-Mites do not attack. Any edged or pointed weapon that is used against a Stalac Mite has a chance of breaking (opposed Adventure rolls).

[man in beautifully-colored cavern filled with stalagmites,]  
[stalactites, and columns, torch light glistening off the dripping]  
[water, laying supine with several Stalac-Mites piercing]  
[his back, blood slowly pooling around him]

## Troll (Jätte)

S: d4 Defense: 4  
W: d16/d3 (Treat as Half-ogre) Health: 250  
A: d8 Size: Large

(Note: I have no idea what sources Gygax et al. used for their regenerating troll.) Large, ugly, misshapen beings of great strength, low intelligence, and a distorted idea of courtesy. Due to their tendency to turn to stone in direct sunlight, trolls are often found in forests, caves, and yes, under the occasional bridge.

[troll eating goat stew]

## Undead

Sometimes known as the Unliving or Revenants. That which was living, died and then returned behaving in a manner as if still alive. Undead as a classification encompasses both corporeal (skeletons, vampires, zombies, etc.) and spirit forms (ghosts, spectres, wraiths).

Common to all undead are susceptibility to the Repel Undead spell to varying degrees and an immunity to mind-affecting spells such as Communicate, Charm, Flash-Bang, Sleep, etc.

Special note: Undead Value is the point value for the Repel Undead spell and Resist is whether that type of Undead is allowed a Resist roll against the spell.

## Ghoul

S: d12 Defense: 4/d3  
W: d12/d1 Health: 75  
A: d4 Size: M  
Undead Value: 4 Resist: no  
Special: Paralyzing Touch

Ghouls are hideous, beast-like creatures that attack and eat any living thing. Any hit from a ghoule on a Large or smaller creature incurs an opposed Resist roll on Sorcerer. Failure indicates the victim is paralyzed for a number of turns equal to the Degree of Failure. Ghouls will keep attacking until all opponents are either paralyzed or dead, whereupon the feeding begins.

## Lich

See description in *Sorcerer Character Has Warrior Adventure*

## Mummy

S: d12 Defense: 3/0  
W: d12/d3 Health: 50/80  
A: d4 Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 10 Resist: See description  
Special: Mummy Rot; -3 Physical Damage Reduction

There are two types of Mummies: mindless husks, with 50 Health and no Resist against the Repel Undead spell, and intelligent, self-aware mummies (80 Health) who have had their organs restored and are allowed a Resist. Mindless husks will obey the commands of an intelligent Mummy. Mummies are highly susceptible to fire, with a -3 to any Resists and all fire-based damage dice are at +1.

When a character is successfully hit by Mummy of either type, they must roll a Resist W8 to prevent being infected with Mummy Rot, losing 1 Rank in Adventure each day. To Cure, first all Ranks need to be restored (against a target number of 8 per Rank lost) before the Rot can be cured (TN 8).

## Skeleton

S: d2 Defense: 2(8)/0 or by armor type  
W: d6/d1 or by weapon Health: 10  
A: d2 Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 1 Resist: no  
Special: Defense of 8 against Stabby weapons and Ammunition

As the name implies, Skeletons are skeletons; bones of the dead animated by magic. Skeletons have simple instructions that they follow within a limited area that they do not leave. (Typically "Kill all who enter. Other than me. I can come and go as I please, but everyone else dies. Unless they're accompanied by me. Don't kill them. Unless I tell you to kill them then, of course, you're to kill them. You know what, forget all that. Kill all who enter.")

## Spectre

S: d16/d3 Defense: 4/0  
W: d2 Health: 45  
A: d2 Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 6 Resist: yes  
Special: Possession; Immune to all physical attacks

Spectres are incorporeal beings. They come in three categories: malevolent, benevolent, and benign. Malevolent spectres have a hatred for life and want to destroy it, benevolent spectres try to warn others of danger, and benign spectres are trying to avenge their death. All spectres have the ability to possess people on a successful opposed Sorcerer roll. When a spectre possesses a character it has all the skills and Aspects of the one possessed. Damage to a possessed character does not affect the spectre and if the character dies, the spectre leaves the corpse.

A spectre's touch (not possession) does d3 damage per PoS against an opposed Sorcerer roll.

## Vampire

S: d20                      Defense: 4/d8  
W: d24/d3                  Health: 350  
A: d20                      Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 16           Resist: yes

Special: Charm (+2 to its victims Resist); Damage Reduction -3

Vampires do not sparkle. They aren't misunderstood, and they most certainly do not brood. A vampire does possess intelligence and cunning, but then so does a house cat. Doesn't mean the cat thinks any further than killing the mouse.

Sunlight poses no threat to vampires; they are simply dormant during the day. Crosses only bother a vampire if he happens to be a Christian vampire, but it has to be a crucifix, not two sticks held together. We're talking the gory, Jesus on a cross blood-streaming, flesh-torn from-his-back, hole-in-the-side crucifix. You know, one of those horrific monstrosities that would scare the shit out of even a vampire. Lastly, a wooden stake through the heart merely does nothing more than prevent a vampire from moving, because the stake goes into its chest, through its heart, out its back, and into something else. Staking a vampire requires a big stake and a big hammer. It's not something that can be done with a little stabby, stabby. And an arrow through the heart is just an annoyance.

A person killed by a vampire does not become a vampire; he becomes dead. Drinking a vampire's blood is required to be turned and anyone Charmed by a vampire gets an additional +2 bonus to Resist if instructed to drink, unless this is something the character would want.

## Wight

S: d12                      Defense: 3/0  
W: d10/d1                  Health: 75  
A: d6                      Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 6           Resist: no

Special: Energy Drain; -2 Physical Damage Reduction

Wights are malevolent creatures that seek to destroy all life they encounter. While a Wight's attack does relatively little damage, the harm done can be great. After being struck, the victim must win an opposed roll on his highest ranked Aspect against the Wight's Sorcerer die or permanently lose a Rank in that Aspect. If two Aspects are of the same Rank, the order of precedence is Sorcerer, Warrior, then Adventure. Note: This is the only way that a character can end up with all three Aspects of the same Rank.

Silver weapons attack as normal otherwise physical attacks (not magical) against a Wight are at a -2 Damage Reduction.

## Wraith

S: d24/d4                      Defense: 6/0  
W: d2                      Health: 150  
A: d2                      Size: n/a  
Undead Value: 12           Resist: yes

Special: Possession; Immune to all physical attacks

Wraiths are considered by some to be malevolent Spectres in overdrive. Wraiths don't often possess people, preferring direct damage. Primarily, Possession is done as a means to weaken a group and create distrust and discord. A Wraith's attack can be "powered up" in a manner similar to a *mêlée* Power Attack.

## Zombie

S: d2                      Defense: 2/0  
W: d8/d2                      Health: 15  
A: d4                      Size: Medium  
Undead Value: 2           Resist: no

Special: Zombie bite

These are the *Night of the Living Dead* zombies, not *The Serpent and the Rainbow* zombies. They are also not the stupid *Dawn of the Dead* "fast" zombies. Zombies are slow, mindless, rotting masses of ambulatory flesh that hunger for the vitality of the living. Zombies will continue pursuit as long as a target is in "sight" but are easily evaded for the short-term.

A Zombie's attack is a grappling attack. If the attack is successful the zombie will start eating. Each subsequent turn, the zombie rolls against Defense with Armor (not Shield) reducing the Degree of Success for damage purposes, but not for the bite, so a character can be bitten but not receive damage. Anyone bitten by a zombie loses 1 Rank in Warrior each hour until either he dies at Rank 0 or a Cure spell is successfully cast vs 4. The zombie bite will be cured first and any remaining Points of Success can be used to replace lost Ranks at a rate of 4 per Rank. Any Ranks not restored during the Curing of the zombie bite are lost until regained through normal CP use.

Those killed while being eaten remain dead while those who die due to loss of Warrior will rise up as a zombie an hour after death unless precautions have been taken.

[ouroboros]



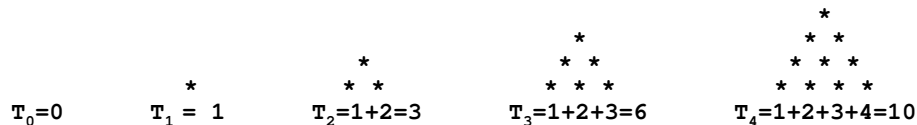
## Appendix A Triangular Numbers

Way back in the day, the ancient Greeks thought numbers were really cool. They would sit around all day, avoiding meat and beans, and think about how numbers worked, how they fit together, how they applied to the world. They were so serious about their numbers, believing that the world could be described in whole numbers and rational numbers (fractions composed of the division of one whole number into another whole number), that when someone proved that  $\sqrt{2}$  was not a rational number, they killed him. True story. Look it up.

[two ancient athenians watching a lynch mob at work:]  
[“είμαι χαρούμενος το μόνο πράγμα που ανακάλυψα]  
[είναι πώς να κατασκευάσει το δωδεκάεδρο”]

We are taught that “square numbers” are numbers that are the product of another number multiplied by itself,  $2 \times 2 = 4$  for example. The Greeks didn't think in quite those terms (although they were well aware of it), but more in the manner of how many objects it takes to form a square. And who can blame them? The Ionian numeral system doesn't really make it easy to think of numbers in the abstract.

This brings us to triangular numbers, the number of objects necessary to make an equilateral triangle. Obviously, the smallest triangular number is 1, but for our purposes, we'll start with 0 for a triangle whose sides have no length.



In general,  $T_n = \sum_{i=1}^n i = \frac{n(n+1)}{2}$ . I'll forgo the proof. So to find the 5<sup>th</sup> Triangular

Number, multiply 5 by 5+1 and divide by 2  $\left( 1+2+3+4+5 = \frac{5 \cdot (5+1)}{2} = 15 \right)$ .

## Appendix B Balanced Encounters

Don't be an idiot. There is no such thing as a balanced encounter and if there were, you wouldn't want one. A “balanced” encounter implies a fifty-fifty chance of defeating, or being defeated by, the opponent. Where is the fun and excitement in what is essentially a coin toss? I'll tell you where: the exact same place that caused the NFL to change its overtime rules, that's where. Balanced encounters suck and attempting to create them is a fool's errand. That said, comparing the Character Points required to build monsters is a method for determining relative power between characters and monsters. It's not a very good method. In fact, it's a particularly awful method; a beginning party of four (160 CP) will get its asses handed to them by a single Human built with the same number of CP. Literally. However, it's the best method available. Well, it's the only method I'm going to create.

## Appendix C Building Monsters

Spend Character Points for the Aspects, Size, Health, and Defense according to the following tables.

S/W/A Rank	CP Cost	Standard Damage*	Size	CP Health/CP	CP/Defense	Flight	
1	1	d1	Pest	1*	**	6	0
2	2	d1	Tiny	0	3 (d6)	5	0
3	3	d1	Small	0	4 (d8)	5	0
4	5	d1	Medium	1	5 (d10)	5	1
5	7	d2	Large	2	8 (d16)	5	4
6	10	d2	Huge	4	12 (d24)	4	8
7	13	d3	Gargantuan	8	16 (d30)	3	16
8	17	d3	* 10 Pests for each CP spent				
9	22	d4	** Each Pest in the swarm has 1 Health				
10	29	d4					
11	39	d6					
* Add 1 CP for each Rank above standard; receive 1 CP for each Rank below							

[crazy-eyed wizard throwing an owl]  
[wearing a negligee into a cage with a bear]

Special	CP Cost
Surprise	1 per Rank above Adventure
Ranks Damage Reduction: Physical	n <sup>th</sup> Triangular for n Ranks
Ranks Damage Reduction: Magical	n <sup>th</sup> Triangular for n Ranks
Additional attacks (not from high Ranks)	n <sup>th</sup> Triangular for n additional attacks
Natural Armor	Cost as per Aspect Rank
Ranged Attacks* (innate, not weapon)	1 for each additional 10/20/40 in range
Undead Value	1 per point
Poison/Curses	See Poison/Curses tables
* Base Range of 10/20/40	

### Poison/Curses\* Tables

Effects	Example	Cost per Point to Resist
One-off	Resist or take d6 damage per Point of Failure	1
Diminishing	d12 damage/PoF, then d10/PoF, d8/PoF the next, etc.	2
Persistent	Lose 1 Rank of Warrior a day until cured	3

\* All-encompassing phrase to include venom, breath weapons, gaze attacks, etc.

Affects	Cost Multiplier	
Health	x1	The question mark for "Other" means "The GM uses his best judgment." What's the CP value of a curse that increases the target number of all Resist attempts by 2? Or a poison that causes blindness? Or paralysis? Or how about a curse that causes all men to immediately hate you and all women to want to bed you?
Aspect	x2	
Other	x?	

[monsieur tête de pomme de terre, monster edition]  
[make a sphinx, make a centaur, make something]  
[no one has ever seen before. fun for the whole family]

## Appendix D Setting Target Numbers and When to Apply Bonuses/Penalties

The d16 is the standard. 8<sup>th</sup> Rank represents the high school quarterback, track star, or valedictorian. You get the idea. Although the valedictorian isn't quite accurate, as anyone who looked at that whole situation and saw it for the pointless bullshit that it really is. After all, the valedictorian is rarely the most intelligent person in school but, instead, is usually the person who knows how to best game the system, suck up to the administration, and has a parent who does most of the research work.

With 8<sup>th</sup> Rank as the baseline, 9<sup>th</sup> Rank would be the top of the class at West Point, the Heisman Trophy winner, the person the former cock-of-the-walk always expected to be until he blew out his knee during the high school state championship game and knocked up the homecoming queen and now he pumps gas and cleans windshields at the local Amoco twenty hours a week for \$8.25 an hour, plus tips.

And so on to the d30, who would be your Fields Medal winner or 321 consecutive game-starter. (Can anyone *please* explain the caveat, "including playoffs". Of course it includes playoffs. Do linemen suddenly start tackling more softly because it's a playoff game?)

When determining a target number for an action – remember, rolling for an action is done when there is either a significant chance of failure or a more than insignificant chance of success: a character wants to read a parchment written in Old English? Roll for it. In Ancient Lesser Atlantean? No. Where was I? Right, Target Numbers. Decide what the rate of failure would be for someone of 8<sup>th</sup> Rank in typical circumstances. Not what you think the rate should be for a particular character, but for some generic person of 8<sup>th</sup> Rank. To that number you add any modifiers from inherent conditions that make this circumstance atypical. Then apply bonuses/penalties from external conditions to the die roll.

There are two types of conditions that can affect an action: inherent conditions and external conditions. If a character wants to cross a tightrope, the rope being at a 20 degree incline would be an inherent condition while a pole for balance would be external. Inherent conditions are reflected by modifying the Target Number and external conditions are applied as bonuses and penalties to the Aspect die. So our funambulist is performing on a dark and stormy night. The darkness is obviously an external condition, as is the wind. The rain soaking the rope, however, is an inherent condition because it affects the rope directly, like the incline. To recap, the wind, darkness, and pole affect the character and are external conditions, and the incline and wet rope are internal conditions to the action of tightrope walking.

But back to determining the Target Number. Determine the chance of failure for an 8<sup>th</sup> Rank character for a typical situation – Tightrope walking: 25% failure, or 4 in 16. Apply modifiers from inherent conditions – 20 degree incline: +2, wet rope: +2. So the Target Number is 8. This number is set, whether the character has a d16, a d4, or a d30 for Adventure. Then apply bonuses and penalties to the die roll – Balance pole: +2, Dark: -1, Wind: -2, for a net total of a -1 penalty to the Aspect Roll.

The Game can be made grittier or pussier (that's pussier as in “more like a bunch of goddamn pussies,” not the proper definition, “pus-like”) (although, come to think of it, “pus-like” still works) by changing the standard Rank up or down, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> Rank for a manly man's game, 7<sup>th</sup> or even 6<sup>th</sup> Rank if you're running a game for your son who gets beat up every day by Rachel, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade bully. Below is a table that gives the Target Number based on the chance of success for each standard Rank.

Target Numbers	Standard Rank				
	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
99%	9	11	15	19	23
95%	9	11	14	18	22
90%	8	10	14	17	20
85%	8	10	13	16	19
80%	7	9	12	15	18
75%	7	8	11	14	17
70%	6	8	10	13	16
65%	6	7	10	12	14
60%	5	7	9	11	13
55%	5	6	8	10	12
50%	4	5	7	9	11
45%	4	5	6	8	10
40%	3	4	6	7	8
35%	3	4	5	6	7
30%	2	3	4	5	6
25%	2	2	3	4	5
20%	1	2	2	3	4
15%	1	1	2	2	2
10%	0	1	1	1	1
5%	0	0	0	0	0

## Appendix E Character Backgrounds

Way back in the day when bread was a nickel, journeys were always uphill, and music was original, innovative, and, well, you know – good, a little upstart game came out of the miniature wargaming scene that incorporated fantasy elements and, eventually, eliminated the miniatures. This was a time when fighting men were Fighting Men, magic users were Magic-Users, and anyone could pick a lock or climb a wall.

These were the salad days when the Referee/Dungeon Master would have the new player tell everyone about their character and the new guy would say something like, “His name is Maldor and he's a Magic-User.” Someone in the group would say, “We already have five Magic-Users,” and the new guy would reply, “Just a sec,” \*erase\* \*scribble\* “I meant his name is Faldor and he's a Fighting Man,” and the game would resume with Faldor the Fighting Man, or maybe even Caldor the Cleric, as a long-established member of the party.

In the intervening years between then and now a shift occurred. No longer is it acceptable to roll some stats, make up a name, and go. Now when the Game Master asks about the character, he wants to know the origin of the character's nickname; how many siblings he has and the relationship with each of them; what bodily scars he has and how he got them; the character's personality traits; the GM wants a two-page, single-spaced essay explaining the character's motivation for becoming an adventurer. Ask him why he wants this information, and the GM is genuinely dumbfounded that anyone couldn't see the obviousness of it all, “I need the character's background to develop his plot.” Background? Plot? *Motivation*? The game has become a cooperative story. Somewhere along the way the game got taken over by the thespians. There has been push-back. The phrase “Background is what happens in the first four levels” became popular amongst the older generation, which was countered with, “You're just a roll-player, not a role-player.”

Roll-player, not role-player. It's a pithy rejoinder, and it's entirely wrong. The error lies in the expectations of what the game is. Time was, the Referee set up encounters, traps, and puzzles for the players, not the characters, to overcome. The characters were the tools the player used and the Class/Race of the character determined the role the player had in the party. Locks and traps weren't placed in the game to give the Thief something to do; the Thief was created as a tool for locks and traps. To make a *very* loose sports analogy, Fighting Men were linemen and linebackers; Clerics were tight ends, full backs, and cornerbacks; Magic-Users the quarterbacks, half backs and safeties; and hirelings were wide receivers (this was before the five-yard rule when cornerbacks beat the shit out of receivers with impunity and players went over the middle at their own peril). There's your role-playing; a Fighting Man that didn't inflict and absorb damage, but instead ran downfield allowing the Magic-User to get sacked, wasn't playing his role.

Differences in attitudes about character backgrounds generally indicate a difference in gaming styles. People didn't used to say, "I know what to do, but my character doesn't." If the player knew what to do, the character did it – or at least attempted to do it. (Although there was plenty of, "I don't know but my character would." Which is perfectly acceptable; I don't know how to cast a fireball.) There's nothing wrong with that and different styles are by no means mutually exclusive. In fact, there are plenty of players who disdain prefabricated character histories but are still able to create fascinating characters. They just prefer to have a character who is deathly afraid of spiders as the result of a horrible incident that happened early in the fifth gaming session rather than because of a decision made when rolling up the character. It's the difference between, "No no no. No more spiders. Get me the hell out of here," and "Yeeahhh. Like, my character has Arachnophobia, so he's, y'know, running away."

So character backgrounds: use them or don't. If you're with a good group of friends, it doesn't matter one way or another. Just don't look for any rules here.

## Appendix F

### A Skill System that Doesn't Suck

During character creation, a player can have their character excel at something. That something has to be defined by a single word or very short phrase – such as "running," "gem-cutting," or "world history" – and needs to have GM approval. Being good at something is not a guarantee of anything whatsoever, but it can, if the GM so chooses, give a bonus to an Aspect roll, provide an Aspect roll if one wouldn't otherwise have been available, or eliminate the need for an Aspect roll. Or not.

*The party finds an old map. The GM informs the players that the characters do not know any of the symbols. Geoff points out that his character is good at heraldry. After thinking for a moment, the GM calls for a Sorcerer roll. After a successful roll, he says that the character recognizes one of the symbols as the mark of the ancient Baobab empire.*

The player may add another subject the character is good at or add a modifier to an existing skill to become "very good at." Each additional skill costs a cumulative character point (1 for the first addition, 2 for the second, etc. See Appendix A for Triangular Numbers) and the GM gets to choose a subject that the character is "bad at." So if our heraldic scholar decides he also wants to be good at animal husbandry, he pays the character point and the GM can saddle him with being bad at personal relations.

As stated earlier, the GM has final say on what a character is good at. Attempts to make a Dwarf who's good at magic or an Elven spelunker should be firmly and harshly rebuffed.

## Appendix G

### Glossary

$\sqrt{2}$  – The first number worth killing over. Yes, there are others. For the latest example of this idiocy, look up illegal primes.

~**Item()** – Item Destructor

**Affable** – Friendly, good-natured.

**Amoco** – Founded as the Standard Oil Company (Indiana) in 1889, now defunct. Many people still call that tall, square, white building in downtown Chicago the Standard Building, just like they still call that other one the Sears Tower.

**Avunculus** – Maternal uncle, whether a blood relative or by marriage.

**Bactrian Camels** – They're the cool ones.

**Beast of Burden** – Not to be confused with a Beast of Burdon, but credit where it's due, The Animals did help bring Black Music to the mainstream.

**Caveat** – Any description or definition I could possibly give would undoubtedly be misconstrued, so take it as you will.

**Chain Mail** – So I lied. Title of the original combat system for the original fantasy RPG.

**Choppy** – See Crunchy

**Crunchy** – See Stabby

**E. Gary Gygax** – Originator of Gygaxian Prose.

∅ – A sign that our educational system is on the decline. Fewer than 1 in 10 people under the age of 35 have any idea what the ∅ symbol is.

**Firkin** – 8 ale gallons, 9 beer gallons, or 1/3 wine tuns. Equivalent to 36.97, 41.59, and 317.97 liters, respectively.

**Funambulist** – Tightrope walker.

**Giant Seahorse** – It's amazing how Aquaman can make something so cool seem so lame.

**Hoodoo** – That which John Fogerty's hound dog chases down in the bayou. Not to be confused with what you do do so well.

**Immure** – At least when you're buried alive, asphyxiation is relatively quick.

**Joseph N. Welch** – An American hero who called out that opportunistic, low-life, piece-of-shit scumbag, Joe McCarthy, for trying to destroy a man's life on national television. Nominated for a Golden Globe and a Bafta for his work in the Otto Preminger (better known as Mr. Freeze) directed *Anatomy of a Murder*.

**Lawn Darts**<sup>TM</sup> – Considering they've been banned in North America for over twenty years, is the trademark still applicable or necessary?

**Metamorphic Rock** – Very gneiss, but not to be taken for granite.

**Molloser** – If a dog can fit in a purse, it's not a dog. These are real dogs.

**Mummy** – Nothing against Arnold Vosloo, but c'mon. Boris Karloff, baby!

**Onanistic** – Pertaining to onanism; masturbatory.

**Ouroboros** – Serpent eating its tail. A symbol of the Eternal Return.

**Phalanx** – Okay, so Leonidis rejects Ephialtes because he can't properly hold a shield which would compromise the phalanx. I don't know about you, but I don't recall them using a phalanx all that much. Feh, I'm going to stick with the 1962 movie. Zack Snyder's an idiot.

**Pulk** – I just like the sound of the word. "Pulk"

**Rank** – How some people describe  $\Theta$ .

**Rick Shaw** – Long-time radio personality in Southern Florida

**Stabby** – Right, like “Hacking, Crushing, and Puncturing” or “Slashing, Crushing, and Piercing” are any more descriptive for weapon types. At least I came up with different word for “Crush”.

**Sun Tzu** – This is where you expected his definition to be so it's somewhere else.

**Travois** – \trə- 'vòi\ ← There you are, folks. The  $\Theta$  in its native environment.

**Triangular Numbers** – The addition equivalent to factorials.

**Uberous** – Productive, bountiful, virile.

**Unibra** – I don't think mastectomies are a laughing matter.

[scribe at a table surrounded by scrolls and tomes]

## Appendix H Further Reading

Go read a book. I don't care what book, but read something, fer chrissakes, even if it's a Spider-man trade or the back of a cereal box.

[two-headed dog attacking a unicorn that]  
[is goring a peacock with a rat in its mouth]

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\*All artwork by Oedipussy Rex, unless otherwise noted

[flock of pegasi flying south for the winter]

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[dragon lying on a treasure hoard]



Name:

Race:

	Rank	Die	Spells	Resist	Temp. Bonus/Penalty
<b>Sorcerer</b>					
	Rank	Die	Mêlée	Resist	Temp. Bonus/Penalty
<b>Warrior</b>					
	Rank	Die	Missiles	Resist	Temp. Bonus/Penalty
<b>Adventure</b>					
<b>Defense:</b>	<b>Health:</b>				
Die	Type	vs: Choppy Crunchy Stabby Shield			
<b>Armor:</b>					
<b>Mêlée Weapon</b>	Damage	Type	Weapon	Damage	Type
<b>Ranged Weapon</b>	Damage	Type	Range	Ammunition	
<b>Spells</b>	Effect			Base	Modifiers

Character Points:

Item	Encumbrance	Item	Encumbrance
Type	Encumbrance	<b>Containers</b>	Type
Contents		Contents	
Contents		Contents	
Contents		Contents	

Total Encumbrance: \_\_\_\_\_

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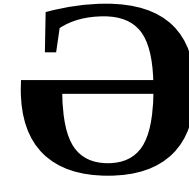
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[headshot]

## About the Author

Oedipussy Rex is a balding, childless, middle-aged divorcé living in his mother's basement with his two cats. Despite his stated desire to “show them all,” he has managed to live up to the expectations of every teacher and girlfriend he's ever had, as well as their parents.

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# Onanistic Hoodoo

*New Races*

*New Weapons*

*New Spells*

*New Monsters*

*New Artwork*

*Same old Crap*

*Throughout history there have been certain events and innovations that irrevocably altered the course of human development: the taming of fire, cultivation, animal husbandry, the wheel, the printed word, splitting the atom, sliced bread.*

**Sorcerer Character Has Warrior Adventure**  
*is not one of these things; it's just a game that uses funny dice.*