

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons®

TOMES

THE **ROD** OF SEVEN PARTS

MIGHT AND MENACE



Book Three



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



Book III

MIGHT AND MENACE

Table of Contents

About the Rod	2	New Magic Items	13
History	2	Side Treks	14
Appearance	2	Chaos Gates	14
Researching the Rod	4	Chaos Reigns	19
Properties	4	Good Samaritan	21
Powers of Individual Segments	5	Waves of Chaos	24
Assembling the Rod	5	Into the Vastest Bog	24
Major Powers	7	Mysterious Stranger	27
Resonant Powers	7	Dragonfire	31
Disassembling the Rod	9	Playing the Game	31
Breakage	9	Dragonfire within the AD&D® Campaign	32
Side Effects	9		
An Example of the Rod in Play	12		

Credits

Design: Skip Williams

Editing: David Eckelberry

Cover Design: Stephen A. Daniele and Greg Kerkman

Cover Illustration: R. K. Post

Interior Illustrations: Glen Michael Angus, Arnie Swekel, Phillip Robb, Jim Roslof, and Erol Otus

Graphic Design: Greg Kerkman

Cartography: Diesel, David Martin, and Arnie Swekel

Typesetting: Tracey L. Isler

Art Director: Stephen A. Daniele

Playtesters: Phil Anderson, Dave Conant, Shawn Costa, Scott Douglas, and Jon Pickens

AD&D, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, DUNGEON MASTER, and the TSR logo are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. All TSR characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.

©1996 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved. This product is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or other unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of TSR, Inc.

Random House and its affiliate companies have worldwide distribution rights in the book trade for English language products of TSR, Inc. Distributed to the book and hobby trade in the United Kingdom by TSR Ltd. Distributed to the toy and hobby market by regional distributors.

TSR, Inc.
201 Sheridan Springs Road
Lake Geneva
WI 53147
U.S.A.



1145XXX1503

TSR Ltd.
120 Church End
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge, CB1 3LB
United Kingdom

ABOUT THE ROD

During this adventure, the *Rod of Seven Parts* functions as described here. The information presented in this section supersedes all previous material about the *Rod*.

History

Aeons ago, in the Age of Legends, a great war arose between Law and Chaos. The roots of the conflict are obscure, shrouded in the mists of antiquity. Perhaps Chaos arose to spread decay and promote autonomy. Or maybe Law embarked on a crusade to stamp out discord and promote unity. Or perchance a monumental conflict between the two opposing forces was simply inevitable. Theories from sages and historians tend to reveal more about their authors' preferences than they do about the truth of the matter.

It is known that at first the two sides struggled without regard to good or evil, in a conflict for dominance untainted (and undignified) by any other consideration. Warfare raged on several worlds (dozens by some accounts). The opposing armies were mighty. The guardians of Law were the Wind Dukes of Aaqa, scions of an empire already ancient at the war's beginning. The champion of Chaos was an enigmatic being known only as the Queen of Chaos. The clash between the two was epic, but painfully indecisive. No matter how resolute and brave the legions of Aaqa, they could not force the armies of Chaos to yield. No matter how cunning and unpredictable the Queen, her troops could not dislodge the Wind Dukes from a single world. Battles were lost and won, but the war ground on.

The stalemate began to break when the queen appointed a powerful and ruthless tanar'ri as her new general. Miska the Wolf-Spider brought fresh troops into the war, and his evil hordes cut a swath through the legions of Aaqa, crushing them and seizing control of world after world. A chaos army with Miska in the vanguard was unstoppable.

The Wind Dukes were quick to sense defeat looming over them, and they began gathering good creatures to combat Miska's evil. But many chaotic yet good creatures who had deserted the Queen when Miska appeared would not join them. After a hurried council, the most powerful champions in the Wind Dukes' armies withdrew from the war, leaving their best troops, the Captains of Law, to resist Miska as well as they could. The seven champions combined their powers to create a weapon that could slay Miska and strike fear into the hearts of the minions of Chaos.

The weapon the heroes forged was a tapered rod of

black metal, not quite as tall as a man. It could be used to batter or pierce foes.

When the *Rod* was completed, the seven champions rejoined the conflict at the battle of Pesh, on the world of Oerth. After weeks of maneuvering, the two armies clashed on a vast, volcanic plain. In the swirling melee that developed, the Captains of Law drove a wedge into the ranks of Chaos and separated Miska from the bulk of his troops. After a furious engagement, Miska stood alone, facing the bearer of the *Rod* and a single comrade. While the bearer's companion sacrificed himself in a selfless attack, the *Rod* bearer drove the weapon into Miska's body.

Stricken, Miska wailed in anguish, and his screams were so terrible that every soldier on the battlefield was briefly transfixed. As Miska writhed in agony, his foul blood covered and penetrated the *Rod*. As the absolute Law imbued in the *Rod* mingled with the Chaos in Miska's blood, the fabric of the multiverse was ripped asunder. The *Rod* shattered into seven pieces and Miska was cast through a planar rift. The hordes of Chaos surged to the scene, but the *Rod* bearer gathered up the fragments and dove through the rift, sealing it.

The sundering of the *Rod* spared Miska from death, but a portion of his being remained in the *Rod*, leaving the general crippled. When Miska retreated to a citadel of Chaos, the Wind Dukes intervened, imprisoning him in a cocoon of pure law and casting him into the depths of Pandemonium, whose damp caves and howling winds have hidden all manner of exiles.

The Wind Duke who followed Miska through the rift has disappeared from the chronicles. Most sages assume he is dead. The seven fragments of the *Rod*, however, have been found and lost again on many worlds. The sundered *Rod* is a powerful tool of Law, but each time it is assembled the minions of the Queen come calling, hoping to extract Miska's essence from it so he can escape his prison and lead the armies of Chaos again. Many scholars regard the *Rod* as a harbinger of doom because of the clash between Law and Chaos that inevitably follows it.

Appearance

If all its component pieces are rejoined, the *Rod of Seven Parts* is 5 feet long. The butt is rounded and about 2 inches across. The opposite end is about as thick as a man's little finger.

Being an artifact of Law, the *Rod's* segments do not look broken. Each "break" is a set of very intricate





About the Rod

geometric facets with both protrusions and depressions. Any two pieces can be fitted together with patient twisting and pressing, like a three-dimensional puzzle. The individual segments are 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 15 inches long.

Miska's blood has converted the *Rod's* metal into a lusterless black substance of indeterminate weight; a character holding a segment in his hand feels something substantial, but the segment feels neither light nor heavy. The fully assembled *Rod* weighs about seven pounds, but feels as light as a feather.

Some of the *Rod's* segments have been incorporated into larger items and are not readily identifiable. See the **Powers of Individual Segments** section for details.

Researching the *Rod*

Once the PCs get their hands on the first segment of the *Rod*, they will undoubtedly seek to learn more about it. Attempts to analyze the *Rod* with spells such as *detect magic* and *identify* come to naught, as the *Rod* is impervious to them.

If the party takes part of the *Rod* to an NPC wizard, sage, or bard, he or she will be puzzled, and suggest that the party cast or commission a *legend lore* spell.

DM Note: Bards can use their ability to identify items to recognize the first segment of the *Rod*, with its ebony handle, as King Siryl's wand of healing. If a bard successfully identifies the wand, the character can immediately make a second check; if the second check succeeds, the bard knows that the wizard Mitcou claimed it was fashioned from part of an artifact of the vaati.

A bard also can try to identify other segments of the *Rod*, but the character's chance of success is reduced by half and a successful roll reveals only that the segment must be part of a larger item.

A *legend lore* spell gives a clue to the *Rod's* true nature:

*That which was sundered on Pesh's plain,
Holds back chaos's reign.
Yet the vaati's deed shall remain undone,
Until the seven again become one.*

Any sage can tell the party that the vaati are a lost race of immortals more commonly known as the Wind Dukes of Aaqa. A sage versed in folklore, history, or law (see *DMG*, Chapter 12) can tell the party the whole story of the battle of Pesh and the events leading up to it.

An NPC can also suggest that the party try a *legend lore* spell to reveal the *Rod's* powers and command words. If they do so, you may show them the back of Card 5. (The *legend lore* caster sees an image of the coat of arms shown on the card.) The back of Card 1 and Card 6 contain additional information.

Eudora, the diviner from the **Incident at a Footbridge** adventure in **Book I**, knows all about the *Rod*. If the PCs rescue her, they have access to all the information they need, except where the segments are. If the party did not meet Eudora at the beginning of the quest, the DM can use her as an advisor to the party.

Once the party understands what they have, they will probably wish to assemble the pieces. The PCs can do their own magical research to discover what needs to be done, or they can consult an NPC, as the DM wishes.

Properties

Except where noted otherwise, the fully assembled *Rod of Seven Parts* and all of its segments have the following properties:

- The *Rod* radiates a faint dweomer if examined with a *detect magic* spell. The spell does not reveal what type of magic is present.
- The spells *detect evil*, *detect good*, *identify*, *know alignment*, and *locate object* divulge nothing about the *Rod*. Magical effects, spell-like powers, and psionic powers that duplicate the effects of these spells are also useless.
- The *Rod* is immune to most forms of harm. It is impervious to the destructive effects of magic, breath weapons, and psionics. If placed in a situation where it would be utterly destroyed, such as crushed under a slab of stone or broken by a gargantuan creature, the *Rod* is either unaffected or teleports to a random location as described in the **Assembly** section. In general, only extraordinary effects will cause the *Rod* to teleport. A blast from a *fireball*, for example, merely leaves the *Rod* unscathed. The *Rod* teleports away if it contacts a *sphere of annihilation* or is successfully attacked by a *rod of cancellation* (the *Rod of Seven Parts* is completely unaffected on a roll of 3 or more on 1d20).
- The *Rod* can be concealed by magic. If the character holding the *Rod* becomes invisible, the *Rod* becomes invisible. If the *Rod* bearer is polymorphed, the *Rod* becomes incorporated into the bearer's new form,



About the Rod

although if the new form is destroyed the *Rod* is automatically separated from the character's body.

- If a character holds any portion of the *Rod* and thinks of it as part of larger item, he receives a vague impression of where the next largest piece lies. The character has no indication of how far away the next piece is, just a direction (north, south, east, west, up, down, or any combination of directions). The effect is similar to a *locate object* spell in that the character holding the *Rod* can slowly turn and know when he is facing the direction in which the next segment lies. The character need not actually see the segment he is holding; the effect is purely mental. If the character comes within 70 yards of the next piece, the impression of direction fades, leaving the bearer to his own devices. If the bearer subsequently moves more than 70 yards from the next piece, the impression of direction returns, but fades again as the bearer gets closer. Intelligent characters can use this property to triangulate the next piece's position.

Powers of Individual Segments

Each segment of the *Rod* has its own minor spell-like power, which requires the user to concentrate upon a command word. Invoking a minor power has an initiative modifier of 2; it counts as an action for the character, but does not require speech and cannot be disrupted as a spell can. Minor powers function at 20th level and are useable by any character. The segments' names are derived from the words to the *vaati's* motto during the war against Chaos (See Card 5). The DM is free to substitute names and command words that are more appropriate for the campaign.

1. The 4-inch tip can *cure light wounds* five times a day. A long-forgotten wizard fitted the tip with an ebony handle to make it easier to use. The resulting device appears to be a normal wand about 14 inches long. A *true seeing* or *legend lore* spell reveals it to be composed of two parts.

The tip's *cure light wounds* power operates normally, as does the *Rod's* curse (see the **Side Effects** section). The wand resists all forms of detection; a *detect magic* spell reveals nothing about the wand, and other magical divinations are also ineffective, as explained in the previous section.

The ebony handle does not have any special resistance to attacks, and saves as thick wood. If the handle is destroyed in an attack, the tip is unaffected.

Anyone who discovers the wand's true nature can pry the tip out of the handle. If the tip is separated from the handle, it radiates faint magic as every segment of the *Rod* does.

The tip's name and the command word for the *cure light wounds* power is *Ruat*.

2. The 5-inch segment can create a *slow* effect once a day with a duration of 23 rounds. The name and command word is *Coelum*.

3. The 6-inch segment can produce *haste* once a day with a duration of 23 rounds. The character wielding the segment doesn't age, but everyone else who is affected does. The name and command word is *Fiat*.

4. The 8-inch segment can create a *gust of wind* five times a day. The gust is 10 feet wide and 200 yards long. The name and command word is *Justitia*.

5. The 10-inch segment provides *true seeing* once a day for 20 rounds. The name and command word is *Ecce*.

6. The 12-inch segment produces *hold monster* once a day (the effect lasts 20 rounds). The name and command word is *Lex*.

7. The 15-inch segment can *heal* once a day. The name and command word is *Rex*.

Assembling the Rod

Assembling the *Rod* is a complex and often frustrating process that requires considerable research. The chaos that Miska's blood infused into the *Rod* causes segments to scatter if they come too close together. If any two segments come within one foot of each other, the newest, largest piece teleports 1d100 miles in a random direction (see table below).

Special magical glyphs, one for each segment, are required to prevent the pieces from teleporting when brought together. The process of inscribing the glyphs is similar to writing a magical scroll. Any priest, wizard, or bard of at least 7th level can attempt it if the character has the proper materials and knows the correct procedures.

The required materials include a brush made from the hair of two rare and powerful lawful creatures, one good and one evil. The creature must give its hair freely, and must have six or more hit dice (not levels).



About the Rod

A pigment made from diamond, iron, lead, and several other ingredients also is required. Pigment materials for a single glyph cost about 300 gp.

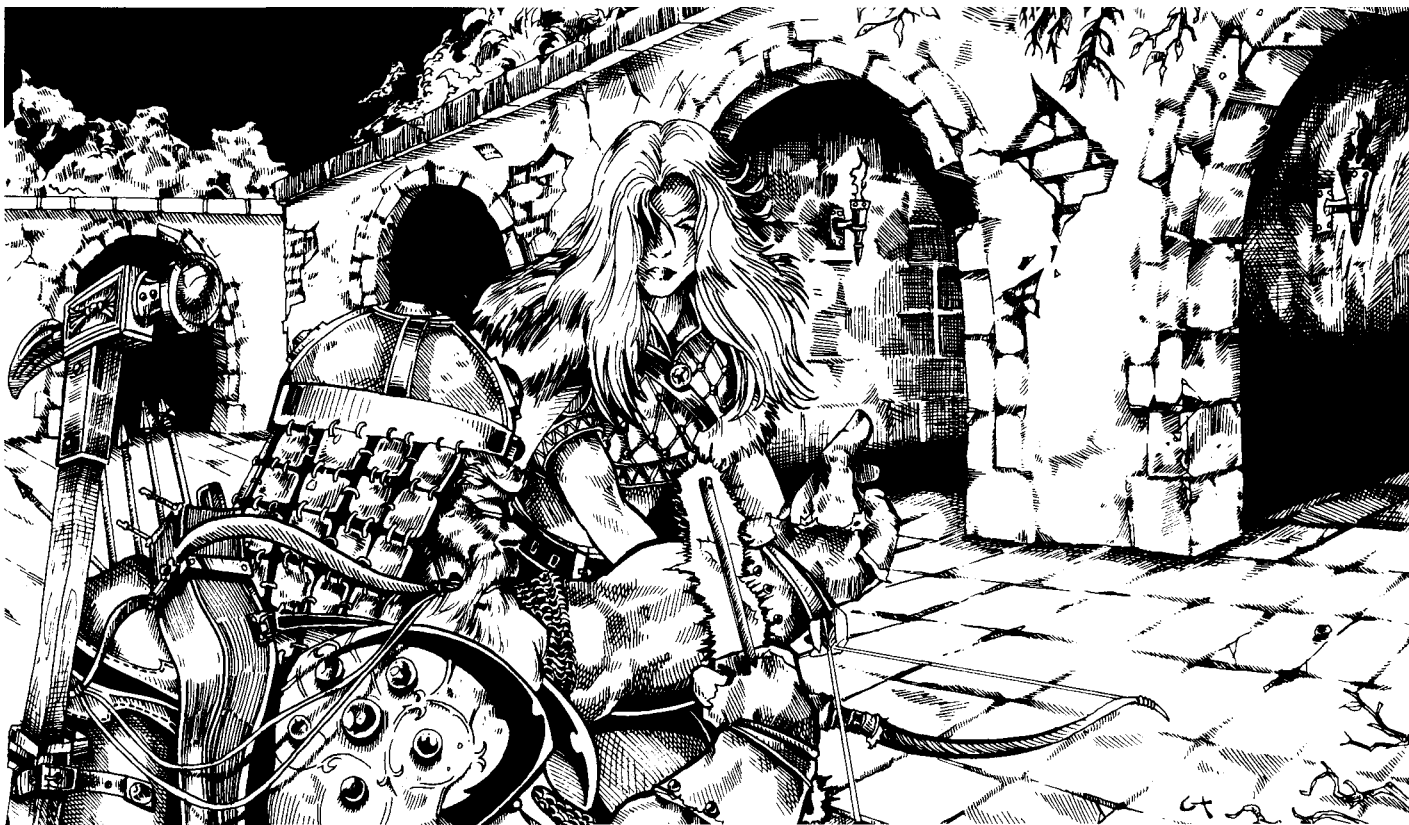
The best way to discover the correct procedures for making the glyphs is to locate a written description; however, a character can discover it himself through research if a proper library and laboratory are available. Use the spell research rules from Chapter 7 of the *DUNGEON MASTER*® *Guide*. The glyphs are as expensive and difficult to research as a 6th level spell, except that any priest, wizard, or bard of at least 7th level can attempt it.

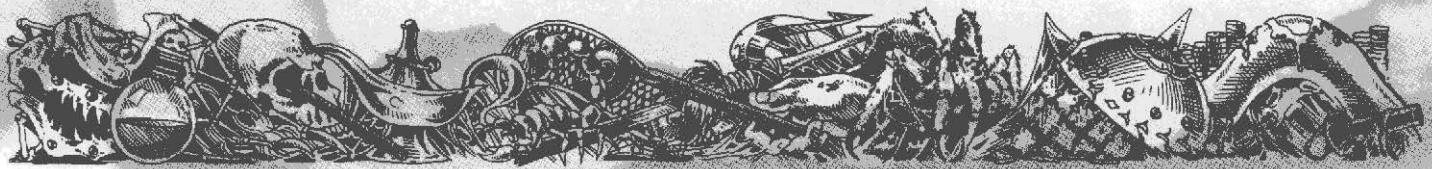
Scribing a glyph onto a segment requires seven hours of uninterrupted work. The base chance for success is 70% +1% per character level. If the character made the brush himself, there is a 5% bonus to the success chance. Characters proficient in painting or calligraphy get an additional +5% bonus. The character can rush the job if he wishes. For every hour or fraction of an hour the character saves, reduce the chance of success by 10%. The task takes at least 10 minutes. Any roll of 96-100 is a failure regardless of the actual success chance. The DM should make the success roll in secret. The only way the PCs can judge success is to bring two

parts of the *Rod* together. Note that when a glyph fails, it is always the largest piece that teleports away when two pieces are brought together, even when the smaller piece has the defective glyph. When a piece teleports, it loses its glyph. Defective glyphs can be removed with a *dispel magic* or *erase* spell.

No spell, not even a *wish*, can prevent pieces of the *Rod* from teleporting if they are brought together without the proper glyphs.

Once the glyphs are in place, any being with at least average intelligence (9 or higher) can fit pieces of the *Rod* together. Generally, joining two pieces requires 20 minutes of fiddling. If it becomes necessary to determine exactly how long a character has to work to join two parts, roll 1d20. If the result is less than or equal to the character's Intelligence score, subtract the roll from 20 to see how many minutes the task requires. If the roll is higher than the character's intelligence score, the task takes 2d4+18 minutes. Even with the proper glyphs, pieces of the *Rod* must be joined in the proper order. Each piece can be joined only with the next largest or the next smallest piece (see diagram of the back of Card 6). For example, the 4-inch tip can be joined only with the 5-inch





About the Rod

piece, which itself can be joined ~~only to the tip and to~~ the 6-inch piece. If anyone tries to join pieces in an improper order, the two pieces that are being forced together both teleport away in random directions, and both pieces lose their glyphs.

Joining two or more compatible parts creates a major power, as described in the next section. If the segments are combined in strictly numerical order, the parts create even more potent resonant powers (see the **Resonant Powers** section).

d10 Roll	Teleport Direction
1	North
2	Northeast
3	East
4	Southeast
5	South
6	Southwest
7	West
8	Northwest
9	Straight Up*
10	Straight Down*

* The distance is only 1d10 miles

Major Powers

As the *Rod's* segments are joined together, more potent abilities become available to the user. Invoking a major power has an initiative modifier of 3, but the procedure is otherwise the same as using a minor power. Major powers function at 20th level. Any group of segments that fit together (see the Assembly section) can be joined to create a unit with a major power. If three or more segments are joined, the resulting unit has only one major power—the one produced by the greatest number of segments. The unit has all the minor powers from the individual segments in it. The command words for a major power are the names of the segments that create it, and the name of the smallest piece comes first. For example, if the party joins the 6- and 8 inch segments together, the command words would be *Fiat Ecce*.

- Two segments bestow flight as the 3rd level wizard spell *fly* at will.
- Three segments add 20% to the wielder's magic resistance. The unit can be used as a blunt weapon and functions as a *horseman's mace* +1. These powers are continuous and don't require command words.

- Four segments allow the user to *control winds* twice a day. The unit functions as a *horseman's mace* +2.
- Five segments grant the power to *shape change* as the 9th level wizard spell once a day. The unit functions as a *quarterstaff* +3.
- Six segments allow the user to *wind walk* once a day. The unit functions as a *quarterstaff* +4.
- Seven segments can create a *restoration* effect, as the 7th priest spell, once a day. The unit functions as a *quarterstaff* +5. The unit can also be employed as a piercing weapon with the same characteristics (weapon speed, damage, etc.) as a quarterstaff.

Resonant Powers

The *Rod of Seven Parts* is most powerful if its segments are joined in the proper order. To create resonant powers, the *Rod's* segments must be joined one at a time starting with the tip. Resonating units retain all their major and minor powers. The major power usually is enhanced. In some cases, resonant units also have additional powers.

The *Rod* does not resonate if assembled in reverse order or if assembled from two or more units that have been put together to create duplicate major powers. For example, if a party starts with the tip and then adds segments 2, 3, and 4 one at a time, the resulting unit resonates. However, if the party takes the same four segments, but joins parts 1 and 2 to create one unit and joins parts 3 and 4 to create another unit, both units have the major power of flight. If the party then joins those two units together the resulting unit does not resonate and has considerably fewer powers that it would have if properly assembled.

If a nonresonant unit is joined to a resonant unit, the resulting unit is nonresonant. For example, a party has joined segments 1, 2, and 3 to create a resonant unit. If the party also has a unit made from segments 4 and 5 and joins the two units together the resulting unit would be nonresonant. The command words for resonant powers are the names of the segments that make up the units that create them, plus the word *Maxima*.

- Segments 1 and 2: Instead of flight as the wizard spell *fly*, user can, at will, fly at a speed of 24, with class A maneuverability.



- Segments 1, 2 and 3: The wielder gains the ability to influence creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air. No creature native to the plane can approach within 5 feet of the user unless the user attacks first. Even then, the user gains a +2 bonus to armor class and to all saving throws. Any damage the user suffers is reduced by -2 hit points per die (minimum 1 point per die). This power does not require command words.

- Segments 1, 2, 3 and 4: The wielder gains the ability to charm creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air. A charm attempt counts as an attack on the creature. The wielder cannot attempt to charm the same creature more than once a day.

- Segments 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. The rod bearer can cast *weather summoning* once a day.

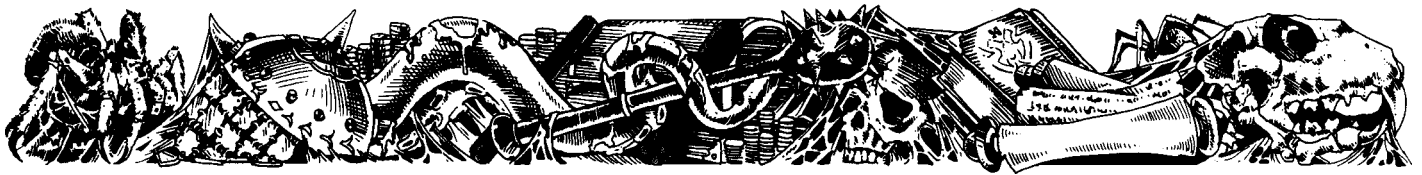
- Segments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The wielder can create a whirlwind once a day and maintain it for up to seven hours; it takes seven rounds to form. The wielder and up to six man-sized companions can ride the whirlwind, or the wielder can direct it at any distance as long as he keeps it in sight.

The whirlwind (and any passengers) moves at a minimum speed of 9, but its top speed is 18; the wielder chooses the exact rate. It is 10 feet wide at the base and 40 feet wide at the top. The height can be from 30 to 70 feet as the wielder chooses. The base must always touch land or water.

The whirlwind buffets anyone caught within it for 2d6 points of damage each round, but a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon negates the damage. Non-aerial creatures with two hit dice or less are killed if the saving throw fails. The wielder and passengers are not affected.

Controlling the whirlwind requires minimal concentration. Damage to the wielder does not end the whirlwind, but the wielder can take no action other than movement while controlling it. If the wielder loses consciousness or is killed the whirlwind dissipates.

- Segments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The wielder can cast *resurrection* as the 7th level priest spell, except that no resurrection survival check is required. Using this power always causes the *Rod* to scatter. See the **Breakage** section for details.



About the Rod

Disassembling the Rod

Resonating sections of the *Rod of Seven Parts* cannot be deliberately taken apart once they have been joined (though they can break apart by accident, see the **Breakage** section). Nonresonant sections can be broken apart.

Disassembling the *Rod* requires at least one unattached segment. A reversed form of the glyphs required to assemble the *Rod* must be inscribed onto the unattached segment. Once the glyph is in place, the loose segment is used to strike the partially assembled *Rod*. When struck the *Rod* falls apart, and the largest piece teleports away. If the reversed glyph is incorrectly inscribed (see page 6), the section that bears the faulty glyph teleports away when brought within one foot of any other part of the *Rod*.

Once disassembled, the *Rod* can be reassembled by scribing new glyphs on the individual segments.

Breakage

The taint of chaos the *Rod* carries makes it unstable even when properly assembled. Any use of a major or resonant power has a 5% chance that the entire *Rod* will break apart and scatter. If the *Rod* breaks, all the segments lose their glyphs and teleport away as described on page 7, but they go twice as far. Only the smallest piece of the *Rod* remains.

The resonant power of *resurrection* always makes the *Rod* scatter. The *Rod* breaks and the pieces vanish through a planar rift and appear at random locations on some world in the Prime Material plane. There is no way to tell which world, but the *Rod* never appears on the same world twice in a row.

Whenever the *Rod* arrives on a new world, its powers change subtly, and the Queen of Chaos must begin her search for the *Rod* all over again. Player characters who send the *Rod* off to a new world gain a powerful enemy. Fortunately, the queen eventually picks up the *Rod's* scent again and forgets about the PCs—unless they have done something to make her remember them.

Side Effects

Carrying and using the *Rod of Seven Parts* can be hazardous, especially for characters who have alignment restrictions. Using the *Rod* can also alert the Queen of Chaos to its location.

Lawful Influence

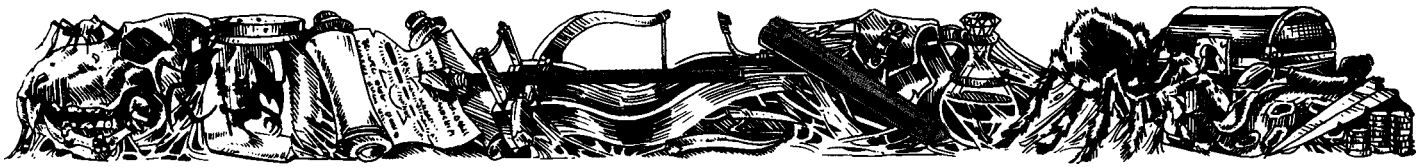
Any character holding or carrying even one piece of *Rod of Seven Parts* immediately falls under its lawful influence. As the *Rod* is assembled, its influence over the bearer becomes stronger. Eventually, the *Rod's* bearer becomes Lawful Neutral, and the desire to promote law dominates his life.

A character holding a single piece of the *Rod* automatically suffers the first effect from the list below. Each time a piece is added to the *Rod*, the bearer automatically suffers the next effect from the list. Side effects are cumulative.

- **Single piece:** The bearer cannot abide disorder. The character keeps himself scrupulously neat and clean, and strives to keep his equipment and belongings in some kind of logical order. If given a chance, the character seeks to arrange any disorderly collection of objects he encounters. The character straightens pictures, sweeps up debris, and generally shows a preoccupation with neatness. If the character's player does not role-play this new aspect of the character's personality, the DM should present the character with some unusually disorderly situation at least once each adventure. If the player ignores the situation, the character becomes distracted and suffers a -1 penalty to all saving throws, ability checks, and surprise rolls for the rest of the day or until the character arranges things neatly. The character need not ignore more pressing concerns in favor of neatness, but must deal with the situation as soon as it becomes reasonable to do so. Nor does the character have to undertake anything that requires more than 5 or 10 minutes of effort. For example, a character visiting a squalid inn need not scrub the entire common room, but does feel inclined to sweep up all the dust at the table where he is sitting and arranges the plates and flatware in a regular pattern.

The character's personal fastidiousness improves his Charisma by one point.

The character becomes Lawful, though the good-evil component of the character's alignment is unchanged. Thieves and bards who become lawful suffer a -10 penalty to Pick Pockets, Open Locks, Hide in Shadows and Hear Noise, but gain +15 to Find/Remove Traps and Read Languages (their more ethical and logical minds are less adept and subterfuge and trial and error, but better at analysis). If the optional thief skills from the *PLAYER'S OPTION™* books are in play, the character also suffers a -10



About the Rod

penalty to Bribe and Escape Bonds and a +15 to Detect Illusion.

If the character is a priest required to follow a non-

vision.) If the character accepts, he immediately becomes a priest of the same level as before (but after the experience loss). If the character's experience total

by a memory-zahn, the highest level of spells for characters is prevented or limited by a character's level. If the character's experience total is less than the minimum required for that level, the character's experience total is increased to the minimum required for that level. If the character refuses the offer, the penalties remain until the character atones as noted under

If the character is a wild mage, he loses the ability to cast wild magic, but must abide by all other restrictions of his specialty unless he chooses to abandon it. If the wild mage discards the segment, his ability to cast wild magic returns.

Two pieces: The character never agrees to random determinations for anything that could be accomplished by more lawful means. For example, the character will not accept dice rolls for distributing treasure. The character insists on some more logical and nonrandom means of distributing the spoils.

If the character is a priest required to follow a non-lawful alignment, the character immediately loses the ability to memorize all but 1st and 2nd level spells and any granted power has a 50% chance to fail when used. The penalties remain until the character atones.

Three pieces: The bearer refuses to knowingly break any law, no matter how absurd the law or how minor the infraction, unless the character can find a legalistic loophole that allows him to avoid prosecution and punishment. Obviously, this side effect restricts rogue characters a great deal; rogue abilities remain unchanged (beyond the modifiers listed above), though rogues who fall this far under the Rod's influence are unwilling to use some of them.

The character refuses to part with the segments of the Rod that he holds. The character gains a +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. charms, suggestions, and similar effects that subordinate his will to that of another, including magic jar.

If the character is a priest required to follow a non-lawful alignment, the character's deity is deeply offended by the character's failure to divest himself of the Rod. The character suffers 2d10 points of damage and loses 50,000 experience points. (If the character had less than 50,000 experience points to begin with, the character is reduced to 0 experience instead.) However, a lawful neutral deity of the DM's choice immediately steps in and offers to accept the character as a priest. (The deity might actually appear in avatar form or the character might have a dream or

Removing Side Effects

Four pieces: The character never deliberately tells a lie. The character can evade the truth through equivocal or obscure statements, so long as what the character says is the literal truth.

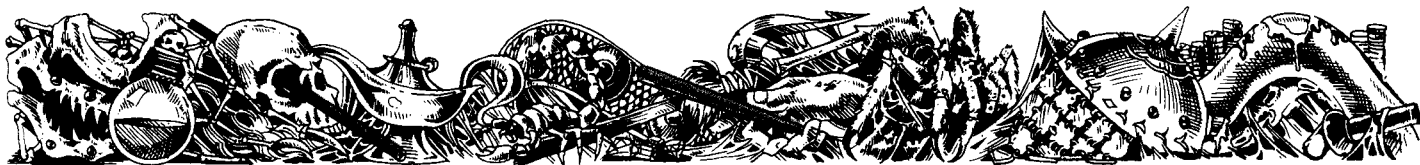
Every lawful creature the character meets instinctively knows the character is being truthful whenever the character actually speaks the clear and frank truth with no attempt at evasion.

At this point, law is becoming more important to the character than good or evil. Paladin and ranger characters lose their spellcasting abilities. Priests who are required to follow a good or evil alignment cannot memorize their highest level of spells, and their granted powers have a 10% to fail each time they are used.

Five pieces: The bearer cannot tolerate extremes of emotion. If the character ever becomes angry, fearful, envious, or reaches any other strongly emotional state, the character becomes confused and unable to take any meaningful actions for 1d4 rounds. The character cannot move, attack, cast spells, or use any abilities; however, the character is not helpless. Saving throws and armor class are unaffected.

Strong emotional states cannot be imposed upon the character from the outside. The character is immune to all forms of fear, and to spells such as *taunt* and *emotion*. Spells that play on the victim's fears, such as *phantasmal killer*, are also ineffective.

The character's alignment becomes lawful neutral. A paladin or ranger loses his special abilities (except for ranger tracking) until the character atones. A priest who must follow a good or evil alignment suffers his deity's displeasure, and suffers 2d10 points of damage and loses 50,000 experience points. An evil priest must also save vs. death or be irrevocably slain. In any case, the character cannot memorize spells higher than 2nd level and all granted powers have a 50% chance to fail. No deity steps forward to adopt the character; the character must atone or abandon the priest class.



About the Rod

- **Six pieces:** The character takes everything he hears or reads literally, making no attempt to understand deeper meaning or irony. The character does not automatically believe everything he sees or hears, but he does assume that every speaker and writer means *exactly* what he says—nothing more, nothing less. The character might well assume that a speaker or writer who uses metaphors, similes, or other forms of colorful language is an outright liar.

If magically charmed or commanded, the character follows all his instructions to the letter.

- **Seven pieces:** The bearer seeks to maintain the primacy of law over chaos in every situation, whether for good or for ill. The character perceives anyone not adhering to his views as an enemy, even close friends and other party members.

The fully assembled *Rod* radiates an aura of fearsome, icy Law with a 20-foot radius. All the bearer's enemies (as defined above) must attempt saving throws vs. spell or flee in panic for one turn.

Avoiding the Rod's Influence

No barrier or protective device can prevent the *Rod* from influencing the bearer, including *anti-magic shells* and extradimensional spaces. A character who carries a *Rod* segment in a portable hole is still under its influence. Manipulating the *Rod* indirectly (with an *unseen servant* or a *telekinesis* spell, for example) does not provoke any side effects. Note, however, that a character must touch the *Rod*—and therefore fall under its influence—to use any of its powers. Any portion of the *Rod* can be in only one creature's possession at a time. When in doubt, the creature actually touching the *Rod* is the bearer. For example, if a character tucks the *Rod* in his backpack he becomes the *Rod* bearer. If the character then climbs aboard a mount, the mount does not fall under the *Rod's* influence. The spyder-fiends in this adventure try to take advantage of this fact when they have to handle the *Rod*. As chaotic evil creatures, they cannot safely possess it. (Miska is an exception, sometimes; see **Book IV**). They can, however, charm or manhandle some other creature who is carrying the *Rod*.

Alerting the Queen

Over the centuries, the Queen of Chaos has developed the ability to sense use of the *Rod*. Each day a party has the *Rod*, there is a chance the queen will

take notice, depending on which power has been used. When the queen senses the *Rod* in use, she dispatches a group of spyder-fiends to attack the group. Details for encounters with these teams of fiends are included in the **Chaos Gates** adventure in this book. If it becomes necessary to randomly determine if the queen detects a use of the *Rod*, refer to the table below.

Action	Sense Chance
Used no powers	0%
Change in ownership	5%
Used minor power	5%
Used major power	10%
Use resonant power	15%
Added a segment	20%
Removed a segment	5%
Scattered segments	10%
Per consecutive day when checks were required*	10%

* For example, if the party uses the *cure light wounds* power the chance for detection is 5% the first time the power is used. If the party uses the *cure light wounds* power every day for five days the chance for detection on day five is 55%.

At the end of each day (sunset or midnight, at the DM's option), note what the PCs have done with the *Rod* in the previous 24 hours and roll percentile dice to determine if the queen has sensed their activity. Total all the numbers that apply. For example, if the party has used the *cure light wounds* power, then added a segment and made use of the *fly* major power, the queen's chance to notice is 35% (5+20+10), and possibly higher if the party used the *Rod* yesterday, too. If the queen notices, she spends 1d12 hours determining the PCs' location, then sends a group of spyder-fiends to attack the party via her *chaos gate* power.

Removing Side Effects

All the *Rod's* side effects, good and bad, go away when the bearer discards the *Rod*. Alignment changes imposed by the *Rod* are involuntary and usually entail no penalties to the character. Paladins, rangers, and specialty priests, however, are special cases, as are all other characters who have class-based alignment restrictions. As noted above, characters can lose experience points and access to spells when their



About the Rod

alignments shift to lawful and then to lawful neutral. Such characters' alignments return to normal when the *Rod* is discarded. Characters such as paladins, rangers, and druids, however, can face lasting consequences from their trips into ultimate Law. As soon as such characters become free of the *Rod*, they must seek a priest of like alignment and receive an *atonement* spell. The atonement always includes a quest designed to further the ethos the character has violated. Upon successful completion of the quest, the character's lost spells and class abilities return, but lost experience does not.

An Example of the *Rod* in Play

Torin, a paladin, and his friends have found the wand containing the *Rod's* tip. The group is puzzled when their *detect magic* spells reveal nothing about the wand, but Torin's *detect evil* ability reveals nothing, either. Torin keeps the wand. Being a paladin, he does not suffer—or even notice—the involuntary shift to lawful alignment, but everyone notices the paladin's newfound preoccupation with neatness. Torin's already exceptional Charisma score climbs slightly higher.

After consulting a sage, the group learns how to use the wand's *cure light wounds* power, and gets a hint that the wand might be more than it seems. After further research, the party separates the *Rod's* tip from the wand, and gets an idea of where the next piece lies.

When they recover the second piece, the party gives it to Devorah, a neutral good specialty priest. Devorah's sudden urge to be as neat as possible is expected, and amusing, but her loss of spells is neither. Devorah resolves to have nothing further to do with the *Rod*, and she returns to normal when she gives up her segment. Kayn, the group's mage/thief, also declines to handle the segment, so Torin takes charge of both. Neither piece has a glyph, however, and the second piece teleports away.

After an effort, the party recovers the second segment. After storing both segments in a safe place, the party settles down while Kayn looks into a method for joining the segments. Learning how to make the glyphs required to assemble the *Rod* is as difficult as researching a 6th level spell, so after 12 weeks of work and an expenditure of 3,600 gp, Kayn is ready to see if the effort succeeded (the DM got the time and cost figures from Chapter 7 of the *DMG*). Kayn's Intelligence is 18, giving him an 85% chance to suc-

ceed. The roll is successful, and Kayn learns not only how to write the glyphs, but also how to write the reversed glyph needed to disassemble the *Rod* and how to make the necessary pigment and brushes.

Getting hair for the brushes requires another series of improbable adventures, but the party gets the hair. After hiring an alchemist to prepare the pigment, and an artist to make several brushes, Kayn gets ready to inscribe glyphs on the two segments. He is in no hurry, and spends seven hours on each glyph. Kayn is 10th level, and has no artistic skills, so his chance to complete each glyph is 80%. The DM rolls each chance secretly, and both succeed.

When Torin wields the joined segments, he gains the minor power from each segment (*cure light wounds* and *slow*), and the major power of *fly*. Because the two segments are resonant, Torin gets the improved flight power. Torin's distaste for disorder grows, however, and the next time the party divides treasure he cannot agree to roll dice to see who gets first choice. Instead he insists the spoils be divided according to a group vote.

Later, the party locates parts 3 and 4, already joined. When Kayn attaches the two segments to the portion the PCs already have, the flight power disappears. The major power of *control winds* replaces it (because the added section was nonresonant). The resulting unit, however, also has four minor powers (*cure light wounds*, *slow*, *haste*, and *gust of wind*). Torin still finds himself compulsively neat and opposed random decision making. He is also unable to break a law and unable to tell a lie. Torin becomes less susceptible to charms and similar mental attacks, but his newfound preoccupation with law strips him of his special paladin abilities. Still, he refuses to part with the *Rod*.

NEW MAGICAL ITEMS

Ointment of Protection from Fungi: This ointment is an original creation of the drow alchemist Istovahn (see **Book I**, page 58). Usually kept in sealed jars, this liquid is to be applied externally. The application makes its user invulnerable to most fungi, including the special attacks of violet fungi and phycomids. A creature coated in the ointment is also protected from the rhizomes of gas spores.

XP Value: 1,000

GP Value: 5,000

Vaati Blade: During the war against chaos, the vaati equipped their greatest heroes with enchanted blades that functioned as +4 weapons on the Prime Material Plane and +3 weapons anywhere else in the multiverse.

Since the war, most of the blades have been lost or destroyed, but a few remain. All vaati blades are Lawful Neutral. A vaati blade with an Intelligence score has a special purpose to defeat chaos and grants its wielder a +2 bonus to all saving throws against attacks launched by chaotic creatures and reduces the damage from such attacks by -2 hit points per die (minimum one point per die).

XP Value: 2,000

GP Value: 10,000
15,000

Special: 3,000

Wand of Vapors: These devices are typically fashioned from materials such as ivory, alabaster, or smoky quartz. Only wizards can use the wand. The wand can create the following wizard spell effects:

- *Wall of fog:* The effect fills eight 10-foot cubes. The range is 30 yards and the duration is 2d4+6 rounds. The effect drains one charge and works just like the 1st-level spell.
- *Stinking cloud:* The effect fills a 20-foot cube up to 30 yards away. It lasts 6 rounds. The effect drains two charges and works just like the 2nd-level spell.
- *Cloudkill:* The effect creates a cloud of deadly vapor 40 feet long, 20 feet high, and 20 feet wide up to 10 yards away. It lasts 6 rounds, drains 3 charges, and works just like the 5th level spell.

XP Value: 4,500

GP Value: 25,000

Wind Chariot: The vaati created these powerful conveyances for rapid transport; they are virtually unknown outside the Vale of Aaqa. When deactivated, a *wind chariot* looks like a flat silver disc one foot across and 2 inches thick. When a character steps on the disc and speaks the proper command word, the disc transforms into a white cloud about 8 feet across. When a second command word is spoken, the cloud spins, forming a whirlwind 40 feet high. The user and up to 10 man-sized companions can ride the whirlwind.

The whirlwind moves at a minimum speed of 9, but its top speed is 36 (maneuverability B); the user chooses the exact movement rate. The whirlwind causes no damage, but it negates all wind and gas effects, magical or natural, within 30 feet of the user. The character and his passengers can pass through gale force winds, *cloudkill* spells, or the winds of Pandemonium without ill effects. Creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air can enter the radius only with the user's permission, and cannot attack the user or his companions unless they attack first.

The user can take no other actions while controlling the chariot, but a successful attack on him does not affect the chariot.

A third command word allows the user to instruct the chariot to travel alone to any destination named, or to wait at a specified location within 300 yards of the caster and come when called for. The chariot assumes its cloud form when waiting. The chariot is immune to all attacks while in cloud or whirlwind form. In disc form, it makes item saving throws as metal, with a +4 bonus.

Five percent of all *wind chariots* can create an *Otiluke's resilient sphere* effect around the user and his passengers. The sphere's diameter can be from 5 to 15 feet at the user's option.

XP Value: —

GP Value: 100,000+

SIDE TREKS

Six short adventures are presented here to help fill the gaps between the major episodes in the quest for the *Rod* and help keep the story moving. They also provide details for handling a few things that will inevitably arise during play, such as spyder-fiends arriving through a *chaos gate* and the *Rod* breaking and scattering.

Chaos Gates

If the Queen of Chaos detects the *Rod* being used (see page 11), she uses her *chaos gate* power to dispatch a group of spyder-fiends to the scene. The gate opens a maximum of 10d4 yards from the character who was using the *Rod* when the queen noticed. For each segment the party has recovered beyond the first, subtract 1d4 from the number of dice rolled. For example, if the party has recovered three segments of the *Rod*, the gate opens 8d4 yards from the character. If the gate is close enough for the party to see, read or paraphrase the following:

The mournful howl of a wolf makes your hackles rise. What could be disturbing the creature? It seems to be close by. A look around reveals no wolf, but you at once notice a strange shimmer in the air. The area glows brightly, and the surface behind it melts away to show a surreal landscape of alabaster spires and trees as white as new sheets. A sky the color of a bloated fish's white belly hangs overhead. Charging at you from the trees is a troupe of wolf-headed creatures with spider bodies. You realize with a start that the monsters are after you.

The howling wolf is one of Arquestan's hounds of law, shadowing the party. If a wolf is not appropriate for the terrain the party is in, substitute any other normal animal and adjust the creature's statistics accordingly. If the hound of law description in **Book IV** does not contain statistics for the animal you choose, pick something similar from the list.

If there are lawful good characters in the party, the hound helps them fight off the queen's agents. When the encounter is over, the hound rushes to tell Arquestan about the attack.

The creatures in the gateway are spyder-fiends rushing to attack. Statistics for the spyder-fiends and the hound of law are found below. Refer to the table below to determine the number and kind of the ambushers.

If the party doesn't see the gate opening, the spyder-fiends fan out and locate the *Rod* bearer. When they find their target they surround the party, using any cover available in their area and their invisibility powers (if any) to remain out of sight until ready to attack.

Die Roll* Spyder-fiends

2-4	1d4+1 kakkuu
5-7	1 spithriku and 1d4+2 kakkuu
8-10	1 phisarazu and 1d4+3 kakkuu
11	1 lycosidilith, 2 phisarazu, and 1d4+2 kakkuu
12	1d6+3 spithriku
13	1 lycosidilith and 1d6+1 spithriku
14	2 lycosidiliths and 1d4 phisarazu
15	1 raklupis, 2 phisarazu, and 1d8+2 kakkuu
16	1d6+3 phisarazu
17	1 raklupis and 1d6+2 phisarazu

* roll 1d10 and add the number of *Rod* segments the *Rod* bearer and his party has. Anytime the gate opens within 10 yards of the party, the queen reaches through the gate herself with one of her tentacles (see below for details).

The Queen of Chaos's *chaos gate* power creates a shimmering gateway anywhere within 25 feet of her person; the gateway can be from 5 to 15 feet in diameter and can rest against a surface or hang in the air in any orientation the queen desires. The gateway remains for one round.

The gateway marks one end of a passage made from warped reality. The other end can be anywhere on the Steaming Fen or the Prime Material Plane and appears as an identical gateway. A creature stepping into one gateway instantly steps out the other. Travel is possible in both directions, and two or more creatures can travel in both directions simultaneously. Anyone but the queen, a tanar'ri, or a creature native to the plane of Limbo stepping through the passage has a 25% chance to age 1d10 years.

Objects and magical effects cannot travel through the passage unless carried by creatures.

The gateway is all but invisible in anything except bright light (*sunlight*, *continual light*, or a *light spell*). Under normal circumstances, a creature looking into the gateway sees nothing but a disturbance in the air.

The gateway's location depends on the current location of the character who was using the *Rod* when the queen detected it, not that of whoever happens to have the *Rod* at the time the gateway opens. The fiends coming through the gateway instinctively



Side Treks

claws loose (which requires an opposed Strength check) or grab the fiend or the *Rod* bearer so that their combined weight exceeds what the fiend can teleport. The fiends' effective Strength scores and teleport capacities are listed below:

Fiend	Strength	Teleport**
kakkuu*	—	250 lbs.
spithriku*	—	250 lbs.
phisarazu	18/01	250 lbs.
lycosidilith	18/00	250 lbs.
raklupis	20	550 lbs.

* The fiend has no grasping appendages and cannot teleport away with a character in its grasp.

** In addition to the fiend's own weight.

If a fiend teleports away with a character, they go directly to the Queen of Chaos's throne room (see the **Chaos Reigns** adventure in this book). Roll to see if the teleport fails (even *teleport without error* has a chance to malfunction if the caster uses it to move between planes), but assume the fiends have "studied carefully" the throne room. If the fiend and its prisoner teleport low, both are killed, and the queen simply digs out the segment and keeps it. The character can be recovered only by a *wish* or if his comrades arrange to recover the corpse. If the fiend successfully teleports, go to the **Chaos Reigns** adventure. If the fiend teleports high, roll falling damage before going to the **Chaos Reigns** adventure.

The Queen's Tactics

If the queen reaches through the gate herself, the gate remains open several rounds instead of the normal one round. The queen extends one tentacle through the gate and reaches for the *Rod* bearer (use the statistics from the **Chaos Reigns** adventure). If the queen grabs the *Rod* bearer, she pulls the character through the gate on the next round, and the gate closes the round after that. No feat of strength can save the character, but the tentacle can be severed. If the queen cannot grab the *Rod* bearer within 1d4+1 rounds, she withdraws the tentacle, and the gate closes one round later.

Hound of Law: AC -6 or (0 in dog form); MV Fl 18 (A) (15 in dog form); HD 8+2; hp 41; THAC0 13; #AT 0 (1 in dog form); Dmg nil (2d4+2 in dog form); SA -5 to opponents' surprise rolls, become astral, ethereal, or invisible at will, tracking, +1 attack roll bonus vs. chaotic creatures; SD +1 to own surprise rolls, detect

invisible creatures 50% of the time, chaotic creatures suffer -1 attack penalty and a -1 penalty to each die of damage, spell immunity; MR 30%; SZ T (1' tall) (size M in dog form); ML fearless (19); Int average (10); AL LN; XP 3,000; See **Book IV**, page 3.

Notes: Base tracking score is 16; ignores vision-based penalties. Can follow a creature that has teleported if it succeeds with a tracking roll at a -2 penalty (the only other penalties that apply are one from the trail's age).

Immune to all spells except *protection from evil*, *magic missile*, and *maze*.

Kakkuu (Tanar'ri, Spyder-Fiend, Kakkuu): AC 2; MV 18, Wb 15, Cl 9; HD 4; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA spell-like abilities at 4th level, poison, webs; SD webs, immunities, concealment; SW susceptible to holy water; MR 15%; SZ M (5' long); ML steady (11); Int semi (3); AL CE; XP 5,000 each; See **Book IV**, page 8.

Notes: Spell-like abilities: at will—*darkness* 15' radius, *teleport without error*; always active—*infravision* (60-foot range).

Poison has an onset time of 1d4 rounds. If the opponent fails a save vs. poison he falls into a stupor and cannot move, think, or act. The opponent can attempt a Constitution check every 2d4 hours to recover. Even if the save succeeds, the opponent suffers a -2 penalty to Dexterity for 2d4 rounds.

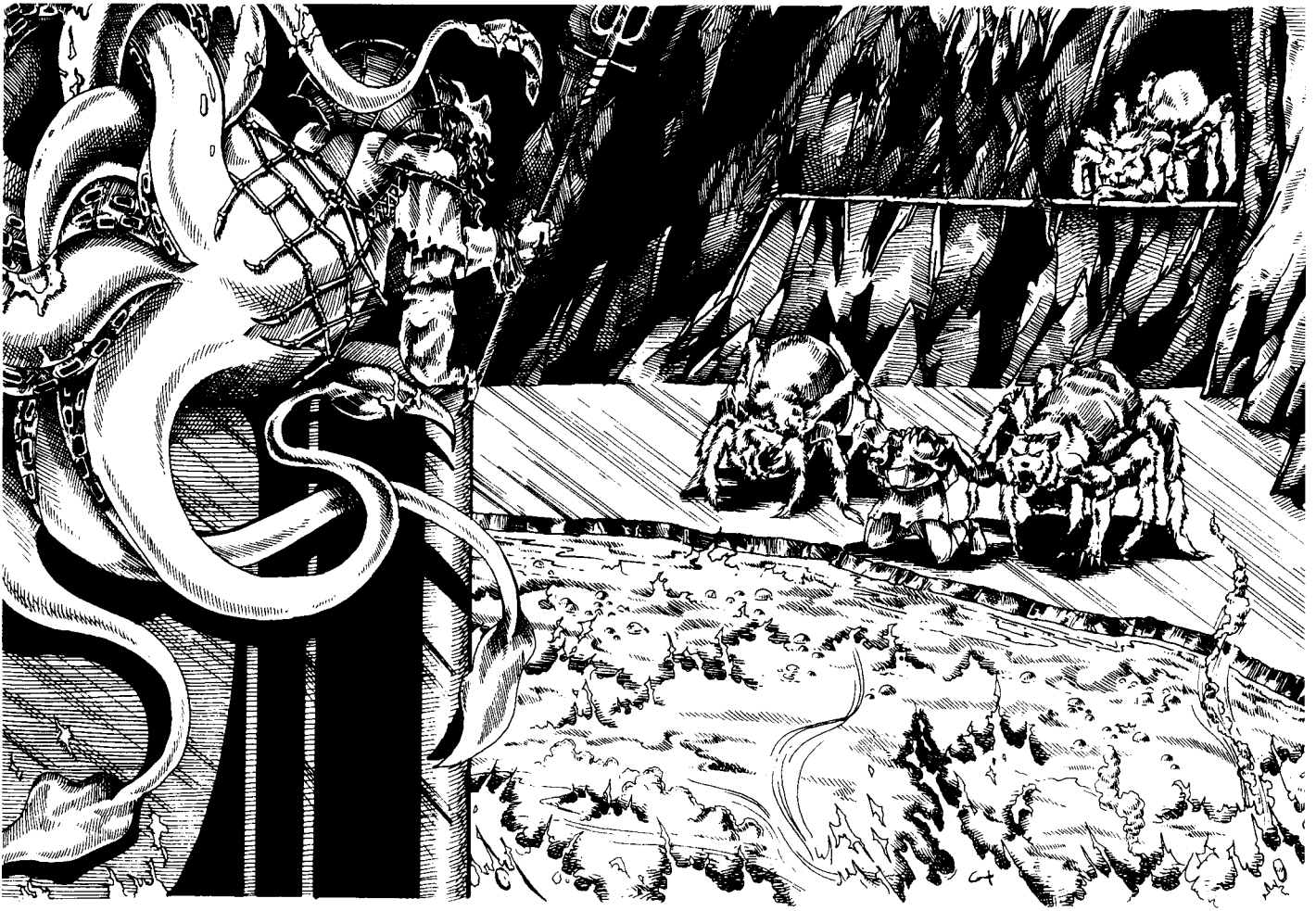
Web abilities: at will—shoot web up to 30 yards to provide a strand for movement or to prevent a fall, create a sticky glob that can be swung in a line 5 to 25 feet long and sticks to the first creature that fails a save vs. breath weapon, wrap helpless or unconscious creatures. Can use a web ability while making a physical attack, but not while using a spell-like ability.

Immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and webs. Half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas.

Concealment makes a kakkuu 80% undetectable when motionless and in cover.

Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage.

Lycosidilith (Tanar'ri, Spyder-Fiend, Lycosidilith): AC -4; MV 12 or 18, Wb 15, Cl 9; HD 10+6; hp 51; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg: 2d4/1d6+6/1d6+6 (bite/short sword + Strength bonus/short sword + Strength bonus); SA spell-like abilities at 10th level, poison, gating, webs; SD webs, harmed only by +2 or better weapons, immunities, invisibility detection (50-foot radius); SW suffer full damage from iron weapons and half damage from silver weapons; MR 60%; SZ M



(5' 6" tall) or L (8' long); ML champion (15); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 22,000; See **Book IV**, page 10.

Notes: Spell like abilities: at will—*alter self*, *darkness 15' radius*, *teleport without error*, *cause fear* (in a single creature by touch) *invisibility*, *telekinesis*; three times a day—*forget*, *mirror image*, *polymorph self*, always active—*infravision* (90-foot range).

Poison has an onset time of 1d3 rounds. If the opponent fails a save vs. poison he falls into a stupor and cannot move, think, or act. The opponent can attempt a Constitution check every 2d6 hours to recover. Even if the save succeeds, the opponent develops a festering sore after 2d8 hours and loses one hit point and one additional hit point each day until he receives a *neutralize poison* spell. The opponent also suffers a -3 penalty to Dexterity for 2d6 rounds.

Gate ability works three times a day with a 60% chance of success, it summons 2d10 kakkuu, 1d8 spithriku, 1d4 phisarazu, or 1 lycosidilith.

Web abilities: at will—shoot web up to 30 yards to provide a strand to move along or to prevent a fall, create a sticky glob that can be swung in a line 5 to 25 feet long and stick to the first creature that fails a save vs. breath weapon, wrap helpless or unconscious creatures; *entangle* effect in a 10'x50'x20' cone (range 0), fire

a lightweight ball that extends the range of the *fear* ability to 30 yards; every two rounds—*glitterdust* effect (range 40 yards); every three rounds—*web* effect (range 50 yards). All webs have only a 50% chance to burn if attacked with fire. Can use a web ability while attacking physically but not while using a spell-like ability.

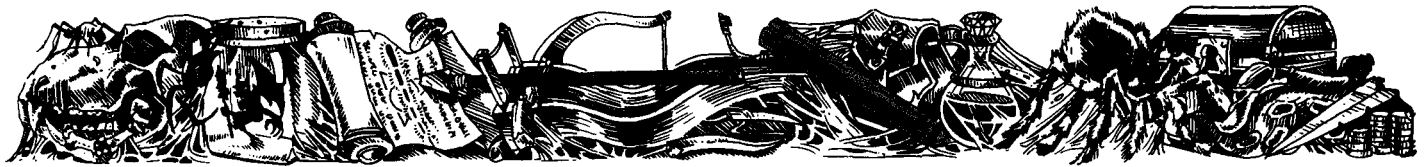
Immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and webs. Half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas.

Invisibility detection is always active and is nonmagical, cannot be foiled by *nondetection* spells and effects that block divination magic.

Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage.

Phisarazu (Tanar'ri, Spyder-Fiend, Phisarazu): AC -3; MV 18, Wb 15, Cl 9; HD 9+1; hp 46; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/1d8/1d8 (bite/sword/sword); SA spell-like abilities at 9th level, poison, webs, hiding; SD webs, harmed only by +1 or better weapons, immunities, invisibility detection (40-foot radius); SW suffer full damage from iron or silver weapons, susceptible to holy water; MR 50%; SZ M (7 1/2' long); ML champion (16); Int very (12); AL CE; XP 18,000; See **Book IV**, page 10.

Notes: Spell-like abilities: at will—*alter self*, *darkness 15' radius*, *invisibility*, *teleport without error*, *cause fear*



Side Treks

(in a single creature by touch); three times a day—*forget*, *mirror image*, *telekinesis*; always active—*infravision* (90-foot range).

Poison has an onset time of 1d3 rounds. If the opponent fails a save vs. poison he falls into a stupor and cannot move, think, or act. The victim can attempt a Constitution check every 2d6 hours to recover. Even if the save succeeds, the victim develops a festering sore after 2d8 hours and loses one hit point and one additional hit point each day until he receives a *neutralize poison* spell. The opponent suffers a -3 penalty to Dexterity for 2d6 rounds.

Web abilities: at will—shoot web up to 30 yards to provide a strand for movement or to prevent a fall, create a sticky glob that can be swung in a line 5 to 25 feet long and sticks to the first creature that fails a save vs. breath weapon, wrap helpless or unconscious creatures, fire a lightweight ball that extends the range of the *fear* ability to 30 yards; every two rounds, *entangle* effect in a 10'x30'x20' cone (range 0), or a *glitterdust* effect with a range of 30 yards. Can use a web ability while attacking physically but not while using a spell-like ability.

Immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and webs. Half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas.

Invisibility detection is always active and is nonmagical; cannot be foiled by *nondetection* spells and effects that block divination magic.

Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage.

Raklupis (Tanar'ri, Spyder-Fiend, Raklupis): AC -6; MV 12 or 18, Wb 15, Cl 9; HD 12+8; hp 68; THAC0 7; #AT 3; Dmg 2d10/1d8+8/1d8+8 (bite/long sword and Strength bonus/long sword and Strength bonus); SA spell-like abilities at 12th level, poison, webs; SD webs, affected only by +2 or better weapons, immunities, invisibility detection (60-foot radius); SW suffer full damage from iron weapons and half damage from silver weapons; MR 70%; SZ L (10' long); ML fanatic (18); Int genius (18); AL CE; XP 25,000; See **Book IV**, page 12.

Notes: Spell-like abilities: at will—*alter self*, *darkness* 15' radius, *teleport without error*, *cause fear* (in a single creature by touch) *invisibility*, *telekinesis*; three times a day—*forget*, *mass charm* (24 hit dice within 30 feet) *mirror image*, *shape change*, always active—*infravision* (120-foot range).

Poison has an immediate onset time. If the opponent fails a save vs. poison he falls into a stupor and cannot move, think, or act. The opponent can attempt a Constitution check every 2d6 hours to recover, but the venom inflicts an extra point of damage every hour. Even if the

save succeeds, the opponent suffers a -3 penalty to Dexterity for 2d8 rounds. The victim also develops a festering sore and immediately loses one hit point and an additional hit point each hour. The victim cannot benefit from healing spells until the poison is neutralized.

Web abilities: at will—shoot web up to 30 yards to provide a strand for movement or to prevent a fall, create a sticky glob that can be swung in a line 5 to 25 feet long and sticks to the first creature that fails a save vs. breath weapon, wrap helpless or unconscious creatures; *entangle* effect in a 10'x50'x20' cone (range 0), fire a lightweight ball that extends the range of the *fear* ability to 30 yards, *glitterdust* effect (range 60 yards), *web* effect (range 50 yards); three times a day create a waterproof globe. (When filled with liquid, a globe can be thrown 10 yards; when filled with venom, a globe bursts when thrown, filling an area 15' in diameter with a poisonous mist. Creatures within the mist must save vs. poison or become blinded and mute for 3d4 turns and suffer 3d6 points of damage. If the save succeeds, the victim still suffers 2d6 points of damage and has a -2 penalty on all missile attacks and a 20% chance of spell failure for 1d4 rounds.) All webs have only a 25% chance to burn if attacked with fire. Can use a web ability while attacking physically but not while using a spell-like ability.

Immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and webs. Half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas.

Invisibility detection is always active and is nonmagical; cannot be foiled by *nondetection* spells and effects that block divination magic.

Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 damage.

Spithriku (Tanar'ri, Spyder-Fiend, Spithriku) (2): AC 0; MV 18, Wb 15, Cl 9; HD 7+1; hp 36 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 (bite); SA spell-like abilities at 7th level, poison, webs, hiding; SD webs, harmed only by +1 or better weapons, immunities, invisibility detection (30-foot radius); SW suffer full damage from iron or silver weapons; MR 35%; SZ M (6' long); ML elite (14); Int average (10); AL CE; XP 12,000 each; See **Book IV**, page 8.

Notes: Spell-like abilities: at will—*darkness* 15' radius, *teleport without error*, *cause fear* (in a single creature by touch); three times a day—*telekinesis*; always active—*infravision* (90-foot range).

Poison has an onset time of 1d4 rounds. If the opponent fails a save vs. poison he falls into a stupor and cannot move, think, or act. The victim can attempt a Constitution check every 2d4 hours to recover. Even if the save succeeds, the victim suffers a -2 penalty to Dexterity for 2d4 rounds.



Side Treks

Web abilities: at will—shoot web up to 30 yards to provide a strand for movement or to prevent a fall, create a sticky glob that can be swung in a line 5 to 25 feet long and sticks to the first creature that fails a save vs. breath weapon, wrap helpless or unconscious creatures; every three rounds, *entangle* effect in a 10'x30'x20' cone (range 0), fire a lightweight ball that extends the range of the *fear* ability to 30 yards. Can use a web ability while attacking physically but not while using a spell-like ability.

80% undetectable when motionless and in cover.

Immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and webs. Half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas.

Invisibility detection is always active and is nonmagical; cannot be foiled by *nondetection* spells and effects that block divination magic.

Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage.

Chaos Reigns

Characters who enter a *chaos gate* or get dragged off by a spyder-fiend wind up in the queen's throne room. The throne room is a vast cavern nearly 200 feet wide and somewhat longer. Its ceiling is 500 feet high in some places. Map E3 shows the area.

From her throne, which is a rock rising from a lake of fire, the queen monitors the Steaming Fen and conducts her never-ending search for the *Rod of Seven Parts*.

When she is not actively using her *chaos gates* to send her spyder-fiends to the Prime Material Plane, a continuous stream of tanar'ri, yugoloths, and other planar creatures shuffles and slithers through the chamber while the queen manages her affairs. As the ruler of one of the infinite layers of the Abyss, the queen cannot give all her time and energy to the search for the *Rod*.

As huge as it is, the throne room is only one small part of a gigantic castle carved from a mountain that would dwarf any peak on the Prime Material plane. The castle has rooms and passages that reach down into the briny, foul waters of the Steaming Fen's ocean and high into the air. A character lost in its passages could wander for a lifetime and not find his way out. Fortunately, this adventure concerns itself only with the throne room.

The features of the throne room are as follows:

1. Lake of Flame

This pool of brackish salt water is forever covered with a flaming sheet of oil that rises up from its depths. The oxygen-starved flames produce a pall of

choking smoke that reduce Dexterity and Constitution scores by -2 each unless the victim is immune to poison or does not need to breathe. Creatures swimming in the lake suffer no damage from the flames during the first round of contact, but the flames inflict 1d6 points of damage each round thereafter unless the creature is immune to nonmagical fire. Any dip into the lake leaves the swimmer coated with a disgusting mix of oil, tar, and lumpy ash.

The water is nearly 1,000 feet deep, with side vents that connect it to stygian depths of the ocean outside.

2. Throne

The "throne" is an irregular pillar of obsidian polished to a mirror shine by hundreds of slaves. The flat top rises 20 feet above the flames and is paved in 3 inches of pure silver.

The two smaller areas on the pillar's side are ledges that are only 5 feet above the lake of flame. The purple bars show where the queen prefers to create her *chaos gates*. The spyder-fiends she plans to send gather beneath the throne and the queen creates a gate that is 5, 10, or 15 feet wide, at the positions shown on the map. The gate's size depends on how many fiends the queen wishes to send.

If a character steps through a gate at the place where it opens of the Prime Material Plane, he instantly winds up here, but only if there is space for him. Non-fiends find travel through the gates disorienting, and are momentarily stunned when they step through. The character can neither attack the queen nor get out of the way so another character can step through the gate. Consequently, only one character can step through a 5-foot gate, two through a 10-foot gate, and three through a 15-foot gate. Additional characters remain at the other end. Note that a gate remains open only one round, so no additional characters can follow the hapless travelers through the gate.

A visitor stepping through a gate finds himself with his back to the lake of flame and facing a wall of smooth, uncracked obsidian 15 feet high. The queen looms above. She is delighted to have visitors who have a part in the quest for the *Rod*, and her first action is to seize them in her tentacles. She can sense the *Rod*, and knows immediately upon touching a character if he carries part of the *Rod* or not. If an opponent doesn't have the *Rod*, the queen uses her *suggestion* power to induce the character to retrieve it for her by whatever means the character can manage. If the *suggestion* works (and the queen instinctively



Side Treks

knows whether it does), the queen sends the character back to his comrades. If it fails, she tries again until the *suggestion* works. If a visitor proves too troublesome, the queen grabs the offender with a tentacle and stuffs him under her body, where she can tear at him with her beak. If the queen feels at all endangered, she uses her destructive spells and her trident. If that doesn't cow the enemy, she summons two raklupises, who appear the next round. One fiend attacks the queen's opponents while the other gates in reinforcements. The attacking raklupis uses its *entangle* and *mass charm* abilities to help subdue the troublemakers.

If the queen finds that a visitor has part of the *Rod*, she uses *domination* to force the character to give it up. If the character has at least three segments joined together, he cannot be compelled to give them up, and the queen attacks to kill instead.

In most cases, however, the queen does not seek to slay the PCs. Instead, she sends them back to their comrades, where they can rejoin the hunt for the *Rod*, and perhaps find more pieces for her. The queen will even send back characters she hasn't enspelled if one of her spyder-fiends can successfully use *forget* on the others. If the queen captures parts of the *Rod*, she sends the largest piece back with the charmed character so he can use it to locate the next bit of the *Rod*. (As a goddess of chaos, she can separate parts of the *Rod* so long as it has not been fully assembled.) Parts that the queen separates lose their glyphs (see page 9).

Characters the queen sends back to the Prime Material Plane arrive via a *chaos gate*. If the character is under the influence of one of the queen's *suggestion* spells, he radiates both a faint trace of evil and a strong aura of enchantment/charm magic. The character will do all he can to secure a piece of the *Rod* and present to the queen during the next month. (The DM must be prepared to make sure the character acts appropriately if the player is unwilling to accept the role.) If the character fails to accomplish the feat, the suggestion fades and the character is unharmed. Meanwhile, the character is secretly convinced that getting the *Rod* for the queen is the best possible thing to do. He won't reveal his compulsion to anyone, however, as he suspects that each of his comrades is secretly a rival for the queen's favor. It might be best to explain this to the player in private once the character fails the saving throw.

No character who returns from the throne room has any clear recollection of exactly what happened. The amnesia is either a side effect of the *suggestion*, or a result of a *forget* spell.

3. Audience Area

Official visitors, whether supplicant, messenger, diplomat, or prisoner, are brought here to stand before the queen. The floor is covered with a smooth sheet of seamless silver, just as the throne is. In times of war many of the queen's subjects gather here to view their queen and receive her orders.

4. Wall of Gold

A huge slab of gold, sixty feet square, is attached to this wall. The queen can command Miska's image to appear in its polished surface. Otherwise, the slab functions as a normal *crystal ball*. When Miska communes with the queen (see **Book IV**), the queen usually invokes his image.

5. Ramps

These sloping passages lead to distant parts of the castle. Characters who flee the throne room via one of the ramps quickly lose their way in the tangled passages that lie beyond them. No passage in the castle leads directly to an exit or any other place of importance; they all meander randomly. Large groups of spyder-fiends usually make their entrances along one of the ramps, but that's just for show. They teleport to the area first. The queen's non-tanar'ri minions and guests usually require spyder-fiend guides to show them the route to the throne room.

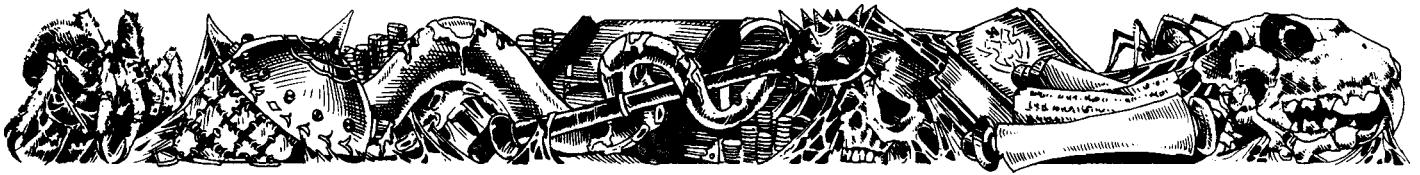
Characters lost in the castle's passages meet random groups of spyder-fiends every hour. Use the table from the **Chaos Gates** adventure, and roll 1d10+3.

6. Balcony

This large area is just one of a dozen similar areas that provide additional space for visitors. This one is 100 feet above area 3. Others, all smaller than this one, dot the walls all round the chamber, though the other balconies are higher. If Miska ever wins his freedom, he appears at the highest balcony, and shows himself to his troops.

7. Treasure Room

The queen keeps just a small portion of the treasures she has looted during her wars and raids here. The floor is heaped with masses of unsorted coins, gems, jewels, and magical items. There more than a



Side Treks

million coins heaped in drifts up to 8 feet high. A party working for a turn just grabbing as much treasure as they could might gather the following: 3,000 cp, 2,500 sp, 2,250 gp, 750 pp, 6 base 50 gp gems and a miscellaneous magical item of the DM's choice. A more careful party might gather twice the listed amount of any single type of coin in the same time (for example, 1,500 pp) or two magical items. A single character working for one round might gather about five percent of what a party could in a turn.

The pool of water is about a 1,000 feet deep and connects to the lake of flame and to the ocean. Characters trying to search might find a sea monster, but they won't find any treasure.

The Queen of Chaos: AC -5; MV 6, Sw 9, Jet 24; HD 31; hp 140; THAC0 5; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d6+16 (tentacle/tentacle/trident +5 and Strength bonus); SA spell-like abilities at 20th level, beak, constriction, breath weapon; SD harmed only by +3 or better weapons, immunities, regeneration; MR 70%; SZ G (about 25' tall); ML fearless (19); Int supragenius (20); AL CE; XP 38,000. See **Book IV**, page 6.

Notes: Can throw trident as a missile weapon (range 10/20/30). When she throws the trident, she can recover it immediately by pulling the rope attached to it. The rope is armor class -5, and it can sustain 50 points of damage before being severed. It saves as hard metal, and can only be harmed by magical attacks and slashing weapons of +1 or better enchantment. The rope is 75% resistant to magical fire.

Tentacles can conduct melee with opponents up to 60 feet away, and can grab opponents of up to size large. When the queen is grabbing, the opponent's effective armor class is 10, with adjustments for magic and Dexterity. The queen, however, suffers a -4 attack penalty and inflicts no damage if she hits. If the queen grabs a foe, she lifts the opponent off his feet and can stuff him under her body on the following round, freeing the grasping tentacle for further attacks.

Opponents trapped under the queen's body are wrapped in one of the queen's other tentacles and constricted for 3d6 points of damage each round. Each of the queen's shorter tentacles can hold one opponent of size large or smaller; only one tentacle can constrict a single opponent. Beak can bite one creature trapped in the tentacles for 7d4 points of damage.

Tentacles cannot be broken with a feat of Strength. The only way to escape is to sever the tentacle with an attack from a slashing weapon of +3 or better enchantment or with tightly directed magical attacks such as

magic missile or the ray version of *Ottiluke's freezing sphere*. The tentacles are armor class -7 and each requires 30 points of damage to sever. The tentacles are resilient; damage from any physical attack is reduced by -5 per attack, to a minimum of 0. Creatures in a tentacle's grasp or trapped under the queen's body suffer a -3 penalty to attack and initiative rolls.

Damage to the tentacles does not harm the queen. Severing a tentacle allows a creature in the tentacle's grasp to wiggle free of the queen's body, but the tentacle does not let go. It continues to constrict for 2d6 points of damage each round until removed with a successful open doors roll. A severed tentacle becomes a little shorter, but is not otherwise harmed and can continue attacking.

Spell-like abilities as a 20th level caster—*shape change* into human or merman form, *mirror image*, *slow*, *chaos*, *magic missile*, *tongues*, *clairvoyance*, *telekinesis*, and *ventriloquism* (at will); *suggestion* with a maximum duration of one month, *polymorph other*, *death fog*, *shocking grasp*, *eyebite*, and *taunt* (six times a day); *chain lightning*, *domination*, *mass charm*, and *polymorph any object* (three times a day); and *symbols of discord*, *fear*, *hopelessness*, and *pain* (each once a day). Can telepathically communicate with any chaotic creature that is at least semi-intelligent.

Once per hour, can expel a cloud of noxious smoke (or ink when underwater). The cloud has one of the following effects as the queen chooses: *darkness 15' radius*, *stinking cloud*, or *solid fog*. Cloud effects function at 30th level. The *darkness* effect cannot be countered with light, but can be dispersed by a strong breeze or water current. The queen is immune to her own cloud effects.

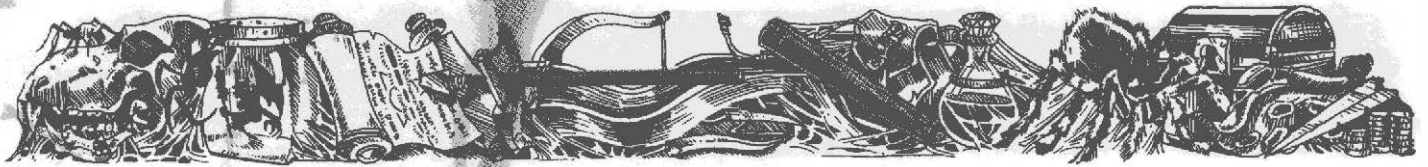
Three times an hour, can create a *chaos gate*.

Immune to all forms of acid, electricity, and poison. Regenerates one hit point a turn. and regrow severed tentacles in 4d12 hours. Immune to 1st- and 2nd-level illusion/phantasm spells.

Special Equipment: giant trident+5.

Good Samaritan

Run this encounter shortly after the party has its first encounter with spyder-fiends that arrive through a *chaos gate*. They get a visit from Chodei-rin Ake, a ki-rin who happens to keep watch over the area where the party is traveling. Ake (pronounced Ah-KAY) is concerned about the characters and their new plaything (the *Rod*). Note that Chodei-rin (Coh-DAY-ee-rin) is his family name; his first name is Ake. He wants to be certain the characters know what they are



Side Treks

dealing with and that they use the *Rod* responsibly.

The player text that follows assumes the PCs are traveling overland and have either stopped to camp for the night. If the party's situation is different, adjust accordingly.

The day's exertions have left you feeling worn out as you slap the trail dust from your clothes and begin thinking about a little food and sleep.

Your search for a sheltered spot stops abruptly when you spot an exquisite pavilion of brilliant silks flapping in the breeze. You're sure the huge tent was not there before. There doesn't seem to be anyone in sight.

Ake uses his ability to create soft goods to make the tent. He is inside, using *invisibility* and *nondetection*. If the PCs don't attack or flee, he uses his ability to create food and beverages for the party and a little something for their mounts. If the PCs approach the tent, they can smell the meal, which is splendid, from several paces away. A peek inside reveals:

The ground under the tent is covered with a pristine, straw mat. A low, lacquered table with one place setting and floor pillow for each member of your party stands on the mat. An extra place setting with a cushion almost 6 feet square lies at the head of the table. Steaming pots that fill the air with mouth-watering smells sit huddled on a charcoal fire. You still can't see anyone, but the table speaks.

"My master, Chodei-rin Ake, welcomes you, brave adventurers, to his humble tent. Please remove your shoes and enter. Be easy, my master protects you."

The talking table is the result of a *magic mouth* spell Ake has cast. If the party members seat themselves at the table, Ake becomes visible and kneels down at the head of the table. If they hesitate, he moves behind the party (via the Astral Plane), and appears, with stamping hooves. He compliments the party on their caution and assures them he is no spyder-fiend. If the party still balks he launches directly into his lecture.

As Ake prefers to eat first and talk business later, he has no desire to discuss serious matters over a meal. He uses his *unseen servant* to serve the food, and happily talks about art, philosophy, and cuisine. When Ake is ready to discuss business he mentions the following:

- A horde of spyder-fiends attacked the last town the party passed through. They tore the place apart, board by board, and killed a lot of people.

- Could it be possible that the characters do not know they are carrying what is one of the greatest artifacts of Law ever created? And that the legions of Chaos will do just about anything to wrest it from them?

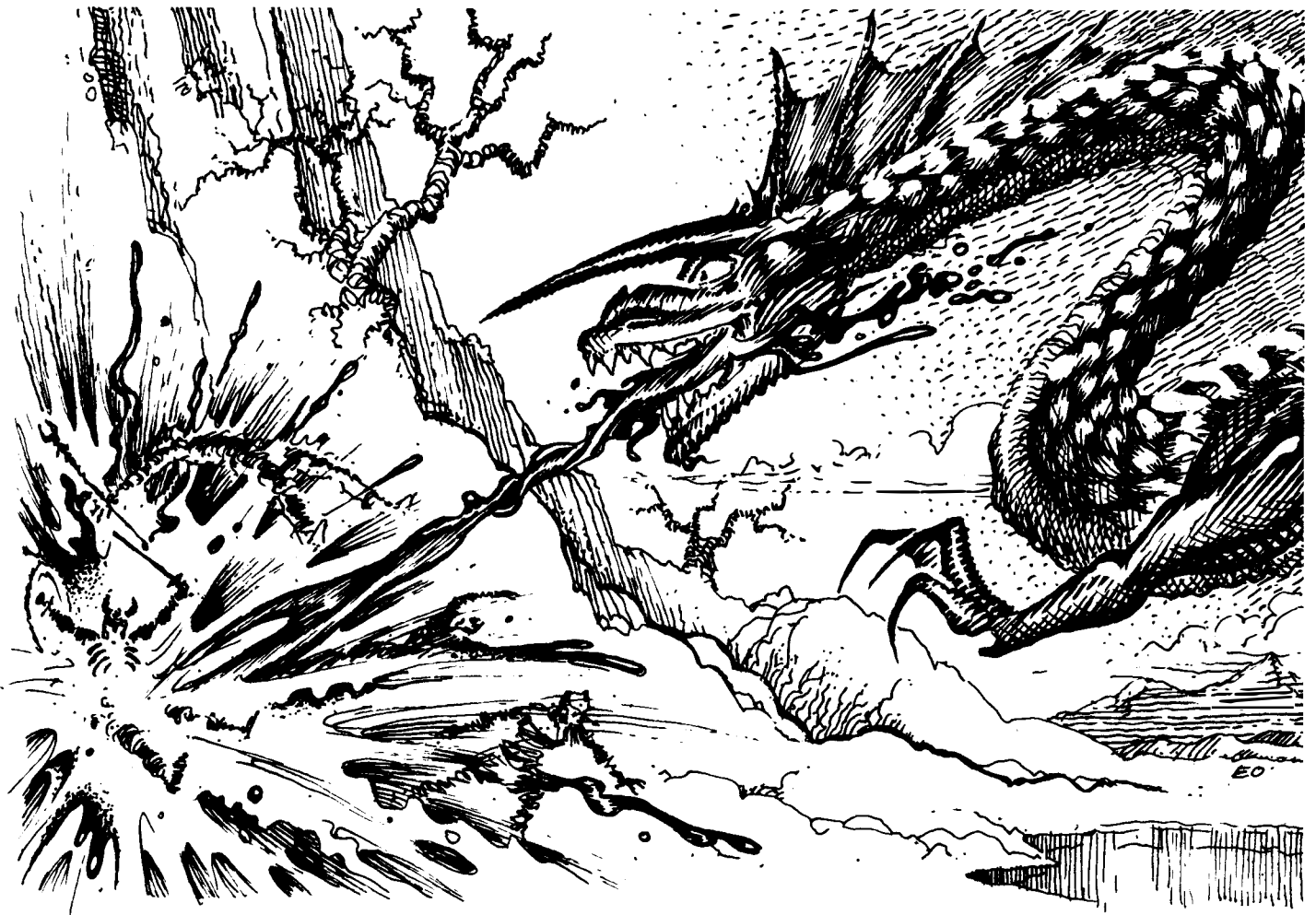
Ake can give the party the *Rod's* basic history, and any other information the DM wishes to divulge about it. Ake knows Arquestan by reputation, and is familiar with several other vaati.

- Ake wants to know what the party intends to do with the *Rod*. No matter what their plans, he warns them that their actions can cause great harm to others.

If the party even hints that they might turn over the *Rod* to the Queen of Chaos, Ake exits to the Astral Plane and casts *improved invisibility* on himself (his *nondetection* spell is still running). He returns to cast a double-strength *chain lightning* spell on the PCs. He gives them one chance to surrender, then hits them with a double-strength *ice storm*. If the battle lasts more than three rounds, a hound of law that has been shadowing the PCs joins the fray on Ake's side. The ki-rin has no intention of letting the *Rod* fall into the queen's tentacles and he has no reservations about killing the PCs to get whatever segments they have, even if good characters are in the group. In Ake's view, the deaths of a few fools are insignificant when compared to the safety of worlds.

If the PCs intend to keep the *Rod*, Ake wants them to promise they will use it carefully and sparingly. If they so promise, he offers them a handful of hairs from his mane. If the PCs don't understand the significance of this gesture, Ake explains that they will need the hair, along with the hair of a lawful evil creature, to make the magical glyphs necessary to assemble the *Rod*. He warns that the hair must be freely given.

If the majority of the characters have good alignments, Ake puts no conditions on his gift of hair, except that they must promise to use it to help assemble the *Rod*. If the party does not contain a majority of good characters, Ake gives them his hair only if they swear an oath never to use the hair for anything other than assembling the *Rod*. He makes them wish that their hands will shrivel and fall off if they break their oath. He uses his *wish* spell to make sure the curse takes effect if the party breaks the oath. Because the PCs are taking the oath freely, the *wish* is reasonable. The entire party must swear the oath and make the wish before Ake gives them the hair. Should any character break the



oath, the offending character loses his hands.

DM Note: If the party manages to steal Ake's hair in some fashion, they cannot make the glyphs because the hair wasn't freely given. If the party manages to charm Ake, however, the hair is useful. Even when charmed, Ake demands that the party takes the oath as described above. The charm makes Ake willing to give the party some hair, but it doesn't remove his sense of caution.

If the party flees the encounter before looking into the tent, or never approaches the tent, Ake trots along behind them the next day, using *invisibility* and *non-detection*. Eventually, Ake appears and speaks to the party.

If the characters and Ake part on friendly terms, he gives them the tent and its furnishings, which are worth 5,000 gp intact.

Chodei-rin Ake (Ki-rin): AC -5; MV 24, Fl 48 (B); HD 12; hp 54; THAC0 9 (6 with horn); #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d6 (hoof/hoof/horn); SA spells and spell-like abilities at 18th level; MR 90%; SZ H (13' long); ML fanatic (18); Int supra-genius (20); AL LG; XP nil; MM/2L

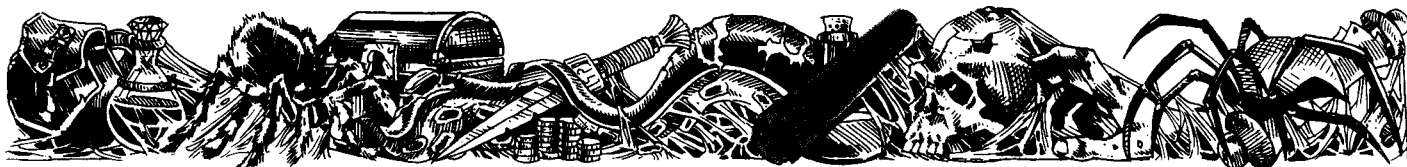
Notes: The party may... Spell-like abilities—create nutritious food and beverage

ages for 2 to 12 people; create 32 cubic feet of soft goods or 18 cubic feet of wooden items (creations are permanent) or 200 pounds of metal items (duration is 1 hour to 1d4+1 days, depending on hardness); create illusion with aural, visual, and olfactory components that lasts until disbelieved or magically dispelled; assume gaseous form, *wind walk*, *summon weather*, and *call lightning*. When performing magic related to the sky or air the results are double strength (including hit points and damage inflicted). Immune to 1st- and 2nd-level illusion/phantasm spells. Can enter the astral or ethereal plane at will.

Spells: (9/8/7/6/5/4/3/2/1): 1st—*cantrip*, *detect magic*, *gaze reflection*, *grease*, *magic missile* (x2), *shield*, *sleep*, *wall of fog**; 2nd—*continual light* (x2), *detect evil*, *detect invisibility*, *invisibility*** , *know alignment*, *magic mouth*, *stinking cloud**; 3rd—*dispel magic* (x2), *fireball*, *lightning bolt** , *nondetection*** , *slow*, *wind wall**; 4th—*charm monster*, *confusion*, *ice storm** , *improved invisibility*, *polymorph other*, *stoneskin*** ; 5th—*cloudkill** , *conjure air elemental** , *feeblemind*, *wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning** , *death spell*, *invisible stalker** , *true seeing*; 7th—*forcecage*, *prismatic spray*, *reverse gravity*; 8th—*maze*, *Otto's irresistible dance*; 9th—*wish*.

* Air or sky spell.

** Precast spell.



Side Treks

Waves of Chaos

Each time the queen opens a *chaos gate*, there is a cumulative 20% chance that a wave of chaos sweeps over party's world. A wave of chaos always occurs after the fifth *chaos gate* is opened, and when the queen gets a segment of the *Rod*.

When a wave hits, the terrain around the PCs warps and changes. It can become an entirely different kind of terrain (mountains shifting to desert, or an ocean shifting to plains) or it can simply be odd (the grass is now blue or the sun turns green). The extent of the change is up to the DM; however, the change should not make it impossible for the PCs to continue the adventure (don't strand the party in the middle of an ocean unless you decide that their mounts turn into hippocampi), and the change overall is never for the better. Altered landscapes are more barren, less hospitable, and less productive. The weather, though not necessarily inclement, is never pleasant, but always murky, hazy, or dusty. Famine is inevitable unless the PCs can reverse the changes. The party notices the changes at the next dawn. Moreover, no one else notices the change. Every NPC the party meets firmly believes the world always has been exactly the way it is now. For them, it always has. The fabric of reality has changed. Only the *Rod's* influence allows the PCs to recall "true" reality.

The PCs are aliens on their own world. They find it a little harder to survive in the new landscape. Each day, they must save vs. petrification or suffer 1d6 points of damage (they eat something that doesn't agree with them, find the air slightly toxic, the weather too hot, or the like).

The *Rod of Seven Parts* can temporarily suppress the chaos. The *Rod* bearer can shift the terrain back to its normal state on a roll of 5 or less on 1d20. Add the character's magical defense adjustment from Wisdom to the base score. For example, a character with a Wisdom of 18 must roll an 9 or less. For each segment that has been added to the *Rod*, the character adds one to the score. If the character in the above example had all segments joined together, his score would be 15. The *Rod* affects a radius equal to five yards per segment currently joined. If the roll succeeds, the terrain within the radius shifts back to its normal form. The party sees the land changing forms as they move along with the *Rod*, but other creatures do not. Characters who spend the whole day within the radius need not attempt a saving throw to avoid damage that day. The *Rod* bearer must make a new check each day, and can

make only one check each day. Trying to stabilize the landscape does not affect attempts to restore beasts of chaos to their normal forms or vice versa.

All the *Rod* bearer must do to shift the terrain is concentrate on setting things right. No command word is required. It is entirely possible that the *Rod* bearer could discover this power accidentally. Whenever the *Rod* bearer expresses concern over a terrain shift or complains about the daily saving throw, the DM should ask for a 1d20 roll. If the roll is successful, the bearer feels a surge of power as the terrain returns back to normal.

When a party arrives outdoors in altered terrain, roll 1d10. On the roll of a 1, a pack of chaos beasts attacks. (If the PCs were traveling cross country when a wave strikes, the pack of beasts could be their own mounts.) The beasts attack to kill. Check for a chaos beast attack once each day in addition to normal checks for random encounters.

Beasts of Chaos (5): AC 0; MV 18; HD 9; hp 40 each; THAC0 11; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d8/1d6/1d6 (claw/claw/bite/tentacle/tentacle); SA rage; SW *Rod* can cause beast to revert to natural form; SZ M (4' long); ML average (10); Int animal (1); AL CN; XP 4,000 each. See **Book IV**, page 2.

Notes: Bright light causes rage—+2 bonus to attacks and initiative for as long as the beast is within a continuous light effect or for 1d4+2 rounds after exposure to a bright flash.

The *Rod of Seven Parts* can force a beast of chaos back to its normal form if the *Rod* can roll a 5 or less on 1d20. Add the character's magical defense adjustment from Wisdom to the base score. Add one more to the base score for each segment that has been added to the *Rod*. The range is 5 yards per segment of the *Rod*. If a beast is shifted back to its normal form, it pauses in confusion for one round. The next round it flees at its maximum rate until the *Rod* bearer is out of sight.

Into the Vastest Bog

If a segment of the *Rod* teleports away from the party, the characters could have their work cut out for them when trying to get it back. Though the exact distance and direction to the segment's new location is determined randomly (see page 7), it is in the nature of the *Rod* to insinuate itself wherever it can promote law the most strongly. As a result, the *Rod* never teleports to a deserted locale; there always will some lawful creature nearby that can use and guard the *Rod* or a chaotic creature that the *Rod* can subvert. A random



Side Treks

teleportation never places a segment in the hand of the queen or her agents. (How can a “random” event have so many restrictions? Such is the nature of artifacts.)

In play, whenever the party loses a segment they will face a fight or a negotiation before they can get the segment back. A sample guardian for a lost segment is presented here. If the party loses pieces of the *Rod* more than once, the DM will have to devise additional adventures. One of the unused adventures from **Book I** will do in a pinch.

The Vastest Bog is the local name for a dismal swamp choked with blighted cypress trees and brambles with thorns sharper than stilettos. The local tales say that, except for the swarms of biting flies, nothing lives there but a dragon older than the hills and blacker than a moonless night. The tales are true. An island in the swamp’s heart is the lair of Acydikeen, a great wyrm black dragon who spends most of his time snoozing, but occasionally flies or swims to hunt in the neighboring lands.

DM Note: Obviously, the Vastest Bog will not always fit where a random roll says it has to go. Go ahead and put it wherever it fits and assume the lost segment teleports there, even if that means it has to travel more than 100 miles.

Background

No one has invaded Acydikeen’s lair in a long time. Acydikeen chose the nondescript island near the center of the swamp for his lair because it is difficult to reach. When the segment arrived in the dragon’s lair, Acydikeen was initially suspicious. The odd, black stick had a wonderful color, to be sure, and was obviously magical. Still, the dragon’s senses told him there was something *wrong*. When Acydikeen found himself absentmindedly tidying up his lair and stacking his horde into neat piles, he decided the segment had to go; however, the stick resisted blast after blast from his breath weapon, and the dragon grew alarmed.

Searching his prodigious memory (even a creature with Acydikeen’s intelligence accumulates quite a store of knowledge after living more than 1,200 years), he recalled the story of the *Rod of Seven Parts* and what its value to the Queen of Chaos. Acydikeen has no desire to live on a world the queen has ravaged, and he has resolved to defend the *Rod* from any fiends that come calling for it. He’ll let the PCs take the *Rod* away unmolested, if they don’t try to steal anything from his lair.

He keeps a close watch on the surrounding sky and

swamp, and notes the party’s approach. He is ready for the PCs when they arrive, but isn’t looking for a fight.

Tracking the Rod

The bog is 20 miles wide and roughly circular. A party on foot would have to march for four days to reach the Acydikeen’s island; traveling through the swamp’s mud, sluggish streams, quicksand, and tangled vegetation is slow going. The party could make the same trip in two days by boat, or in a few hours by air.

If the PCs have the next smallest piece of the *Rod*, the segment leads the characters right onto the island before the indication of direction fades. There is nothing to show that this particular island is any different from any one of a dozen other small islands in the swamp, and a group who does not have a *Rod* segment to guide them would probably overlook it.

If the party does not have the next smallest piece of the *Rod*, Qadeej makes himself known to the PCs and suggest they search the Vastest Bog.

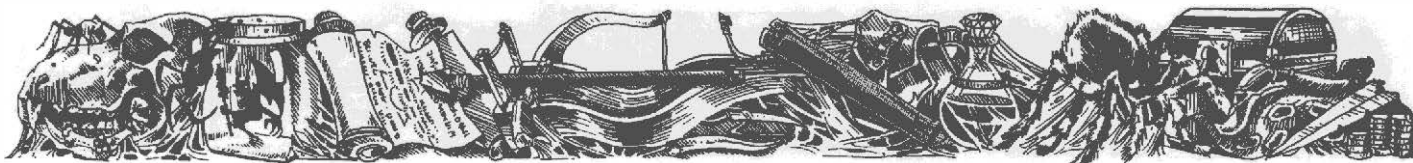
As the party begins exploring the island, Acydikeen makes a brief appearance, diving upon the party from high altitude and swooping low overhead. His intention is merely to scare the PCs, and impress them with his size and power. If the PCs attack, he performs a wingover (see the general information on dragons in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* tome) and makes a snatch attack against one character. If the attack succeeds, Acydikeen carries the character high into the air and demands to know what the party is doing here. If the character refuses to answer Acydikeen’s question, or tries to get free, Acydikeen squeezes him for claw damage (1d6+12 points).

If the PC admits that they came for the *Rod*, the dragon tells him the party is welcome to it. He drops the PC at his comrades’ feet from about 30 feet up, then climbs into his lair through the land entrance.

After his initial encounter with the PCs, Acydikeen dives into the water west of the island and swims to his lair via a submerged tunnel. There Acydikeen awaits the party’s arrival.

The Island

Acydikeen’s island is a sandy hummock covered with the brambles and cypress trees for which the Vastest Bog is famous. The highest point on the island is about 160 feet above water level. See Map E4 for details. To find the entrance to the lair, the party must either search the entire island, or search the marsh bottom were the



Side Treks

dragon dove into the water. In the first case, they can find the opening to the lair after about three hours of searching. The brambles on the island cut their clothing to shreds, and all the PCs' outer garb—except armor—is rendered useless unless it makes a successful saving throw vs. acid (the brambles aren't actually acidic, that's just the most appropriate column on the item saving throw table). Druids of level 3 or higher are unaffected.

If the party decides to go swimming instead, they can find the underwater passage leading to the lair only if they can breathe water. If the character can breathe water, they still must roll a 1 or 2 on 1d6 to find the entrance. (Elves and half elves find the entrance on a roll of 1-4.)

Inside the Lair

Acydikeen's cavern is dank and smelly; the air reeks of dragon and the carcasses the dragon has stored in area 5. Except where noted otherwise, the lair is unlit and has rough limestone walls dripping with seepage from the surrounding swamp. Ceilings throughout the lair about 50 feet high, too cramped to allow Acydikeen to do much flying (see the individual area descriptions for details). Map E3 depicts the lair.

1. Land Entrance

A sinkhole about 30 feet wide leads down to the cavern. The hole is funnel shaped and narrows to about 15 feet some 20 feet below the surface. The sides of the hole are bearded with tree roots. The roots are very weak, however, and cannot support characters who weigh more than 200 pounds. It is 60 feet from the surface to the cavern floor below.

Acydikeen can enter the corridor leading away from here, but he can't unfurl his wings or fly. But neither can the PCs attack his flanks unless the use they alcoves, and the dragon is not likely to advance that far.

2. Pedestal

A natural table of rock holds the *Rod* segment; it is in easy reach, if the party can ignore what lies in the chamber beyond:

A short walk from the entrance brings you to a chamber as big as the common room in a first-class inn. You notice the stone here is badly pitted and the air has an acrid smell.

A plain, flat boulder holds the object of your present mission, a familiar-looking black stick. But you cannot ignore what lies in the rest of the chamber. You see neat stacks of coins, some green with corrosion, other still shiny yellow, a pile of gems, a stack of arms and equipment. . . .

"Take the accursed stick and go, before the queen discovers you are here. Do not try my patience mortals, or I shall feast on your flesh!" The hissing voice sounds like a thousand serpents. It seems your host is eager to have you leave.

Acydikeen is not keen on having the PCs study his hoard. If the characters ask about the queen, Acydikeen relates the basic history of the *Rod*, and then commands them to leave once again.

Any character can grab the segment, but pools of acid from Acydikeen's attempts to destroy the segment still cover the area. Unless the player specifically states that his character is watching his step, the character suffers 2d8 points of acid damage and his footgear is destroyed.

3. The Main Chamber

Acydikeen lies here, guarding his treasure. If the party makes a move to take so much as a copper, he blasts away with his breath weapon. He can make short flights in here, but cannot turn around in flight. He might, however, use his *spider climb* spell to walk on the walls or ceiling.

The hoard includes 24,000 cp, 4,800 sp, 9,000 gp, 3,000 pp, 25 base 50 gp gems, and any two magical items the DM deems appropriate.

4. Water Entrance.

This pool connects with the swamp via a passage-way.

5. Pickling Pool.

Acydikeen uses this shallow pool of slightly acidic water to prepare carcasses for dining. The mass of putrefying flesh in there now creates a gut churning stench.

Acydikeen (Dragon, Chromatic, Black): AC -7; MV 12, Fl 30 (C), Sw 12; HD 20; hp 90; THAC0 3; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+12/1d6+12/3d6+12 (claw/claw/bite);



Side Treks

SA spells as an 17th level caster, spell-like abilities, breath weapon, fear; SD detect invisible objects and creatures within 120 feet, immune to acid; MR 45%; SZ G (100' body); ML fanatic (16); Int average (10); AL CE; XP 20,000; MM/65.

Notes: Breath weapon once every three rounds—line of acid 5' wide and 80' long; creatures within the line suffer 12d4+12 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half).

Can kick with back feet for 1d6+12 points of damage; any creature struck must pass a Dexterity check or be knocked back 1d6+12 feet. Creatures knocked back must save vs. petrification at -12 or fall down. Can buffet with wings 1d6+12 points of damage; creatures struck must pass a Dexterity check or fall down. Can slap up to 12 creatures with tail for 2d6+24 points of damage (roll a separate attack for each). Creatures struck must save vs. petrification at -12 or be stunned for 1d4+1 rounds. Can snatch an opponent of size L or less with a successful claw hit when flying. Can carry up to three snatched opponents at once.

When dropping from a height of 30 feet or more can plummet and crush up to 12 opponents (roll a separate attack for each). The plummet inflicts 3d6+12 points of damage and creatures struck must save vs. petrification or be pinned under the dragon. If the dragon does not move off a pinned opponent, the creature must save vs. petrification again or continue to suffer damage. Causes fear in a 50-yard radius; all creatures of 1 hit die or less and all noncarnivores of 20 hit dice or less flee in panic for 4d6 rounds unless part of a formed military unit. Creatures not automatically panicked save vs. petrification at a -4 penalty. If the save fails, the creatures are stricken with fear and fight with a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls for 4d6 rounds.

Spell-like abilities (17th level): *darkness* in a 120' radius three times a day, corrupt 120 cubic feet of water once a day (this power destroys potions unless they roll a 15 or better on 1d20), *plant growth* once a day, *summon insects* once a day, *charm reptiles* three times a day (similar to *charm mammals* but works on reptiles instead).

Spells (9): 1st—*alarm*, *color spray*, *charm person*, *erase*, *feather fall*, *hypnotism*, *jump*, *spider climb*, *spook*.

Mysterious Stranger

This section introduces Arquestan and Qadeej, two vaati who are for various reasons interested in the group's progress. These two NPCs serve as the DM's handymen; they can step in whenever it becomes nec-

essary to set the party back on track or to impart information to the PCs.

Arquestan is a member of the wendeam, the caste of lawful good vaati outcasts dedicated to monitoring the activities of the Queen of Chaos and the current status of the *Rod of Seven Parts*. At the age of 1,234 years, he is a youngster by vaati standards, but he is among the most gifted members of his caste.

Arquestan is a thoughtful man with impeccable manners and fastidious habits. He is genuinely concerned for the party's welfare. He is not necessarily eager to see the *Rod* recovered, but would like to see Miska finally destroyed if the party can succeed. To Arquestan, the PCs are a group of heroes who deserve respect. It is Arquestan who sent the hounds of law the party may meet during their various adventures. Arquestan knows Naltecatl, the couatl from the **Spelunking** adventure, personally. Arquestan plays a vital role at the end of the adventure, when he carries the PCs off to Pandemonium in his *wind chariot*.

Qadeej is a member of Bledrudeam, a caste of vaati wizards. He is among the oldest vaati, and even he has lost track of exactly how old he is. Qadeej is one of the seven vaati who originally forged the *Rod of Seven Parts*. During the centuries since the war ended, Qadeej has become disgusted with the vaati's decline and impatient with the seemingly endless stalemate that has prevailed since Miska's imprisonment. He has become convinced that the vaati can be great again only if they restart the war. Never mind that there is only a mere fraction of the race left. Just as the wendeam have become lawful good as a result of their long dedication to opposing the queen, Qadeej has become lawful evil after scheming for so long to light the fires of war.

As one of the *Rod's* creators, Qadeej has a power that is very useful to the party; he is sensitive to the Law in the *Rod*, he knows where the segments of the *Rod* are, and he can sense the *Rod* being used just as the queen can. Vaati politics have prevented him from gathering the pieces himself, and he sees the PCs as the perfect tools to complete his work. Unlike Arquestan, Qadeej cares nothing for the party, and he ultimately hopes they will attempt to destroy Miska and fail.

The Two Wind Dukes in Play

Arquestan hovers in the background throughout the entire adventure. He is ready to lend the PCs a hand, indirectly, whenever they need it. He uses his superior tracking ability to locate the party. Qadeej



remains in the Vale of Aaqa, tracking the party's progress through his connection with the *Rod*. Both Arquestan and Qadeej make an appearance at the beginning of the **Citadel of Chaos** adventure. If things have gone well for the party, this might be the first time the PCs meet either of them.

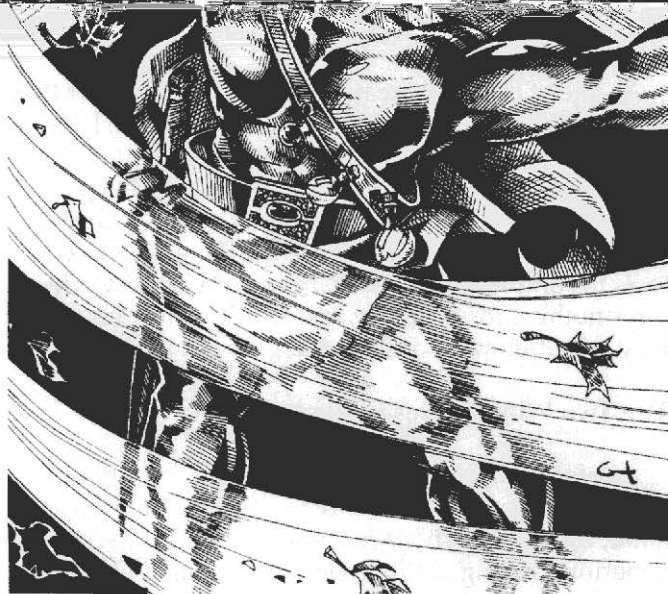
Arquestan: often poses as Arquesta, a singer and actress with a troupe of performing white rats (actually hounds of law). Arquestan uses his *hat of disguise* to pull off the charade. The PCs are likely to see "Arquesta" pretty much anytime they return to civilization after going after a segment of the *Rod*:

You have come upon a knot of children and townsfolk gathered around an unusually tall, but handsome woman in a turban and a loose robe. A white rat perched on her shoulder stands up on its hind legs and bows to the crowd. "Applause, please," the woman's asks in a pleasant voice. The audience claps politely and the rat responds by diving off the woman's shoulder, and landing headfirst in a bucket of water at her feet, turning somersaults all the way. As the woman bends to help the rat out of the bucket, six more white rates begin performing on a rickety contraption made from string and sticks. You see rats walking a tightrope using just their front feet, like acrobats doing handstands, rats on trapezes, and rats performing tumbling tricks on a seesaw. Overall, they are the most remarkable set of rodents you have ever seen.

rats and the woman tell the rats aren't what they really are. The woman collects a few keep an eye on her, and her equipment and of scrawny urchins. The rat show and moves in just about every

and if the party asks she tells them she's enemies they don't it is established, to the PCs:

of the race that cre-



A *true seeing* spell reveals the rats in their actual forms. A druid can tell normal creatures, but can't tell white rats.

After the performance, the woman collects coins from the crowd. If the PCs see her pack up her rats and give her entire take to a couple of children.

If the party ignores the trained rats, they witness a similar scene in the town they visit.

Arquestan is not a good liar, and "Arquesta" is up to something. If you are watching them because they have your even suspect. Once polite contact is made, Arquestan reveals the following:

- He is a Wind Duke, a member of the *Rod of Seven Parts*.



Side Treks

- If the PCs are bent upon assembling the *Rod*, he can assist in small ways.

If the PCs begin asking questions, Arquestan has some answers for them:

- The wolf-headed spiders are a rare type of tanar'ri called spyder-fiends. They serve the Queen of Chaos, who seeks to take the *Rod* from the PCs.

- The *Rod* is an artifact of law, but it carries the taint of Miska the Wolf Spider, the leader of the spyder-fiends and the general and lover of the queen. The queen can sense the ebb and flow of chaos when the part uses the *Rod*. Whenever the *Rod* operates, a little of Miska's essence rubs off on the wielder, and the spyder-fiends can locate the character, like a hound tracks a scent, for a short time.

- The *Rod* makes the wielder into a Champion of Law. The more parts are added to the *Rod*, the more lawful the wielder becomes.

- Anyone who can cast wizard spells can create special glyphs that keep the *Rod* from flying apart when two segments are brought together. Arquestan isn't a wizard, so he doesn't know what they are. He understands, however, that the glyphs are not particularly difficult to discover.

- The alterations in the world (*chaos waves*) are a consequence of the queen's growing influence. The changes will remain until the PCs break the queen's grip on the world. If they slay Miska, the queen's power will be broken. They can also break the queen's grip by sending the *Rod* to a new world. The best way to do that is to assemble the *Rod* completely and invoke its greatest power—restoring life. The *Rod* will shatter and move to a new world, forcing the queen to search for it all over again.

- Arquestan is busy keeping track of both the party and various spyder-fiends right now, though he tries to check up on the party every few days. There is no reliable way to contact him should the party wish to do so. However, if the party leaves some sign behind when they leave an area, perhaps a note bearing the letter "A" or the letter "A" scratched into the ground at a campsite, Arquestan will know the party wants to talk.

Several of the major adventures begin with a visit from Arquestan if the party does not have the segment of the

Rod that normally would get them started. In these cases, Arquestan approaches the party himself. If the party is in the wilderness, he arrives on his *wind chariot*, with his hounds of law in their will o' wisp forms. If the party is in a town or city, Arquestan uses his *hat of disguise* to pose as a messenger. He invites the PCs to meet him at some isolated locale, then arrives on his chariot:

A whirlwind is approaching. A tall, silvery funnel of wind zips over the treetops with blinding speed. It is an unusual whirlwind, not only because of its silvery color. The funnel should be tearing the trees up by the roots, but hardly a leaf stirs.

The savage-yet-gentle-whirlwind settles nearby, kicking up no more dust than a wagon coming to a halt. The wind fades, revealing a tall man standing upon a silvery disc.

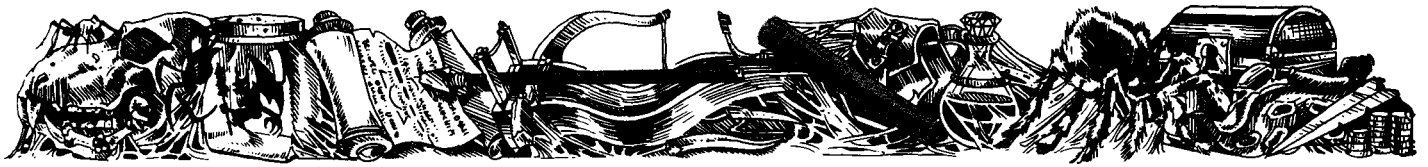
As the man steps off the disc, you notice that his skin is black as ebony and that he is naked except for a belt from a few weapons hang. His physique is excellent, but his state of undress also reveals that the term "man" is not quite appropriate. The figure is utterly sexless.

After introducing himself, Arquestan goes on to explain that he has a solution to the party's difficulty. See the individual adventures for more details.

Qadeej: spends as little time as possible dealing with the party. If the PCs are unable to proceed because they don't have the segment of the *Rod* that will lead them to the next piece, Qadeej dispatches a noble djinn to deliver them a message:

A giant of a man with a bald head and gold earrings approaches and greets you with a bow. "My master, Qadeej of Aaqa, sends his regards, and suggests that a meeting anon would be most beneficial to you. Get you to a place secure from prying eyes, and my master will come." With that he vanishes, leaving you and several onlookers gaping.

The next time the party is alone, Qadeej pops in, courtesy of his *staff of the magi*. He is both gruff and terse. He tells them he is Qadeej of Aaqa, and that he has information they need. Then he tells them how to go about finding the next segment. He does not tell them exactly where it is or what guards it, because he doesn't know. All he knows is how far the next segment



Side Treks

is and the direction in which it lies. If the party asks questions, he irritably responds with the following:

- “I have studied the artifact thou calls the *Rod of Seven Parts* since before your most ancient ancestor was born, mortal, for I am a Wind Duke of Aaqa. Follow my directions and locate the next piece, if thou desire, or do not. No Champion of Law would leave the job undone.”
- “How do I know where it is? Through magic I could not help thee understand in a thousand of thy lifetimes.”

Be careful not to overuse Arquestan and Qadeej. They are intended to help you, the DM, move things along when the party comes to an impasse. Neither Wind Duke will accompany the party on an adventure or recover a segment of the *Rod* for the party unless the text for an adventure specifically says so.

Arquestan, v, R12: AC -2 (natural armor and Dexterity bonus); MV 12, FI 12 (A); hp 72; THAC0 9 (8 when employing missiles), (7 with Strength bonus), (3 with Strength bonus and weapon +4); #AT 3/2+1; Dmg 1d6+9 (*short sword* +4 and Strength bonus)/1d4+8 (*dagger* +4 and Strength bonus); SA ranger abilities, spells as a 5th level caster; SD immunities; SZ M (7' 1" tall); ML fearless (19); AL LG; XP Nil; See **Book IV**, page 15.

Notes: Can influence natural animals (save vs. rods at a -4 penalty negates), track with a base score of 17, and can track creatures that are flying or have teleported; receives a +4 attack bonus and a -4 reaction penalty vs. spyder-fiends. Immune to aging, +2 saving throws, armor class, and ability check bonus vs. all forms of air-based attacks, -2 points per die of damage from air-based attacks, air elemental creatures will not attack or approach within 5 feet unless attacked first; +2 to saving throws and -1 to each die of damage vs. all chaotic attacks (vaati blade).

Spell-like abilities at 12th level—*control temperature* 10' radius, *dust devil*, *gust of wind*, and *feather fall*, all at will. Can use *gust of wind* to double flying speed for one round.

S 18/97, D 15, C 16, I 15, W 14, Ch 15.

Personality: Dedicated, trustworthy, friendly.

Spells (2/2/1): 1st—*entangle*, *pass without trace*; 2nd—*charm person or mammal*, *goodberry*; 3rd—*summon insects*.
Ranger Abilities: MS 77%, HS 94%.

Special Equipment: *Short sword* +4 *vaati blade*, *dagger* +4 *vaati blade*, long bow and 20 *sheaf arrows* +2, *portable hole*, *ring of shooting stars*, *oil of slipperiness*, *potion of fire giant strength*, *iron bands of Bilarro*, *hat of disguise*, *wind chariot*.

Hound of Law: AC -6 or (0 in dog form); MV FI 18 (A) (15 in dog form); HD 8+2; hp 41; THAC0 13; #AT 0 (1 in dog form); Dmg nil (2d4+2 in dog form); SA -5 to opponents' surprise rolls, become astral, ethereal, or invisible at will, tracking, +1 attack roll bonus vs. chaotic creatures; SD +1 to own surprise rolls, detect invisible creatures 50% of the time, chaotic creatures suffer -1 attack penalty and a -1 penalty to each die of damage, spell immunity; MR 30%; SZ T (1' tall) (size M in dog form); ML fearless (19); Int average (10); AL LN; XP 3,000; See **Book IV**, page 3.

Notes: Base tracking score is 16; ignores vision-based penalties. Can follow a creature that has teleported if it succeeds with a tracking roll at a -2 penalty (the only other penalties that apply are one from the trail's age).

Immune to all spells except *protection from evil*, *magic missile*, and *maze*.

Qadeej, v, Abj13: AC 0 (natural armor, Dexterity bonus, and *cloak of displacement*); MV 12, FI 12 (A); hp 28; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SD immunities; SZ M (6' 9" tall); ML fearless (19); AL LE; XP 20,000; See **Book IV**, page 15.

Notes: Immune to aging, +2 saving throws, armor class, and ability check bonus vs. all forms of air-based attacks, -2 points per die of damage from air-based attacks, air elemental creatures will not attack or approach within 5 feet unless attacked first.

Spell-like abilities at 13th level—*control temperature* 10' radius, *dust devil*, *gust of wind*, and *feather fall*, all at will. Can use *gust of wind* to double flying speed for one round. Spell turning once a day, *reveal truth* (similar to *dispel magic*, but works only on illusions and deceptions), and *calm air* (quiets all forms of wind and negates all sound-based attacks within a 30-foot radius for 36 rounds) three times a day. Gains a +1 saving throw vs. abjuration magic and opponents suffer a -1 saving throw penalty vs. his abjuration magic. Immune to 1st-level illusion/phantasm spells.

S 15, D 16, C 13, I 19, W 18, Ch 16.

Personality: Driven, conceited, crafty.

Spells (6/6/6/5/5/3): 1st—*protection from evil*, *sleep*, *magic missile* (x3), *unseen servant*; 2nd—*detect invisibility*, *ESP*, *forget*, *protection from cantrips*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *summon swarm*; 3rd—*clairaudience*, *dispel magic* (x2), *flame arrow*, *lightning bolt*, *suggestion*; 4th—*detect scrying*, *emotion*, *fire shield*, *ice storm*, *minor globe of invulnerability*; 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *cloudkill*, *dismissal*, *domination*, *hold monster*; 6th—*anti-magic shell*, *globe of invulnerability*, *repulsion*.

Special Equipment: *Staff of the magi* (13 charges), *ring of mind shielding*, *cloak of displacement*.

DRAGONFIRE

Dragonfire is played with 25 tiles or cards. There are six sets of four tiles, plus one unique tile. The unique tile is the Dragonfire tile, and the sets of four are most commonly swords, crowns, rings, ships, stallions, and shields. The Dragonfire tile is red, and each set of four tiles has two yellow tiles and two green tiles.

Three or more people can play; a dealer/banker is also required. The game is a favorite at the *Golden Cockatrice* (see **Book I**).

Starting the Game

Each player begins by placing a standing wager. The house may require a minimum or maximum amount, or both. A player's standing wager cannot be changed except at certain times during the game. A player can withdraw his standing wager anytime, but must leave the game if he does so.

Once each player has made a standing wager, the dealer shuffles the tiles and all the players draw to see who goes first. The person who draws the highest tile plays first. The ranks, from highest to lowest are: Dragonfire, swords, crowns, rings, ships, stallions, and shields. Between tiles of the same rank, yellow tiles outrank green tiles. In case of a tie, players draw again from the remaining tiles.

Once the first player is selected, play proceeds clockwise (to the dealer's left) around the table.

The dealer starts the game by shuffling the tiles and arranging them, face down, in a 5 x 5 formation.

Playing the Game

The first player places a bet, which cannot exceed the value of the player's standing wager. The standing wager itself is not used in normal play. After the player bets, he indicates two tiles for the dealer to turn over.

- If the two tiles are the same suit, the player wins the amount he bet.
- If the two tiles are the same suit and color, the player wins twice the amount he bet.
- If the tiles do not match at all, the player loses his bet.
- If the player won, the dealer picks up the 10 tiles in the horizontal rows containing the winning tiles, shuffles them, and returns them to the formation. If the tiles are in the same row, the dealer shuffles the vertical columns containing the tiles instead. No tiles are left face up.

- If the player lost, the first tile is turned over and the second tile is left face up.

The next player now bets, subject to the same rules as the first player was, and indicates one tile for the dealer to turn over.

- If the tile is the same suit as a tile that already is face up, the player wins the amount he bet. If the tile is the same suit and color as a tile that already is face up, the player wins twice the amount he bet.
- If the tile does not match a tile that already is face up, the player *must* indicate a second tile for the dealer to turn over.
- If the second tile is the same suit as the first tile the player turned over, the player wins the amount he bet. If the tile is the same suit and color as the first tile the player turned over he wins twice his bet.
- If the second tile the player turned over matches a tile that was face up at the beginning of the turn, the player loses his bet. As in the case of any match, the dealer then picks up all the tiles in every row that contains a matching tile, shuffles them, and returns them to the formation. If there are matching tiles in the same row, the vertical columns containing those tiles are reshuffled as well.
- If the second tile matches none of the face up tiles, the player loses his bet, and the first tile the player selected is turned over again.

Anytime a player wins by matching two tiles, he can opt to continue playing by indicating another tile for the dealer to turn over. If the player does not wish to continue, his turn ends and all the tiles in the rows containing the winning tiles are reshuffled and returned to the formation. If there are winning tiles in the same row, the columns containing those tiles are reshuffled along with the rows.

If the player wishes to continue, he must bet all of his winnings from his current turn, plus his standing wager. He then selects another tile.

- If the selected tile matches the winning pair, the player collects five times the amount he risked.
- If the selected tile does not match the winning pair, the player loses the entire amount he risked. No tiles are turned over (unless there are eight or more tiles face up; see below).
- If the selected tile matches a tile that was face up at the beginning of the turn (other than one of the two



Dragonfire

winning tiles), the player loses the entire amount he risked and the turn ends. The rows containing the matching tiles are reshuffled and returned to the formation. If there are matching tiles in the same row, the columns containing those tiles are reshuffled along with the rows.

- Whenever a player decides to search for a third tile, the other players at the table can decide to risk their standing wagers, too. If they decide to do so, they win four times the amount they risked if the acting player finds the third tile; otherwise they lose their standing wagers. The other players cannot bet that the acting player won't find the third tile; they bet that he can or they don't bet at all.
- Anytime a player wins or loses his standing wager, he must make a new one to remain in the game. The new wager does not have to be the same amount as the old one, but it must fall within the limits set by the house for the game.
- A player who has successfully located a third tile cannot search for a fourth tile; his turn ends.
- If all four tiles in a row or column are showing after a player finds a pair, but before the player searches for a third tile, the player *must* decline to search for the third tile.

Anytime the Dragonfire tile is turned face up, the active player loses his entire wager and his standing wager. In addition, every other player loses half his standing wager. If a player has an odd number of chips, the loss is rounded up.

The player's turn ends. The column containing the Dragonfire tile is removed and reshuffled, along with any row that contains at least one face-up tile. No tiles remain face up after the reshuffling.

Anytime there are eight or more tiles face up in the formation at the end of a player's turn the entire formation is reshuffled, leaving no tiles face up.

Anytime a player wins or loses part of his standing wager, he can increase or decrease his standing wager according to the limits set by the house.

Play can continue indefinitely.

Players may not keep written notes or discuss the locations (or probable locations) of hidden tiles during the game.

Dragonfire Within an AD&D® Campaign

Dragonfire can be played with a regular deck of playing cards. Use the joker (Dragonfire), aces (swords), kings (crowns), queens (rings), Jacks (ships), 10s (stallions), and 9s (shields). The suits can represent colors as follows: yellow (spades and clubs) and green (hearts and diamonds).

For a better fantasy atmosphere, use SPELLFIRE™ cards. Use a dragon card, event card, or rule card for the Dragonfire tile. Use heroes for swords, artifacts for crowns, magical items for rings, wizards or wizard spells for ships, clerics or cleric spells for stallions, and allies for shields. Use each card's level to represent color; within a suit, the card with even levels are yellow and cards with odd levels are green.

Character Skills & Magical Items in a Dragonfire Game

A character with the gaming proficiency can attempt to see a tile before it is turned over during his turn. To do this, the character must indicate a tile and roll an ability check vs. half his Intelligence score. (The character's gaming skill makes the opportunity, but it is the character's brain that has to do the work.) If the roll succeeds, the character gets to see the tile, but cannot show it to anyone else. If he doesn't like the tile, he can play another one instead. If the roll fails, the tile is turned over normally. A character can attempt to peek at only one tile per turn. If the roll is a 17-20, the character is caught cheating.

Characters without the gaming proficiency also can attempt to use their Intelligence scores to peek at a tile as described above, but only once per game. There is no chance for the character to be caught cheating, however.

There are several magical items and spells that players might try to use to improve their chances at winning. No establishment tolerates spellcasting at the Dragonfire tables, so spellcasters must be discreet.



2
3
-5
-6



ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and the TSR logo are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. TOMES is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc. ©1996 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

