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MURPHY'S WORLD™

Where Things Can Always Get Worse...™



A Humorous Roleplay Gaming World Where Reality Takes a Vacation!

by KEVIN DAVIES with DAVID BROWN


MURPHY'S WORLD™
Where Things Can Always Get Worse...™
Paradise!
And it's all mine!
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Murphy's World

Writing, Development, and Editing
Kevin Davies, with David Brown

Additional Writing/Ideas
Bill Harrison, Chris Kovac, Steve Stirling

Editing Assistance
Sue Benger, Annette Ing

Art Direction, Layout, and Production
Kevin Davies

Cover and Interior Illustrations
Kevin Davies

Additional Illustrations/Assistance and Ideas
Brian Davies, Sean Eisenporth, Dave MacKay, David Okum, Allen Swerling, Eric Tobiason, Graeme Walker

Playtesters and Readers
Many thanks to the following people for their time and honest comments:
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Phone: (416) 461-9884 Fax: (416) 461-4031
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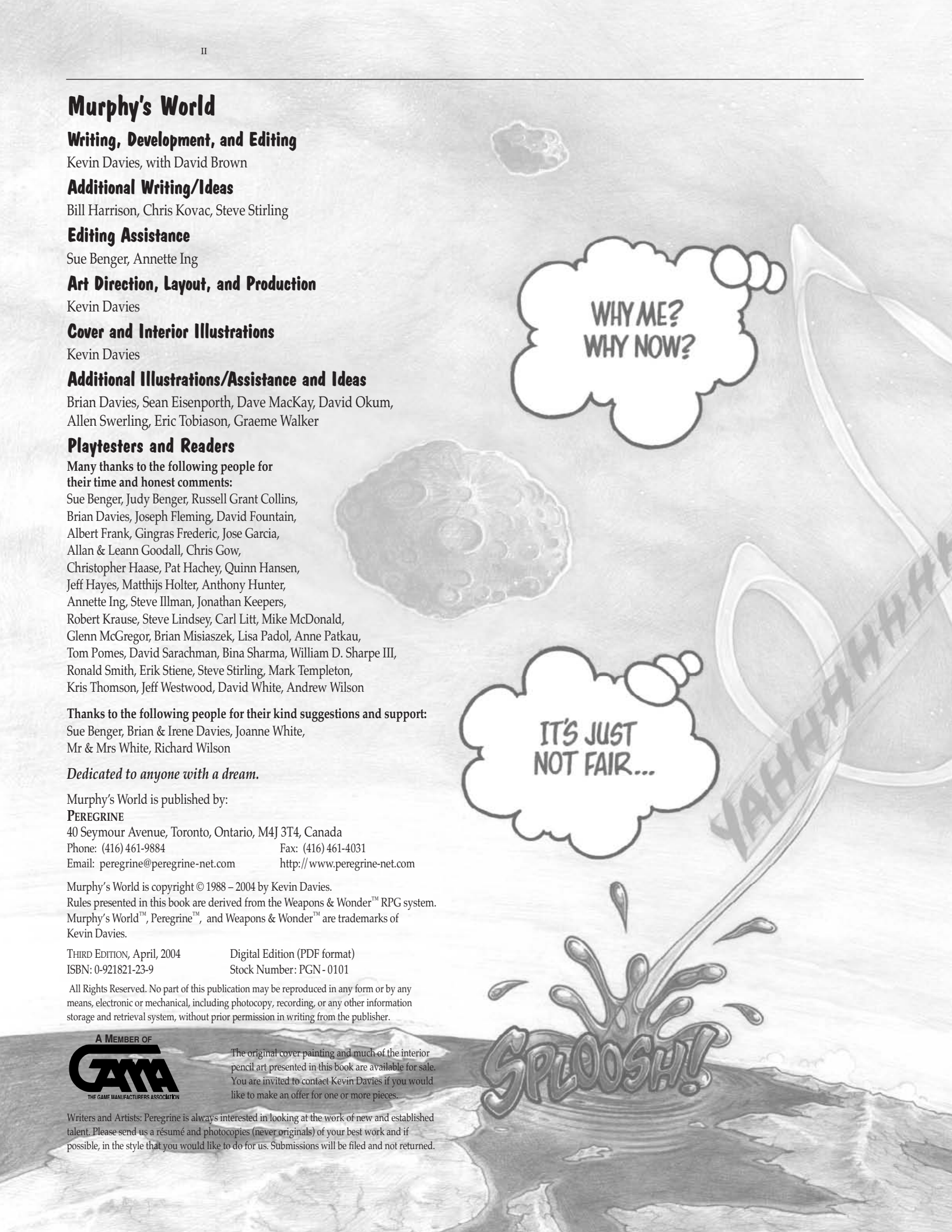
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PREFACE

"I've had worse days… at least today I didn't end up sopping wet and naked…."
— Sean Murphy.

From the Journal of Sean Murphy, Independent Space Explorer and Opportunist.

It was a dream come true. I'd spent the last three years in the cramped quarters of my spaceship, desperate for a rest and refueling stop, with only the odor of my socks for company. I was taking a short-cut through a deserted section of the galaxy when I made the discovery of a lifetime — an uncharted planet that could sustain life! The third of seven planets orbiting an amber star, all blue and green with pastel pink and yellow clouds, it was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen. A scan of the surface revealed that it was technologically undeveloped and teeming with life.

To someone sitting comfortably on a roomy and temperate place like Earth, this may not mean much, but to many hapless souls on countless other worlds, a find like this is their chance to build new lives for themselves. To a lucky fella like myself, it means a tidy profit and an early retirement. Quickly, I called up the necessary claim forms on my terminal and filled them out, then fired them off via sub-space link to the Planetary Claims Office at Galactic Central. The planet was mine!

For 10 years I had been looking out for a place like this: an unclaimed world with vast resources, an underdeveloped consumer market, and an exploitable labor force. Now I had it all! It seemed too good to be true.

It was.

I brought the ship into low orbit and switched on the auto-pilot, telling it to seek out a touchdown spot that would have the best chance of impressing the natives. Meanwhile, I hopped into the shower and put the final touches on my colonial take-over speech: 'What's Yours Is Mine, Let's Work Together'. As I slipped into my best cybernetic tuxedo, I found it hard to believe how good I felt. Everything was finally going my way. I was in complete control of my destiny. Nothing could go wrong!

Suddenly, all the little lights on the control panels, the ones that never light up, lit up. Sirens screamed. I screamed. I scrambled and tore open a smoking service panel revealing a jumble of laser circuits. The one furthest back had completely melted. Somewhere in the back of my mind I wondered, if something had to go wrong, why did it have to do so in the least accessible place? I grabbed a replacement circuit card and eased into the crawlspace… then the auto-pilot died.

I was thrown against a bulkhead. I dropped the new circuit card. It hit my foot and tumbled into the hold. As the ship plunged through pinkish clouds, I cursed the salesman who sold me the auto-pilot. Then the engines burst into flame.

As everything around me fell into chaos, I realized that anything that could possibly go wrong, had just done so. Within seconds the ship, now a blazing fireball, crashed into a shallow body of water (which I later discovered is called the Sea of Tranquillity).

I spent the rest of the day turning into a prune while salvaging as much as I could from my toasted spacecraft, submerged in about 5 meters of water.

A small contingent of finely dressed natives came out of a nearby settlement and offered me a formal greeting. Gradually, the entire town assembled and held a picnic while watching me throughout the afternoon. I'm sure that my disheveled and soaking wet appearance made an authoritative impression.

I decided to omit my prepared speech.

MURPHY WAS TO SPEND THE NEXT FEW YEARS OF HIS LIFE wandering around on this special planet, which the local inhabitants call Færie — 'The Beautiful Land'. Murphy chose to call it 'Chaos'. He passed the time writing notes, drawing maps, and crying a lot. Eventually, he became acclimatized to the unique character of the world he had discovered. He made some contacts, developed a workable marketing plan, and prospered. Murphy's World became his home.

Murphy's World is a silly place which operates according to Murphy's Laws. The real culprit is Ludo, the planet's sun. This amber orb assaults the little planet with strange energies which toss any predictability regarding natural laws or supernatural forces right out the metaphysical window.

The planet also happens to possess an extensive, though faulty, network of dimension doorways — through which many of the inhabitants have unwillingly arrived — connecting Murphy's World to just about everywhere. New arrivals can pop up anytime, anywhere: confused, embarrassed, and often vulnerable… yearning to return from whence they came. The trouble is, spaceships usually crash upon entering the atmosphere, and return portals are hard to find.

This book provides a gateway to this remarkable world, an alternate and anything but internally consistent reality, within which you may adventure.

Welcome to Murphy's World.

May your bread occasionally land butter side up!



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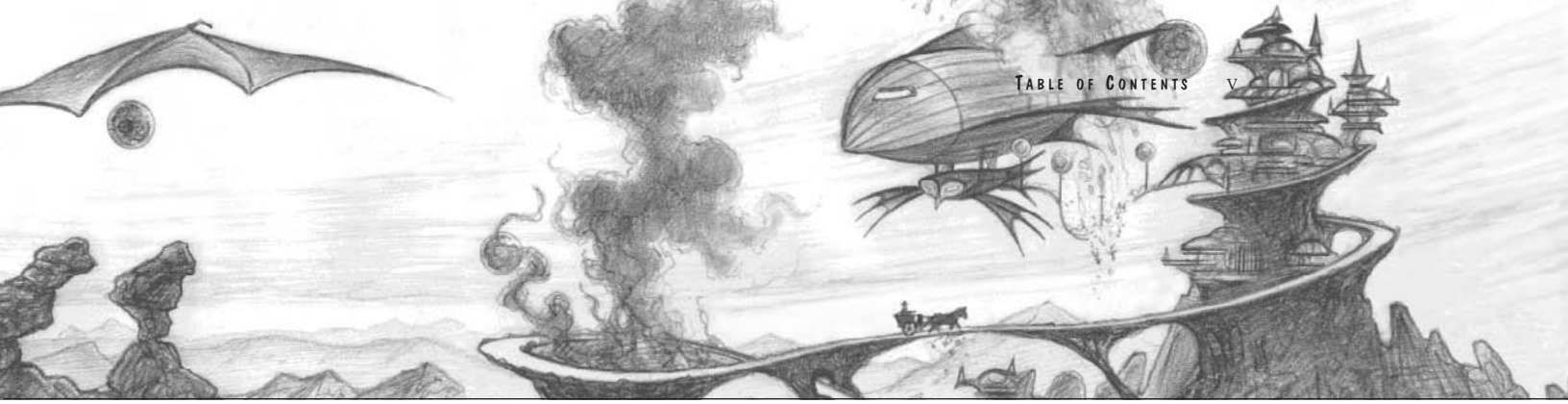
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There is no limit to how *weird* things can get.

INTRODUCTION

What This Book Is All About

MURPHY'S WORLD IS A SILLY PLACE where you can roleplay lighthearted adventures. The goal of this book is to provide fun, new, and outrageous twists for your adventures. Murphy's World gives you an adventure setting based on the famous Murphy's Law: "If something can go wrong, it will."

The Role of the Player Characters (PCs)

Once a Character becomes a visitor or refugee on Murphy's World, they may aspire to any goal. Their ambitions may be as simple as wanting "to survive long enough until I find a way home," or as complicated as wanting "to rule the world... or at least a fair-sized portion of it."

The Characters' aspirations will be affected by the type and duration of the adventure(s) that the Gamemaster (GM) runs. There is nothing to stop PCs from involving themselves in the local political scene and establishing a presence as they could in any other roleplay setting. Don't forget that the Murphy's World political scene is unlike any other you've ever seen!

As with all roleplay games, the important things are: create a Character which is interesting and believable, enjoy the company you game with, and above all, have fun.

The GM Section

The second half of this book is for Gamemaster eyes only (we know, fat chance...). It includes GM tips; a universal Character conversion tool; lots of tables for generating silly names, items, plants, creatures, and GM Characters; and an assortment of ready-made examples with detailed descriptions. This book has everything you need to begin adventuring on Murphy's World — including an adventure: Robyn's Summer Romance in Asgard (or Robyn and Her Merry Sven). *Enjoy!*

Some Roleplay Game Terms

SINCE WE'VE DESIGNED THIS BOOK to be used with existing Roleplay Game (RPG) rules, we've tried to keep our use of terms to a minimum. However, some terms are necessary in the Gamemaster Character descriptions and the Gamemaster's section of the book. If a term is mentioned in this book, and your RPG system does not make use of it, match it with the alternative below which comes closest to the *intent* of the term in your game. The terms in **bold** are used in the text of this book; alternative terms listed after are found in various RPGs and describe essentially the same thing. Abbreviations for specific terms are provided where appropriate.

Gamemaster (GM)
The person who plans and administrates the players' adventures.
ALTERNATIVES: Dungeon Master (DM), Judge, Storyteller, Host.

Player Character (PC)
The character created by the player to use in a roleplay game. The term 'Character' can also be used to describe a PC.

Gamemaster Character/Creature (GMC)
A Character, Creature or Monster roleplayed by the GM. The term 'Character' can also be used to describe a GMC.
ALTERNATIVES: Non-Player Character (NPC).

(Primary) Attributes (PA)
Character's mental and physical qualities expressed as numbers to facilitate Action Resoultion and PC comparisons.
ALTERNATIVES: Characteristics, Statistics (**Stats**), Abilities.

Intelligence (INT)
ALTERNATIVES: Knowledge, Wisdom, Common Sense.

Willpower (WIL)
ALTERNATIVES: Mental Endurance, Mental Strength, Ego, Power.

Charisma (CHA)
ALTERNATIVES: Mental Affinity, Charm, Personality, Presence.

Appearance (APP)
ALTERNATIVES: Physical Beauty, Comeliness, Attractiveness, Charisma (includes mind and body), Fitness, Constitution.

Strength (STR)
ALTERNATIVES: Body, Fitness, Constitution, Willpower.

Dexterity (DEX)
ALTERNATIVES: Physical Prowess, Agility, Fitness, Constitution.

Fitness (FIT)
ALTERNATIVES: Physical Endurance, Health, Constitution, Strength, Body, Willpower.

Health Points (HP)
The amount of potential physical and/or mental fatigue or harm (expressed as a number) that a Character can withstand before passing into unconsciousness and death. A Secondary Attribute.
ALTERNATIVES: Hit Points (HP), Life Points, Body, Resilience, Fortitude, Stamina Points (SP), Endurance, Stun Pips.

Action Initiative (AI)
A numerical value used to determine the relative reaction time and thus the turn order (highest to lowest) for a Character each round of gameplay. A Secondary Attribute established by adding a Character's Willpower + Dexterity values.

Damage Resistance Value (DRV)
A numerical value representing the amount of resistance an inanimate object (Armor or Shield) has to Damage, thus the protection it provides if placed in the way of an attacking blow.
ALTERNATIVES: Armor Class (AC), To-Hit-Armor-Class-Zero (THAC0), Structural Damage Capacity, Structural Rating (SR).

Damage (Points)
A numerical representation of the harm inflicted upon a Character, usually involving a reduction in Health Points, and/or a description of specific damage applied to the target/victim.

Action Roll (Skill, Ability or Attack Roll)
An Action Roll is made whenever a PC wants to attempt an Uncertain Action (Attribute, Skill, Ability, or Attack). To succeed, the player must roll 1d100 ≤ their PC's Action Value (AV), a percentage, established from their Base Action Value (BAV), +/– any Action Modifiers applied at the discretion of the GM.
ALTERNATIVES: Skill Roll, Ability Roll, Proficiency Check, Skill Check.

Creature
Any semi-intelligent or instinct driven natural lifeform. Creatures may be harmful or benevolent towards Characters.

Monster
Any semi-intelligent or instinct driven supernatural or artificial creature deemed threatening by PCs.

Encounter
An unplanned (from the player's perspective) situation or meeting with a Character, Creature or Monster. A 'Wandering Monster' refers to a being met in such a chance encounter.

Adventure
A specific situation or series of events which the GM has prepared to challenge the players and their Characters. Generally, the circumstances that the Characters find themselves in.
ALTERNATIVES: Scenario, Module, Story.

(Adventure) Campaign
A series of sequential adventures in the same gameworld.



If This Is Your First Roleplay Game, *Look Here!*

What Is Roleplay Gaming?

ROLEPLAY GAMING is very similar to group storytelling: each player takes on the 'role' of one or more of the Player Characters (PC) in the story, much like an actor in an improvisational play. Unlike reading or watching a film, both passive forms of storytelling, a player in a roleplay game takes an *active* part in the story, participates in events, and influences the progression of the plot.

In a roleplay game (RPG), unlike a novel, there is no fixed plotline, no certain outcome: just as in real life, you are never certain of how things will turn out in the end.

You will experience the excitement of the story through your Character's adventures. When your Character succeeds in some task, or resolves some riddle, it will be your success as well. You will find it a uniquely satisfying form of entertainment.

By keeping two fundamental questions in mind, you will be able to grasp the basics of roleplaying:

- Who is my Character; what are his/her current motivations and goals?
- What would my Character do next based on what he/she knows about the current circumstances?

Roleplaying is a very social form of entertainment. It forces you to interact with your fellow players. Cooperation is often necessary to ensure a successful conclusion to your adventure. At its best, roleplaying stimulates additional reading, research, and interest in other subjects (such as history, science, invention), as you seek to improve your personal background knowledge. This extra knowledge gives your Characters an edge during the game and makes it more enjoyable.

In every roleplay game, one of the players takes on a special function: they act as the Gamemaster (GM). The GM directs the flow of the of the story action by managing the other players' participation in the game. The GM fabricates setting and plot elements as needed along the way. The GM integrates the the actions of the Characters into the game, including their interactions with the environment informing the player about what their Character hears, sees, smells, tastes, touches (and if applicable, senses supernaturally); plus they provide Gamemaster Characters (GMC; people and creatures created and played by the GM). The GM performs this task by: a) using their imagination to create a plausible dilemma which serves as the catalyst for an adventure to be undertaken by the Characters; and b) asking each Character in turn (and when appropriate providing the answer to) the question: "What does your Character do next?" The players' answers provide the energy to keep the plot moving. The trickiest part for the GM is to mentally stay five minutes ahead of the Characters, keeping track of the potential plot twists, GMCs the Characters might encounter, and things they might see.

> *When your Character succeeds in some task, or resolves some riddle, it will be your success as well.*

What About Rules?

MOST ROLEPLAY GAMES consist of two parts: a description of a world or setting designed to inspire adventure, and a collection of rules for generating and playing a Character. Through this Character, you may explore and interact with the inhabitants and environment of the roleplay world. In most RPGs, only the GM is required to be familiar with the setting — indeed, it is better if players discover it gradually through successive adventures.

In addition to the rules for Character generation, everyone must be at least somewhat familiar with the rules that limit the ways in which Characters can interact with the lifeforms, objects, and the forces of nature in the roleplay setting. The GM provides the player with the sensory information that their PC gleans from the world around them.

On Murphy's World chaos reigns. There is no need for extensive and complex rules. All decisions about what a Character ultimately can or cannot accomplish under any specific circumstance are left to the discretion of the GM — we have provided *some* rules and suggestions, but they are all optional. It's possible to play Murphy's World without using any rules at all! You can spend your time roleplaying, rather than learning new rules and how to work with —and around—them.

To get started, you need to find others interested in playing. Ideally, you should join a group of people who already have roleplaying experience. Most gaming stores can put you in touch with roleplaying enthusiasts.

A world of adventure awaits!


THE ICE COUNTRY
Mt. Top
Mt. Tip
THE THURSES KINGDOM
The Misty Mountains
The Not-So Misty Mountains
GREAT WHITE NORTH
THE FROZEN SEA
Castle Iceneak
THE ACCIDENTAL OCEAN
JOTUNHEIM
The Vast Wasteland
Mt. Sapsago
KUMMINOST
Quargel
Teleme
Havarti Isle
City of Mists
LAND OF SPIRITS
COUNTRY OF THE GHOSTS
THE NORTHLANDS
Nynne Chaba
Acarugi Mountains
THE TEE-TEE SEA
The Idawold Plane
ASGARD
Ironwold Forest
Cheshire
Elam Island
Place of Caves
Ague
Fibroma
Acidosis Bay
Pyrexia
VANAHEIM
SVARTALFHEIM
STILTON
CACIOCAVALLO
THE SNAREDRUM CURRENT
Sheepcheese
Sweet Grass Hills
Lodge of the Peace Queen
ADENITIS
Coryza
NIFLHEIM
Natalie Wood
Edam
THE SNAKE LANDS
Lentigo
Apoplexy
Limburger
Ricotta
THE TURTLE LANDS
THE PLEASANT PLAIN
Snake Island
Mt. Verruca
THE ISLES OF AVALON
MIDGARD
Upper Dentures
Atheroma
THE DA
LAND OF ARGYLE
THE ICE SEA
STATE OF DISORDER
THE FLOODED LANDS
The Tucker Forest
Picturesque Park
LANDS (THE LAND OF BOB)
MYOPIA
LAND OF ANGORA
MUSPELLHEIM
STATE OF DISORDER
Niceville
The Kringarra Mountains
Fish Pond
Mt. Scoliosis
LAND OF WHITETHORN
LAND OF AVALON HARBOR
THE AVALON CHANNEL
Castle Abaton
PO-PAU-OLE LAND OF THE SUN
The J. Akerman Forest
Cellulitis
LYONESSE
The Modest Lands
Ed Wood
Notsoniceville
Hamlet City
Pit of Used Car Salesmen
SLOBBOVIA
Castle Filthy
Castle Kleen
Castle Grime
Poop Tower
Seer-
This Is IEO sucker
Arbray
Myton Manor
Lyonesse
Castle Greedy
Chrysleford
East Wood
New South Plympton
North Wimbley
Castle Plympton
VERDENTIA
The Favonius Plain
The Forest of Phobias
Ack-Poof
Domino
THE GULF OF CHIHLI
Beerbloat
Escrow
Deskbound
Pellagra
AGNOSIA
Edema
LOWER LOWER SLUGGONIA
OFF TO ONE SIDE LOWER SLUGGONIA
THE LONELY LAND
Trimble Valley
SLUGGONIA
The Minerva Mountains
The Dam Dam
UPPER LOWER SLUGGONIA
Rutger Tower
Veeblefetzer
THE NOT-SO LONELY LAND
Kumquat
Noodle Pass
The Melacaaco Mountains
THE POPS
Top of the Pops
THE PYGMY LANDS
Slum Lord
Loquat
The Rose Bowl
Atemoya Isle
Ananas Island
RAMBUTAN
Commercia
Naartje
The Hollywood
Rigatoni
Tortellini
Wind Pass
THE BASSDRUM CURRENT
The Salad Bowl
KREPLACH
Ziti
CHRYSOPLASIA
Feminazi
Betel Island
QUINOA SEA
KNODEL
Gnocchi
The Barenaked Art Museum
RURITANIA
Major Tourist Attraction
LAND OF THE GIANT MIDGETS
What's The Point
Mt. Fusilli
Vermicelli
The Dusky Mountains
Touchdown
PUMMELO
Mt. Penne
Farfel
Mt. Filbert
RHEUM SEA
HYPOPRAXIA
MACADAMIA
The Lawn Bowl
Rightwing
Sane
Febrile
Bay of Piglet
Castle Precarious
LAND OF PUNT
Left of Center
No Point at All
Corozo
Souari
MERT SEA
LANDS OF SET
Mt. Rere
REALM OF SEKER
Vee-Six
LAND OF THE LOST LEFT SOCKS
Point of No Return
Dika
Mt. Syncope
Litchi Pass
Poliosis
HYSTERIA
REGION OF ETERNITY
Sekhet-Aaru
Ambet
REGION OF URNES
Amenta
REGION OF AMENTET
Vee-Ate
The Gump
Dhaa
Limbago
Gaggh
Abh
LAND OF CONFUSION
PROVERBIA
Mt. Shu
The Yukkie Peninsula
LAND OF LOOSE CHANGE
CHOCOLATE
Sorbet Isle
LAND OF DUAT
LAND THE ETERNAL DRY
Rust
Blah
Urr
Out Where the Buses Don't Run
SEA OF NU
Four Rivers
THE DOLDRUM CURRENT
LAND OF 1,000 DANCES
Land Ho!
Lawyer Commune
THE SEA OF MILK
Mt. Fubsy
Very Deepwater
Sunset Hill
THE LIVING LANDS
Mt. Meru
ADITYA VARUNA'S LANDS
Shark Bay
Danger Bay
THE LAND OF KUVERA'S LANDS
SWARGA
Bagwash
The Patala Rhibus Lowlands
NARA SEA
THE MUDDY WATERS
Bagatelle
Mt. Rishyamukha
Mt. Malyavana
DU-WOP
Whiffet
DESPOT
Vomiting Volcano
Animato
LANKA ISLE
Castle Ghastly
Aubade
Castle Grotesque
Mt. Lumpy
Mt. Fortissimo
ODE
Castle Crooked
Duet
Illgotten Gains
THE GREAT WET DESERT
Yokel
OPUS
THE REALM OF RHYME
Arabesque Isle
Fantasia
Mt. Runty
The Putrid Palace
Mt. Frowzy
Mt. Scabby
Castle Awful
Mt. Gawky
TITHLANDIA
West Eastland
INTERLUDE SEA
Mt. Crescendo
Eugine
East Westland
Carline
Requiem
Dirge Isle
THE GREAT MIDDLE EMPIRE
Malkin
Mt. Droopy
Castle Gnarley
TROUBLE
Waif Isle
Mt. Bottom
Rock Bottom
Ice Station Wonderbra
The Original Ice Brewery
THE FROZEN WASTE
The Edge of Reality
MAP LEGEND
Capital City
City
Town/Village
Building/Site
Geographic Site
Mountain Peak



Murphy's World

The map provided here is an electronic composite, made from images obtained during my brief orbital survey, just prior to my craft's untimely power failure and subsequent plummet into the Sea of Tranquility.

I've tried to fill in as many political and geographic details on the map as possible, however there remains a great many more lands to be encountered and catalogued.

The most distinguishing feature of the map is the large circular and darkish area in the Northern Hemisphere which I call the Dark Lands. This, I later discovered, was a good choice, since it happens to be the name the locals have used for the place for centuries.

When I first arrived I was informed by some of the more 'learned locals' that through my map and their ability to make and disperse copies I've done more to stabilize the geography of the planet than anyone has done in eons. It wasn't until I began travelling on my own that I was able to grasp fully the meaning of their comments.

Thus, while this map reveals the contours of various landmasses and gives some indication of their features, unless they are highly populated or their geography well known to the world at large, don't count on them remaining exactly as depicted on this map. For wilderness areas, consider it more of a snapshot in time, rather than a permanent resource. As discussed in my notes, this planet has a habit of changing things that you're not paying attention to.

However if one has to be marooned, it's not such a bad place. It's resource rich and has a great potential consumer base. Plus, it seems that there is always another beautiful horizon to be journeyed toward and a new and curious people to meet.

CHAPTER ONE

The Geography of Murphy's World

FROM SPACE THE PLANET APPEARS TO BE A PSYCHEDELIC MOSAIC of green and blue patches. As you might expect, when seen from the planet's surface the green bits become lawns, shrubs and trees, while the blue bits become water and large orgies of blue dragons. But there are also brown, black, and red lumps, and what some people regard as most important of all, the silver and gold bits….

A Brief Overview of the Planet

If you're the kind of person who likes things to make sense — a place for everything and everything in its place — you've come to the wrong planet. Then again, if your Character's history is anything like Sean Murphy's, you probably had no choice in the matter. Whether a Character arrives via spacecraft or teleportation gateway; intentionally or by accident; what they find will be the same: chaos. Murphy noted in his journals that while other celestial bodies might appear strange or even unique, they all share some common attributes. The threads that bind all of these worlds together are the Natural Physical Laws of the Universe. Murphy's World, however, is a special case. Due to the energies emitted by its star Ludo the natural laws don't stand a chance on Murphy's World!

The Magically Changing Landscape

The geography of Murphy's World is a surveyor's nightmare. Though various civilizations have attempted to produce maps of their region of the planet and the lands beyond, they can never be sure that what they record will be there the next time they visit. This is due to the curious habit the planet has of altering the appearance of small patches of its surface geography when no one is looking. As a result, large scale maps of the planet contain many grey areas marked *uncertain.*

Wilderness areas are more likely to experience a random alteration of their geography. These transformations take place when there is an insufficient number of conscious minds to stop them. Becoming lost is a constant concern while travelling in wilderness territory. A transformation might occur while you are sleeping….

If you are a GM, wilderness terrain design is a piece of cake. Anything — and we mean *anything* — may occur over the horizon — even if someone has already been there and thinks they know what to expect.

Surprising as it might seem, most people on Murphy's World accept these alterations as a matter of course. After all, they have little choice in the matter.

The Constant Physical Geography

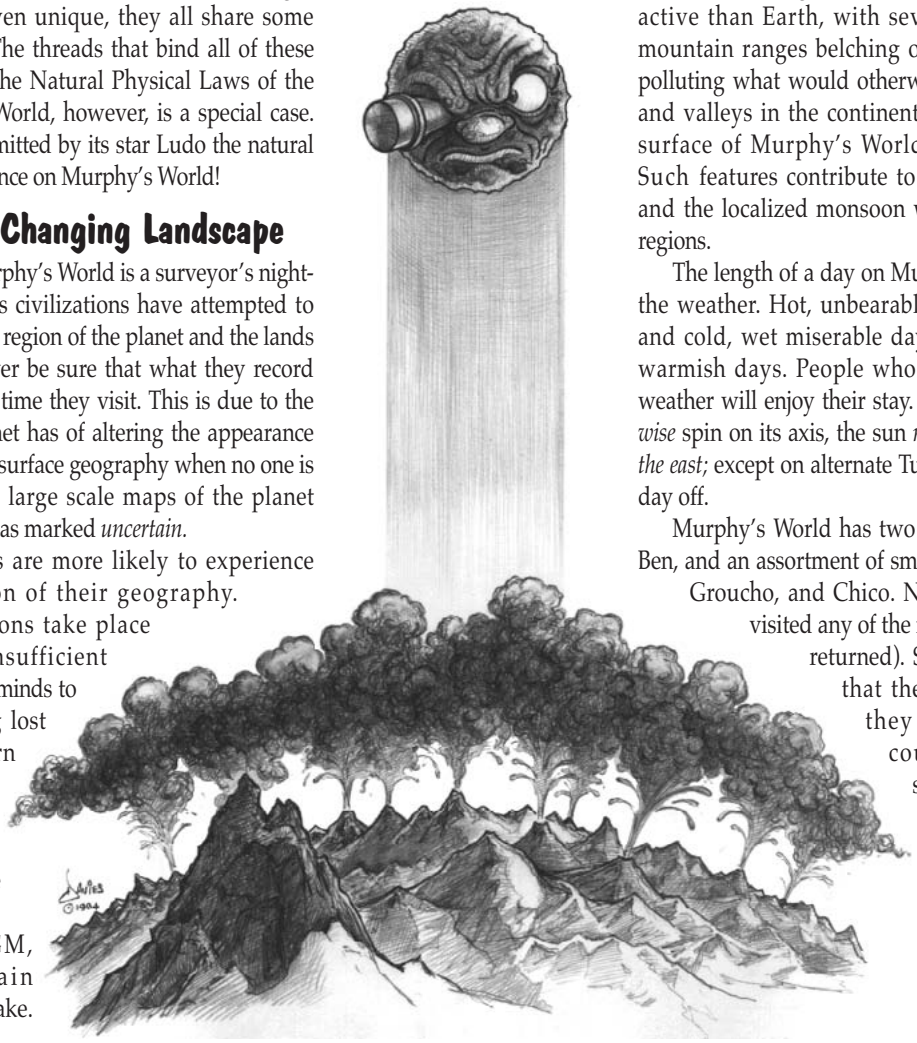
It is widely believed that in sufficient quantity, conscious and consistent thought can override the supernatural forces of Ludo. The greater the number of conscious minds present that *believe* in a place, the greater the chance it has to remain the way it is. Civilized and populated areas tend to remain stable. There is safety in numbers.

Going back to Murphy's notes, we find that the planet is not quite as large as Earth, with a bit less of a wobble, and a fairly circular orbit around its amber-gold sun. The planet is more tectonically active than Earth, with several towering volcanic mountain ranges belching out foul smelling gasses, polluting what would otherwise be beautiful plateaus and valleys in the continental interiors. Most of the surface of Murphy's World is covered by oceans. Such features contribute to the diversity of climate and the localized monsoon wind patterns in various regions.

The length of a day on Murphy's World varies with the weather. Hot, unbearably muggy summer days, and cold, wet miserable days last longer than mild warmish days. People who appreciate extremes of weather will enjoy their stay. Due to the planet's *clockwise* spin on its axis, the sun *rises in the west* and *sets in the east;* except on alternate Tuesdays, when it takes the day off.

Murphy's World has two massive moons, Bill and Ben, and an assortment of smaller ones: Harpo, Zeppo, Groucho, and Chico. No one is known to have visited any of the moons (at least none have returned). Some inhabitants believe that they are not as distant as they appear, and that you could reach one after several days ride in a balloon. (On Murphy's World, they just may be right.)

Bill appears in the sky as a pale white disc. Ben, slightly larger, orbits very close to the planet.



It hovers directly over a favorite spot in the Northern Hemisphere — though no one is quite sure why, or how. It greatly affects tides and causes geothermal activity that darkens the area with oppressive clouds. This region experiences a long daily eclipse of the sun. The day progresses from inky darkness to a hazy dawn of tentative daylight peering through dense volcanic cloud. (Except when it's raining, which is often). This mid-morning twilight is followed by darkness at noon, twilight again in the afternoon, a brief period of cloudy light, then finally twilight leading into night. Due to the lack of direct solar radiation, the air temperature in this area is rather cool. It is *not* a coveted vacation spot.

This region is aptly named the *Dark Lands*. The lifeforms and cultures found in this realm of eternal twilight are believed by many (admittedly non-residents) to be a significant threat to the enlightened inhabitants of Murphy's World.

The Dark Lands of Lunacy

The Dark Lands are considered by some to be the source of ultimate evil... if you believe in that sort of thing. They are feared, not so much for the almost constant darkness (even worse on a cloudy day), but for the beings who occupy the territory and the bizarre *supernatural disease* they carry — BrainBlight. Though it is not certain this sickness originated in the Dark Lands, it is clear this region contains the largest population of those afflicted with this contagious, mind-decaying illness. Some claim that the moon Ben is the cause of this blight, looming as it does so close to the surface of the planet. Others, even more deeply steeped in forbidden lore (or heavier imbibers of hard liquor) whisper that Ben has a directing mind, and is deliberately causing this malignancy.

A healthy mind is essential to control the effect of Ludo on your body and environment; this is precisely what the inhabitants of the Dark Lands lack. Thus, as settlers of the Dark Lands fell prey to this supernatural plague, their land was transformed from a place of picturesque herbal gardens and cottages, to that of a ravaged and ever-altering disaster zone, bleak and dying. The Dark Lands are even more geographically unstable than the remote wilderness areas of the rest of the planet.

There is an even greater concern. In recent years, beings have ventured forth from the Dark Lands, offsetting the environmentally stabilizing effects of more sane individuals, and infecting those they encounter with the madness. Since it can take up to a year or more for symptoms of the disease to reveal themselves, travellers so infected have spread the plague many hundreds of miles from its source.

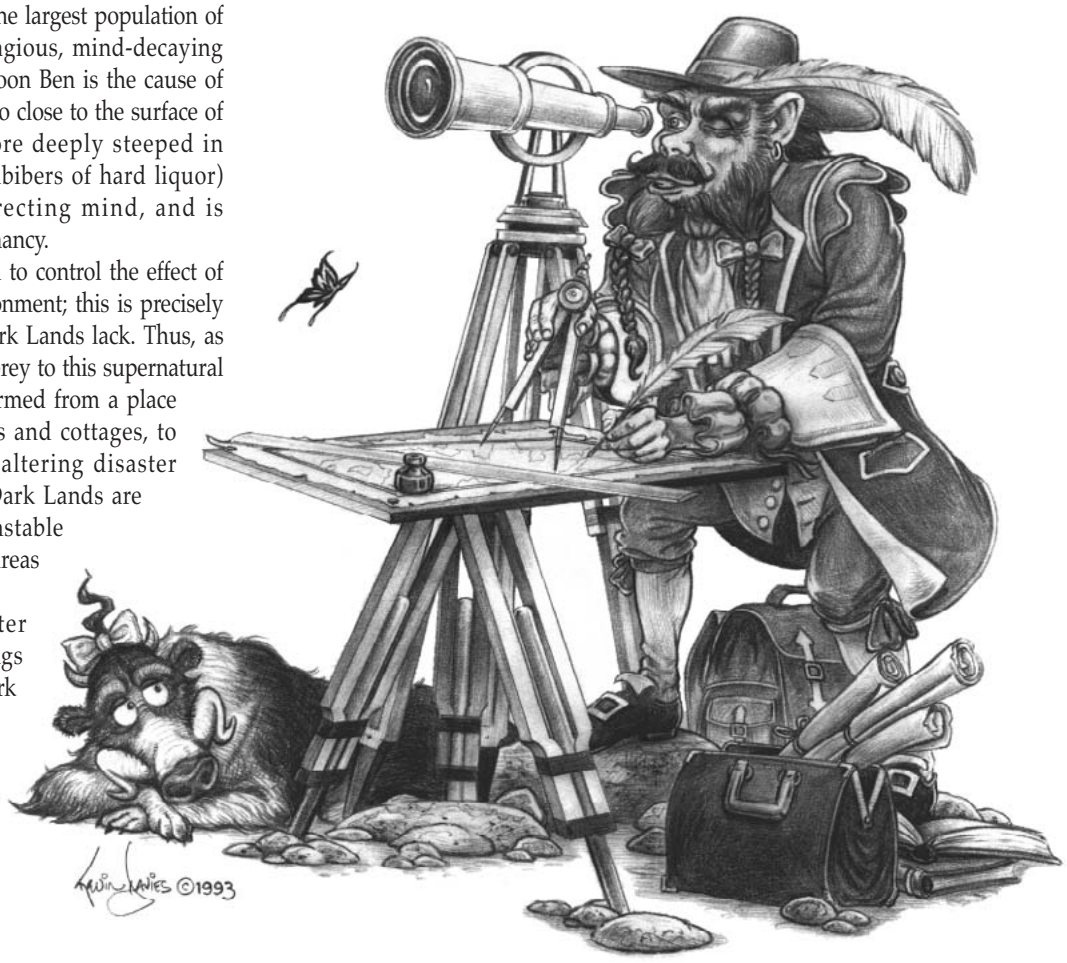
The civilized peoples surrounding the Dark Lands are on their guard, and immediately destroy any person or creature acting strangely (this is not the best place for you to take a vacation — the natives have a very broad definition of 'strange behavior'). Inevitably, a few contaminated individuals slip through. Occasionally, large bands of marauding 'Lunies', as the infected are called, wander into civilized areas. BrainBlight, by weakening their minds, makes them more susceptible to Ludo's weird radiation. It also alters their self-image, and this is externalized in actual physical transformations — occasionally barbaric, sometimes bestial, and usually just plain strange.

It is rumored that some strong-willed individuals possess *immunity* to the disease. Some of these are leaders of the Lunie armies who seek to conquer the civilized regions of the planet.

The response to all this from the rest of the inhabited world is mixed. Those most distant from the problem area (for example, the Elves of Whitethorn), consider the matter to be just another "trifling local problem in one of those backward out-of-the-way foreign places." Meanwhile, those closer to the problem live in a constant state of dread. Most of them

OPPOSITE: Ben, the largest of the two Great Moons is thought to be somewhat less secure — hence his need to hover so close to the planet. While some have tried to reach for the nearby planetoids and asteroids, nobody has ever been able to display a convincing snapshot or postcard of the trip.

BELOW: It takes a person with the patience of stone and a will of iron to be a surveyor on Færie. Out in the wilderness, even the smallest of stray thoughts can alter the landscape from forest to tundra. Of course an experienced mapmaker may use this to his or her advantage. Something to keep in mind when you purchase a map or tourist guidebook.



There is no limit to how *weird* things can get.

BELOW: A map of the 'Important World' by the famous Dwarvish cartographer Hedley Banister III, official mapmaker for the Light Elves of Whitethorn Castle in the Land of Lyonesse.

are making contingency plans to deal with the threats of invasion, madness, and falling property values.



The Teleportation Gates

The most interesting and significant feature of Murphy's World is its infamous network of Teleportation Gates. Some believe that whoever gains control of the Gates will command the multiverse, for they are not only the doorways to other worlds, but also to other dimensions. Many a megalomaniac dreams of discovering their whereabouts.

The origin of the Gates is clouded in the Mists of Time. Some believe that they were created for intergalactic conquest, some that they are the stepping stones of the Gods, still others insist they were used by an intergalactic floral delivery service — most remain skeptical.

None of that really matters now, because no one is sure *where* any Gates are. Even if you found one, there's no guarantee it would still operate — at least not in the way you might expect. Some Gates, it is said, *travel about* by themselves, never to be found in the same place twice.

The oldest history books on the planet claim that a Teleportation Gate (sometimes referred to as a Dimension Door) can be located just about anywhere. If you could see one (which typically you can't, unless you already know it's there), it would appear as a circular disk about **7' [2 m]** in diameter. Other worm-ridden tomes indicate that the Gates exist in various shapes and sizes. Some are surrounded by smoke or mist. Others stand out as clear as day. Some have dark or colored swirling interiors, while still others glow. Occasionally, a Gate flickers in and out of sight, or has some kind of visual clue as to its existence (e.g., a large sign with an arrow, or a cryptic flower sigil) nearby.

Historians state that each Gate is operated by a unique *code* — unfortunately, these codes are lost as well. However, certain mouldy manuscripts do refer to a 'Book of Deliverance' which contains a listing of all Gates, their codes, and destinations. No complete copy of this opus is known to exist, but it is possible that some fragments could be found deep in the shelves of used book stores or misfiled in public libraries. Supposedly this book was carried by all floral delivery agents — whom no one with any credibility will allow themselves to believe in.

According to legend, whenever you are close to a Dimension Door you'll immediately get a 'tingly feeling'. This tingle will cause the hairs along the back of your arm and neck to rise, and you will sense the existence of the Gate, though you won't be *precisely* sure where it is.

Ancient writings now lost provided instructions in the operation of a Teleportation Gate. Though there are a number of possible ways to activate a Gate, the following method is one that most scholars have agreed

might actually work for a particular style of Gate.

This Gate has a series of ten **2' [0.6 m]** wide circles arranged in a band around the central disk. Whenever one of these circles is pushed, the entire disk rotates, first to the right, and then to the left, returning to its original position. This series of pushes represents a code, telling the Gate what other Gate to connect to.

If you pause from pressing the circles for a period of about ***seven seconds,*** the Teleportation Gate assumes that you have finished entering a code, and *the Gate will **open*** (or in some cases do something totally unexpected).

The entire disk will now become dark, or multi-colored, or appear as a vast well of stars — the result varies from Gate to Gate. The circular activation points will become translucent. At this point, you and any intrepid companions may plunge into the void. It is possible that there could be several more steps; some accounts indicate that you can continue touching activation points around the ring, though again, the ancient writings are unclear on just what effect this might produce.

If nothing enters the Gate for a period of ***seven seconds,*** the Teleportation Gate, in a booming voice, will loudly count off ***ten seconds,*** after which it will shut. Once closed, a portal will be unresponsive to any further attempt to activate it for about ***three minutes*** — or just long enough for someone to fly into a panic while waiting.

It is whispered amongst wizards, sages and those who drink from bottles in brown paper bags that some Gates still exist in working condition. It does seem to be the only explanation for the occasional sudden appearances of strangely garbed and confounded beings who travel about in a dazed state talking to themselves. These benighted creatures request information about others who speak in a similar nonsensical way, and ask if this is the place where loose change, left socks, and spare keys end up. Characteristically, they carry on this way for a few months (sometimes years), until they've sat down and had a good cry; then they get on with life and fit in just fine.

It is rumored that due to some intergalactic mishap in the distant past, many of the portals function in only *one direction.* Thus, if you experience the misfortune of taking a one way portal (e.g., to Murphy's World), you must scout around for another to take you home.

One decrepit parchment claims that if you can 'speak' with inanimate objects, you can ask the Gate itself for the location of the nearest portal going your way; it will gladly reply — and there is a miniscule chance that it knows the correct answer.

The Passage of Time Relative to Murphy's World

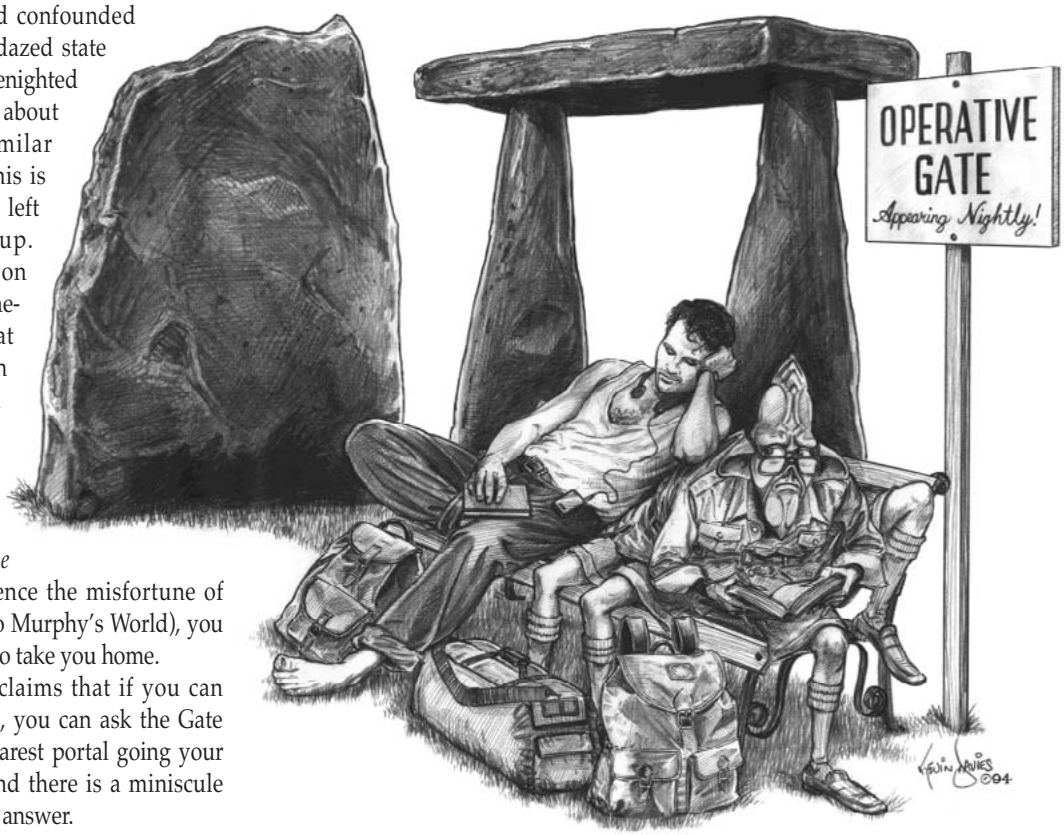
The amount of time spent on Murphy's World does not always match the time that passes in the place you came from. It depends on where you're from and which Gate you happened to use in travelling to and/or from the planet. Stories abound of people who plunged through a Gate, spent the evening whooping it up with the Brownies, wore giant toadstools for party hats, fornicated with Færies, then returned home; only to find that they were gone for *years,* not hours! Their greatest shock upon returning was discovering the amount of their overdue library book fines.

The Impact of Geography & Gates on the Cultures of Murphy's World

There's no point in trying to describe the local geography of the wilderness regions, since you can never count on it appearing exactly as described; thus, we will concentrate on the more densely inhabited (and geographically stable) areas of the planet.

Geopolitically, Murphy's World is divided into territories by race, climate, geographic obstacles, social customs, and forms of government. Murphy attributed the variety and number of intelligent species to the curious geography of the planet. Early in the evolution of Murphy's World, geographic barriers (such as

BELOW: Waiting for a Gate to become operative offers the perfect time to put one's feet up and relax, catch up on a good mystery novel, or make a new acquaintance.



The *ignorant* are most likely to travel the path to *prosperity.*

CHAPTER TWO

The Significant Races & Cultures of Murphy's World

MURPHY'S WORLD POSSESSES A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF CULTURES and races. The descriptions that follow are of the races and cultures encountered by Sean Murphy during his travels. Some groups, of a more secretive nature, await discovery. Many of the lifeforms reflect popular legend and fable, for Murphy's World is a place of classic mythology and fictional literature, made real — though slightly twisted.

Each race listed has a discussion of their physical characteristics and abilities, special traits and powers, language, geographic distribution and settlements, customs and lifestyle, skills and labor practices, religions and superstitions, and some sample clans or communities.

A Panoramic View of the Many Cultures

Murphy observed that among the civilized peoples there exists a difference in attitude which divides them into two generalized camps — those of a civilized, constructive and sane (though not necessarily friendly) aspect, and those of a chaotic and destructive nature, verging on malevolent insanity. The only problem is that sometimes it's difficult for an objective observer to tell the two apart. It all depends on who you know, and where you're coming from.

Cultural Relations

Most of the civilized cultures get along. Of course there are always the anti-social types. These are dealt with in a number of ways: a) they're ignored, with the hope that they'll all quietly die off or cross-breed out of existence, b) they're isolated politically and economically via trade sanctions, c) they're beaten on by coalitions whenever they get too uppity.

While no culture is totally immune from believing that it is better than the rest, some are more overt about it than others. Usually this concept of superiority is expressed in an unconscious and reasonably subtle way — not unlike the way people of different social classes react to one another. Rarely does such behavior lead to hostile or aggressive actions. However, diplomatic faux pas are not unknown.

It is a fact that at any given time, two cultures are bashing each other's brains out somewhere. Everyone just hopes that said combatants are engaged somewhere very far away, and that neither owe them any money.

Diplomacy is the favorite pastime of the wealthier nations and city-states. It is considered an appropriate profession for dilettantes, retired heads of state, and children who must be sent out of the way due to some scandal or other. Those posted or self-promoted to diplomatic positions experience a whirlwind of cocktail parties, back-room meetings, and international travel, with huge helpings of pomp and circumstance along the way. The diplomatic circuit is rarely thought of as an activity critical to the promotion and maintenance of civilized culture.

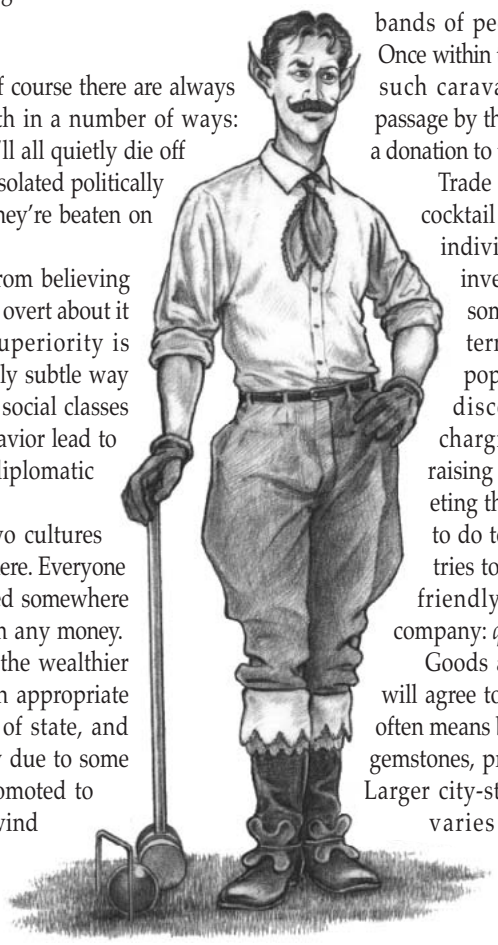
Of course, after several Spayed Gerbils with Rum Fizz chasers, disparate parties do occasionally see eye to eye and strike up a deal of some kind. Unfortunately such arrangements are usually struck down or so altered beyond recognition when returned to their respective governments that they fail to achieve ratification. Still, diplomacy is deemed good for public relations, even among enemies. And let us not forget the potential for spying — something that, of course, never happens. Gentlemen, after all, never open other gentlemen's mail. That's what the hired help is for.

Commerce & Trade

Everyone who is anyone knows that wealth is generated by trade, i.e., exports of goods and services. Trade is a serious business among the friendly cultures. All have a vested interest in maintaining safe routes for goods between areas of manufacturing and the marketplace. There are scores of trade agreements and mutual protection treaties (though occasionally these have caused wars…). Streams of merchant caravans roam the vast regions between major cities. Smaller bands of peddlers journey to villages and trading posts. Once within the official domain of a local ruler or government such caravans are usually offered protection and a safe passage by the local militia — though occasionally this requires a donation to the garrison pension fund.

Trade is a popular topic of conversation at salons and cocktail parties in capitals everywhere — after all, the individuals doing the talking are often the primary investors and insurers of trade goods. *Free trade* is something everybody wants as long as it is on *their* terms — freer for them than anyone else. Other popular subjects are *tariffs* and *duties*, i.e., ways to discourage foreigners from selling locally by charging them a fee to enter your market, or just raising the price yourself at the point of sale and pocketing the tax. This is another thing that everyone wants to do to everyone else but protests whenever someone tries to do it to them. Finally there is one word that all friendly investors know never to mention in polite company: *quotas.*

Goods and services are traded for whatever someone will agree to accept in return. In more primitive locales this often means barter, or something of more universal value, i.e., gemstones, precious metals, comic books, collector cards, etc. Larger city-states often mint their own currency. Opinion varies as to how valuable these currencies are,



LEFT: Sir Reginald Twitsworth III, renowned international croquet champion, darling of the Elvish blazer and straw hat set, and all around swell chap.



depending upon whether it is minted from precious metal or made of some substance like silly-putty. An additional concern is whether the market (or the bandits) in the next valley consider it valuable as well. This is why moneychangers are both popular and hated.

Money & Relative Values on Murphy's World

1 Groat (copper: a 'penny')
1 Grupnick (brass: a 'dime') = 10 Groats
1 Simoleon (silver: a 'dollar') = 10 Grupnicks = 100 Groats
1 Dinero (gold: 'ten dollars') = 10 Simoleons = 100 Grupnicks = 1,000 Groats
1 Clam (gold: 'hundred dollars', called 'Bobloons' in the Land of Bob) = 10 Dinero = 100 Simoleons
10 Clams = Mucho Dinero. You're Rich!

Examples of Income & Wages

Brownie Rock Star:	100,000 Clams	(= 1,000,000 Dinero = 10,000,000 Simoleons)	per year
Landowner, Large, Gentry:	500 Clams	(= 5,000 Dinero = 50,000 Simoleons)	per year
Landowner, Small:	100 Clams	(= 1,000 Dinero = 10,000 Simoleons)	per year
Interior Decorator, Elvish:	10 Clams	(= 100 Dinero = 1,000 Simoleons)	per project
Contractor, Dwarvish:	5 Clams	(= 500 Dinero = 5,000 Simoleons)	per project
Master Artisan:	2 Grupnicks	(= 20 Groats)	per day
Laborer:	8 Groats		per day (plus free water)
Soldier, Mercenary:	4 Simoleons	(= 40 Grupnicks)	per day
Soldier, Cavalryman:	8 Grupnicks	(= 80 Groats)	per day
Soldier, Infantry:	4 Grupnicks	(= 40 Groats)	per day
Soldier, Archer:	2 Grupnicks	(= 20 Groats)	per day
Bouncer, Giant:	1 Grupnick	(= 10 Groats)	per day (plus free beer)

Lifestyle & Quality of Life

When it comes to lifestyle in the civilized regions, inhabitants of Murphy's World aren't really all that different from the rest of the multiverse. The rich live in luxury, worrying about stock prices, next quarter's profits, and interest rates, while everyone else tries to glean a meaningful existence from the endless struggle to make ends meet in some thankless job.

People everywhere want the same thing: good company, a little respect from their peers, and as much stuff as they can get their hands on. Some are just better than others at achieving these goals.

Those bold enough to leave the stability of the towns and cities and venture into the wilderness can generate their own stuff by commanding the forces of Ludo. A strong will, lots of faith, and a good dose of concentration are the necessary ingredients if your 'possessions' are to be permanent. However, in the middle of nowhere, companionship and respect are hard to come by.

Technocrats & Intergalactic Refugees

Most civilized peoples have either heard about strangers who periodically show up out of nowhere, seen their clothing or equipment, or invited them over for dinner. The influence of this continued influx of individuals of varied species and technological backgrounds has enriched the cultures that they have come into contact with. Locals make use of new and weird artifacts, and incorporated imported goods into their fashion and design.

Some local scholars have tried to make sense of these random appearances, but most simply accept it as just another aspect of their unique and inexplicable home world.

The Lunies: Destructive & Insane Races

The 'Lunies' is a catch-all term used by the 'sane' inhabitants of Færie to refer to those who have been infected by the madness called ***BrainBlight***. However, Lunies may in fact belong to one of many regional bands or settlements, each with their own distinct name and characteristics.

The only consistent thing about the Lunie peoples is that you can count on them to act irrationally and unexpectedly — they often do things which surprise even themselves. Although they are considered evil by the majority of peoples, they are not evil per se, they simply don't behave in a typically 'civilized' manner.

The good peoples let this nasty group off the hook a bit by suggesting that their condition is a product of their environment — namely the effect of exposure to the intense radiating energies of the sun, Ludo, or inhabiting an area close to the hovering moon Ben and its Dark Lands. (This is somewhat comparable to living next to an open sewer). Those races possessing limited willpower are vulnerable to the BrainBlight, which rots the mind and inflicts madness, along with a desire to live in mobile homes in tornado prone regions. Additionally, the mental instability of the affected races causes the landscape where they dwell to be unstable, increasing the chance of it altering — a situation otherwise rare in the inhabited regions of Murphy's World.

Many people live in fear of the spread of these insane races. It is believed that the Lunies' expansion will lead to chaos and unpredictability, and to an end to civilization. A few intrepid (and somewhat twisted) souls think this would make for an interesting change of pace for the planet.

Examples of Prices

Food & Possessions

Meal, Veggie, Self-prep: 1 Groat
Meal, Meat, Tavern: 10 Simoleons
Corn Chips: 1 Simoleon/bag
Wine, Good : 2 Simoleons/bottle
Beer, Ale, Poor: 1 Groat/cup
Book, Handwritten: 20 Dinero
Coach, Passage (one way): 1 Grupnick/mile traveled
Ship, Passage (one way): 1 Simoleon/day at sea
Wagon, (1,200 lb load): 3 Dinero

Clothing, Peasant

Peasant Woolen Tunic: 5 Groats
Gentry Garment: 3 Dinero
Fashionable Gown: 1 Clam
Designer Jeans: 2 Clams
Sandals, Cheap: 1 Groat
Shoes, Average: 10 Simoleons
Boots, Quality: 60 Simoleons

Armor & Weapons

Leather Tunic: 5 Simoleons
Mail Shirt: 1 Clam
Dagger: 1 Grupnick
Bow & Arrows: 1 Simoleon
Short Sword: 1 Dinero

Animals

Ox: 1 Dinero
Horse, Draught: 2 Simoleons
Horse, Riding: 1 Dinero
Horse, War: 1 Clam

Buildings (Annual Rent)

Inn Room (1 Night): 1–20 Groats
Hovel/Hut/Room: 5 Simoleons
Row House: 30 Simoleons
Merchant's Store: 60 Simoleons

THE ELVES

THIS IS ONE PEOPLE you should *never* take *lightly.* If 'culture' is what you're after, you've come to the right race. At least that is what an Elf will tell you should you be so *gauche* as to inquire as to who has the most highly developed culture on Murphy's World.

When you encounter an Elf, you may not realize it at first. You might mistake one for a 17th century aristocrat, a commander of a Colonial British battalion, a banker, or someone in dire need of a good sexual experience.

Elves consider themselves the elite of the Færie races and connoisseurs *par excellence.* They demand (and occasionally have the funds to pay for) the best of everything. When they can't obtain the best, they'll convince themselves that what they have got is in fact superior.

Elves are naturally aesthetic and have a keen appreciation of beauty and music. They have a very highly developed sense of pride — it is their greatest weakness. The worst Elvish dread is embarrassment.



Duke and Dutchess Thurston Beachead ready for a night out on the town.

They are quite vain. They are image conscious: concerned about their appearance, their poise, and how they are perceived by others. They are sticklers for social convention. They even fret about the behavior of their acquaintances. Not knowing the proper fork to use for the salad course at the dinner table will forever demean you in the eyes of the typical Elf.

Elves believe that it is important at all times to *appear* (it doesn't matter whether you are or not) complex, sophisticated, wise, and appealing. They believe that they are a superior race, that the world was created for their benefit, and that they are the most refined and advanced culture. Other races consider Elves cold, superficial egomaniacs, and hold them in contempt.

Elves rarely show their emotions, particularly to strangers, and many consider friendships with other species to be not worth the bother, since the shorter-lived types are not around long enough to get to know well (on Elf terms, anyway).

Elves have difficulty forming attachments even amongst themselves, partly because their strong, although repressed, desire for friendship and affection leaves them open to grief when a friend or companion dies — attachments built up over hundreds of years become deeper and stronger than any other race can know. When a long-term companion is lost, Elves may go berserk, especially if the companion has been killed, and then brood and grieve for decades. Elves are loyal to pledged commitments, and will come to the aid of those to whom they feel an obligation regardless of cost, difficulty, or whether or not the person really desires their assistance.

Though Elves spend a large part of their time socializing and politicking, they balance this with extended periods of solitude. During this 'quality time' they satisfy their at times insatiable curiosity about the world around them. They collect beetles and butterflies, explore the lost ruins of ancient civilizations, and spend long hours playing the latest video games.

Despite their sometimes solitary nature, Elves can work effectively in teams when the need arises. They can be formidable fighters — or at least formidable employers of mercenaries. Their longevity gives them a great fund of experience which makes them adept at cunning traps, tactical manoeuvres, and avoiding enemies much tougher than they are.

Elves give the impression that they are captains of efficiency and pioneers of most of the known world's creative endeavors. In fact, *giving impressions* is one of the few things that Elves are capable of doing on their own. Elvish culture is relatively non-productive and introspective. This quality is something which has developed over the many eons of the existence of the race and is now an integral part of their culture.

When without a handy hireling to do their work, Elves, by and large, are lackadaisical; this tends to make them appear incompetent. Of course, most of the time, they could do the job if they put their minds to it.

They do, however, have a knack for letting their underlings manage themselves and Elvish businesses without much intervention. Most of the other races simply use the capital of the long-living Elves to finance their own ventures and pay the Elves a percentage as silent partners. In return, the Elves gain status, a steady income, and abundant free time to pursue more important priorities — like organizing the next badminton tourney.

Elf Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Elves are intelligent, graceful, knowledgeable, athletic, excellent wordsmiths, and have *magical powers*. Unfortunately they are also fussy, stubborn, assertive, conceited, snobbish, condescending, and correct far too often for others to remain comfortable around them for long. This has more to do with their lifespan than any inherent natural aptitude.

Elves live an average of 10,000 years. To most other races, this might as well be forever. Most Elves, by the time they reach adolescence (at about 300 years), have seen and done it all, or so they'll inform you. Elves take offense easily. They have thin skins and are somewhat insecure. They're a bit like wealthy, youthful, jaded, spoiled brats.

Elves stand a modest **3'5" [1 m]** to **5'6" [1.7 m],** and weigh between **50 lbs [23 kg]** and **130 lbs [59 kg].** They have pointed, mobile ears with very acute hearing, fair skin (darker in tropical climes), and favor long hair, which can be blonde, white, red, black, brown, or green.

Their eyes are almond-shaped and usually green, blue or brown. Perfectly sharp vision is the Elvish norm. Despite this, many insist on wearing an unnecessary monocle, claiming "it adds a touch of dash, wot say?"

Elves have a superb sense of balance (which they are forever pointing out in annoyingly subtle ways), and are good climbers, lacking any fear of heights. Any Elf can walk a tightrope and will try to if dared, particularly at a party after their second drink. Elf fingers and toes are somewhat longer and more flexible than a Human's, giving them greater hand and foot dexterity. Elvish voices are higher than Humans', and have purer tones, making them capable of wonderful singing, or calling across great distances. Elves go through a lot of glassware.

Elf Special Traits & Powers

Every Elf possesses a magical power. It doesn't show itself until an Elf reaches their teenage years, at which point it kicks in with force. It gradually settles down and becomes more manageable as the years progress.

In truth, this power is more of a supernatural knack or minor talent for which you would be hard-pressed to find a practical use. Classics include: 'flower arranging', 'communicating with inanimate objects', and 'croquet ball retrieval'. Abilities which contribute to *productive work* and non-leisure activities are regarded as *less desirable* and a defect in upbringing. Their possessors keep quiet about them.

Elf Language

All Elves speak a local dialect of *Elvish.*

Of all the Færie races, the Elves possess the most ornamental written language. Elves think of writing as an art form. No word is committed to parchment until the author is certain that it is precisely the one called for — Elvish novelists have serious problems with deadlines. No one has ever heard of an Elf wasting a piece of parchment (but who knows; perhaps they simply have a superior recycling system).

Elves have no difficulty picking up a language (again, a benefit of their long life experience), but usually begrudge the chore since most non-Elvish languages change beyond recognition after a millennium or so. Thus, though most Elves become masters of many tongues, these languages tend to be archaic or dead. The Elves do offer a solution to this problem however: all foreigners living abroad are encouraged to learn Elvish.

When an Elf does condescend to speak to someone of another race in their barbarous native tongue, they believe that they are doing them a *big* favor. Any Elf whom you annoy will feign lack of comprehension in order to end the conversation and snub you.

Elvish is extremely difficult for non-Elves to master, and Elves *rarely* speak to anyone who verbally destroys their beloved vernacular. Most non-Elves who attempt to learn Elvish look and sound like idiots as they tie their tongues in knots (and quite likely bite them off) while trying to get them around even the most simple phrases — e.g., "Shaaradwchh uhnn araav, osggwêlwch uhan ddthaah," means, "Please speak slower.")

Elf Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Elves dislike crowds and tend to be somewhat claustrophobic. Their preferred habitat is a temperate or

The Average Elf

Quote:	"That's not quite cricket, eh what?"	
Vocations:	Charity Event Organizer, Cricket Player, University Don, Aristocrat.	
Intelligence:	16	Bright
Willpower:	15	Willful
Charisma:	17	Charming
Mystic:	14	Sensitive
Strength:	6	Weak
Dexterity:	17	Nimble
Fitness:	14	Hale
Appearance:	15	Comely
Health Points:	11	
Height:	4'6" [1.4 m]	
Weight:	90 lbs [41 kg]	
Traits:	Arrogant, Conceited, Stuffy, Perfectionist, Snobbish, Picky, Disdainful of non-Elvish Things, Lazy, Afraid of Embarrassment.	

subtropical forest. They avoid tundra, hot deserts, environments which are lacking in trees (and other forms of 'cover'), and areas which are densely inhabited by other races. (Elves always make an exception for those non-Elves who make up their substantial serving staffs or work as their employees.) They sometimes locate near Dwarvish warrens for trading purposes. Within these limits Elves are broadly distributed. Their mecca is the Elvish Isles (the Isles of Avalon), and colonies are located almost anywhere there are pleasant forest lands.

Elves can be found in settlements of varying size, from glorious palaces to modest tree-homes, or complexes of communal arboreal dwellings and workshops. Easy access to shopping and entertainment is of prime consideration when an Elf is deciding where to live.

Typical Elf Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	(Roll multiple times for hyphenated last names) Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Atholl	Alfreda	Aberdeen
4 – 6	Averill	Arcadia	Asquith
7 – 9	Basil	Bathilda	Attlee
10 – 12	Bentley	Bronwyn	Baldwin
13 – 15	Caldwell	Concordia	Balfour
16 – 18	Cedric	Devondra	Canning
19 – 21	Darnell	Edina	Cavendish
22 – 24	Dudley	Elfrida	Chatham
25 – 27	Entwhistle	Finella	Churchill
28 – 30	Ethelbert	Gillian	Derby
31 – 33	Fairfax	Guinevere	Disreali
34 – 36	Gareth	Hayley	Eden
37 – 39	Gaylord	Hortense	Gladstone
40 – 42	Hadley	Isadora	Grafton
43 – 45	Holden	Jocelyn	Grenville
46 – 48	Ignatius	Jonquil	Heath
49 – 51	Jarvis	Kendra	Palmerston
52 – 54	Kelvin	Lacey	Peel
55 – 57	Kenton	Lucinda	Pelham
58 – 60	Lancelot	Mallory	Macmillan
61 – 63	Langford	Melvina	Major
64 – 66	Manley	Nanette	Melbourne
67 – 69	Marsden	Octavia	Newcastle
70 – 72	Neville	Olivia	Perceval
73 – 75	Nigel	Pamela	Rockingham
76 – 78	Osbert	Penelope	Rosebery
79 – 81	Paxton	Regina	Russell
82 – 84	Phelps	Rosalind	Salisbury
85 – 87	Quentin	Sorrel	Shelburne
88 – 90	Radcliffe	Thomasina	Thatcher
91 – 93	Reginald	Vanessa	Walpole
94 – 96	Safford	Victoria	Wellington
97 – 100	Twitchell	Winifred	Wilmington

Elf Customs & Lifestyle

Elves are omnivores and prefer a mixed diet. They dine out frequently and relish the culinary creations of other cultures — so long as they are prepared by a reputable Elvish chef.

The typical forest-dwelling Elves have their servants hunt locally, gather wild foods, and cultivate small areas beneath the trees. A stranger might see only a wild-wood, but Elves can instantly detect a forest inhabited by their kind. The game in such a forest is protected and subtly managed and bred. There is an abundance of nut and fruit trees and the undergrowth contains many carefully selected berries. Elves delight in flowers, encouraging and selecting wild varieties rather than planting flowerbeds. The upper stories of the forest canopy are thick with camouflaged walkways, storehouses, and dinner theatres.

One fruit which the Elves cultivate with a passion is the grape, for they are very fond of wine. A sign that Elves dwell nearby is an abundance of grapevines, growing over trees or planted on sunny slopes. Vintage festivals, wine tastings, and outings to the community de-tox center are prominent features of Elvish life.

Elves have a passion for trends, especially when it comes to fashion. Many great Elvish designers have been 'inspired' by the garments worn by those dropped onto Murphy's World by a Gate or spacecraft failure. Elvish garb tends to be a mishmash of various designs with an overall 18th Century flavor. Elvish tailors make their clothing from carefully spun and dyed natural fibers, soft leather if more rugged wear is required, or fabric from the microfibre polyester farms in the province of Seersucker in Southwest Avalon.

While more 'traditional' Elvish communities in the forests favor garments colored and patterned to blend into the surroundings (varying with location and season), the 'civilized' town-dwelling Elves have adopted bright colors and dandified accoutrements. A common Elvish curse is to wish for another to possess *bad taste.*

With their long lifespans and frequent boredom, Elves have strong incentives to develop their culture through entertainment. They love feasts and festivals, and are skilled at organizing elaborate and beautiful masques, banquets and lawn bowling tournaments. They have a passion for extravagant cocktail and open air garden parties; a social challenge and obligation met with simultaneous enthusiasm and dread. Wrangling an invitation to the next 'important' party consumes an inordinate amount of time. Being snubbed is seen as a fate worse than having your nose pierced by a blind Troll with the shakes.

Elf Skills & Labor Practices

Elves practice all the arts and crafts — on rare occasions, however, a few stop practicing and actually get serious about their work.

Elves prefer crafts which do not produce overmuch dirt and noise: there *are* Elvish blacksmiths, but not many. Elves consider it uncouth to be seen sweating. When possible, town-dwelling Elves hire other races to provide labor deemed too *physical* for a gentleman or lady Elf. Skills considered socially acceptable to Elves include: Party Caterer, Talk Show Host Companion, Talent Scout, Charity Event Organizer, and for those without connections, Badminton Bird Retriever.

Elves commonly trade with Dwarves to secure their metal and finished *functional* goods. Buying Dwarven swords and then decorating them with inlay and engraving is a common Elvish practice. They are unmatched in aesthetic design, and the Dwarves often commission Elvish experts to make patterns for jewelry. (It is rumored that some degenerate Elvish artisans incorporate Elvish swear words into their motifs — they consider it great sport to sell items so decorated to others ignorant of their writing.)

Elvish cooking is matchlessly subtle due to their knowledge of herbs and spices. Elvish spices, cordials, preserved fruits, Gummy-Trolls, and other luxury foodstuffs are valued articles of trade.

Elves are great culinary experimenters; they will try anything even vaguely edible in hopes of discov-

ering some new taste sensation. Luckily, their internal constitution is very resistant to tummy upset.

At Elvish banquets each course is a work of art. Elves are masters of the art of 'noue-Elf cuisine': arranging extremely small portions of food in pleasant designs on extremely large plates.

When inspiration strikes, Elves can be great shipbuilders (or, rather, designers and contractors of shipbuilding talent). They design sleek fast vessels (average **40' [12 m]**), which are used for sport fishing and the annual Avalon Cup yacht races.

Elves are also splendid seafarers, and their slender, fast, silvery catamarans with colored sails range widely in the outer seas as yet not frequented by most other races. They visit many lands for their raw materials to supply their artisans; their merchant traders seek out jewels, exotic woods, rare flowers, and ignorant locals to exploit.

The Elves occasionally establish small colonies on remote islands. Such noble Elvish adventurers bravely shoulder the Elf Lord's Burden, bringing 'Culture' to the natives.

Elves make great storytellers, professors, musicians, poets, and variety show hosts. As statesmen, their condescension occasionally gets in the way, and diplomatic missions often result in more problems than they were sent to clear up. Thus such missions are rarely undertaken, and Elvish societies remain politically insular.

Elf Religion & Superstition

No race on Murphy's World is more concerned with the outward forms of religion and less with inward spirituality than the Elves. The typical Elf makes a great show of attending weekly religious services, but would have a difficult time telling you just who his or her deities are.

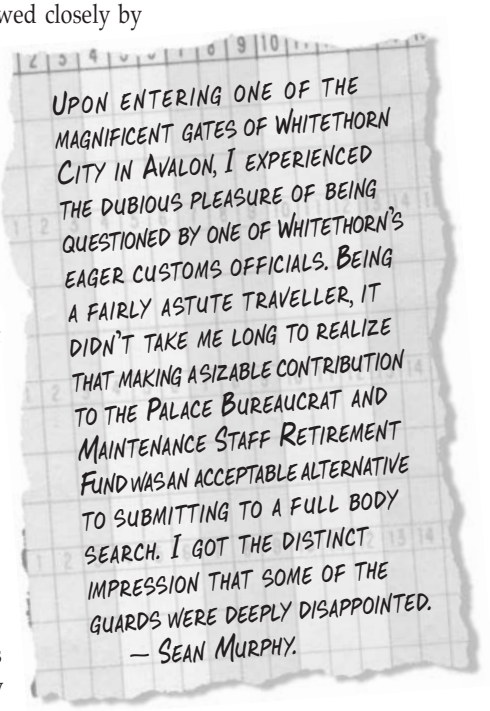
To an Elf, the important part of the religious experience is being *seen* there, and seeing who else is, or isn't. Religious services are ahead of even lawn bowling tournaments as a way for Elves to show off their new fashions, enthuse about their more famous friends, or talk about others behind their backs.

The Elvish religion is divided into three main groupings: High, Low, and Off-To-The-Side. No outsider can tell the difference in beliefs between the three, nor can most Elves. Belonging to the 'right' religious group, however, is essential to an Elf's social status; moving from one group to another is nearly impossible, making getting an invitation to a popular garden party look like child's play. Currently, the High Religion is thought to be in ascendancy as it has the best attended services, but few can tell whether this is due to the popularity of the deity or the skill of the caterers. Regardless, such trends are transitory and usually pass within a millennium or two.

The 'Light' Elves of Lyonesse

Being snobs, the Elves of Lyonesse view the world in terms of the social standing of others relative to themselves. They consider themselves to be the 'Light' Elves in comparison to their aggressive and primitive racial rivals across the Accidental Ocean, the Drow.

Since the most valued individual trait of the Light Elves is that of leisure time (followed closely by the ability to appreciate the 'finer things' in life), the ruling Lords of Lyonesse classify other regions by the capacity of their peoples to support a large aristocracy; in other words, people that the Elves can relate to. Regretfully, not many regions live up to the Elves' standards. Thus, the Elves conclude that they have the most advanced and desirable civilization in existence.



All Elvish maps of the world indicate the Isles of Avalon as the height of the civilized world, and detail the surrounding areas according to how the Elves value the inhabitants of each region: by social etiquette and pleasant aristocratic personages, useful talented hirelings and trade goods, ecopolitically uncouth civilizations (e.g., the Drow), barbarians, and insignificant or unknown territories.

The Isles of Avalon: Cultural Capital of the Light Elves

The center and origin of Elvish civilization is located on the Isles of Avalon in the **Land of Lyonesse,** on the eastern side of the Accidental Ocean. It is a picturesque place, with rolling hills and valleys of green fields separated by low stone walls and hedges, and little brick and thatch condos nestled along clear streams and babbling brooks.



Above: The Isles of Avalon and Lyonesse — homeland of the Light Elves, and as any one of them will tell you, the only significant location on any map of the planet.

The land is governed by **King Roderick Whitethorn the Amiable** and his **Queen, Gwendolyn the Aesthetic.** They rule from **Whitethorn Castle,** located in the central lowlands on the great River Concord. The river winds its way through the countryside permitting boats to reach the channel between Avalon and the mainland, where industrial pollutants are indifferently flushed out to sea.

Whitethorn City sits on a low hill overlooking a thriving assemblage of artisans, craftsfolk, and productive individuals of all races and backgrounds. Proclaiming itself the 'capital of culture', local policy encourages

BELOW: One of the many gates leading into the City of Whitethorn. This entry is for trading vessels and passenger ships. The water is quite deep and clear enough to see a few substandard and hostile ships below the waterline which have sunk over the years. It is a serious offense to dump waste or spit into the Whitethorn waters. You have been warned.

those with talents, marketable skills, and investment capital to cluster in the area. The goods produced in the many workshops located throughout the metropolis are exported far and wide, and traded for the food, raw resources, and self-help books.

Tapered and crenelated walls, towering **60' [18 m]** high and **20' [6 m]** or more thick, surround the roughly hexagonal-shaped city. Watchtowers rise at each of the six corners. There are six massive gates, one in the center of each wall. Two of these gates are for water travel along a **600' [183 m]** wide canal which enters and circles the city, then leads out to the River Concord. Another, smaller, canal beyond the city wall doubles as a moat; it is a favorite spot for punting.

The four remaining gates have drawbridges which are lowered daily to permit access to the town by road. At night, only one drawbridge remains lowered. Each of these gates consists of an outer portcullis of wrought iron, an inner gate, and a set of large reinforced double doors, which may be barred from the inside if necessary. Anyone caught between the two gates and deemed unwelcome can be questioned or quickly dispatched by arrows and chamberpots launched from above.

Barges, small galleys, and paddle boats carry foodstuffs and other imported resources along these waterways to the city. Finished artworks and devices are exported abroad, carried by the larger sea and coastal vessels docked in Avalon Harbor at the mouth of the Concord.

Passing through the city, cutting it into sections like a pie, are the six main roads, two of which run parallel to the canals. These are paved with cobblestones and lighted at night by fire-fly streetlights. They run toward the center of town, where, dominating the scenery for miles around, stands the towering architectural magnificence of Whitethorn Castle.

The Castle itself is built of white marble blocks, painstakingly carved and etched with a pattern of ornate relief vinework, so that the whole structure looks somehow organic and alive. Although designed by Elves, it was built by Dwarvish contractors (with surprisingly little graft) and has stood for over 10,000 years.

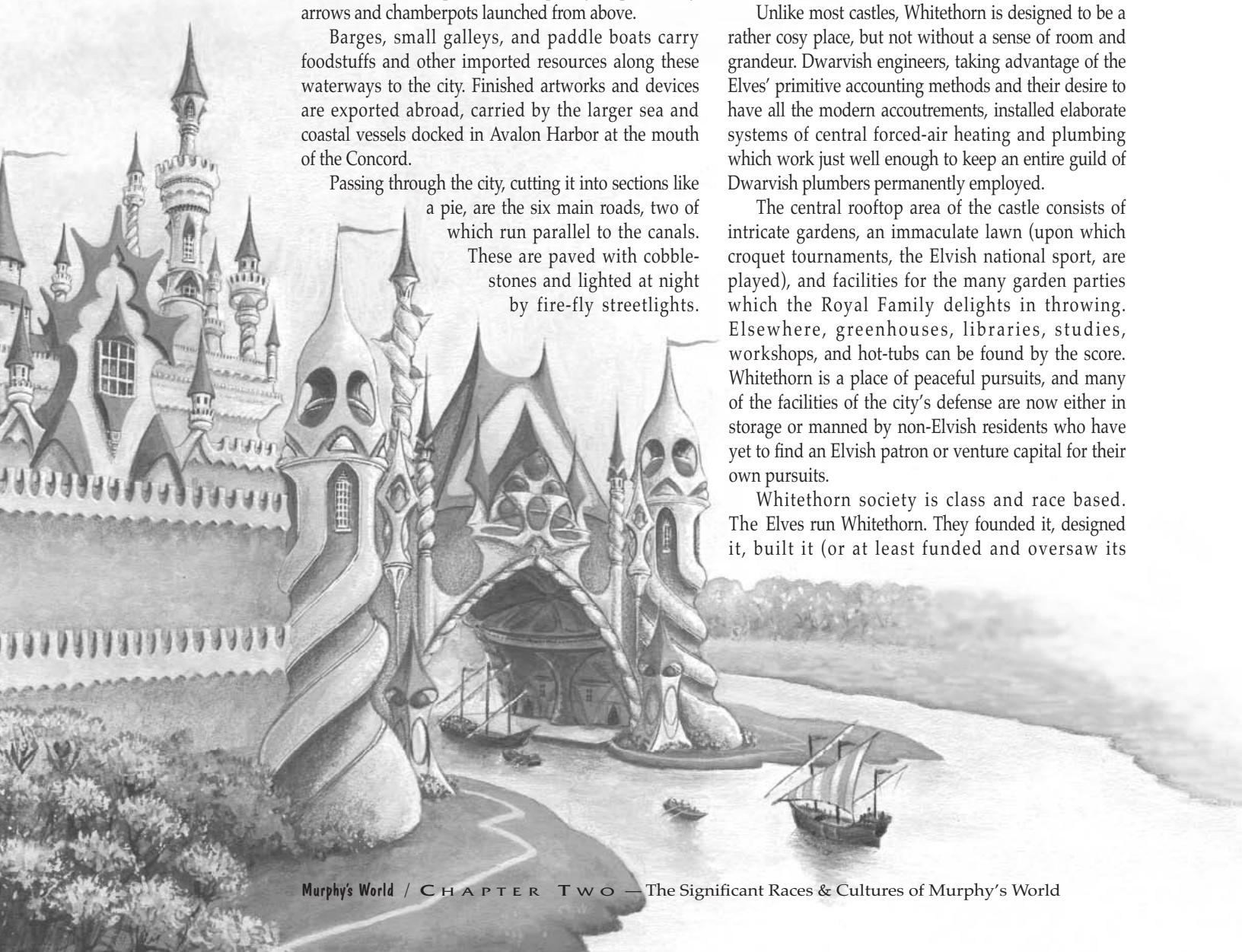
The main gate is a spectacle of colored enamel tiles, carved bas-reliefs, and pictures giving a visual account of the exploits of Elvish heroes: sports stars and gourmets alike.

The ironwork of the gate is formed in a pattern of rosebushes with thorns to prick unwanted intruders. Much of the decor of the castle, painstakingly produced by Dwarvish artisans, makes use of a plant-life motif, harkening back to the Elves' humble forest origins. This is to the chagrin of the chic inhabitants of the city who would rather not be reminded of their crude country cousins. For this bit of freelance design the Dwarves lost their bonus.

Unlike most castles, Whitethorn is designed to be a rather cosy place, but not without a sense of room and grandeur. Dwarvish engineers, taking advantage of the Elves' primitive accounting methods and their desire to have all the modern accoutrements, installed elaborate systems of central forced-air heating and plumbing which work just well enough to keep an entire guild of Dwarvish plumbers permanently employed.

The central rooftop area of the castle consists of intricate gardens, an immaculate lawn (upon which croquet tournaments, the Elvish national sport, are played), and facilities for the many garden parties which the Royal Family delights in throwing. Elsewhere, greenhouses, libraries, studies, workshops, and hot-tubs can be found by the score. Whitethorn is a place of peaceful pursuits, and many of the facilities of the city's defense are now either in storage or manned by non-Elvish residents who have yet to find an Elvish patron or venture capital for their own pursuits.

Whitethorn society is class and race based. The Elves run Whitethorn. They founded it, designed it, built it (or at least funded and oversaw its



construction), and reap the greatest benefits of its existence. The society is defined along distinct lines of financial wealth and family heritage. Those who can trace their roots back to the original forest settlement which once occupied the area still have the greatest prestige among the ruling class. The families of both the King and Queen can do this.

Next in line are those Elves who are financially independent: artisans and landlords are preferred, but merchants, venture capitalists, and gourmet cookie manufacturers are now demanding and getting equal treatment. Then come employed artisans and craftsfolk, military officers, followed by Elvish common laborers and Elves from abroad.

Below the Elves comes the hierarchy of the other races dwelling locally. Elves have had a significant relationship with Dwarves throughout the years, and have come to depend upon their judgement regarding matters of engineering and practical problem solving. Dwarves are afforded more respect by the Elves than any other race. Since the Elves consider all other races lower than dirt, this isn't saying much. Dwarves are seen as crude but useful craftsfolk who for reasons incomprehensible to the Elves, choose to live underground in the mines where they do most of their work. Thus they are forever relegated to the status of 'hired help'.

By and large though, the Elves like having Dwarves around. They are tireless and trustworthy workers, and are always sure to do a top job. Some are even bright enough to have brief conversations with — although one is advised not to look like they are enjoying it over much, in case one is being observed by a peer.

Some successful Dwarves have even been knighted and amassed significant fortunes and landholdings. These individuals and their families are afforded a status somewhere between that of an Elvish merchant and Elvish employee. Occasionally a Dwarvish merchant (or other non-Elvish individual) will grow wealthy and attempt through purchases to achieve the 'cultural status' that 5,000 or more years of Elvish upbringing ensures all Elves possess. This is looked upon as either quaint or troublesome by most Elves. Such an individual is thought to be attempting to rise above their natural station. Should such an individual become too obvious about their aspirations, they may inadvertently engage the malicious attentions of an especially insecure Elf who might submit the victim's name to all the junk-mail lists in the known world.

In a similar fashion, other races are afforded respect in the following order: Giants, Pixies, Brownies, and Trolls. Peoples such as the Dark Elves, Ogres, and their many local variations are on the whole treated as enemies of the Kingdom of Lyonesse, and most of the other kingdoms of the Færie Isles of Avalon. Humans and others not native to Murphy's World are tolerated, and treated as something of an amusing enigma: they may not be as sophisticated as Elves, but they do have some interesting ideas about fashion, mechanical devices, and decadent desserts. The Elves aren't quite sure where to place them in the hierarchy of things — other than, of course, *below* Elves.

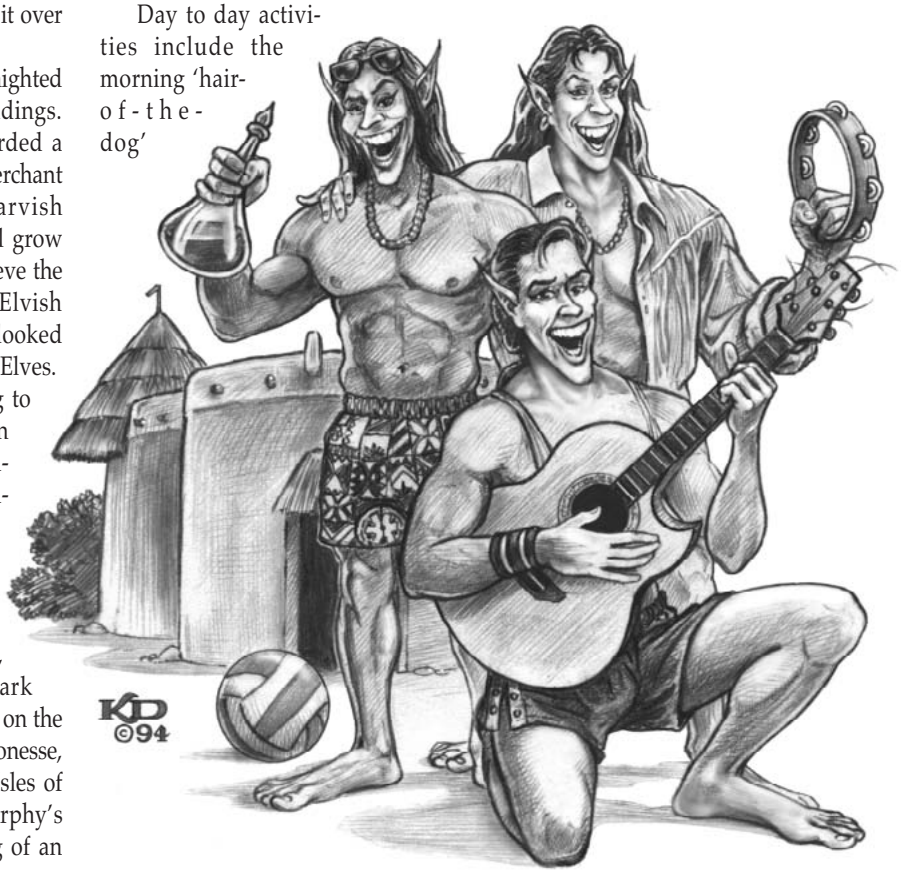
The Gandharva: An All Male Elf Clan

This collection of tribal communities numbering over 6,000 individuals and spread over the Rhibus Mountains and the lowland region of Patala is the ultimate fraternity. It is an *all male* clan whose members specialize as artisans, bards, traders, salvage operators, and gigolos — when they can be bothered to take time away from their leisure activities.

Gandharva are the most sought-after pinup hunks for pubescent Elvish maidens. Tall, and tanned, with proud, angular features, they sport long black hair and are usually clean-shaven. They have a supernatural ability to work ***illusions*** during the (approximately **1 hour**) period of dusk and dawn. They usually use this ability to make it appear as though they are actually doing some of the housework.

Gandharva live communally in comfortable chaos. Most live in huts and longhouses made of woven wood and/or reed shafts, with thatched roofs. They spend much of their time avoiding responsibility for housework and arguing over whose turn it is to do the dishes.

Day to day activities include the morning 'hair-of-the-dog'



BELOW: The Gandharvas are a wild bunch always ready and willing to break into song or party. They aren't much for working and schedules.

ritual, a few hours of weight training, sand and surf activities, a couple hours of work avoidance while voguing for passers-by, followed by an afternoon of practical jokes and beer runs. Come evening, the festivities really begin when they invite a bunch of Apsara babes over and party 'till they're blitzed. Annoyingly, Gandharva always look fantastic, are always in the peak of physical condition (except when blowing chunks), and have incredibly long lifespans. Their motto is: "Live fast dude, die really, really old."

I HAPPENED TO MAKE MY WAY TO THE TROPICAL LOWLANDS OF PATALA IN THE SPRING OF THE YEAR, WHERE I BECAME A GUEST OF THE GANDHARVA ELVES.

THEY'RE A CRUDE BUT FUN LOVING BUNCH WHO REMINDED ME OF THE GUYS I USED TO ROOM WITH BACK IN SPACE SCOUT ACADEMY — THEIR HOUSEKEEPING WAS CERTAINLY ABOUT THE SAME. THEY BREWED A GREAT ALE THATPACKED QUITE A WALLOP.

OUR FRIENDSHIP LED TO AN INVITE TO JOIN THEM ON THEIR ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO THE APSARAS SPRING FESTIVAL.

I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MANY BEAUTIFUL BABES IN ONE PLACE BEFORE. WHILE I'M TOLD I WON THE 'BLARNEY BOWL', THE DETAILS OF THE EVENING REMAIN SOMEWHAT HAZY.

STILL, I HAVE AN OPEN INVITATION FROM THE APSARAS TO RETURN. WHEN I'VE FULLY RECOVERED — IN A COUPLE OF YEARS — I'M SURE TO GO BACK.

— SEAN MURPHY.

The reason why Gandharva don't burn out and die off from overpartying is two-fold: first, they possess a plant called **Soma,** which they cultivate and ferment into a mead called **Amrita.** They quaff it in great quantities. It has the properties of ***extending lifespan, ensuring good health, curing hangovers, building huge muscles, deepening the voice,*** and ***increasing one's sense of competition.***

Second, they regularly get it on with an all woman Elf clan called the **Apsara** and thus ensure that both societies have successors. While some Gandharva and Apsara do in fact pair off and settle down in communities of their own, usually the male children are raised by the Gandharva, and the females by the Apsara. When asked why the majority of both clans retain the swinging singles lifestyle, most simply reply, "we like it this way."

The Gandharva struck a deal with a nearby clan of Celestials called the **Suras.** The Gandharva supply them with Amrita, which, to the Suras, is an ***addictive hallucinogen;*** as well, it heals and extends life. In return, the Sura provide the Gandharva with whatever they happen to need at the time of the shipment. While the Suras have had limited success at cultivating Soma, only the Gandharva know the exact way to harvest and process it into Amrita — a secret which they're not willing to part with (rumor says it involves cold filtering…).

Relations with the Suras has opened the door to the employment of Gandharva as storytellers, couriers, bouncers, and male strippers.

The Gandharva hope to expand their trade in goods and services beyond the immediate region, ideally with the assistance and companionship of the beautiful Apsara.

The Apsara: An All Female Elf Clan

Kin to the Gandharva, and more often than not their lovers and spouses, the Apsara is an association of amazon tribes. They are fierce in battle when threatened. Most Apsara are in a *constant state of sexual desire,* and early Gandharva-Apsara history records extended periods of bliss, but little cultural development beyond cigarettes and birth control. Thus, if the Gandharva and Apsara clans were going to develop any sort of civilization, it was necessary for them to arrive at some sort of contact-limiting arrangement. An agreement was made between the Apsara and Gandharva chiefs that female children of any relationship between the peoples would be raised by the Apsara community, while the Gandharva would take care of the upbringing of males. So far, things have worked out very satisfactorily.

The Apsara are beautiful to behold and possess the supernatural ability to ***inspire love in whomever they so choose*** (it doesn't hurt that they look great in lingerie). Only a truly strong will can resist this power. (Which raises the question: who would *want* to resist?) Although Gandharva claim to be immune to this effect, they never seem to require much coaxing to submit to the charms of an Apsara.

Their separation from men (their chief distraction), has permitted the Apsara to create a wonderful civilization in the southwest Lowlands of Patala. Large multi-story towers of wood and stone rise above the forest floor to break the canopy and touch the sky. The Apsara, while passable artisans themselves, employ the services of female artisans of other clans and races to enhance the splendor of their realm.

Since they restrict access to their immaculate cities the Apsara have taken to hosting an annual spring beach party in Catchaguya Bay, where they've established a hut and tent city which requires little maintenance and makes their Gandharva guests feel right at home. The Apsara delight in playing one vain suitor off of another as they put them through their paces via a series of contests including the 'G. Hamilton Tanning Competition', 'The Surfin' Safari', and 'Catch-A-Wave'. At the end of the day winners and losers alike pair off for an evening of good vibrations.

Some Apsara possess limited abilities to ***foresee the future*** and serve as oracles to rajahs and chiefs.

One talent which the Apsara excel at beyond all others is ***dancing.*** When coupled with the sensual music of the Gandharva they provide an act to which few can compare. Many troupes have travelled abroad to the delight of foreign kings and peoples. One member of such a troupe, **Indrani,** became the bride of **Shakra,** leader of the Celestial clan of Suras, forging a

strong alliance which continues to this day.

The Nymphs: An Undersea Female Elf Clan

In ages past, some Apsara took to the water and over time evolved into a sub-race of sea Nymphs. Their skin is silver-blue or green-gold, their eyes are large and dark brown or blue-green, and their hair is long, straight and black, green or blue. Nymphs can ***breathe while under water*** and possess limited ***powers over water.*** They can raise or lower the temperature of a small volume of water up to **25˚F [14˚C]** within moments, purify the same amount, or squirt water from their mouths up to a distance of **30 yards [27 m].** (They tend to be annoying pool-party guests).

If a Nymph spends more than **24 hours** with her body *out of water,* she will begin to dry out. If not totally submerged in water within the next **6 hours,** she will *die.*

The Nymphs have a unique and secretive underwater civilization. They live in beautiful mother-of-pearl palaces and mysterious grotto suburbs where shipwrecked sailors are occasionally taken to heal and serve as captive lovers. (Hey, life could be a lot worse.)

The Drow: The Dark Elves

The Drow are an aggressive and expansionist sub-culture of Elves, referred to by their detractors as 'Dark Elves'. This has nothing to do with their appearance, for their skin is the palest of *white,* but everything to do with where they are likely to be encountered: in sophisticated underground complexes, on lonely wind-swept moors after sundown, and all-night donut shops. They also have a very black sense of humor.

The Drow are more ambitious and megalomanical than their more amiable cousins and interact more with other races. Unfortunately, this has convinced most people they've encountered that *all* Elves are bad.

While the Drow share many of the characteristics of the Light Elves, each Elvish culture is embarrassed by the existence of the other. They see the other's activities as an affront to the 'True Elf' image that each is trying to project to the world at large. Though they possess a lifespan similar to that of their racial cousins, very few Drow live to see old age. This is due to the hostilities they tend to get embroiled in. In some areas, being old is considered unlucky.

Unlike the Light Elves, nobody seems to mind much that the tyrannical Dark Elves are obnoxious snobs or annoyingly jaded. If you've gotten that close, more often than not you have other things on your mind… like why the Drow torturer is heating up that red hot iron….

The average height of a Dark Elf is slightly shorter than their Light Elf counterparts, **3' [1 m]** to **5' [1.5 m]**, and this frustrates them no end. Many bold merchants have made a fortune (briefly) selling growth pills, extension elixirs, and elevator shoes to the Dark Elves.

Drow share the same facial features as the Light Elves: pointy ears, almond eyes (of green, black, blue or red), and long thin noses. Their eyes have large pupils which permit them to see in limited lighting conditions; they squint whenever they go out in daylight unless wearing dark shades. Drow hair is black, brown, white, red, green or even cool blue. The women can be remarkably beautiful, in a rather cold, treacherous sort of way, while the men just look menacing.

Hubris is the Drow Achilles Heel. Every Drow wants his or her place in the sun (as long as it isn't *too* bright) and their name permanently inscribed on the pages of History. They live their lives goose-stepping from one missed opportunity to another — their lack of subtlety and belief in the liberal use of the jackboot to the side of the head as the solution to all problems does not win them many friends or admirers.

Possessing the grace, agility, and speed of their Elvish heritage, the Drow are even worse showoffs than the Avalonian Elves. Their desire to display their physical supremacy over others has led to many Dark Elves being abruptly weeded out of the gene pool. They consider themselves to be superior to all other peoples and continually try to prove it. The Drow motto is: 'To Hell With the Rest, We're the Best'.

The Dark Elves worst conceit is that they were born to sing. But when they do sing, anyone else within earshot (except for another tone-deaf Drow) wishes that they were never born. Their tastes lean towards loud repetitive marching tunes, overproduced and pedantic opera, and Madonna pop singles.

Dark Elves can be encountered almost anywhere — usually as spies, conspirators, saboteurs, pirates, colonial conquerors, and concert promoters.

Typical Drow (Dark Elf) Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Albrecht	Adelicia	Aufklärung
4 – 6	Alrik	Alexis	Beute
7 – 9	Alvin	Brigette	Brummbär
10 – 12	Aurelius	Cecilie	Einheits
13 – 15	Baldwyn	Christel	Eisenwerke
16 – 18	Berg	Elvire	Ente
19 – 21	Blasius	Erika	Gummi
22 – 24	Conrad	Gina	Hornisse
25 – 27	Emil	Giselle	Hummel
28 – 30	Franz	Gretchen	Jäger
31 – 33	Gottfried	Gretel	Kätzchen
34 – 36	Gunter	Hanna	Kugelblitz
37 – 39	Gustav	Heidi	Ladungsträger
40 – 42	Hans	Helga	Mörser
43 – 45	Hugo	Idette	Nashorn
46 – 48	Justus	Ilse	Nebel
49 – 51	Kasch	Jutta	Panzerfaust
52 – 54	Klaus	Katrina	Pauke
55 – 57	Lucius	Lizzie	Schlepper
58 – 60	Ludwig	Marlene	Schmal
61 – 63	Max	Millicent	Schwere
64 – 66	Menz	Minna	Sturmgeschütz
67 – 69	Otto	Natalia	Taifun
70 – 72	Richart	Nettchen	Tauchpanzer
73 – 75	Rolf	Rebekka	Träger
76 – 78	Roth	Regine	Versuchs
79 – 81	Ruprecht	Resel	Waffe
82 – 84	Sepp	Sabine	Waffenträger
85 – 87	Sergius	Stina	Wanze
88 – 90	Sigfrid	Trina	Wespe
91 – 93	Stoffel	Trudie	Wirblewind
94 – 96	Thaddeus	Veronike	Zerstörer
97 – 100	Ulric	Wanda	Zielfernrohr



Above: Drowcathia, Home of the Drow Empire.

The fewer the number of *obstacles encountered* while travelling a chosen path, the more likely it will *lead nowhere.*

Drowcathia: Capital of the Drow Empire

The heart of the Drow Empire is the island continent of Drowcathia on the western side of the Accidental Ocean. Other Dark Elves are scattered north and south on the mainland continent Somagni.

The settlements of the Drow consist of imposing Gothic-Art Deco complexes hidden underground or nestled among the crevices of unscalable precipices. Large domed and vaulted chambers with arched doors and gates are characteristic architectural flourishes. Extensive use of glass, sweeping lines, muted colors, and geometric styling contribute to this distinctive look. These structures exude an uneasy sophistication, and are calculated to intimidate newcomers. They seem more 'perfect' than comfortable.

I RAN OUT OF WRITING PAPER AGAIN THE OTHER WEEK. WHILE AT THE TIME THIS POSED SOMETHING OF A CRISIS WITH REGARD TO MY JOURNALS, IT DID LEAD ME TO DISCOVER A NEW SUPPLIER: THE DARK ELF CLAN OF FLAANGGH. THESE UNUSUAL PEOPLE PRODUCE A PARCHMENT MADE FROM THE SKIN OF THE BELLY OF THE KANTU LIZARD WHICH INHABITS THEIR DARK UNDERGROUND REALM. THE LIZARD-PARCHMENT PAGES ARE PALE AND THIN, BUT VERY STIFF AND RESISTANT TO WATER AND TEARING. THEY POSSESS A DISTINCTIVE GRAIN AND TAKE INK VERY NICELY.

OBTAINING THE RAW MATERIAL FOR THE PARCHMENT REQUIRES A HEROIC EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE FLAANGGH ARTISAN-WARRIORS, FOR AN ADULT KANTU CAN GROW AS BIG AS A HOUSE! WHILE VISITING WITH THE CLAN I WAS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HUNT— I GRACEFULLY DECLINED, ELECTING TO PAY THE MARKUP AND PURCHASE MY KANTU PARCHMENT RETAIL.

— SEAN MURPHY.

The Drow are big on technology — they are fascinated by mechanical devices. Their warlords employ artisans to invent all sorts of mechanical 'toys' to entertain the people at public celebrations. If a mechanical novelty functions well, and a hypothetical application can be found for it, then the inventor is provided with the means to go into full scale production. This development process has brought the world such wonders as the Left-Handed Chain-Driven Tuba, the Self-Launching Ballistic Catapult, and the Magic 8-Ball Fortune Teller.

Their concentration on the discovery of practical solutions to daily problems (some of which only appear after the creation of the invention) has lead to an abundance of carefully documented experimentation. However, due to the primitive methods of observation and the unreliable natural laws of the planet, the Drow have found it difficult to produce much of practical value, and to distinguish freak accident from predictable behavior. Innovation ever continues, and new labor-saving devices are constantly being installed in mines, on farms, and in armories. Sometimes they work….

The Drow are formidable pirates and keen adventurer-traders. The midnight black sails of their sleek galleasses upon the horizon strike fear into the heart of even the most seasoned navy captain. Merchants drop goods over the side in order to flee the terrible assaults of these midnight raiders.

The Big Plan: Global Conquest

The Drow are actively engaged in a plan of conquering and colonizing all of the lands of the eastern shore of Somagni. Having met with little resistance thus far, they have expanded their plans to include the whole world! (Insert sinister laughter here.)

Their basic concept is to unite all the other like-minded peoples (under Drow command of course), and then build massive sailing vessels and attack the hated Avalon Isles and the mainland of Chrysoplasia beyond. There has been some difficulty working with other would-be conquering peoples: few are willing to accept Drow leadership, and those who do are more of a liability than an asset. Many people dream of world conquest, but few are willing to really *work* at it.

At one time Drowcathia was an island of many different Elvish tribes. They were gradually united through a series of bloody wars in which the Drow clan was victorious. This was a great moment for the Drow. Their warlords encouraged a code of pride, honor, self sacrifice, nobility, unfailing loyalty, and slavish toadying from their subordinates.

The wars took a great toll on the common people of the land: the food growers, artisans, and merchants. Meanwhile there was an large class of excitable warriors roaming the countryside looking for something noble and risk free to do. So the wise **Warlord Ashambula** devised a cunning plan. Rather than put these proud warriors to work doing menial tasks like roadbuilding (an act sure to prompt a coup), he created a series of elaborate, noble, and time-consuming ceremonies for the soldiers to perform. He convinced them that by engaging in these 'honorable rituals' they would better themselves spiritually, permitting them to cleanse their minds of any distractions and presumably make it easier for them to focus on the task at hand whether on or off the field of battle. It also kept them from forming gangs, pillaging villages, and threatening his own position.

Since the army's upkeep was so enormous, Ashambula had to figure out a way to get the soldiers' money back into the economy and his own coffers. He did this by establishing a network of suppliers for ritual paraphernalia, under the guise of an order of spiritualist monks. These monks set up workshops in remote places and manufacture ritual accoutrements such as fancy tea-pots, cups, daggers, vessels, stools, mood rings, hoola-hoops, etc., and sell them at exorbitant prices to the warriors.

The warriors, thinking anything was better than building roads and bridges, took to this just fine.

Whatever new ritual or ceremony the Warlord decreed was enthusiastically taken up by his loyal legions. All this was done with Ashambula's promise in mind: someday, soon, the soldiers would be called upon again to participate in a grand, noble, and profitable war of conquest.

Years went by, the land prospered, everyone was happy and the warrior class, now only halfheartedly waiting for the aforementioned great conflict to come, were doing quite nicely contemplating their navels, collecting their paychecks, and spending them on fine china, and objects d'art; all in the name of 'the warrior's code of spirituality'. Ashambula eventually died (while inspecting an erupting volcano a little closer than was wise), and his daughter, **Princess** (thought she prefers Warlord) **Dysnyctaa,** goose-stepped to the throne.

Dysnyctaa had been kept well informed by her father of what was going on throughout the Empire. Unfortunately, he failed to tell her that war is a nasty business, and that he had no intention of pursuing the great conflict and that neither did his aristocratic warriors. She was a product of her generation, and having heard the great tales of old from her uncles and other warriors of the House, swore that she would rekindle the great ferociousness that was the heritage of the Drow. After all, hadn't everyone been spiritually preparing for this undertaking for over 300 years?

In the beginning, Dysnyctaa's plan went over like a lead zeppelin. Being young and full of spirit, however, she won over the Imperial Council and began directing more of the resources and labor of the Drow to the fabrication and procurement of armaments. Ten years later the Drow emerged like a torrent from their relative quiet and declared war on the rest of the planet.

The Drow advance has been embarrassingly slow. The warriors are totally convinced of the necessity of the numerous rituals now governing almost every aspect of their daily lives, No Drow army can march a step without spending days conducting ceremonies and formalities such as: the Pulling One's Pants Up Genuflection, the Sword Swabbing High-Tea Ceremony, and the Teeth-Gnashing Fear-Inducing Belt-Tightening Observance. Upon the rare occasion that they actually engage in battle and win, the soldiers spend the next two days completing the time-honored High-Five Hand-Slapping Ego-Boosting Celebratory Congratulation. Trying to take advantage of the rout of an enemy is an ulcer-inducing proposition for a Drow general.

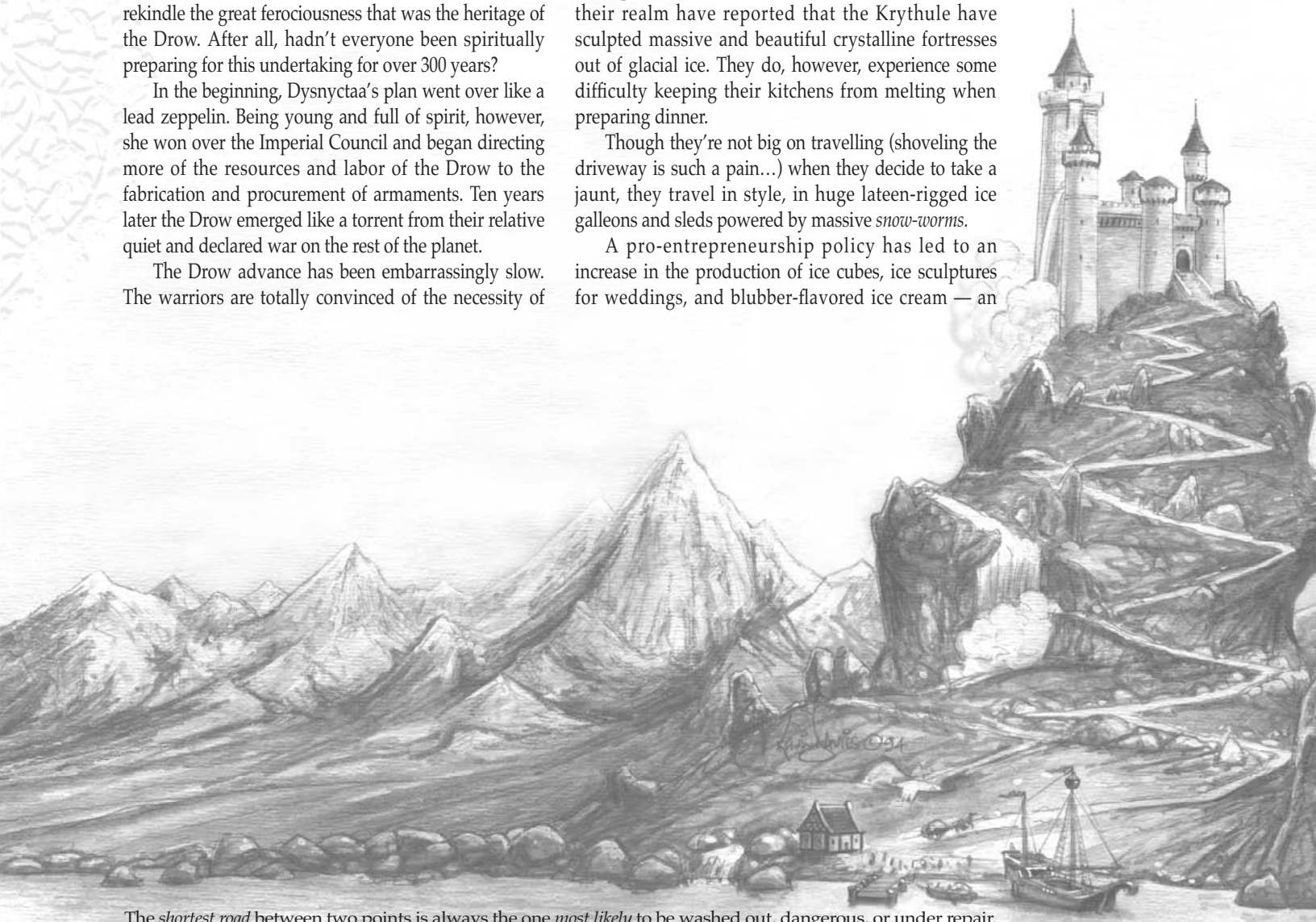
The Krythule: The Ice Elves

Millennia ago this Drow clan migrated to the frozen wastes at the top of the world where they now vie for control with the Frost Giants and other races of the North. With pale skins, long white hair, and steely blue-grey eyes they are the most mysterious of all the Elvish clans. It is unknown how far their civilization extends across the frozen lands, and how deep into the ice it penetrates. Travellers who have returned from their realm have reported that the Krythule have sculpted massive and beautiful crystalline fortresses out of glacial ice. They do, however, experience some difficulty keeping their kitchens from melting when preparing dinner.

Though they're not big on travelling (shoveling the driveway is such a pain…) when they decide to take a jaunt, they travel in style, in huge lateen-rigged ice galleons and sleds powered by massive *snow-worms*.

A pro-entrepreneurship policy has led to an increase in the production of ice cubes, ice sculptures for weddings, and blubber-flavored ice cream — an

BELOW: Castle Icepeak. Built in an icy wasteland (hence the name), of magical stone which radiates a comfortable heat, the Castle is a fantastic example of Dwarvish craftwork with 100' [30 m] high walls. Regretfully, Castle Icepeak no longer belongs to the Dwarves. About a year ago, the peaceful, though somewhat grandiose, Dwarves were cheated out of their domicile when many of their numbers were knocked flat on their backs in the grip of a suspiciously fast spreading and rather vicious stomach flu. Immediately thereafter a force of hostile Drow just happened to show up, and upon firmly establishing a position of domination, began to lord over the bitter recovering Dwarves.



The *shortest road* between two points is always the one *most likely* to be washed out, dangerous, or under repair.

THE DWARVES

THESE ARE A SIMPLE FOLK with humble pleasures: enough ale to float a barge, enough food to choke a horse, and paid holidays in a seaside hotel where they can dangle their swollen feet in icy water and quaff colorful drinks with exotic names, served with paper umbrellas stuck in the top.

Dwarves appear to possess split personalities. When dealing with each other, they are gregarious, sympathetic, and patient; when dealing with other races they come across as terse, professional, and downright touchy. However, they do have a reputation as the best darn engineers and artisans on the planet. Like anything else, this is due to a good dollop of excellent self-promotion and the fact that the competition is so poor. Most other races would have a hard time assembling a spice rack, let alone a waste treatment facility (a little technological innovation that the Dwarves have done very well by…).

A Dwarf seems happiest when busy doing some form of what the Elves consider to be 'hard labor'. Dwarves are willing to engage in the most grueling and filthy of tasks which would surely break the backs and spirits of many other races. (Though some suggest that Dwarves merely need an excuse to complain.)

Most of the time Dwarves simply *appear* to be working themselves to death. This is the *real* Dwarvish talent. Rarely has a Dwarf been known to skip a coffee-break or pass up an opportunity to visit the loo. Yet they always *seem* to get the job done. Since most of the races employing them know less about construction than about splitting the atom, few flaws in workmanship are ever noticed.

It's not that Dwarves are poor workers, at least when they apply themselves; it's just that once they become ticked-off, quality control goes right out the window. When a supervisor is of another race, a Dwarf is *guaranteed* to become ticked-off sooner or later. Dwarves are not the best order takers. And they *really* hate people who think themselves superior to Dwarves. For this reason, Dwarves hold the Elves, their best clients, in utter contempt.

Dwarves have their own way of doing things. To a casual observer this may seem somewhat erratic and inefficient. To a salaried supervisor it seems like overt graft. This has more to do with the Standard Dwarvish Contract than anything else. Paragraph 411.B states: "Any resources not incorporated into the structure become the property of the contract laborers." Thus a frazzled supervisor finds it impossible to keep track of supplies — things continually seem to disappear…. Dwarvish laborers assure them that "…you didn't really need all that concrete anyway."

Naturally, Dwarves do a roaring business in selling construction supplies to frazzled building contractors. (It's rumored that one particular shipment of exotic green floor tiles has been making the rounds for the better part of three hundred years.)

When the day is done, or whenever the supervisor is not on site, Dwarves nip down to the one place they can escape from the day's toil and strife: the local pub. There the *real* business gets done — they have a pint, commiserate with their mates about how thick the supervisor is, have another pint, argue about where to fence the load of exotic green floor tiles they've stashed behind the pub, and have another pint before going off to their favorite pub for a pint and bite to eat.

Dwarves are enthusiastic patrons of bingo halls, boxing matches, dog races, and betting shoppes. Scratch-and-win lottery tickets are a racial obsession.

The Average Dwarf

QUOTE:	"If it ain't in my contract, I ain't doing it."	
VOCATIONS:	Construction Worker, Maintenance Worker, Miner, Blacksmith, Union Organizer, Pub Owner.	
INTELLIGENCE:	10	Sensible
WILLPOWER:	16	Willful
CHARISMA:	9	Annoying
MYSTIC:	4	Incognizant
STRENGTH:	13	Stalwart
DEXTERITY:	9	Awkward
FITNESS:	16	Sturdy
APPEARANCE:	8	Homely
HEALTH POINTS:	14	
HEIGHT:	4' [1.2 m]	
WEIGHT:	100 lbs [45 kg]	
TRAITS:	Argumentative, Sticks to Rules, Canny, Corruptible, Takes no Nonsense, Wary of Strangers, Opportunistic.	

Dwarf Physical Characteristics & Abilities

They are shorter than many of the other races (**3' [1 m]** to **5' [1.5 m]** and **50 lbs [23 kg]** to **150 lbs [68 kg]**), stocky, and thick-boned, with pale pimply skin. The only time you might notice the chalky pallor of the Dwarvish complexion, however, is immediately after one has taken a bath — but wait a few minutes — they'll be just as filthy as usual. Such is the case when you work in a hole in the ground.

Dwarvish skin is tough and leathery, with hard callouses forming easily on feet, knees, elbows, hands and buttocks. Their skin peels and burns rather than tanning when exposed to the sun. Their faces are angular roadmaps of craggy wrinkles with strong cheekbones and jaws; square, flat, hard teeth; pointed ears; and large blobby noses.

Their eyes have larger pupils than humans, often blue, green, or light colored, permitting them to see better in dim light. The daysight of Dwarves is limited. Under normal daylight conditions they must squint to shield their sensitive retinas. They prefer overcast days and sport dark wrap-around sunglasses when out and about.

Dwarves reach adulthood by age 3; Dwarvish parents are blessed — their young remain teenagers for a period averaging 17 hours, 35 minutes. They can live 300 years or more. Once they reach maturity, females are in their prime reproductive years until age 30. After this fertility declines, and the females lose excess body fat (e.g., breasts) and

grow more hair, including beards. Hair color varies between different groups, but brown and rusty red are most common. All male Dwarves, and many Dwarvish women, have abundant beards which grow to or below the waist. There are extensive regional variations in the customary hair and beard length and style.

Dwarf Special Traits & Powers

Dwarves can see almost as well in darkness as the average person does in daylight. This ***'darksight'*** has a range of **1000' [300 m].**

Dwarves are renowned for their ***direction-sense.*** Place a Dwarf in a foreign village or town and within minutes he can lead you to the nearest pub. This skill can be employed underground to locate stashes of gold, gems, and distilled liquor.

Dwarves can ***consume abnormal amounts of alcohol, yet still comprehend each other*** when others listening have long since given up on making sense out of the conversation. The drunker a Dwarf is, the greater his or her ***memory*** for useless trivia, old wives tales, and bawdy songs.

Due to their consumption of traditional cuisines, the Dwarvish population has acquired a remarkable ***resistance to toxic substances.*** Many of these poisons are less disturbing to the constitution than a typical Dwarvish meal.

Due to extensive construction training received since youth, all Dwarves have certain skills, including: the ability to ***discern stolen property at a glance*** **(40%),** the chance to ***detect shifting masonry or other heavy objects*** just before they shift and/or tumble onto their victim **(60%),** and ***estimate their approximate depth*** below the surface of the earth: "well, I'd say we're pretty deep now…." **(70%).**

A final skill involves the ability to ***determine the approximate age of a given construction*** **(80%).**

"This tunnel is almost 324 years old…."

"That's remarkable! How do you figure that?"

"Well, I just read the builder's mark etched into this stone over here."

Dwarf Language

Individual Dwarf clans each speak a different dialect of *Dwarvish* — some with accents so thick that even other Dwarves have trouble making them out. Perhaps this is just as well, for to gain employment, many Dwarves have to venture abroad and learn the language(s) of their employers. Many Dwarves speak two or more languages. A typical phrase in Dwarvish sounds a bit like the speaker is gargling with gravel, which probably isn't all that far from the truth, since most Dwarves have a problem with dirt getting into everything.

Some of the isolated mountain Dwarvish clans are renowned for their poetry and talent of speaking in oblique rhyme. While this might appear quite charming to the passing traveller, to someone who has unknowingly purchased a retirement cottage in the neighborhood, it can lead to madness. A tailor was heard to say to a client: "Quit now with the rabbit and pork if you want the whistle and flute. 'And over the bees and honey 'cause I ain't rollin' in hay, and I don't want a bull and cow." (Meaning: quit talking if you want to purchase the suit, and hand over the money, because I don't have all day and don't want to row [argue].)

Dwarf Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Dwarves can be found almost anywhere, regardless of extremes of climate. There are desert-dwellers whose features are thinner and more angular than the stocky majority. Mountain chains, limestone caverns, volcanic tropical islands, and seaside resort towns are favored residences.

At one time all Dwarves spent most of their lives in the dark underground. Then a few enterprising individuals took a night-school course in mortgage financing. Suddenly everyone saw the light and began purchasing quaint hillside cottages and urban row-housing.

Settlements typically take the form of smallish villages rather than urban centers. This has more to do with a characteristic low sex drive and a fear of travelling



LEFT: Ah, the good life! A beautiful Dwarvish maiden on holiday attempts to add some color to her pale, leather-like skin. The pebbly beaches on the southern shores of Verdentia are popularized by vacationing craft workers and their kin through packaged tours.

If you are still travelling at dusk, the *remaining distance* to your intended destination will remain *constant.*

than a lack of social vision, although it is true that Dwarvish social visionaries are few and far between. Many Dwarves still live underground in warrens.

A typical Dwarvish warren is near a mineral-rich limestone mountain range with navigable water connecting it to rich farmlands. A Dwarvish dwelling may start as a simple burrow, but as their numbers increase it gradually turns into a warren of tunnels, mines, chambers, and rooms. Interconnecting tunnels may stretch hundreds of miles through the countryside.

A Dwarf almost never loses his or her way in such a complex. An unskilled traveller can pass right over a Dwarf warren without noticing. However, you would have to be really dense to miss the slag heaps, open pit excavations, and the smoke of the forges casting a pall over the entire countryside.

They also establish themselves on or near trade routes, producing income from high traffic toll roads and the marketing of their 'excess' building supplies. They trade for food, ale, and sweepstakes tickets.

BELOW: If you want to make a Dwarf happy and possibly gain a friend for life, offer to buy him or her a drink, or six. Then ask him to relate some old Dwarvish legend or shaggy-dog story. You'll find that the tale will get better as the evening progresses — as long as you are drinking too.

Dwarf Customs & Lifestyle

Dwarvish society is pretty straightforward. They are gregarious among their own, but suspicious and standoffish among strangers, particularly non-Dwarves, who must make a sustained effort to win their trust or affection. If you are someone who can hold your drink, spin a good yarn, and join in a singalong, you've found friends for life. Dwarves mistrust people who can't hold up their end of a conversation and are 'party vegetables'.



Dwarves are loyal to friends, but implacable towards enemies, and *never* forget an injury. Dwarves consider their interpersonal relationships very important, and keep an exact reckoning of all debts, rights, and obligations to families, clans, and acquaintances.

Dwarvish women are quite liberated. This might have something to do with the fact that it is difficult to distinguish an adult female from her male counterpart (don't reveal this to either of them if you value your health…). Dwarvish males are rather sensitive about their masculinity, and behave very macho at times. Strange Dwarves occasionally greet each other by shaking hands with crushing grips, testing the strength of the other. Female Dwarves roll their eyes in disgust at this immature practice.

Dwarves are monogamous, and mate for life. Individual couples and their children are grouped into clans by common descent or adoption. Clans owe allegiance to a common king, who rules a collection of settlements. Marriages are by mutual consent, and almost always outside the clan. Wealthy or royal families may *encourage* a specific match for purposes of alliance.

Dwarves have a passion for accumulating wealth in the form of precious metals, exotic gems, and high-yield short-term junk-bonds.

Since many engage in labor intensive artisan trades such as jewelry production and weaponsmithing, they are especially fond of labor saving devices — which permit even more time at the pub. Dwarves cannot bear to waste effort on ordinary tasks, such as carrying water and polishing the silver, as it takes up time which might be better used in manufacturing and boozing.

Although they are cooperative and always help a fellow-clansman in need (or any Dwarf stranded among non-Dwarves) Dwarves have a strongly-developed sense of private property — those who rob them do so at their peril.

Dwarves bargain well, but fairly, never selling below the price they believe is an appropriate minimum. Dwarves would rather lose a sale than undersell, even if they are desperate for money.

Dwarves have very little time for bureaucracy. They are great believers in their own unique brand of common sense — which usually translates to 'whatever a Dwarf says is correct'.

While there is much travel and trade between Dwarf communities, war is considered counter-productive; non-aggression pacts are common. In a few instances, a theft of a precious artifact has resulted in open inter-Dwarf conflict. Dwarves only become directly involved in the quarrels of other races when *attacked*, or on an *individual basis*. Dwarvish mercenaries are rare but not unknown, and specialize in fortifications, siege warfare, and giving unwanted advice to their employers.

Dwarves are extremely stubborn warriors, almost impossible to panic or force into flight. They fight as heavy infantry, armored from head to foot, and wield

axes, war-hammers, and particularly nasty dental tools. They prefer to form a shield-wall and hold their ground rather than engage in dashing manoeuvres.

Dwarves are not adverse to developing and marketing the devices of war. Friendly competition is encouraged between Dwarvish armorworks and weapons forges. One clan will advertise a new blade which penetrates last season's breastplate. Meanwhile another clan will promote their fall line of greaves as proof against the new blade. Tickets to the seasonal trade fairs and exclusive showcases of the latest in Dwarvish armor fashions are eagerly sought after by the military elite of the known world.

With all this wealth to be earned through the sales of military ordinance, is it any wonder that on occasion the Dwarves have been accused of 'dabbling in politics'?

Dwarves are not xenophobic toward most other races. However, they are wary of Ogres and Pixies and have little contact with them. In regions settled by Dwarves, armed skirmishes occasionally take place between Dwarves and these other races.

Though Dwarves prefer to trade for their foodstuffs, they practice some agriculture, keeping herds of sheep, goats, small cattle and hamsters. They are omnivorous, but require less in the way of fruits and vegetables than Humans.

A Dwarvish banquet has plenty of food, prepared in that unique Dwarvish manner: boiling. Meat and fresh vegetables of all kinds are equally assaulted in this unappetizing way. Foreign dignitaries have been known to break down and cry at the sight of such potentially flavorful sustenance being reduced to an unrecognizable soup at the hands of Dwarvish cooks. Occasionally, a visitor will make the social *faux pas* of offering the services of an internationally respected cooking teacher; this has resulted in a declaration of war on the visitor's home nation. Dwarves are not renowned for their cookbooks, celebrity chefs, or culinary humor.

Besides soup, Dwarvish feasts feature plenty of excellent home brewed ale — for which guests are more than grateful. All extensive Dwarvish settlements have underground mushroom farms. Fungi are a favorite food of the Dwarves; they brew a potent mushroom beer.

Though normally avoiding travel like the plague, once a year Dwarvish families disrupt their weekly routine and cram themselves and most of their possessions into a vehicle and become holidaymakers. With father driving along precarious mountain passes, mother screaming directions, and their grown children bored out of their minds in the back, they eventually make their way to the same boring, dinky, seaside holiday spot that their parents dragged them to years earlier. Variety is not the spice of life for Dwarves.

Typical holiday spots include tacky seaside towns with pebbly beaches and cool ocean swells, regimented holiday camps with organized 'fun', and mystery coach tours. There's nothing quite like the sight of hundreds of pale, calloused, and grumbling Dwarves turning beet red and peeling their fatty flesh all over the jagged seaside 'sand'.

Dwarf Skills & Labor Practices

Dwarves are natural miners with an intuitive understanding of stone and its capabilities, and have accumulated much skill in shaft-driving, ventilation, and machinery.

They are also superb smiths and metal-crafters, refining all known metals and working them into the finest weapons, tools and machines. They work in wood and leather only as necessary for their other trades. Their jewelry and finery is also unrivaled for skill and finish, although their design sense for ornamentation is not the best and they often work to patterns drawn up by other races.

Individual Dwarves can be found travelling or working in foreign territories, acting as master smiths, metalworkers, masons, and builders. The resources so acquired are used to buy foodstuffs, cloth, and raw materials the Dwarves need.

Many Dwarves make their living at the favorite Dwarvish pastime: prospecting for legendary 'mother lodes' of gems and ores.

I happened upon a travel brochure hyping Dwarvish bed and breakfast establishments "located in especially scenic surroundings." The advertisement said I shouldn't miss sampling the "warm hospitality, charming architecture and 'traditional Dwarvish breakfast' consisting of a generous sampling of fresh eggs, cheese, meat and toasted bread."

What I found was a cramped, leaking, pathetic hovel, perched precariously on the side of a slag heap — the proprietor jovially explained "the etching in the brochure is a bit ancient."

Dwarvish 'cuisine' is an acquired taste. Although I've yet to meet anyone other than a Dwarf who has acquired it. I had no idea that there was quite so many ways to destroy a good meal with boiling water.

Still, it turned out to be the best incentive I've ever had to begin that diet I've been putting off for years.

— Sean Murphy.

Dwarf Religion & Superstition

There are as many Dwarvish gods, major and minor, as artisan skills known to the Dwarvish race. To someone who is not fluent in the Dwarvish tongue, the culture might be considered to be a highly religious one — they are continually calling upon their gods in moments of stress or frustration.

While many gods worshiped by other races are aloof from their followers, the Dwarvish gods are very much interested in the day-to-day business of the rank and file, much to the chagrin of a great many Dwarves.

Being immortal isn't all it's cracked up to be. After all, if you had just polished off your three

billionth cocktail with the Goddess of Oral Hygiene, a change of venue would look pretty inviting. Thus, the Dwarvish gods have taken to hob-nobbing it with the mortals whenever the opportunity arises, offering them the benefit of their extensive knowledge of just about everything, their crack negotiating talents, and their boundless charisma.

The only trouble being, that in this case, the mortals would rather do without such godly 'assistance', since the gods' knowledge is often suspect, their negotiating skills have lost more contracts than won, and by-and-large, they possess all the charisma of a boiled turnip.

Dwarves aren't much for superstitions. To a Dwarf, either something is to be heeded because it is real, or it is a load of crap and not to be bothered with. When it comes to their own gods, Dwarves are *not* superstitious — their gods are real, to be heeded, and avoided where possible because they are a load of crap.

The gods of other races have to be summoned — Dwarvish gods have to be convinced to leave. They usually arrive on the scene uninvited whenever a group of Dwarves is about to engage in an important negotiation or project. Dwarvish gods love a good confrontation; they excel at verbal abuse. This, from the Dwarves point of view, is precisely the problem.

Whenever a god is noticed by a assembly of Dwarvish laborers — a loud, obnoxious and argumentative manner is a sure giveaway — straws are drawn to determine who will prostrate themselves before the god, offer a grovelling thanks for their generous assistance, and then escort the god down to the pub for a pint. This is a financially dangerous task since the gods are competitive even in their drinking; and the mortal picks up the tab. Still, sacrifices must be made for the common good.

THERE WERE TWELVE IN OUR PARTY WHEN WE STARTED THE TOUR. THE CORRIDORS WERE CRAMPED AND ODOR OF DWARF WAS OVERWHELMING. THE BROCHURE HAD LIED AGAIN.

THE THRONE ROOM AND ATTENDANT CHAMBERS OF KING GILSCAR WERE MORE THAN I HAD EXPECTED. IT WAS AS THOUGH SOMEONE HAD ORDERED EVERY COLOR OF PAINT AND THE PAINTERS COMPETED TO COVER EVERY EXPOSED SURFACE WITH COLOR.

IT WAS THOUGHT BEST THAT WE TAKE THE STAIRS WHEN ONE OF OUR NUMBER PLUNGED THIRTY FIVE FLOORS UPON STEPPING INTO AN ELEVATOR WHICH HADN'T SEEMED TO HAVE ARRIVED.

WE LOST ANOTHER OF OUR PARTY AS HE STEPPED BACK TO VIEW A CEILING DETAIL AND UNWITTINGLY SKEWERED HIMSELF ON A BIT OF WALL ORNAMENTATION.

FINALLY, OUR GUIDE INFORMED US THAT THE PRICE IN THE BROCHURE DID NOT INCLUDE A RETURN ESCORT TO THE SURFACE. THREE MORE WERE LOST FROM OUR GROUP WHEN THEY COULDN'T AFFORD THE RETURN TRIP AND HAD TO BE LEFT BEHIND.

APART FROM ACQUIRING A FEW BUMPS TO THE HEAD, IT WAS A SPLENDID TOUR OF MINERVA, SEAT OF DWARVISH CULTURE. AT LEAST FOR THE SURVIVORS.

— SEAN MURPHY.

Minerva: Grandest of the Western Dwarvish Kingdoms

The largest collection of Dwarvish settlements exists within the mountain chain that divides the cultures of the cool northwest from the tropical southwest.

The greatest of these cavernous kingdoms is **Minerva,** the domain of **King Gilscar** and his imposing consort **Queen Bertha.** Minerva's wealth is built on generations of exploiting business opportunities — the production of raw materials, the reselling of misplaced goods, and off-track betting. The inhabitants of this glittering and garish dominion are a caste privileged above all other Dwarves. Those who reside in this realm of opportunity are the first to be tipped off about juicy take-over deals, high-yield stock options, diplomatic trade arrangements, and the best locations for McKipper franchises. The credo of Minerva is a simple one: "greed is good."

The elite of Minerva have risen to the top in much the same way as one would in any culture: through the taking of great risks, shady business dealings, and exploitative property flips. This is a system where ingenuity and amorality are rewarded. To receive an invitation into the Society of Legitimate Businessdwarves (S.L.B.), you must maintain at least the facade that you are a caring, environmentally friendly proponent of family values. King Gilscar is President-For-Life of the S.L.B. Up-and-coming entrepreneurs are advised to gain favor with the S.L.B. by making occasional donations to its President and members.

The halls of Minerva are something to experience — preferably through postcards or descriptions from survivors.

While the interior decor is the grandest example of the melding of function and Dwarvish design sense (often unappreciated by other races), due to habitual corner cutting by Dwarvish craftsfolk the place is constantly under repair. In a conspiratorial effort to ensure that Minerva remains a perpetual artisan cash-cow, no task is ever *fully* completed. Thus, it has become a death trap for the unwary.

The elaborate air-conditioning system delivers a plentiful supply of cool air — but only when it is snowing outside. Ornate plumbing fixtures provide hot and cold running water — continuously. Elevator shafts permeate the structure and transport hundreds of inhabitants to the many levels of the realm — occasionally via working elevators.

Guided tours are available to take in the wonders of this unique complex. However, you must sign a waiver before going on the tour. Most tourists find it a fascinating experience — serious injuries are relatively rare.

Unlike the Light Elves, who base many of their motifs on biological symbols, the Dwarves favor geometric patterns and lines to direct the eye of the observer, and focus it on the area of the room deemed

most important. Unfortunately, you have to be a Dwarf for this chaos of lines and shapes to have its desired effect.

Working in the limited environment below the ground, the Dwarves have become masters at using visual tricks in their construction and finishes. The overall effect gives the sense that a room is larger and less claustrophobic than it really is. This can be somewhat disconcerting for the uninitiated. Many visitors have returned from Minerva nursing minor concussions and fractured skulls. Good helmets are recommended.

Security is much easier to maintain underground than in a surface settlement. Although there are dozens of openings to the surface from this Dwarvish warren, each is carefully guarded with a series of gates, traps, and guards. While on parchment this looks great, it does not take into account the hired help.

Motivating a Dwarvish guard to actually close and lock a secret entrance or set an alarm can be a challenge. It's not that Dwarvish workers are incompetent, they simply work to rule — and if a task is not specifically and precisely described in their contract (meaning they're being paid for it), it doesn't exist for them.

The Dwarf Clan of Bes

This Dwarvish settlement exists in the mountain chain that borders the harsh (and rather foul-smelling) volcanic **Land of Duat.**

While the Bes might come across as a bit less civilized and rougher around the edges than their counterparts elsewhere, deep down their hearts are (usually) in the right place. They spend much of their time mining precious ores and gems, then transforming the raw materials into some of the most fearsome weaponry on the planet. Bes weapons are know to possess names like: *Spleenslicer, Kneecapper, Lungplucker, Noseripper, and Gutbuster.* These products of their labors are exported abroad across the Mert Sea.

But when work is done what they really like to do is kill things. They throw off their work clothes, don their best armor, and head out for a night on the town, calling themselves 'Dæmon Slayers'. Actually, most of the *real* Dæmons have moved away in recent years, and since on weeknights the Bes have work in the morning, they direct their hostile energies toward passing travellers, small furry rodents, and, when really desperate, inanimate plants. After about an hour of this they usually end up brawling at the local pub.

Bes are also swell musicians and love singing, dancing, and general merrymaking — especially on the corpses of their enemies. Indeed, when at ease with their own kind they can be down right comical — for a bunch of workaholic homicidal maniacs.

The Trow: The Dark Dwarves

There is one Dwarvish clan which is rarely spoken of, for just mentioning their name strikes fear and loathing into the heart — the Trow, or Dark Dwarves. Named for their rumored dark arts and dealings, this swarthy sub-species of Dwarves lives underground in mana-rich hot-spots where they excavate their vast and mysterious realms.

Physically, the Trow are similar to their fair-natured cousins, with slightly more angular features and a wiry build. Their hair coloring tends towards black and deep red. They rarely possess beards and those who do wax them into points or peculiar curved or woven shapes.

The language of the Trow, *Trowlish*, is a dialect of Dwarvish. Although some of the runic symbols of the written script vary from that of common Dwarvish, most Trow writing can be deciphered by someone familiar with Dwarvish runes.

While it is believed that the Trow inhabit various mountain chains throughout the globe, they have only ever been seen in the vicinity of the **Melacaaco Mountains.** This mist-shrouded range rises east of the Minerva Mountains, in the land of **Chrysoplasia.**

Few have ever actually seen a Trow, thus little is known of their lifestyle and culture. It is darkly rumored that they have covert spies and envoys who conduct their business while stationed secretly throughout known civilization.

Typical Dwarvish Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Acklea	Aubertha	Abutment
4 – 6	Adney	Beda	Aumbry
7 – 9	Afton	Bliss	Baluster
10 – 12	Aiken	Blossom	Barbican
13 – 15	Arley	Dawnita	Beakhead
16 – 18	Bardolf	Deanna	Belfry
19 – 21	Bardoul	Dita	Buttress
22 – 24	Bart	Eda	Cob
25 – 27	Bede	Edlyn	Concrete
28 – 30	Berk	Erda	Daub
31 – 33	Binky	Ethyll	Facade
34 – 36	Blagden	Fryda	Folly
37 – 39	Botolf	Goldarine	Gadroon
40 – 42	Byrn	Goldia	Gazebo
43 – 45	Calder	Herta	Grotto
46 – 48	Dalbert	Idina	Joist
49 – 51	Dudley	Ivie	Muntin
52 – 54	Farold	Kodie	Nailhead
55 – 57	Gomer	Luella	Obelisk
58 – 60	Grimshaw	Lulu	Ogee
61 – 63	Harlan	Lynde	Plinth
64 – 66	Kipp	Mayda	Postern
67 – 69	Manfred	Merrielle	Rafter
70 – 72	Murvin	Mildred	Rotunda
73 – 75	Orton	Misty	Skewback
76 – 78	Oswin	Neda	Soffit
79 – 81	Ringo	Shirlene	Spandrel
82 – 84	Rycroft	Uda	Striges
85 – 87	Shepp	Udella	Transom
88 – 90	Slayde	Verlye	Truss
91 – 93	Ted	Wylda	Undercroft
94 – 96	Udolf	Yetta	Veranda
97 – 100	Weylin	Yudella	Wattle

Deep in their underground forges they mine metals and gemstones with arcane powers, and spend tireless hours seeking out the secrets of the universe (such as why is it that whichever line you choose to wait in always moves slower than the rest…).

A few sailors claim to have glimpsed the dark and incredibly swift vessels of the Trow. These sleek sloops are said to ply the south-eastern coasts and seas at dusk and throughout the night, transporting the Dark Dwarves to their mysterious destinations. It is considered bad luck for anyone to catch sight of a Trow ship. (Especially the bumper-sticker which states: "If You Can Read This, You're Too Damned Close.")



The Largest Trow settlement is rumored to exist in the Melacaaco Mountains.

While some say that the Trows are among the

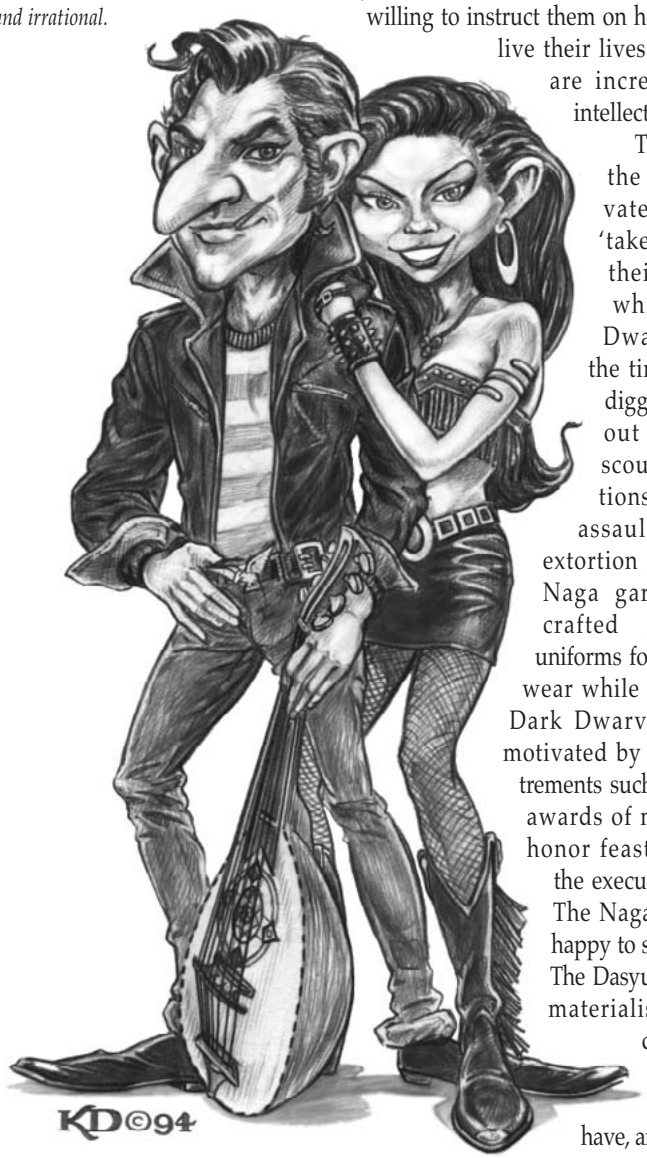
mad-races or 'Lunies' who have succumbed to the mind-destroying forces of Ludo, such is not the case. There is, however, some substance to the rumors that the Trows occasionally recruit these insane forces to accomplish their twisted goals.

The Dasyus Clan of Dark Dwarves

The Dasyus are cousins to the Trow and live in the underworld of the **Naga Mountains.** At one time, they were the only inhabitants of these subterranean regions. However, when the Nagas were forced underground by the Celestials, they made contact with this Dwarf clan. The initial meetings were very traumatic, and the Nagas put on such a good show of dominance that the Dasyus quickly came to regard the Nagas as *gods of the underworld*, and made *serving* these snake-like beings their purpose in life.

The relationship has worked well for both races. At the time of meeting the Dasyus, the Naga were in no condition to fight a war for underground territory. The Dasyus have found someone who is only too willing to instruct them on how they should live their lives — the Dasyus are incredibly limited intellectually.

The Nagas helped the Dasyus excavate tunnels and 'take inventory' of their treasures, while the Dark Dwarves devoted the time saved from digging to carrying out guard duty, scouting expeditions, hit-and-run assaults and petty extortion for the Nagas. Naga garment makers crafted really spiffy uniforms for the Dasyus to wear while on Naga duty. Dark Dwarves are easily motivated by military accoutrements such as rank, titles, awards of merit, medals, honor feasts and keys to the executive washroom. The Nagas are only too happy to satisfy this need. The Dasyus are extremely materialistic and title conscious, and are envious of what others have, and they haven't.



BELOW: Brownies are fun-loving and hip. They're willing to take more risks with new fashion and trends than most other races, including Humans. The Elves simply consider them undisciplined and irrational.

THE BROWNIES

TO A BROWNIE, LIFE IS MEANT TO BE FUN. Responsibility is *incomprehensible.* Brownies are the most uninhibited and fashion conscious of the races of Murphy's World. They are quick to pick up on and follow new trends. Brownies are not afraid to look different or strange if it gets them *attention.* For this freedom of style the Brownies are simultaneously admired and loathed by the Elves.

Brownies consider it a must to *look cool* and abreast of the times, to *appear in control* of their situation and environment. Brownies like poetry, music, parties, drinking, dancing, parties, practical jokes, slang, parties, etc.

They're a bit like delinquent adolescent punk Elves, with the tinkering, jack-of-all-trades mechanical, and artisan abilities of the Dwarves.

Brownie Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Brownies look like short, thin, long-limbed humans with less grace than Elves, but a quicker wit. They're also rather cute. They have rounded human-like ears, button noses (well at least for the women), and reddish to blue-black hair. Brownies are agile, and excellent climbers. All are fair swimmers, and enjoy water sports.

Brownies range from **2' [0.6 m]** to **4' [1.2 m]** in height, averaging around **40 lbs [18 kg]** to **90 lbs [40 kg]** and reaching **150 lbs [68 kg]** in extreme cases. Their life expectancy (barring violent death) is at most 60 years, and more commonly 30 to 50; they are adult at 8, and mature (strictly a relative term for Brownies) at 20.

Brownie Special Traits & Powers

Brownies have the innate ability to ***detect trends in design and fashion.*** They are often employed as freelance part-time consultants by artisans and design shoppes. (No Brownie in history has ever held down a full-time position).

Brownies have an ***excellent sense for things mechanical.*** They can get just about anything working with a well applied kick, thump, or minor adjustment. Brownies are popular among Technocrats.

All have the ability to ***detect a party*** from up to **5 miles [8 km]** distant. They can determine the nature of the party and whether or not it is worth attending. While Brownies are cheap drunks, they ***never pass-out or get sick from alcohol.*** When intoxicated their traits simply intensify.

Brownies are masters of sarcastic wit and cutting remarks. Unfortunately, they are often unable to hold back their remarks in the presence of a deserving recipient. The word 'tact' is not in the Brownie vocabulary.

Brownie Language

Brownies have their own language, but *no formal written script*. Certain clans have adopted various symbols, runes, and marks to stake out their territory and display their clan 'colors'. Brownie communication is free-wheeling and like their culture, rather anarchistic. If a word doesn't exist for the thing they wish to describe, they make one up. If it catches on, it's a great personal achievement. Brownies spend a fair amount of time trying to think up new words to impress their peers. The only trouble is, many have run out of things to name and describe. Thus, Brownies are always looking for new experiences and items to invent words for.

Brownie Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Brownies live in small hunter-gatherer communes, tribes, or, as some see them, *gangs*.

Brownies are intelligent and adaptable, and therefore can be found in a variety of environments. They prefer warm to temperate landscapes, either forested or with mixed forest and grassland, suitable for hog-grazing and folk festivals. A favored locale is the great **Favonius Plain,** which extends from the coast of Aesthesia to the Dwarvish Minerva Mountains. Brownies do not form communities in arid open plains or desert areas, and rarely live in mountainous or underground situations.

While Brownies are a social race, they are culturally insular, living in small communities placed so as to avoid detection. They are aware that their rollicking activities have the potential to disturb others located nearby — not that they're being considerate — they just don't want the hassle of dealing with grumpy neighbors.

There are no Brownie cities. Their villages and communes rarely have more than one or two hundred inhabitants. On the other hand, individual Brownies can often be found in the large urban centers of other races.

Brownies establish new communities when an existing one has reached its maximum sustainable population or is at risk of detection. The leaders select from the community a balanced mix of childless young couples with varying skills to embark upon task of establishing the new settlement. The whole village or group of villages contribute tools and equipment to help the youngsters make a start in life.

Sometimes an entire Brownie village will pack up and move to another area, for no other reason than wanderlust. Keeping track of Brownie addresses is a difficult chore. Tax avoidance is endemic.

Settlements are governed by a charismatic leader, chosen via a trial of 'presence'. Each participant in this contest of the 'coolest' must progress through a series of stringent tests of their 'hipness' and is awarded points based on their performance. Such challenges include: proficiency at hog-tuning and riding, recital of improvisational blank-verse poetry, fashion and musical sense, responsibility avoidance and delegation, and degree of angst. The participant who accumulates the most Brownie points wins.

Brownie Customs & Lifestyle

Brownie culture, especially where relationships are concerned, is complex. From early adulthood they form bond-pairs with only one partner at one time. However, they are outrageous flirts. They're likely to change partners whenever distracted by a great pair of legs or tight buns. They also get insanely jealous of their partners, which makes for complicated break-ups and domestic quarrels.

They like to appear independent and try to maintain tight control over their emotions. In times of extreme stress they depend heavily on their partner for comfort. Their partner is the only person for whom a Brownie lowers their emotional guard and control.

The Average Brownie

Quote:	"We're here for a good time, not a long time!"	
Vocations:	Hog Rider, Tinker, Singer, Gambler, Actor, Artist.	
Intelligence:	11	Sensible
Willpower:	10	Indecisive
Charisma:	15	Appealing
Mystic:	8	Undiscerning
Strength:	7	Weak
Dexterity:	15	Dextrous
Fitness:	10	Sound
Appearance:	14	Attractive
Health Points:	6	
Height:	3' [1 m]	
Weight:	65 lbs [29 kg]	
Traits:	Insatiably Curious, Freedom-Loving, Fun-Loving, Fashion-Conscious, Handy, Mechanically Talented.	

The average Brownie family has 2.5 children. This is by *choice*, since Brownie females have the talent to control conception by an act of will. Birth control salesmen go broke on the Brownie beat.

Brownies are into leather. They also like tight jeans, stretchy fabrics, silk, lace, fishnet stockings and angora sweaters.

Though they may look and talk tough, for most Brownies it's simply an act. A real fight would risk ruining their 'threads'. While capable of fighting valiantly in self-defense, Brownies are peaceful. While the occasional fistfight breaks out, they avoid getting involved in out-and-out warfare. Pleasure and fun are what Brownies are all about.

Disputes between individuals or communities are settled by a contest of elaborate and creative cut-ups and rapid-fire comebacks. The participant who can invent and deliver the most intimidating, witty, and degrading insults wins the argument and the day. When community disputes are involved, the village leader serves as champion.



The Favonius Plain is laced with Brownie communities and communes.

The *greater the desire* to find something or an item of information you are searching for, the *less likely* it will turn up.

Brownies are curious by nature. Many have a wanderlust which leads them to seek new experiences, exploring other cultures and lands. Young Brownies often set out on extended journeys, alone or in small groups, trading their skills and goods for room and board, while gathering information, lore and wealth to share with their relatives at home. On returning home, these travellers get increased respect and status in their community.

Tricks and practical jokes are a favorite way for a Brownie to gain status. The grander the execution, the greater the kudos received by the perpetrator. Such antics never cause direct physical harm — their purpose is to ridicule and torment. Young Brownies usually practice their trickery on the elderly — much to the chagrin of the old.

Though you'd never guess it, Brownies have a great respect for age, experience, and wisdom — of the Brownie kind. They have little respect for wealth and even less comprehension of economics. As long as they have the resources to feed their hogs and buy the latest threads and accessories, they're happy.

Some ambitious types raise wild boars with huge spiky tusks, teaching them to sing and hum popular tunes. These musical 'boarkaroos' are among the bravest of the Brownies, riding bare-back, breaking and branding bucking boars. This is challenging and dangerous work. The 'hogs' must continually be re-tuned to achieve their best musical performance.

Those fortunate enough to own one of these magnificent beasts are the elite of the Brownie folk. They ride cross-country in 'packs' seeking the freedom of the open road, life in the fast lane, and sampling every new alcoholic beverage they encounter. As the boarkaroo say, "Life is meant to be experienced — you're ahead on a hoggy."

Typical Brownie Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Alice	Alannah	Albert
4 – 6	Axel	Annette	Arditi
7 – 9	Bono	Aretha	Bach
10 – 12	Booker	Billie	Beethoven
13 – 15	Boz	Buffy	Casals
16 – 18	Buddy	Celine	Cherubini
19 – 21	Chubby	Crissie	Debussey
22 – 24	Del	Diana	Enesco
25 – 27	Elvis	Eartha	Falla
28 – 30	Fabian	Enya	Foster
31 – 33	Fats	Florence	Gershwin
34 – 36	Fleetwood	Grace	Gilbert
37 – 39	George	Helen	Handel
40 – 42	Herman	Jane	Jullien
43 – 45	Jackson	Joni	Kern
46 – 48	Jethro	Judy	Korsakov
49 – 51	John	Linda	Liszt
52 – 54	King	Loreena	Mahler
55 – 57	Lynyrd	Martha	McCartney
58 – 60	Mick	Maxine	Mozart
61 – 63	Muddy	Melissa	Offenbach
64 – 66	Mungo	Nana	Paderewski
67 – 69	Paul	Nancy	Piatigorsky
70 – 72	Prince	Natalie	Rachmaninoff
73 – 75	Ringo	Patsy	Reger
76 – 78	Roch	Reba	Rimsky
79 – 81	Santo	Sarah	Satie
82 – 84	Slim	Sass	Schonberg
85 – 87	Smokey	Sinead	Sullivan
88 – 90	Stevie	Sylvia	Tosti
91 – 93	Sting	Tiffany	Verdi
94 – 96	T-Bone	Vanity	Walton
97 – 100	Van	Winona	Wieniawski

Typical Brownie Phrases & Meanings

Brainburger	☞	Idiot
Buddy	☞	A person
Bugged	☞	Annoyed
Chick	☞	A gal
Dig	☞	Like or understand
Hot down	☞	Get calm
Hot up	☞	Get mad
Killer	☞	A friend
Man	☞	A guy
Ol' lady	☞	Wife or Girlfriend
Pad	☞	Residence
Pops	☞	Older guy
Smokin'	☞	Great
Whole bottle & then a drop	☞	Wonderful

Brownie Skills & Labor Practices

Brownies are nomadic by nature. They prefer brief contracts or temporary freelance arrangements over long-term commitments. They are tinkerers, learning as they go, picking up new skills from those they meet. Often they take on tasks they are not qualified for. Brownies can be found engaged as inventors, gamblers, pool hustlers, surfing instructors, mechanics, advertising account reps, fashion designers, actors, and artists. You will never find a Brownie farming or working as a full-time employee.

They brew potent beer, wine, and a vast array of liqueurs, brandies, whiskies, meads, and herbal infusions. Favorite concoctions include: Shrieking Shrubbery Sherry, Razorgrass Rum, Anxious Absinthe, Sassafras Stout, and Lucid Lupin Lager.

Brownie Religion & Superstition

Brownies are the most 'believing' people in the known

I WAS STALKING A PIG ON THE FAVONIUS PLAIN, HOPING TO GET SOME OF THE INGREDIENTS FOR A BACON, LETTUCE AND TOMATO SANDWICH. I MANAGED TO CORNER THE PIG NEAR A PILE OF BOULDERS, WHEN I SWEAR IT STARTED TO SING! STARTLED, I WITHHELD MY KILLING BLOW — AND GOOD THING TOO, FOR SUDDENLY I WAS SURROUNDED BY TWO DOZEN SHORT, LEATHER-CLAD BROWNIES, ALL ARMED WITH SWITCH-BLADES. ONE OF THEM MARCHED UP TO ME AND HELD HIS KNIFE UP TO MY THROAT. "HEY, WAS YOU THINKING OF HURTING PIGASUS?" AS I STAMMERED A COMPLETE LIE IN WAY OF EXPLANATION, A SECOND BROWNIE ASKED, "DO ALL OF YOU DRESS LIKE THAT?" BEING, AS FAR AS I KNEW, THE ONLY SPACE ACADEMY GRADUATE ON THE PLANET, I ANSWERED "YES."

I WASN'T EXACTLY WEARING STANDARD SPACE ACADEMY UNIFORM. NOT HAVING HAD A CHANGE OF CLOTHES FOR SIX MONTHS, MY PANTS WERE IN TATTERS, MY SHIRT WAS WORN THROUGH AT THE ELBOWS, AND MY SHOES WERE FULL OF HOLES. ROPE SUSPENDERS HELD MY PANTS UP. I WAS A MESS.

THE BROWNIE WHO ASKED ABOUT MY CLOTHES STARED AT ME FOR A MOMENT AND SAID, "WOW, WHAT A FASHION STATEMENT." WITH THAT HE TOOK HIS KNIFE AND STARTED TO SLASH AT HIS CLOTHES TO MAKE THEM LOOK LIKE MINE. WITHIN MOMENTS, THE PIG INCIDENT FORGOTTEN, THE ENTIRE PARTY WAS HACKING THEIR CLOTHES TO RIBBONS.

ANOTHER BROWNIE, A LOOK OF AWE ON HIS FACE, ASKED, "WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS STYLE?" I SMILED MY WIDEST SMILE AND REPLIED, "IT'S THE MURPHY LOOK."

I NEVER DID GET MY BLT.

— SEAN MURPHY.

world. Just like someone wanting to sample all flavors of ice cream, they immediately adopt any new religion, belief system, old wives tale, or supermarket tabloid headline — that is, until the next one happens along. This has nothing to do with their intelligence. They just feel that when it comes to superior and omnipresent beings, it's not worth taking chances.

From a deity's point of view, Brownie followers are somewhat perplexing. What is the Dwarvish God of Plumbing Supplies to do with a devout congregation of nomadic Brownie boarkaroos?

The Beatnik Brownies of Kerouac Forest

In the woodland areas west of Whitethorn lives a community of Brownies which has been influenced by the style and attitude of a portal victim from 1950's Earth. This child of the 'beat' generation had such a presence that the Brownies of this area allowed him to indoctrinate them into the ways of 'cool'. Generations later, the male descendants of those original Brownies are more hip than the Human refugee ever was, with their black leathers, turtle-neck sweaters and goatees. The women sport tight slacks, short skirts, and long straight hair which extends down to the small of their backs.

This clan spends much of their time writing poetry and engaging in incomprehensible discussions of the why's and wherefore's of life, love, and why everyone won't shrug-off the shackles of civilization and retreat to the forests to live off berries and mushrooms as they do.

These beatniks see themselves as paragons of sophistication and romance. Others have trouble understanding their lingo, and wonder why they don't overheat in the sun, wearing all that black. Just don't step on their blue suede shoes.

The Brownie Urban Underground

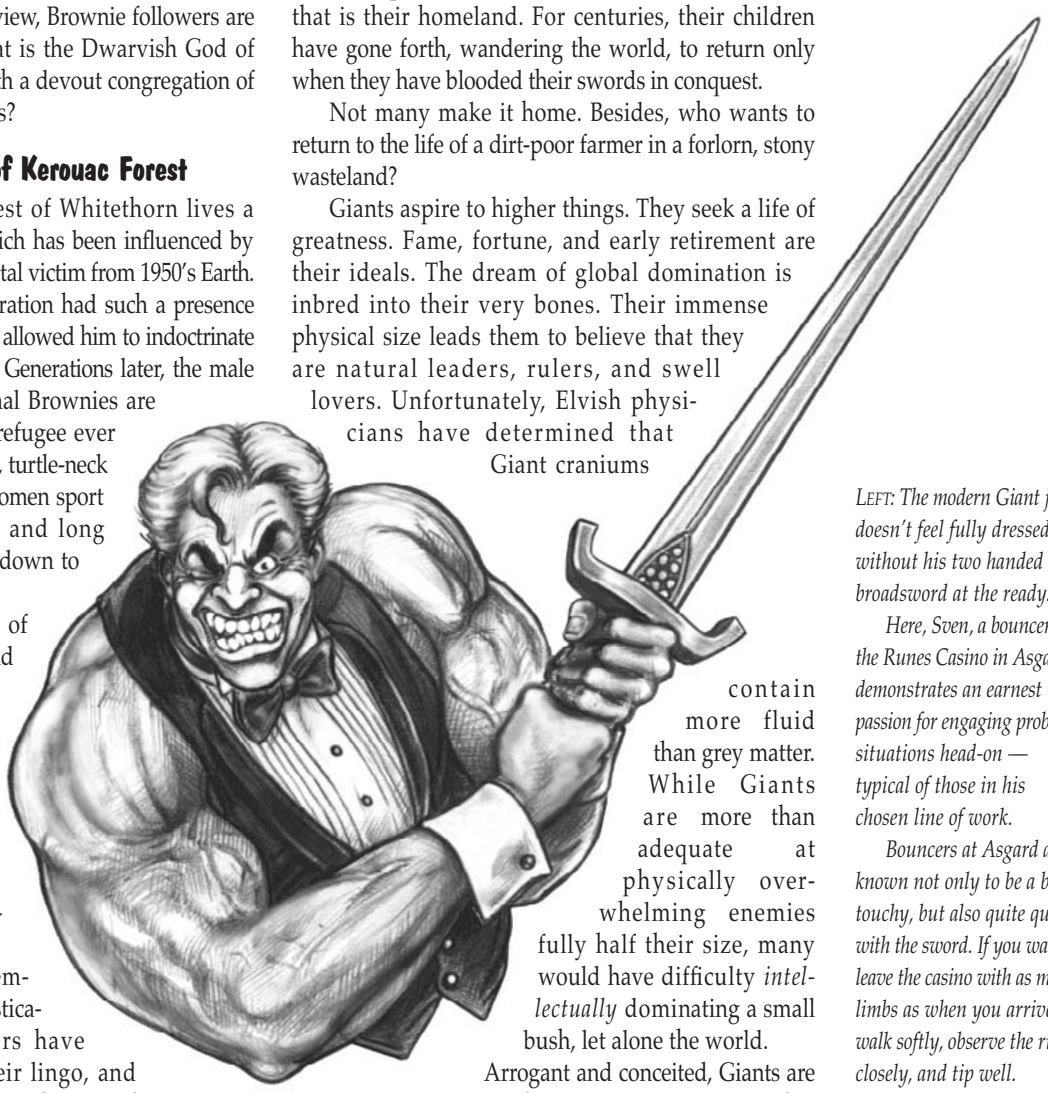
Not so much a community as an unwritten agreement among Brownies to offer lodging to any of their kind (and their companions regardless of race), for as long as necessary. Typically the guest offers a token something in return (e.g., a bottle of Tucker's 'Smooth' Rot Gut, or a tale of events from the places visited previously). Naturally, given the work ethic of the Brownies, such 'temporary' stays can last weeks or even years! Brownie visitors rarely consider that they could ever outlive their welcome. They also don't take subtle hints. Occasionally they must be expelled by force.

The Giants

This is a proud and enterprising people. Rooted in a simple farming tradition, they have labored long to eke out a precarious existence from the barren tundra that is their homeland. For centuries, their children have gone forth, wandering the world, to return only when they have blooded their swords in conquest.

Not many make it home. Besides, who wants to return to the life of a dirt-poor farmer in a forlorn, stony wasteland?

Giants aspire to higher things. They seek a life of greatness. Fame, fortune, and early retirement are their ideals. The dream of global domination is inbred into their very bones. Their immense physical size leads them to believe that they are natural leaders, rulers, and swell lovers. Unfortunately, Elvish physicians have determined that Giant craniums contain more fluid than grey matter. While Giants are more than adequate at physically overwhelming enemies fully half their size, many would have difficulty *intellectually* dominating a small bush, let alone the world.



Left: The modern Giant just doesn't feel fully dressed without his two handed broadsword at the ready.

Here, Sven, a bouncer at the Runes Casino in Asgard, demonstrates an earnest passion for engaging problem situations head-on — typical of those in his chosen line of work.

Bouncers at Asgard are known not only to be a bit touchy, but also quite quick with the sword. If you want to leave the casino with as many limbs as when you arrived, walk softly, observe the rules closely, and tip well.

Arrogant and conceited, Giants are always scheming and resentful of other 'intelligent races' — especially the Dwarves and Elves. Conceit is their downfall, leaving them vulnerable to manipulation, quarrels, and tricks.

Giants are aggressive and brooding, and find friendships hard to maintain. This is partly because of their boastful and hostile natures, and partly due to their bad table manners. They love to eat and drink — however, you don't want to have to entertain a drunken Giant. Disagreements with a Giant often lead to death, or, at the very least, the loss of a limb or two.

Giant Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Giants are among the largest of intelligent creatures. Adult males weigh **800 lbs [363 kg]** or more and reach heights exceeding **12' [3.7 m].** They attain adulthood by

age 25, are considered mature by 50 and can live to 200 years or more.

Giants have long arms reaching almost to their knees, stocky barrel-shaped bodies, muscular legs, humanoid ears, and humongous hands and feet. Giants faces are heavy-boned, with high cheekbones, lantern jaws (many of glass…), and deep-set blue, brown, or green eyes. Their skin may be black, brown, blue-grey, reddish or pink, and is somewhat leathery in texture. Giants of one color often irrationally despise and mistreat Giants of another color — though only when their numbers are significantly larger.

With their heavy bones and dense muscle, they are not naturally buoyant. They can learn to swim, but never enjoy it, and rarely seek employment as fishermen, sailors, or professional water-polo players (besides, their ponies keep drowning).

A Giant may occasionally be deemed beautiful or handsome by a Human, but usually only after the Human has consumed excessive amounts of alcohol.

The Average Giant

QUOTE:	"Just fer dat, I'ma goin' ta hafta, beat yer head in. Nothin' personal."	
VOCATIONS:	Lemming Herder, Casino Worker, Mercenary, Chariot Repairer, Kegball Player.	
INTELLIGENCE:	7	Stupid
WILLPOWER:	10	Indecisive
CHARISMA:	6	Obnoxious
MYSTIC:	4	Incognizant
STRENGTH:	28	Powerful
DEXTERITY:	9	Awkward
FITNESS:	36	Vigorous
APPEARANCE:	8	Homely
HEALTH POINTS:	40	
HEIGHT:	14' [4.3 m]	
WEIGHT:	950 lbs [431 kg]	
TRAITS:	Power Hungry, Just Plain Hungry, Argumentative, Pushy, Loud, Demanding, Violent, Attracted to Kitsch, Macho Posturing.	

Giant Special Traits & Powers

Some Giants are born with the supernatural gifts of ***precognition*** or ***postcognition*** (**1%** chance). These rare individuals are viewed with both fear and awe by their communities, and sought out for divination consultations by many clan chiefs. Such a Giant is **Vafthrudnir** who resides in the northern arctic land of Jotunheim.

Individuals with ***precognition*** earn good a living as oracles, gambling consultants, and supermarket tabloid psychics.

Those with ***postcognition*** (or 20 : 20 hindsight) acquire an entirely different sort of reputation: "Yep, that's how it all happened. It's obvious to me what you should have done. Next time, you'll know better. It always happens that way. If only you had listened to me… gaaaagghhhh!!!…."

Giant Language

Their culture and degree of literacy varies with each settlement and region. There *is* a Giant language, and variations of it are spoken by the many tribes scattered across the planet — though to hear it you might think you were being yelled at by someone with their mouth stuffed full of crackers. The Giant language excels at threats and insults. There are more ways to call someone a "stone-headed git" in Giantese than in any other known tongue.

Those clans which are less isolated and engage in trade (or warfare) with other races are more likely to have a written language. Giant script is primitive with a sparse lexicon upon which to draw. Most of the very few Giant scholars acquired their education abroad and employ the languages of the Elves or Dwarves to produce their descriptive histories and narratives (giving them a better chance for a bestseller). Book club memberships are practically unknown among Giants.

Giant Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Giants are found virtually everywhere except dense forests and jungles, deserts, or government assisted co-op housing developments. Giants adapt and renovate cities deserted by *other* races (often vacated when the Giants move in… "There goes the neighborhood."). Their first task upon moving in is to raise the ceilings — many new residents sport black and blue foreheads.

They prefer grassy, lightly forested areas or verdant mountain valleys, where they can build their own settlements some distance away from other species. In tundra areas, Giant clans live a nomadic lifestyle, moving with herds of gigantic six-legged reindeer from pasture to pasture with the change of seasons.

Whenever possible, Giants get someone else to design and build their houses for them. When necessary, Giants build their own houses (from rather unimaginative designs or poorly engineered knockoffs), with logs, clay brick, rough hewn stone, and back issues of *Færie Geographica* (after they've looked at the pictures). Giant communities are often surrounded by a perimeter ditch, a wall, convenience stores, and ten-pin bowling alleys.

Giant Customs & Lifestyle

Family is the center around which Giant life revolves. From the moment of birth to day of death, Giants maintain strong blood-loyalties and relationships. Although some may wander far from the 'old country' where they were raised, they consider their place of birth their true home.

Giants clans are proud and powerful, ruling various regions of the planet (though most of these are in locations where no sensible person would want to live anyway).

As you might expect, Giants like things large. Their ideal residence is a many roomed mansion, with servants, gardens, and a multi-chariot garage. Unfortunately, most Giant families are dirt poor — they occupy some of the worst farmland on the planet — and their actual dwellings are significantly smaller. What they lack in size they more than make up for in kitsch.

Giants possess a knack for selecting the most ornate,

over-styled, and tacky furnishings of any civilized race. Each home has two living rooms: one of which is used by the family on a day-to-day basis; the other is preserved in a dust-free environment, used only by invited guests. In this shrine to domestic bliss couches are covered with form fitting plastic, tables are draped with lace doilies; everything remains as it was when first purchased. For many families, decades go by without anyone entering the room except for the daily cleaning.

Giants are omnivores. Most communities live by a mixture of herding, hunting, farming and the manufacture of junk food. Their favorite dishes include: fried chicken, corn bread and other baked goods, hush puppies, grits, and roadkill. Actually, Giants will eat anything that won't fight its way back out of their gullets.

Giant families are large. The average Giant household includes a patriarch and an odd collection of relatives — many of whom have no visible means of support and have to have their arms twisted to do any work around the house. The men tend livestock, drink, hunt, fight, mine, debauch, log, operate stills, continually tinker with their chariots, and run the family business. The womenfolk farm, gossip, practice handicrafts, spread malicious rumors, manage the household, chew the fat, and plot world domination over pinochle.

Despite their close family ties, adolescent Giants often find it necessary to leave their homes and their teary-eyed mothers behind to walk the lonely trails and seek their fortunes elsewhere. The fact is, the only thing to do at home is raise lemmings, clear rocky fields, and extort small change from their peers.

Young Giants travel the civilized areas dominated by other races, earning their living, acquiring skills, and building up stakes as mercenaries, lumberjacks, ranchhands, miners, and laborers. The lives of these young wanderers are full of excesses, particularly wine, women (of various races), and brawling. Giants have a tendency to try and prove themselves when in the company of others. This leads to contests, bickering, and the loss of employment, friends, and body parts.

After acquiring sufficient wealth, most Giant males journey back to the village of their birth. Having returned with fortune in pocket (they'd better not return home broke), family and friends welcome them with a feast, a long list of get-rich-quick schemes, old relatives needing operations, and the creditors they left behind.

Giants are gregarious, enjoying sports, hard liquor and congregating in bars. At their favorite roadhouses they beat each other senseless until everyone decides that they've had enough and that honor has been upheld. Then they pat each other on the back, pick up their teeth, and buy a round for their new good buddies.

Dueling is part of their culture. This leads to some individuals packing up and moving on after major disagreements; especially when the winner is *not* the one the maiden took behind the barn. Giant communities are prone to disputes and splits.

Giants who suffer an injury (whether verbal or physical) are vengeful and vindictive, and as soon as the odds can be stacked in their favor, they seek revenge on the one who has done them wrong. Pooling their resources, a gang stalks their quarry until their thirst for blood has been quenched or their money runs out. Should they go broke before achieving their purpose, they settle for pounding the living snot out of the first poor sod they happen to encounter. Needless to say, this leads to more tragedy and calls for revenge….

Giants *love* competitions. When not killing each other, they pretend to do so by playing sports such as football, hockey, and full-contact backgammon. Exiles from Earth, having had the misfortune of being transported to Murphy's World, taught the Giants these congenial pastimes. With the limited memory capacity of most Giants, the rules are subject to change each time they play.

Football, called 'kegball' by the Giants, is their national sport. Their size makes them formidable opponents since most of the game involves head-butting, wrestling on the run, jumping on an opponent when he's down, and patting your teammates on the butt. Giants took to the sport like fish to water. Giants are the acknowledged world champions of kegball. Few foreign opponents survive to play a rematch.

Typical Aesir Giant Clan Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Alrik	Arla	al Dente
4 – 6	Arni	Astrid	Antipasto
7 – 9	Audun	Aud	Besciamella
10 – 12	Björn	Beda	Brodo
13 – 15	Bodil	Birgitta	Cannelloni
16 – 18	Borg	Britta	Capellini
19 – 21	Brede	Dagny	Carbonara
22 – 24	Dag	Disa	Carducci
25 – 27	Dolfe	Elsa	Conchigliette
28 – 30	Dreng	Erika	Divanetto
31 – 33	Egen	Gleda	Fettuccine
34 – 36	Erik	Gressa	Fontina
37 – 39	Faxon	Greta	Frittata
40 – 42	Goran	Gunda	Gazpacho
43 – 45	Hakon	Helga	Gorgonzola
46 – 48	Hilmar	Helli	Lasagna
49 – 51	Inger	Hertha	Linguine
52 – 54	Jorgen	Ilka	Macaroni
55 – 57	Jukka	Ingrid	Manicotti
58 – 60	Knud	Ivanka	Mozzarella
61 – 63	Kosti	Jonina	Oregano
64 – 66	Lars	Judit	Panzerotti
67 – 69	Leif	Karin	Pastitsio
70 – 72	Lukas	Katrina	Penne
73 – 75	Nils	Kelda	Pesto
76 – 78	Olaf	Kirsten	Pistachio
79 – 81	Rikard	Kolina	Porcine
82 – 84	Sigvard	Olga	Prosciutto
85 – 87	Sven	Signe	Ricotta
88 – 90	Thorvald	Sigrid	Rigatoni
91 – 93	Vann	Vilma	Tortellini
94 – 96	Zakris	Wera	Vongole
97 – 100	Ziven	Zora	Zucchini

Giant Skills & Labor Practices

While Giants are capable of craftwork and manual labor, most will have none of it. In this they compare themselves to the Elves, whom they see as their cultural rivals — the Elves for their part turn apoplectic simply at the thought of the comparison. Dwarves, Brownies, and Trolls are hired to handle the dirty work, giving Giants the time to engage in the activity they love best: extorting money from others and investing it in completely impractical schemes. To a Giant, world conquest isn't just a good idea… it's a great way to spend the weekend.

Giants breed their own livestock. Their most prized animal is a powerful breed of giant horse, a Percheron-

like steed up to 35 hands [150" / 3.8 m] high, with six legs, capable of carrying a full-grown Giant in plate mail and galloping as fast as a lemming in heat.

Lemming herding is the Giants' other major livestock industry. Lemmings are the favorite snack food of Giants everywhere. They like them fried, baked, broiled, diced, sliced, marinated and *au bleu*. The lemming business is truly a growth industry — for seven years at least — after which practically all the tiny beasts take it upon themselves to stampede hundreds of miles, lay waste to everything in their path, and finally throw themselves off the highest coastal precipice they can find. The travel routes of the lemmings are carefully noted by Giant urban planners.

Giants are big on partnerships. They firmly believe that the right word in the right ear can make anything happen. And, if that doesn't work, there's always the shiv in the back.

Every Giant has a dream, handed down from generation to generation, of being his own boss, the boss of his family, and of every living thing on the planet. Most young Giants begin by running errands for their elders and the family business. This includes delivering small packages, escorting defenseless young maidens to work, and bashing competitors' skulls in. With age comes wisdom, and gradually the secrets of the operation are made clear. Adolescents learn about club management, weighted dice, and double dealing. Upon achieving adulthood (if they're one of the lucky ones…), they are finally accepted into the business proper, and are granted a share of the profits.

Once a family man, many vocational opportunities become available: liquor manufacturing and distribution, night club and entertainment services, concert promotions (Giantish pop groups are known for their talent for singing other languages phonetically), animal and chariot racing, and most desirous of all, casino management.

Giant Religion & Superstition

Faith is an integral part of Giant life. To Giants the fabric of reality is woven from dreams of the goddesses on the **Isle of Destiny**: **Mrs. Howell**, **Ginger**, and **Mary Ann** and the tales of their male companions. Together they spin the fortune of each Giant as he or she sails on the seas of fate. These, however, are the *old gods*, communicated with through runes, the beating of drums, and periods of meditation lasting one half hour (including commercials).

The Divine Pentad

The new religion, the **Divine Pentad**, was first revealed to a vagabond cast-out, Divanetto Patata, wandering the Vast Wasteland. Suddenly, he was overwhelmed by a vision of kaleidoscopic images within which he knew was contained all the wisdom of the ages — none of which made any sense to him. The pictures carried a subliminal message, and as the poor wretch sat stupefied, captured by its phosphorescent glow, a new divine force became clear: a force for the family, of values eternal, of the wisdom of the people. Above all towered the images of the five **Divine Ones**: **Homer**, **Marge**, **Bart**, **Lisa**, and **Maggie**. First the Son commanded the sacred taboo: they were *no longer permitted to ingest the flesh of cows*. Then the patriarch deity revealed the sacred sustenances: *donuts* and *beer*. Naturally, this religion spread like wildfire throughout the Giant lands.

Once a week, and in times of personal distress, Giants enter Pentad Temples to worship. Weekly rituals (evenings, at 'Prime Time'), include the quaffing of large quantities of the sacred brew and the snarfing of holy donuts. Then, with heads spinning and stomachs bulging, all eyes turn to the large black box in the corner. A few lucky devotees are rewarded with visions of the colorful world beyond, a place of benevolence, beauty, and rampant consumerism. In this way, the guiding principle of the 'Invisible Hand' is made plain to all true believers.

BELOW: *The* ***Asgard Review*** *is a cabaret show not to be missed — at least if you're a tourist and you like that sort of thing. Fleshy dancers in skimpy outfits, lounge singers, and the occasional magic, circus, or animal act. Of course, the drinks are free with admission — and often necessary to get through the evening.*

Sven Sicilio and the Swinging Svelte Sisters *is the big act in Asgard this season, and we mean big! Their hit single: 'Baby, I'd Kill a Frostie For You', has been Number One on the charts for twelve weeks straight!*



The Aesir Giant Clan

The most spectacular Giant settlement was founded by the Aesir Clan. Its name is **Asgard.** Asgard is located on a large island in the middle of the wide and never freezing River Ifing. The river winds through the vast Idawold plain in the northern arctic waste of Niflheim.



The origins of the Aesir are shrouded in mystery. Local Dwarvish elders claim that one day a Giant named Odin and several wagons of family and hangers-on emerged from out of the south and began spreading money around. The Aesir, on the other hand, claim that their ancestors were the creators of the world, and that they are invincible. Everyone else thinks that is just plain *silly* — at least the creation part.

Asgard was originally a difficult place to reach. Some think this was part of Odin's plan, since rumor had it the Aesir left Muspellheim in a hurry when Odin cooked the books and ripped off Surtr, boss of the Flame Giants.

Asgard originally consisted of a simple stockade, dirt road, and bingo hall used to generate liquid capital from the locals. This venture proved such a success that it attracted other investors and soon buildings were going up everywhere. Odin claims to have experienced a *vision* in which he was informed: "If you build it… they will come."

As more money flowed in, local Dwarves were hired to improve the facilities and infrastructure. Additional monies were raised for expansion by raiding the surrounding settlements and delivering the booty to the Dwarves, who in turn, fashioned the Aesir weapons, and sent them off for more goodies.

One of the first buildings completed was the **Idavol,** the High Thingstead (council chamber) of the Aesir. The Aesir boast that its walls are *solid gold*, and its roof is tiled in silver. In Dwarvish circles it is well known that the Aesir could only afford wood and stone, and had it covered with silver and gold *foil*, a decorating request which Invalde, the Dwarvish contractor, was heard to describe as 'tacky'. Within Idavol, twelve golden (foil) thrones were constructed for Odin, his sons, and the other favored Aesir.

A great dark stone wall was erected on the perimeter of the island, permitting only one safe entry to Asgard via Odin's Gate. An autobahn and Rainbow (toll) Bridge brings tourists to the site. Vingolf, a giant casino and pleasure palace (voted 'Tackiest Building' by the Elvish Architectural Association three centuries in a row), attracts visitors from as far away as Eastern Akimbo. Parks and Games Gardens pull in cash, along with five-star hotels and tourist shops. The construction of new facilities continues.

Once other races heard about this clan of ambitious consumers, they sent envoys to this prosperous realm with offers for interior decorating, fashion designs, night club acts, and decent food. Since to even a Giant's intellect it is plain that you can't get rich preying on your suppliers and customers, a new strategy was needed. Loki, Odin's oath-brother and head of marketing, figured out a way the Aesir could easily distinguish friend from foe: the **Aesir Gold Card (AGC)**. Now everyone who patronizes Asgard is issued an AGC. Should someone happen to be raided by an Aesir warband, they simply flash their AGC card and the berserkers will pass them by, going on to pillage the home of someone who failed to have the foresight to vacation in Asgard. As Loki says: "Don't get raided with it; get caught dead without it."

The Kewawkqu Giant Clan

These Giants live on the Pleasant Plain below the mountains bordering the Dark Lands.

Millennia ago the Kewawkqu were just another clan of dirt-poor Giants. Then one day, their 'Discovery' took place. Unfortunately, no-one except the Kewawkqu are precisely sure *what* this discovery was.

During the 'Discovery', their community was devastated by a rift in the fabric of reality. Toads rained from the heavens; people ripped off their clothes and ran naked through the streets, thoroughly enjoying themselves. Everyone recognized how hollow and materialistic their lives were; the haves shared their wealth with the have-nots — everyone had a good time. Within a week interest rates fell, inflation was eradicated, and the government balanced the budget.

This was too much of a good thing for the neighbors, so the Kewawkqu were driven from their homes — after which, the economy collapsed, the fashion industry boomed, and everyone had something to complain about again.

The Kewawkqu began a period of wandering which lasted for over 60 happy years. They traversed the blasted wastelands

Last autumn I had the mixed pleasure of attending the Aesirheim Super-Stein featuring the Niflheim Vikings and the Fenris Wolves.

I was amazed at the display of intricate maneuvers, violence, and frenzied masses of palpitating flesh — and that was just the cheerleaders!

While the strategy of the game eluded me, the fun apparently to be gained lies in betting on how long each player will live, and who will survivethe game.

Each side fields 13 combatants who are charged with the task of transporting a keg of rot-gut across their opponent's hostile territory, through a massive stone gatehouse, and into their 'end zone'.

The Vikings, the hometown favorites, who seemed to be cruising — literally, since they somehow diverted a river and flooded the field — to an early victory in their longboats, took a spill when a cascade of catapulted boulders sank their spirits along with their ships. Thus, they had to send in a slew of subs.

By the close of the second half, I was uncertain whether 45-5 represented the score, or the casualty rate. However, with the many battles taking place around me in the stands, it was all I could to to avoid being crushed, let alone keep a tally.

Little did it matter however, since it seemed that my team won. While collecting my winnings, the debauched victors mistook me for their mascot, and bore me away to the post-game festivities. I awoke the next morning bruised and hung over, in the arms of a Valkyrie who declared her willingness to abandon her well-paying career to bear our love-child. With visions in mind of a 200 lb. toddler wanting daddy to play 'horsey', I quickly remembered I had a dental appointment on the other side of the planet. To this day I panic every time I hear a woman in chainmail sing Wagner.

— Sean Murphy.

and strip-malls of Scarberia, the glass and steel forests of Etobicola, and journeyed the length of the Tee-Tee Sea. Never once did they lose their good cheer, despite making enemies wherever they went. Finally they resolved to live apart from all other peoples. They travelled to the furthest reaches of the known world and established a new homeland in a place they called the Pleasant Plain. (Which, except for periodic rains of toads, is a wondrous place to behold.)

Meanwhile, back in the lands of deficits and debt, the tabloids report that the Kewawkqu have become master sorcerers who retired from civilization to practice their dark arts in isolation. It is rumored that they have made allies with the denizens of the Dark Lands, throw wild kinky parties, engage in spouse swapping weekends, and always pay their taxes on time.

These days, the Kewawkqu are rarely seen abroad and little is known about them. They are thought to be wiser and more mysterious than the average Giant, and nobody is sure whether they possess good or evil intentions. But whenever one is sighted, he or she always seems to be smiling about something.

> Though I've been told Asgard has experienced some growing pains over its uneven history, I can confirm that it has now developed into one of the hottest entertainment meccas in all the multiverse.
>
> In addition to a wide assortment of betting and gaming houses, cabarets, theatre shows, and circus acts, it boasts a lineup of round-the-clock entertainers that can't be beat. Many of these talented individuals include those who have gone 'missing' (and/or presumed dead) from their own worlds. Among the names I was familiar with were the pianist Wladziu Liberace (a huge Elvish favorite), Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper, Elvis Presley (a role-model for many Brownies), Jim Morrison, Glen Miller, and the real Paul McCartney (the one who disappeared in 1967 and was replaced with the Canadian ex-OPP officer photographed for the Sgt. Pepper album).
>
> Proving once again that old acts never die, they just find a new venue.
>
> — Sean Murphy.

The Thurses Giant Clan

The members of this clan are the largest of all the Giant races. Towering **15' [4.6 m]** to **20' [6.1 m]** tall, with blue skin and long white hair covering their entire bodies, they dominate the northern tundra and arctic wastes of Jotunheim.

Not because they prefer it that way. Originally, the Thurses lived much further south. After several protracted wars with other Giant clans, they chose the better part of valor and bravely ran away. In their great towering ice castles and edifices, they're rarely troubled by enemies, and anyone else who drops by is usually invited to dinner — and eaten.

The lands of the Thurses are cold. Their enemies have nicknamed them 'Frost Giants' or, when feeling especially cruel, 'Frosties'. These names are deserved, for few others could withstand the constant freezing blizzards, the howling hail, and bursting water pipes of this winter wilderness. They are not immune to the effects of prolonged exposure: many Frosties are missing toes, fingers, noses, ears, and other appendages. This makes for repulsive visages and short tempers.

Thurses warriors hunt ice worms, arctic bear, seal, and tiger for meat, oil, pelts, and worm milk. They also mine precious gems, metals, and ice cubes. Once a month they drive their polar bear powered sleds to trading posts to exchange their goods for exotic items, fuel, and instant pudding. Thurses are by far the biggest 'party animals' of the Giant community. They are also the greatest braggarts about their deeds and romances. Thurses are great gamblers and dare takers (as long as it doesn't involve anything vaguely dangerous). They will compete with anyone to see who can consume (and hold) more liquor or food — just so long as the loser picks up the tab….



ABOVE: The wealthiest Giants on the planet live in Asgard.

The Yakshas Giant Clan

These stocky and powerful Giants reside in the mountainous lands of Lord Kuvera, who calls himself the 'God of Wealth'. His claim rests entirely on the wealth of trade goods and profits he skims off the labors of the enterprising Yaksha miners and artisans of whom he is Clan Chief, Head Honcho and Supreme Overlord. His personal credo: "Somebody's got to enjoy the fruits of your labors — and it might as well be me!"

The Yaksha people are a simple and hard-pressed folk who excel at doing as they're told and take joy from such down-home pleasures as a diet exclusively of gruel, fourth-generation hand-me-down long-johns, and mindless drudgery from dawn till dusk. They can be somewhat gruff and uncouth in social situations — but who can blame them? They appear devoted to their craft — at least while Lord Kuvera's guards are standing over them, lash in hand.

The artisans rarely interact with foreigners directly, but when they do, they are shrewd and cunning in their bargaining. The Yakshas maintain a policy of fulfilling every contract *exactly* as signed. They provide excellent service, but rarely give more than agreed to. They expect the client to fulfill their side of the bargain to the letter: broken promises mean broken legs….

Occasionally the Celestials, who call them 'the good people', contract the Yaksha's services for the mining of minerals, or the construction of large fortifications. Whenever strong backs, proud craftsmanship, and small minds are needed, they can be relied upon.

When necessary the Yakshas can be fierce warriors and individually fight as well as any Rakshasa or Celestial in hand-to-hand combat. The Yakshas weapon of choice is their formidable serrated, double-edged, two-handed pallet-knife.

THE TROLLS

TO TROLLS, NATURE IS SACRED. They spend their lives in harmony with their environment. They believe taking the life of any living creature is an unforgivable crime. Therefore Trolls subsist on small pebbles and dirt. (Tooth decay is virtually unknown among Trolls, and they never miss their minimum daily recommended intake of minerals.) However, Trolls have one hell of a time convincing their tastebuds that mud and loam is worth swallowing. They have developed the talent to cast magical illusions that makes their 'food' look and taste like anything they desire — cheeseburgers, caviar, and chocolate mousse are the fantasies of choice.

Hard working but not very bright, Trolls are often tricked, dominated, and abused by smarter individuals (this includes just about everyone except Ogres, Reagombies, and fundamentalist religious fanatics). Trolls can be quite resentful and vengeful once they've determined that they've been dealt an injustice — they're not keen on practical jokes. Trolls have a strong sense of honesty and fair play, and are rather naive about most things (e.g., they believe that the world is shaped like a kumquat, and that evolution is a fib).

They are a bit like enormous children: physically strong, impulsive, and easily distracted. They are subject to dramatic mood swings and seek the attention of others, occasionally making fools of themselves to achieve it. By nature they are not as curious about the mysteries of the world as are some of the other races. Trolls are happy enough knowing what they know, remaining shy and conservative.

The fact that the male and female are distinct from one another, both physically and mentally, makes Trolls stand apart from most civilized races (this is also due to their refusal to use artificial deodorants and their failure to discover a natural substitute).

The males embrace a philosophy of pseudo-intellectualism and eco-pacifism. This translates into an excuse for frequent twilight gatherings in the woods. At these secret sessions, mild mannered males bang drums, sing, tell tales of ancient noble role models, cry on each others furry shoulders, inhale copious amounts of pollen, and while in a state of altered consciousness, try to get in touch with their inner selves. Meanwhile, the women are convinced that the men are a bunch of idiotic wimps.

For their part, the females are much more active in the day-to-day responsibilities of Troll society. This includes dealing with foreign dignitaries and hostile encroachments on Troll territory.

Troll Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Trolls' arboreal, branch-swinging ape ancestry is evident in their short bandy legs, long arms reaching almost to their ankles, and in the shaggy fur which covers most of their body. The fur of the males is a forest green, while that of the females a bright scarlet. They have heavyset bodies, small but humanoid ears, very long fingers, and are prone to warts in embarrassing places.

Their fur is an effective insulator in the temperate climates where most Trolls live, and the cold-weather race possesses a layer of blubber beneath the skin. Cold weather Trolls are renowned for their subscriptions to diet magazines, fat farms, and Slim-Kwik™ drink mixes.

Trolls have excellent hearing, permitting them to hear distinct sounds at great distances. They shun noisy places. Unfortunately they also fall victim to excessive ear wax build-up, forcing them to spend inordinate amounts of time cleaning their ears — on the bright side, this has proved a boon to the candle industry.

The males reach heights of between **6' [1.8 m]** and **7' [2.1 m]** and weigh up to **500 lbs [227 kg].**

The females stand from **7' [2.1 m]** to **8'**

BELOW: Trolls exhibit a unique domestic character between bonded pairs. A sense of equality is demonstrated in their relationships that could only be the product of natural selection and new-age self-help books. Surely, they are a model for us all.



If you *want* strongly enough for something to occur, it *will* (but it will likely come about in a manner which was *unexpected*).

[2.4 m] and weigh up to **700 lbs [318 kg]**. Trolls reach young adulthood by age 10, are considered mature by 30, and may live to 80 or more years.

To Troll women, the reproductive act is an unpleasant but necessary evil. Thus the Troll birthrate is low. Once every six to eight years a Trollish female succumbs involuntarily to the 'ponn-neer', a physiological state which overrides the her normal distaste for sex and plunges her into extreme nymphomania. During this period, which can last from several days to months on end, the female does little but feed and seek out successive sexual partners.

Unfortunately for the males, after the pleasure of the sexual act is over, it is *they* the female tries to devour. Having been deprived of sexual release for so long, few male Trolls can resist the temptation at this time. Some fleet of foot do manage to make it to safety, and over a pint boast about their exploits to the other survivors.

Trolls have few natural enemies (with domestic conditions like this, who needs them?) and little endemic disease.

The Average Troll

QUOTE:	"Please don't hurt my friends — the potatoes…"	
VOCATIONS:	Protesters, Intellectuals, Pacifists, Plant Conversationalists, Tree-Huggers, Dryad Slaves, Husband Eaters.	
INTELLIGENCE:	5	Thick
WILLPOWER:	7	Impressionable
CHARISMA:	8	Annoying
MYSTIC:	7	Unknowing
STRENGTH:	20	Mighty
DEXTERITY:	12	Deft
FITNESS:	20	Husky
APPEARANCE:	8	Homely
HEALTH POINTS:	22	
HEIGHT:	7' [2.1 m]	
WEIGHT:	600 lbs [272 kg]	
TRAITS:	Naive, Kind, Wistful, Restless, Peace Loving, Easily Duped.	

While under normal circumstances Trolls are quite peaceful, you are advised against engaging in any conflict with them. Acting against Trollish interests can be compared to stepping upon a hornets' nest. Once aroused, Trolls throw themselves body and soul into the cause at hand. *Your* peace will come to an abrupt end. They will present petitions, encircle your home and work-place with protests, and important equipment will vanish or mysteriously break down for no apparent reason.

Troll Special Traits & Powers

In addition to the talent possessed by both male and female Trolls to alter the appearance, taste and texture of their unpalatable food, the males have the talent of 'Communicating with Plants'. By the ***laying-on of hands,*** the males can listen in on the conversations of grass, shrubbery, flowers and bark. Unfortunately, most of the time plants do nothing but complain: "We've had less than a piddle of rain this season"; "Oooh, I so detest being stepped on"; "I'm sick of having my limbs lopped off so that some inconsiderate git can roast marshmallows"; "Have you seen those awful vines who crept in down the way? Not exactly up to the standards of the species, wot say?" and "Why can't *I* be made into a semi-detached bungalow just like dear old dad?"

Dryads: The Ultimate in Tree Hugging

Occasionally a Troll comes across a tree that provides a very different set of experiences… a tree inhabited by a sensual *Dryad*. These supernatural nymphs of the woods cannot roam beyond the area encompassed by the span of the tree in which they reside. Thus they become a tad lonely after a millennia or so.

While travelling through the woods, chatting with vegetation, male Trolls are easy prey for the seductive charms of the Dryads. The unsuspecting Troll who partakes of the luscious fruits of the Dryad's tree will fall into a swoon and lay helpless beneath the shadowy branches. The sultry Dryad will emerge and descend upon the hapless intoxicated male.

Hours later, when his head clears, his eyes will behold a wondrous vision — a lithe naked form of abundant soft curves, glowing green and gold with shimmering long hair, sparkling eyes, clean even teeth, and best of all… no earwax! Overcome with passion the Troll reaches out for the maiden but before his desires can be satiated she utters a command "Be a dear… pop down to the liquor store and pick up a fifth of bourbon, ta celebrate, like." Realizing that he is ensnared in passion's vice-like grip, he shrugs in resignation and does as he's told.

Yet, as he makes his way back to the ætherial grove he reflects that things haven't turned out so bad. After all, being made the love slave of an incredible looking green nymphomaniac beats the hell out of being screwed and then devoured by your spouse.

Troll Language

Troll culture is not a very literate one. Apart from the common glyphs used by all to mark territorial boundaries, travel routes, warnings of insurance salesmen in the area, etc., only a few elders or religious specialists use symbolic communication.

Trollish society has a strong oral tradition. Trolls are famous for their poetry and storytelling, which often describe the details of passionate woodland encounters.

Female Trolls excel at inspiring others through their speeches, rhetoric, and intimidating size. Many of their speeches focus on denouncing enemies of the people and inciting others to champion worthy causes.

Male Trolls are less political. They recite works of local history and legend, and are renowned for their capacity to fill in the particulars of any given tale. They are liars *par excellence.*

Troll Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Trolls are found in mountain valleys and forested regions. A few hardy tribes live in the high arctic tundra regions and underground. Their solitude means their range is quite limited — there are no known seafaring Troll clans — and each community knows little about the others.

Trolls are not gregarious, preferring to live alone in wilderness areas or in communes of a few families, usually comprised of fewer than 100 individuals, although there are a few large settlements. They travel within a set territory between their tree-houses. As Troll families grow, younger members move away and build their own tree dwellings nearby within the clan territory.

These tree-houses are connected to their family home by 'sky-paths' through the branches. While undetectable to a member of another race, these paths are immediately apparent to a Troll. Along the paths are water-collectors, meeting halls, rock gardens, and convenience stores. The treehouses of the largest communes can become sprawling 'cities' across the forest canopy, linked together over many miles and encompassing hundreds of individuals.

Distinctive cries, drumbeats, and express couriers travel from tree to tree, passing news across the settlement and keeping people awake at night.

The most dreaded catastrophe for a Troll community is *fire.* When seasonal dry spells make fires a risk, fire-watchers are appointed, and emergency plans are laid to fight the fires or evacuate the population. Trolls understand fire, but use it only when essential, and even then with reluctance and extreme caution, for tasks such as forging tools. The worst social gaffe for a Troll is to make an ash out of himself… and everyone else!

Troll Customs & Lifestyle

Trolls require little sleep and remain active at night, using phosphorescent fungi to illuminate the darkness.

All that talk about Trolls carrying off babies and biting your mother-in-law's head off has caused everyone an undue amount of concern. Trolls are nothing at all like that — unless your mother-in-law is president of a logging firm….

Woodland Warriors

In areas where other civilized races have trespassed on Trollish lands, the females engage in *guerrilla warfare* against the offenders, be they Giant loggers, Dwarvish dam-builders, or Elvish golf course engineers. This is a duty which is embraced in time-honored fashion by Troll maidens: they love a good fight.

Employing their extensive knowledge of the forest they set upon the enemy with the ferocity of a cornered tigress. They write letters of complaint, sign petitions, picket, organize boycotts, distribute inflammatory pamphlets, sing protest tunes, and bring in big name Brownie rock stars to gain sympathetic publicity, making life unbearable for all concerned.

The genders' opposing lifestyles, viewpoints, and methods of dealing with problems are a source of continuing tension in Trollish society. From the female perspective, the males contribute little to society; the males in turn view the females as excitable and humorless — however, they're too afraid to say anything about it.

Troll Skills & Labor Practices

Trolls aren't big on education. This is not to say that they don't like to *sound* educated when out with friends; they simply have little use for extraneous information in their daily lives. Besides, by-and-large, they're stupid.

Despite their generally limited intelligence, Trolls are skillful students of nature. They tend and prune the woods in which they live, cultivating wildflowers, singing shrubbery, and harvesting psychedelic pollen. They are excellent gardeners.

What little education they do receive takes place within the family. This includes the knowledge of fire, forest lore, the casting of food illusions, media manipulation, and 'tree-singing'.

Tree-singing is the Trollish art of crooning to certain magical trees located within their forests to cause them to grow in desired forms. Over the long term, continued singing produces complex shelters and all the other structures of Trollish architecture. Generations of Trollish research has determined that the musical themes to which trees are most receptive include: lost love, the death of favorite pets and/or lovers, lovers who've done you wrong, fond memories of rural childhood living, and rocky mountain highs. (Independent Elvish researchers speculate that the trees alter their shape not in sympathy with the so-called music, but rather in the hope that by doing so the Trolls will cease singing.)

Having taken yet another wrong turn, I was deep inside a primeval forest. Giving up on finding a path, I settled down for the night. I built a fire and began to roast a few vegetables and roots I had gathered. Suddenly, I was tapped on the shoulder. I whirled around and sat down hard, for towering over me was a huge, hairy beast with a distinctly unfriendly look on her face.

In a weak voice I said, "Hi. Want to join me for dinner?" I hoped she wouldn't mistake that as an invitation to gnaw on my giblets.

Her heavy-browed, hairy visage filled my sight as she leaned close to me. "Tsk, tsk," she said. "Did you never stop to think of those poor vegetables' families? And how about the dangers of forest fire? Such carelessness makes me so angry." Not only did her words give me pause, but her breath was strong enough to halt a herd of charging elephants.

Smiling broadly, and shaking like a leaf, I quickly doused the fire and did my best to replant the vegetables. Somewhat mollified, she offered me a handful of loam as a snack. You know, with salt, it doesn't taste that bad. Then I noticed she was looking me over carefully. "You know, you're kind of cute, for such a little guy." She smiled as predatory a smile as I had ever seen. It was then I realized that I was facing a female Troll, and she was in heat!

Screaming like a banshee, I made tracks, her cries of "Can't you give a gal a little company?" fading behind me.

I'm broad-minded, but not to the point of becoming a post-coital snack!

— Sean Murphy.

Troll Religion & Superstition

Trolls take their religion seriously. All the forest is a place of reverence. They worship the ground they walk on. Divinity is found in the soft breezes which waft among the rustling leaves; the diffuse sunlight nourishing the plants and animals which dwell upon the forest floor; the cool waters of the limpid pools where they gather by moonlight to celebrate their oneness with nature — and skinny dip with friends.

Trollish males 'worship' nature personified — the forest Dryads. But *that*, say the females, is something *else* entirely. The males protest that their twilight devotions are quite genuine. Still, you can't fool mother nature… nor your wife.

Typical Troll Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Ackerley	Acacia	Aretino
4 – 6	Arlo	Anthea	Auden
7 – 9	Bancroft	Blanchefleur	Blake
10 – 12	Berkeley	Blodwin	Browning
13 – 15	Chaney	Calantha	Byron
16 – 18	Cicero	Cerise	Coleridge
19 – 21	Collins	Dahlia	Dante
22 – 24	Dagwood	Daphne	Eliot
25 – 27	Elder	Eglantine	Field
28 – 30	Ellery	Eustacia	Garth
31 – 33	Farnham	Fernleigh	Goethe
34 – 36	Fenton	Flora	Heine
37 – 39	Glen	Geneva	Homer
40 – 42	Gore	Glacinta	Jonson
43 – 45	Hagley	Heather	Keats
46 – 48	Ives	Iantha	Landor
49 – 51	Jacinto	Jasmine	Malherbe
52 – 54	Keith	Juniper	Montgomery
55 – 57	Lee	Kezia	Nash
58 – 60	Marden	Lily	Parker
61 – 63	Norwood	Magnolia	Petronius
64 – 66	Platt	Morela	Poe
67 – 69	Rutley	Niobe	Racine
70 – 72	Stockley	Olivia	Rivarol
73 – 75	Sylvester	Pansy	Scott
76 – 78	Thorndike	Prunella	Shelley
79 – 81	Tilden	Reseda	Tennyson
82 – 84	Upwood	Saffron	Thomas
85 – 87	Vance	Thalia	Untermeyer
88 – 90	Wiley	Varda	Verlaine
91 – 93	Worth	Violet	Virgil
94 – 96	Yardley	Yolanda	Waller
97 – 100	Yves	Zsa Zsa	Yeats

The Vanar Trolls of Rishyamukha Mountain

The Vanar are a very special Troll clan. They are more powerful and intelligent than any other Troll community. They have established a kingdom of six tribes under the leadership of King Surgriva and his chief councillor and general Hanuman.

The Vanar look even more simian than their Trollish cousins. They resemble large monkeys, with fur of many colors (white, black, green, blue, yellow, red, brown and Argyle), long tails, sword-like nails, and sharp pointed teeth. They prefer to be called Vanar rather than Trolls — you risk life and limb if you call them "monkey-people."

Other Trolls hold the Vanar in contempt. It is clear that they wish to establish themselves above their peers. This really pisses off the other Trolls.

All Vanar have the supernatural ability to ***grow up to 3 times normal size at will*** — Vanar tailors never go hungry. Additionally, each individual can ***transform*** into one other lifeform of their choice. The first time they alter their appearance, that becomes the *only* alternate shape that they can ever take.



ABOVE: Some of the poorest Trolls on the planet live near Asgard in the Ironwold Forest.

Compared with the standards of their race, the Vanar are highly intelligent, though at times it is offset by their tendency to react based on emotions and spontaneous thoughts rather than sticking to a planned course of action. They are prone to brooding, procrastination, and throwing impromptu dinner parties.

The Vanar are allies of the Celestials against the Rakshasas, offering moral support, selling victory bonds, and throwing swell garden party fundraisers.

The Vindawol Troll Clan of Ironwold

The Ironwold Forest, located to the southeast of Asgard, is where the Vindawol make their home. It is a prime source of lumber for both the Aesir and the local Dwarvish clans whom they employ. This, of course does not endear them to the tree loving Trolls.

This is one group of Trolls you've got to feel a little sympathy for. To begin with, they didn't even get to name the area where they live (which translates as 'the dark but beautiful wood'); it was chosen by a nearby Giant clan, the Aesir. While the Trolls' time is spent bothering no-one in particular, the Aesir have taken it upon themselves to claim Ironwold as their own personal hunting grounds, and more often than not, it's the Trolls they are hunting!

The Aesir, not the wisest of folk by any account, have spread all sorts of terrible rumors about the Vindawol Trolls, such as: they all possess crows feet, they engage in mischievous activities, and are actually stupid and taller Dwarves (thus simultaneously offending the Dwarves). The Vindawol respond mainly by avoidance and secrecy. Although their official policy is that of non-aggression, some younger members have been known to sneak into the camps of travellers intruding on their realm and swipe all their clothes and equipment.

The Angurvin

Currently there is a movement (called the Angurvin) among the younger Trolls to take a more aggressive stance with the Aesir (and to a lesser extent, the Dwarves). It is widely known that the Aesir are dependent on the Dwarves for their best weapons and finest buildings. These young, radical, and mostly female Trolls believe that if they could impersonate some Dwarves and commit a major offense against the Aesir, it would start a war between the two races. This would halt the attacks upon the Vindawol while the Aesir and Dwarves fight it out.

The assault team has been training, trying on beards and learning Dwarvish for years now, while engaged in heated debate over precisely what offense they should commit. Should they: spread rumors among the Dwarves that the Aesir are about to replace them with Trow scab labor; should they rubberize the parchment that the Aesir draft their checks on; or sabotage Dwarvish plumbing repairs to Asgard? The debate continues.

THE OGRES

MAKE NO BONES ABOUT IT, Ogres are big and dumb. Everyone knows it, and it frustrates Ogres all to hell.

Ogre Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Ogres are shaggy and gorilla-like, and the most heavy-set sentient creatures on Murphy's World. Adult males, more massively built and considerably larger than the females (often the only way you can tell them apart), can weigh up to **1000 lbs [454 kg]** and reach heights of up to **11' [3.3 m].** Ogres are very strong, with long arms reaching to their knees, large, barrel-shaped, thickset bodies, short legs, flat feet (3 toes), and stubby fingers (3 plus a thumb). They bite their toenails.

Some Ogres are more hairy than others. The exposed skin of their faces and chests are black, blue-grey, reddish or pink, and leathery in texture. Their faces are snout-like, with high foreheads and massive brow ridges. Some Ogres have horns randomly placed on their heads. They have small deep-set bloodshot eyes, small rounded ears, a flattened nose with flared nostrils, and a large mouth with jagged teeth. Running from front to back on top of their heads is a heavy ridge of bone, which gives purchase to their powerful jaw muscles (whose most obvious use is in yelling at others).

Ogres reach adulthood by age 7, are considered mature by 30, and live to around 60.

Although they are good climbers, and young Ogre children enjoy swinging from branches, the heavy-boned adults prefer to remain on the ground, their great weight usually proving too much for tree-branch travel.

Ogre Special Traits & Powers

Ogres can ***detect lower forms of life.*** However, they don't have the opportunity to use this ability very often.

Ogre Language

Ogres do not possess a language so much as a variety of loud bellows. Typical Ogres might best be compared to half-intoxicated lager-louts who impose themselves on you when you have taken some dear friends out to a favorite nightclub. Ogres think that if they just speak *loud enough,* they will be understood. The problem is, they usually have little to say, and their language possesses too few words to express even that.

Ogres do not have much of a written language. What they do possess might be compared to the worst of stick pictures and bathroom graffiti.

Thus Ogres are in low demand as scribes and opera singers. They do, however, make popular sportscasters.

Ogre Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Ogres are found virtually everywhere except treeless plains and hot flat deserts. They prefer to settle near marshes, lakeshores, and large rivers with floodplains. The underground variety of Ogre is common in mountain and cavernous badland areas, while the subarctic race lives in glacial caves near the poles, and on high mountains above the treeline. Wilderness areas are likely to contain Ogre colonies and deserted cities may harbor Ogre bands. Individual rogue males favor areas where famine, plague, and war have reduced the population, and left abandoned dwellings.

A mixed forest-grassland is their preferred habitat and some of the more advanced bands have

The Average Ogre

Quote:	"Duh, you making fun of me?"	
Vocations:	Mercenary, Sportscaster, Hunter/Gatherer.	
Intelligence:	3	Gormless
Willpower:	5	Susceptible
Charisma:	4	Nauseating
Mystic:	1	Oblivious
Strength:	32	Formidable
Dexterity:	12	Handy
Fitness:	22	Robust
Appearance:	4	Repulsive
Health Points:	25	
Height:	10' [3 m]	
Weight:	900 lbs [408 kg]	
Traits:	Easily Confused, Always Hungry, Aggressive, Very Limited Curiosity.	



Whenever you try to repeat something a *third time in a row,* something will occur which will have a 99% chance of *distracting* and *interrupting* you.



taken to herding animals. Smaller subspecies of Ogre live in trees in tropical forests, while another lives underground, digs burrows and crude caves, and comes out at night to forage. Ogres are omnivores: if it sits still long enough to be picked up or clubbed, it's food….

There is a giant sub-species of Ogre which lives in the far north and south; this subarctic race is more carnivorous than the standard type, has whitish fur, a thick layer of fat beneath the skin and is less socially and technically advanced (which puts them pretty far down on the cultural scale).

Ogres are not highly sociable and prefer to live alone or in small family groups of up to 30 individuals. 5 to 15 such groups, inhabiting an area of up to **25 sq miles [64 km²],** consider themselves 'related'. They form a loose-knit clan, have occasional social gatherings and act in concert in emergencies — a migration, drought, invasion by another intelligent race, etc.

The common Ogre builds small huts of mud and clay, or mud-mortared stone, with thatched roofs. Within each hut is a nest-like construction of branches and leaves, to which hides, skins, and cloth are added for comfort; granaries and food-stores are built in the branches of trees, out of the reach of scavenging animals. Each hut has a hearth for fire and a small shrine.

Ogre Customs & Lifestyle

Ogre family groups consist of a dominant male and a number of females and young. Young adult males are cast out of the family group after a confrontation with the family leader, usually due to an argument over playing the stereo too loud, or not having gotten a decent job yet. Solitary younger males wander the fringes of Ogre territories alone or in small groups. During their wanderings many develop deep friendships. The young Ogres in these gangs build their self-confidence and physical prowess, while generally raising hell.

Eventually they either woo young females (often those neglected by the reigning male) and strike off into unknown territory, or challenge an established male for rulership of his clan.

Ogres are highly aggressive omnivores, and can, if pressed, survive on almost anything — including other intelligent species, or even each other. They are creatures of habit, however, and prefer to stick to the diet on which they were raised. Most Ogre bands live by gathering wild vegetable food, and by hunting with bows, spears, clubs, and hand grenades.

Ogre Skills & Labor Practices

Ogres make simple tools of stone, wood, and leather. The underground subspecies has developed crude mining and smithing skills. They employ nets for hunting and fishing, but are poor fishermen because they fear water and detest getting wet. With their heavy bones and dense muscle, Ogres are not naturally buoyant. In fact, they sink like stones.

They will, however, trade or steal more advanced weapons and tools from other races — an Ogre in full armor with a two-handed sword is bad news. Rogue male Ogres living on the fringes of civilized territory sometimes become bandits and raiders, haunting lonely roads, bridges, and woods, killing (and occasionally eating) passers-by. If they have been separated from Ogre society for long enough, they may take non-Ogre women as mates. (Such a pairing produces notably confused children.)

HAVING AN OGRE AS A FRIEND IS LIKE HOLDING A TICKING BOMB IN YOUR HANDS — IT IMPRESSES THE HELL OUT OF PEOPLE, BUT IT CAN BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE AT ANY TIME.

I WAS ATTENDING A COMEDY CLUB, LISTENING TO SOME OF THE FINEST TALENT THE PLACE COULD OFFER. SOME PEOPLE PREFER THE DRY WIT AND SOPHISTICATED HUMOR OF THE ELVES, BUT I WILL ADMIT TO A PREFERENCE FOR THE LESS SUBTLE BROWNIE STAND-UP ROUTINES. AS I WAS ENJOYING MY BEER DURING INTERMISSION, I HAPPENED TO GLANCE TOWARDS THE DOOR AND SAW MY FRIEND BLORG, THE OGRE, PEERING AROUND THE ROOM. I STOOD UP, WAVED, AND SHOUTED, "HEY BLORG, C'MON OVER HERE. THESE GUYS'LL SLAY YA!"

BAD CHOICE OF WORDS.

"SLAY ME? I NO LET THEM SLAY ME!" WITH AN ANGRY ROAR, BLORG PROCEEDED TO TRASH THE CLUB, THE STABLES, THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR, AND MOST OF THE BLOCK. I DID MY BEST TO STOP HIM, BUT COULDN'T FOR THE LIFE OF ME THINK OF A WAY TO GET THE CONCEPT OF 'FIGURE OF SPEECH' ACROSS TO AN OGRE. BLORG FINALLY STOPPED WHEN HIS CLUB JUST MISSED A LITTLE PUPPY. BLORG PICKED THE FRIGHTENED ANIMAL UP, AND WITH TEARS IN HIS EYES, SAID "POOR PUPPY NEEDS FRIENDS, JUST LIKE BLORG. SEAN SAVE BLORG FROM BAD PEOPLE. I TELL EVERYONE SEAN IS BLORG'S FRIEND."

I'M SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING CHANGING MY NAME.

— SEAN MURPHY.

Ogre Religion & Superstition

Ogres are highly superstitious and have a strong but obscure religious belief system involving ancestor worship, a pantheon of gods and spirits, and extensive use of Ouija boards. They believe practically *everything.*

The Dsonoqua Ogres

In the vast forested coastal regions called the Turtle Lands there lurks a rather obnoxious group of carnivorous Timber Ogres called the Dsonoqua. They are hairy and ape-like, reaching heights of **9' [2.7 m],** and weigh over **500 lbs. [227 kg].** They leave ***no tracks*** where they walk.

The land where they live is an interesting place, for here all things, including animals and inanimate objects, possess *consciousness* and the ability to *communicate* in various and mysterious ways. The entire region is said to be *alive.* It is often referred to as the Land of Spirits. It is not a place for the paranoid.

These creatures live in small family groups and usually prey on nearby animals and other creatures as they happen across them. The Dsonoqua are primitive, with no technology to speak of, no written language, and communicate solely by *whistling* (unfortunately, they have a weakness for crackers…). Occasionally they *hum.* They are allied with the Rock Giants who live in the Place of Caves southward down the coast.

Dsonoqua are difficult to kill, as any ***wound heals*** within **1d10 minutes** and severed limbs (including heads) re-attach themselves, unless their attackers can pass their hand (or any other part of a living creature) between the severed pieces, breaking the supernatural bond which causes reunion. The most popular method of getting rid of the creatures once subdued is cremation. The only troubling thing is that their ashes turn into large blood-sucking mosquitoes.

The Oni Ogres

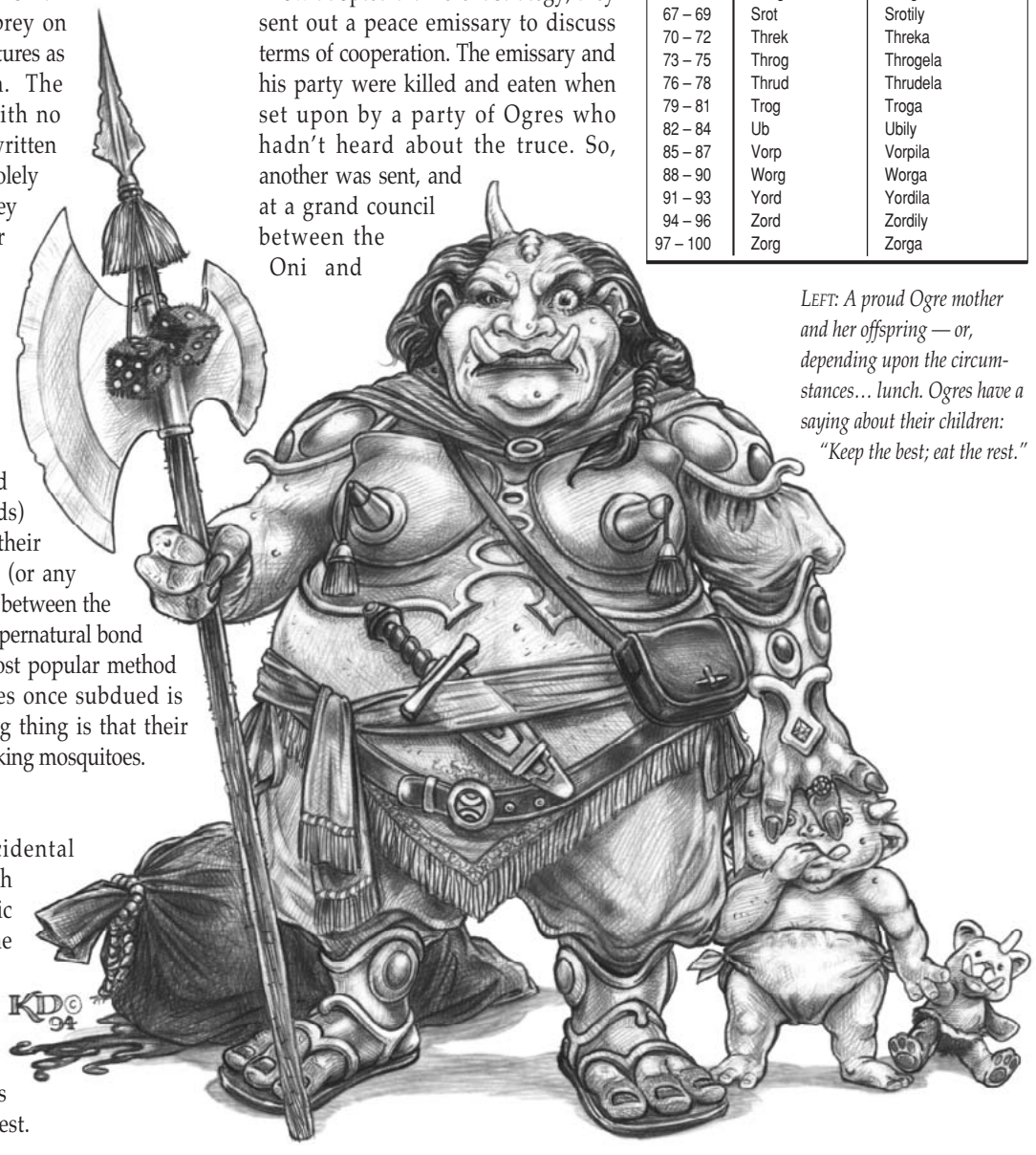
The lands west of the Accidental Ocean are a wild and harsh place where forests of gigantic trees, lakes, and rivers are the habitat for many animal species. This wilderness has a certain grandeur, broken only by the babbling groans and bellows of Oni Ogres as they stumble through the forest. Whenever an Oni appears, it is a signal for any animals in the area to end their socializing at the river bank or grassy glade and flee — lest they become part of the creature's daily meal. It is said of the Oni that they live to eat, for it seems that they do little else.

One other thing they do, however, is fight — though they're not certain why. This addiction to combat keeps their numbers down, preserving the forest for more deserving creatures. It also means that the Oni get in the way of the expansionist plans of the Dark Elves. While Oni Ogres are not the *best* fighters, they are darn hard to kill, especially after they get all excited and sweaty.

Stymied by Oni resistance, the Drow adopted a different strategy; they sent out a peace emissary to discuss terms of cooperation. The emissary and his party were killed and eaten when set upon by a party of Ogres who hadn't heard about the truce. So, another was sent, and at a grand council between the Oni and

Typical Ogre Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names
1 – 3	Agop	Agopa
4 – 6	Akdor	Akdorly
7 – 9	Blod	Bloda
10 – 12	Blorg	Blorgila
13 – 15	Brog	Brogily
16 – 18	Carog	Caroga
19 – 21	Droob	Droobly
22 – 24	Flug	Fluga
25 – 27	Gork	Gorkila
28 – 30	Grog	Grogila
31 – 33	Hrodor	Hrodorly
34 – 36	Krid	Krida
37 – 39	Lorp	Lorpily
40 – 42	Lugo	Lugola
43 – 45	Lurg	Lurga
46 – 48	Morg	Morga
49 – 51	Nogg	Noggily
52 – 54	Nort	Nortelal
55 – 57	Ogg	Ogga
58 – 60	Plob	Plobela
61 – 63	Rog	Rogily
64 – 66	Slurg	Slurgela
67 – 69	Srot	Srotily
70 – 72	Threk	Threka
73 – 75	Throg	Throgela
76 – 78	Thrud	Thrudela
79 – 81	Trog	Troga
82 – 84	Ub	Ubily
85 – 87	Vorp	Vorpila
88 – 90	Worg	Worga
91 – 93	Yord	Yordila
94 – 96	Zord	Zordily
97 – 100	Zorg	Zorga



LEFT: A proud Ogre mother and her offspring — or, depending upon the circumstances… lunch. Ogres have a saying about their children: "Keep the best; eat the rest."

representatives of the Drow Warlord, a deal was struck. The Drow would provide the Oni with the training and weapons necessary to conquer their own territory and keep out the Trolls and Giants, while the Oni would furnish the Drow with natural resources and mercenaries to continue their 'great war of global unity'. This treaty depends a great deal on the forbearance of the Drow, for the Oni are constantly eating Dark Elves who pass through their forest in small groups; the Oni explaining "We thought they was deer." The Drow, having so few allies, grit their teeth and put up with these unfortunate barbecue parties.

An especially nasty clan of Oni live on the Isle of Oni in the stormy seas west of Ongoro Island. These Oni operate as notorious pirates in the area, pillaging and extorting treasure from coastal settlements. They kidnap young victims to serve as slaves and run an export business in humanoid laborers.



BELOW: Pixies are a proud people with a long warrior tradition — in spite of being one of the most vertically challenged races on the planet. Treat Pixies with respect: they are always prepared and usually looking for a fight. Typically, they win.

THE PIXIES

APPEARING CUTE AND CHILDLIKE, the Pixies are known as 'the little people', or 'the wee folk' — a moniker which they will often kill over if they hear it spoken. Pixies take themselves *very* seriously. They are the most macho and spartan of the Færie races — they make Giants seem like wimps. Pixies are a a puzzle to anyone who has bothered to try and understand them.

Pixie Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Pixies appear fragile, standing **2' [0.6 m]** to **3' [1 m]** tall, with long thin limbs attached to a slight build, large dark eyes, small noses, and graceful pointed ears. While some clans have amber, brown, or even forest green complexions, most possess porcelain white skin and either white, blonde, red, or chestnut brown hair. Their hands have a thumb and three fingers.

But don't be fooled. Though they weigh only **30 lb [13.6 kg]** to **60 lbs [27.2 kg]**, most of it is solid *muscle.* Their bodies are remarkably strong, and beneath their haunting eyes lies a mocking smile, and a strength of character and purpose of will that is rare on Murphy's World. They achieve adulthood by age 8, and reach old age at 13.

Pixies use their bodies as canvases. They cover themselves from head to foot with geometric and spiral tattoos that follow and enhance the contours of their bodies.

Their personalities are confrontational. They are as much into boasts as Giants, yet Pixies are wild enough in spirit to carry out what they've said. They are capable of extremes, including acts of great generosity (and you'd better appreciate it) and of great mischief and vengeance.

Pixies possess many natural talents. They are as at home in the wild as in the city. They are excellent skulkers, trackers, and pickpockets.

Pixie Special Traits & Powers

They have the power to cast ***one glamour per day*** upon a victim. This spell causes the victim to view one specific thing (e.g., a acorn, or a trail) as the Pixie would have them view it (e.g., as a gold coin, as going the wrong way). People affected by this magic are said to be 'Pixie-led' or *pixilated.*

Pixie Language

The Pixie spoken tongue is a harsh sounding cross between the sound you make when clearing your throat and the noise made if you drop a box of tools down a mine-shaft. There are many local dialects, and occasionally one Pixie cannot comprehend another from a clan several hundred miles away. They possess a simple symbolic written language used mostly for military and ceremonial purposes.

Pixie Geographic Distribution & Settlement

Pixies are known as the 'terror of the steppes'. They live in nomadic clans of direct family relatives and associates. They travel mounted on domesticated beasts, herding their flocks and cattle, dragging their tents and belongings behind them on travois to the next grazing site.

The standard Pixie camp consists of 20 – 30 dome-like tents (or longhouses in permanent settlements) constructed of wood and animal hide. There are openings at the top to let out the smoke from the cookfire within. A larger tent (or complex of tents) serves as the home/workplace of the chief and his senior advisors and their families.

Pixie Customs & Lifestyle

Pixies are smart, and quite capable of organizing into a force sizeable enough to pose a threat to other civilized races. Since their lives are relatively short, a premium is put on age, and councils of elders form their governments. When a young Pixie plans a battle, he usually has at his side at least one elder to advise and offer some perspective on his plans.

Pixies are fond of whooping it up in their own rather crude barbarian style, and have a huge appetite for drink, dancing, and general merrymaking. This occasionally takes place at the expense of a conquered settlement. All Pixies like to play in water. Pixies love malicious practical jokes, and have no sense of discretion, or when to quit. "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing." That can be said for almost everything they engage in.

Pixie Skills & Labor Practices

The combination of competence in leadership and skill in horseback riding has lead them to develop a formidable cavalry — even if they fall off periodically due to their lack of stirrups and saddlery. They reproduce often enough to replenish the numbers they lose in their ferocious charges.

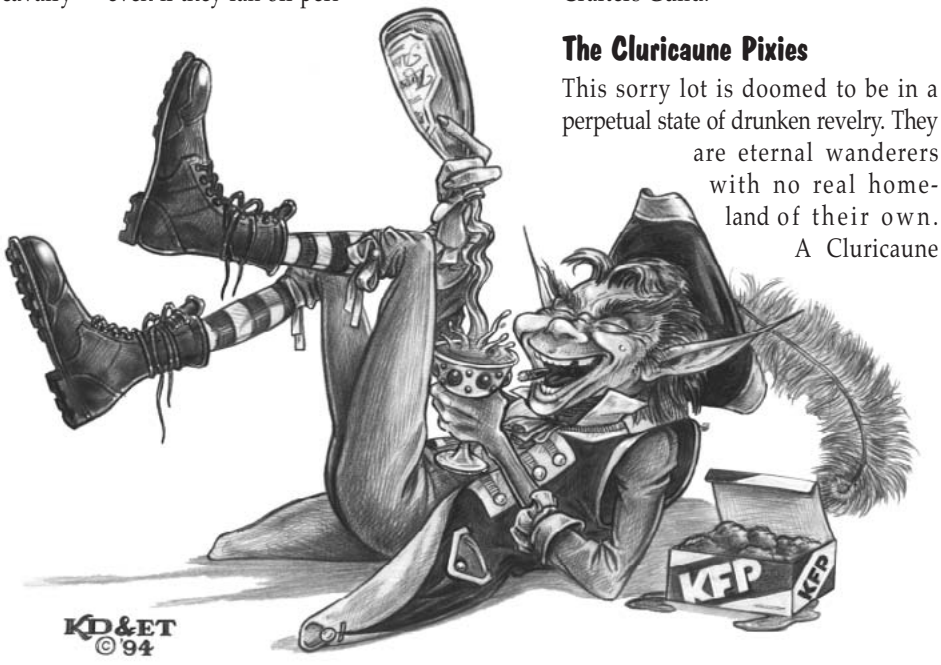
Pixie Religion & Superstition

Their spiritual beliefs, handed down from the Pixie prophet **Glougchmoran** and preserved by word of mouth, involve the *worship of nature* and its mysteries. The sighting, quantity, or behavior of a certain type of animal or bird are taken as signs of divination and great relevance to daily events and long term plans. Among the features of this religion is the requirement that the only artforms or motifs which may be used are non-illustrative, comprised of geometric patterns and designs.

With their success in expanding their territory through conquest, they have taken it upon themselves to interpret their dogma a step further and destroy the icons, artworks, and images of any 'false belief' they encounter along the way. This makes them unpopular with other religions, but they are a huge hit with the Religious Symbols Crafters Guild.

The Cluricaune Pixies

This sorry lot is doomed to be in a perpetual state of drunken revelry. They are eternal wanderers with no real homeland of their own. A Cluricaune



The Average Pixie

QUOTE:	"You wanna make something out of it?"	
VOCATIONS:	Barbarians, Thieves, Winos.	
INTELLIGENCE:	10	Sensible
WILLPOWER:	18	Confident
CHARISMA:	9	Annoying
MYSTIC:	11	Aware
STRENGTH:	16	Burly
DEXTERITY:	12	Deft
FITNESS:	14	Hale
APPEARANCE:	10	Plain
HEALTH POINTS:	12	
HEIGHT:	2'6" [0.8 m]	
WEIGHT:	40 lbs [18 kg]	
TRAITS:	Practical Jokesters, Daring, Boastful, Vengeful, Prickly, Party Animals, Macho, No Discretion.	

BELOW LEFT: A typical Cluricaune in a typical situation. These urban Pixies are definitely not of the same calibre as their nomadic warrior brethren.

Typical Pixie Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names
1 – 3	Alexander	Aclys
4 – 6	Attila	Aventail
7 – 9	Blucher	Baidana
10 – 12	Buller	Berdysh
13 – 15	Custer	Chausses
16 – 18	Cyrus	Cinqueda
19 – 21	Darius	Dolabra
22 – 24	Dayan	Enarmes
25 – 27	Eisenhower	Falarica
28 – 30	Ewell	Falchion
31 – 33	Foch	Galea
34 – 36	Genghis	Gisarme
37 – 39	Grant	Hauberk
40 – 42	Haig	Ikada
43 – 45	Hindenburg	Jamibya
46 – 48	Ismay	Jineta
49 – 51	Jackson	Kaddara
52 – 54	Joffre	Karabela
55 – 57	Lee	Lamella
58 – 60	Ludendorff	Lorica
61 – 63	Manstein	Machaira
64 – 66	Napoleon	Maniffer
67 – 69	Outram	Navaja
70 – 72	Patton	Odoshi
73 – 75	Rommel	Pallasch
76 – 78	Saladin	Quillon
79 – 81	Sedgewick	Rondel
82 – 84	Templer	Squama
85 – 87	Tiberius	Tabar
88 – 90	Walker	Vambrace
91 – 93	Wellington	Ventail
94 – 96	Xerxes	Wakizashi
97 – 100	Zhukov	Zischagge

can often be found at dawn passed out in the wine cellar of a wealthy lord or merchant. It's not that Cluricaunes like or want it this way: their boisterous behavior is due to a *curse* put upon their clan by a Pixie whom the Cluricaunes mocked until he committed suicide by drowning in beer to escape the torment.

By day the Cluricaunes are perfectly upstanding and contributing citizens. When night falls, each of the clansfolk is compelled to head directly to the nearest source of liquor and continue to drink until the supply runs out, they pass out, or dawn — whichever occurs first. Not a pleasant life. Still, they've learned to cope, mostly by brewing their own moonshine and staying indoors.

SOMETIMES, MY SENSE OF HUMOR GETS ME INTO SERIOUS TROUBLE. I WAS SITTING IN A BAR THE OTHER DAY, DRINKING, AND ASKING MY COMPANIONS TO TELL ME ABOUT PIXIES. I WAS CURIOUS, NEVER HAVING MET ONE. ONE OF MY COMPANIONS MENTIONED THAT PIXIES WERE THE 'TERROR OF THE STEPPES'. LAUGHING, I ASKED, "WHAT IF I LIVE IN A HOUSE WITH ONLY ONE FLOOR?" SILENCE FELL IN THE BAR, AND THE FIVE PIXIES I HADN'T KNOWN WERE SITTING BEHIND ME CAME OVER TO MY TABLE.

SITTING, I LOOKED SLIGHTLY DOWN AT THIS GROUP OF ARMED-TO-THE-TEETH PIXIES. "CUTE JOKE," THE LEADER SAID. "DO YOU FIGHT AS WELL AS YOU TALK?" SIZING THEM UP QUICKLY, I SAID, "I'M UNARMED, BUT I WAS ARM-WRESTLING CHAMPION BACK AT SPACE ACADEMY. CAN YOU HANDLE THAT?" THEY WERE SO SMALL, I KNEW I COULD TAKE THEM ALL AT ONCE.

AS IT TURNED OUT, THEY WERE KIND ENOUGH TO BREAK MY ARM IN ONLY TWO PLACES, AND THEN THEY HAD TO GO. WHICH JUST GOES TO PROVE ONCE MORE THAT ON THIS PLANET, BIG ISN'T ALWAYS BEST.

— SEAN MURPHY.

The Fir Darrig Pixie Clan

This especially gruesome and ambitious clan resides on the northeastern steppes of the continent of Somagni west of the Accidental Ocean. These hardy, practical and aggressive herders have become a real pain for the other races living in the area who are not interested in fighting over the plentiful open space. Local settlements of Giants and Ogres have built elaborate walls, ditches, and mounds around their villages to keep the Pixie warriors at bay. These fortifications only serve as a greater challenge to these inconvenient (and perhaps unstoppable) pests.

The Spriggan Pixies

This subterranean branch of the Pixie family tree take themselves a bit less seriously than the rest. While enjoying the Pixie fondness for song, dance, pranks, and drink, they often assist miners and underground travellers in difficulty. No one is really sure why they are willing to do this — they rarely ask for or accept compensation. However, if the chance shows itself, a Spriggan will take the opportunity to pocket an untended valuable or two. Occasionally, if the opportunity presents itself, they'll clean out the entire mine.

Spriggans hoard treasures of gems and other riches of the earth in their vast networks of underground tunnels and caverns that exist in every mountain chain. Well, almost every mountain chain. They don't like cold.

Unfortunately, the Spriggans are ugly as sin and very sensitive about it. They have large mouths with crooked teeth, irregular noses, and knobby faces. Their skin is lumpy, sand-like, and a pale brown, gray, or white. Occasionally they grow scraggly beards. Often this only makes them look worse. If they think they've been insulted, they will either turn and leave in a huff, drop a rock on the offending person's head, or both.

They possess perfect ***darksight,*** and always seem to ***know which direction they're travelling*** in and ***how deep they are below ground.*** They are able to ***increase their height and weight to twice their normal size*** for brief periods of time (**1d10 minutes**). They do this to either scare opponents or reach cookies on a high shelf.

While Spriggans like their drink as much as the next Pixie, they ***can't hold their liquor*** and get embarrassingly drunk on embarrassingly little booze. While sloshed, they are willing to do and say silly things that they wouldn't do normally, and are extremely susceptible to suggestion. Other Pixies love to get a Spriggan in a drinking contest. Spriggans are, for the most part, happy drunks. Should Spriggans drink ***salt water***, it will poison and *kill* them within **1d10 minutes** unless they drink huge quantities of fresh water. If salt water *touches* the *skin* of a Spriggan, the exposed area will remain uncomfortably itchy and scabby for **1d10 days.**



BELOW: Somagni, home to many great Pixie clans.

THE TECHNOCRATS

THE TECHNOCRATS ARE NOT A RACE as such. Indeed, *anyone* can be a Technocrat. All you need is a firm and completely irrational belief in the inherent saneness of the universe.

Anywhere but on Murphy's World this makes perfect sense. For anywhere in the Universe but Murphy's World what goes up must come down; things at rest tend to remain at rest; things in motion tend to remain in motion; the speed of light is a constant; energy is conserved; and tipping is 15%. The fact that none of these constants are constant on Murphy's World makes the typical Technocrat very pissed off.

Most Technocrats are refugees from other worlds where things are 'normal'. Not all alien refugees are Technocrats (although the locals of Murphy's World occasionally lump all foreigners into this category). Some techno-refugees remain loners or make an effort to abandon their techno-roots and integrate with the less demanding lifestyle of native Murphy's World cultures.

Real Technocrats are something unique. They form a community of refugees from technological worlds who pine for the conveniences of their past. Their monomania for recreating some sort of techno-civilization has indeed produced results. Over time towns, and even cities, of Technocrats have sprung up and developed an ever increasing exotic technological infrastructure.

Most Technocrats have difficulty adjusting to the way things work (or, more accurately, don't work) on Murphy's World. It takes time for them to clue in to the fact that reality reflects the current convictions of the sentient beings in the general vicinity. What galls them the most? They can't seem to convince the typical denizen of Murphy's World to believe in the same things that they do.

If they could just get them to *believe…* in wankle-rotary engines, automated bank tellers, and ball-point pens, they're certain their problems would be over. It would cease raining frogs on alternate Thursdays; electronic calculators would give the same answer twice in a row; compact discs would be more than miniature frisbees; and the government would actually work on behalf of the people. (Interestingly enough, a significant minority of Technocrats snigger whenever that last possibility is raised.)

Technocrats share common goals, but lack some fundamental organizational skills. This is probably because many sit at home tinkering instead of canvassing the masses and spreading the dogma. Most are a bit shy on committing themselves to cooperative ventures and extended projects. They also experience difficulty making decisions (e.g., which polka-dot shirt goes with which pair of Argyle socks).

Technocrat Physical Characteristics & Abilities

The Technocrats are a collection of beings of widely varying backgrounds transported to Murphy's World from places hither and yon. They come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and numbers of body parts. However two configurations seem to dominate across all species and cultural boundaries: *tall and thin*, or *short and wide*.

The typical Technocrat is festooned with devices (and parts of devices) of all kinds, some of which may even work on occasion. They carry with them the scavenged remains of technological civilizations from across the multiverse: digital stopwatches, steam-powered pocket calculators, atomic trash devourers, 8-track tape players, zap guns, inflatable sports shoes, and chain-driven vibro-phones.

In response to a beep, an alarm, or some other type of attention-getting sound, you may see a Technocrat thrust a hand into a jacket, and upon retrieving one of their devices, poke it, prod it, fiddle with some switches, shake it, raise it to their ear, unscrew a panel, re-attach it with some gum after losing the screw, and finally shove it back in their pocket while shouting, "Worthless piece of junk!" (Elvish sociologists have speculated that this is some kind of Technocratic religious observance.) Many Technocrats wear 'pocket protectors' — although it's not clear why they need to protect themselves from their pockets.

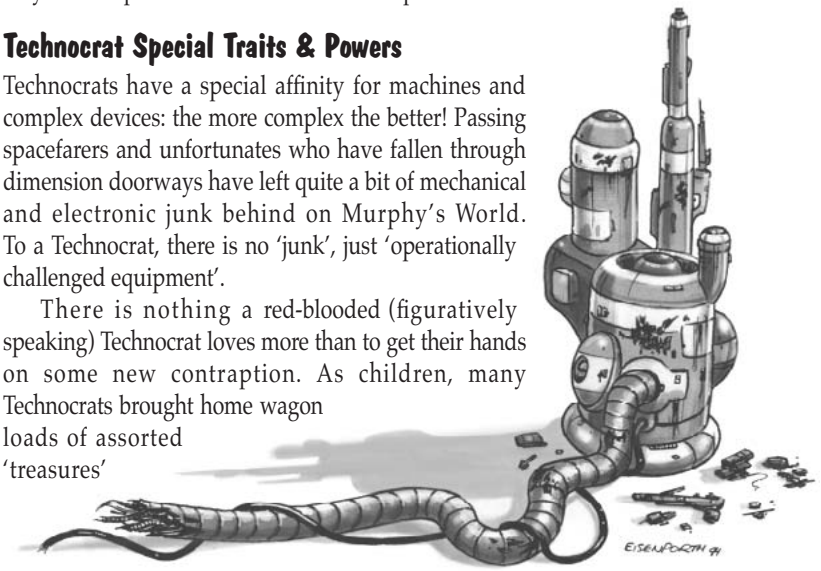
The Average Technocrat

QUOTE:	"I've found an alias in my b-tree, my volume bit map doesn't match, and my resource forks are damaged. I think it's time for lunch…"	
VOCATIONS:	Mechanic, Technician, Computer Consultant, Fast Food Courier, Policy Analyst, Game Designer.	
INTELLIGENCE:	17	Savvy
WILLPOWER:	6	Impressionable
CHARISMA:	6	Obnoxious
MYSTIC:	Race Dependent	
STRENGTH:	Race Dependent	
DEXTERITY:	Race Dependent	
FITNESS:	Race Dependent	
APPEARANCE:	Race Dependent	
HEALTH POINTS:	Race Dependent	
HEIGHT:	Race Dependent	
WEIGHT:	Race Dependent/ Typically Over or Under 'Normal' Weight.	
TRAITS:	Manic-Depressive, Obsessive, Socially Challenged, Incomprehensible, Oblivious, Nuts.	

Technocrat Special Traits & Powers

Technocrats have a special affinity for machines and complex devices: the more complex the better! Passing spacefarers and unfortunates who have fallen through dimension doorways have left quite a bit of mechanical and electronic junk behind on Murphy's World. To a Technocrat, there is no 'junk', just 'operationally challenged equipment'.

There is nothing a red-blooded (figuratively speaking) Technocrat loves more than to get their hands on some new contraption. As children, many Technocrats brought home wagon loads of assorted 'treasures'



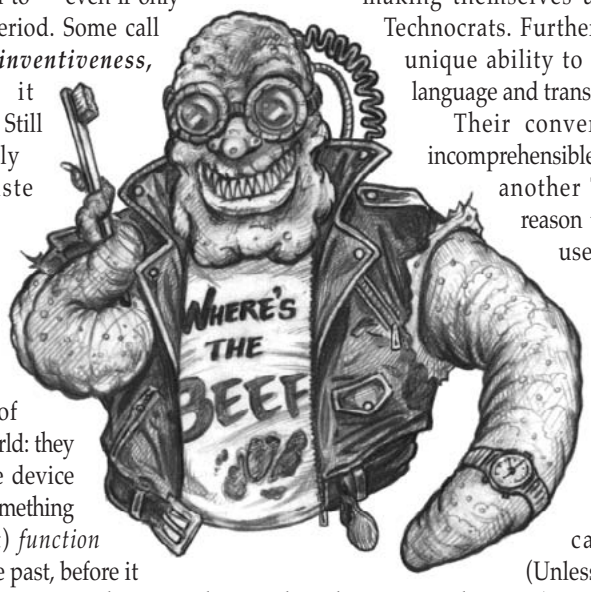
Nothing is as easy as it *looks*.

RIGHT : Technocrat Bort Bismuth proudly shows off his latest invention: the Sonic Toothbrush. "Sonics everywhere can look forward to significantly improved dental hygiene,"burbles Bort.

scrounged from the local dump, only to suffer the indignity of having their parents throw it out with the trash.

Technocrat Inventiveness

Given the time and resources, a Technocrat can make almost any device work at least once. It takes some fooling around, a bit of reverse engineering, and a detailed study of the mechanism in question, but eventually any Technocrat worth their solar-powered screwdriver will make the thing function in a manner approximating the way it was designed to — even if only for a brief period. Some call this talent ***inventiveness***, others call it ***jury-rigging***. Still others simply call it a waste of time.



Most Technocrats have an edge over the local population of Murphy's World: they have *seen* the device (or at least something similar to it) *function properly* in the past, before it was exposed to Ludo. This gives them the faith essential to their task; for without it, their work would be hopeless. As it is, their powerful belief in the possible has the capacity of temporarily overwhelming all other thoughts in the area — emitting positive vibes, so to speak — to which the equipment responds.

Problems arise when the Technocrat's companions react approvingly and say things like, "Cor… that was FANtastic!" "Absolutely un-be-liev-a-ble!" and "Neat. Do that again" (as they inevitably say).

At this point the secret Technocratic fear of failure and uncertainty inevitably kicks in, and combined with the dumb amazement and open skepticism of those watching, is almost guaranteed to influence the apparatus so it never works properly in that Technocrat's hands again. Once a working device begins to show signs of trouble, a Technocrat who continues to operate it risks destroying it or having it do strange and harmful things.

The **Technocratic Code** requires all tinkerers *write down the exact operations they perform* — just in case they happen to produce a working artifact. Supposedly this allows others to duplicate their success. Unfortunately, it usually doesn't work that way. Most forget to write down their actions as they perform them, and try to recall what they did after the fact — usually over a beer down at the pub. Technocrat manuals are not only inaccurate, being the vague recollections of an inebriated tinker, but smell of old beer. Real Technocrats don't read manuals — now you know why.

Technocrat Language

Technocrats speak *Tech*. They always seem able to communicate with one another, no matter what their species or cultural background might be. They possess the innate talent of taking seemingly random letter combinations and by inserting them into sentences, making themselves understood by other Technocrats. Furthermore, they have the unique ability to take *nouns* from any language and transform them into *verbs*.

Their conversations are mostly incomprehensible to anyone other than another Technocrat. For this reason they were occasionally used as ***message writers*** and ***couriers*** in times of war; since using Technocrats as a medium of communication virtually guaranteed that the enemy would be unable to decode captured messages. (Unless of course the enemy had their own Technocrats). Most generals found that they couldn't understand their own Technocrats, and the practice soon died out.

A Typical Conversation in Tech:

"Yo. Did you interface with Al on that ESDI kludge?"

"Nugatory, Rolf, but I compute that if I boot his ROM and standard his ASCII, we'll be loose."

"Isn't that kind of retro, dude?"

"Yeah, but sometimes ya gotta Model-T it, ya know."

"Yowza, wunderkind. See you RSN."

"Hasta la vista, bae-bee."

Technocrat Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Technocrats can be found just about anywhere on Murphy's World. Many are nomadic wanderers, always on the lookout for other Technocrats and any high-tech equipment that has made its way to the planet.

Almost every settlement of any significance has at least one Technocrat around, partly as a *novelty* (sort of a conversation piece for the locals) and partly to help *repair* the devices acquired from other Technocrats (e.g., solar-powered shoe trees, water-driven cat detectors, etc.).

Most major cities have a Technocrat ghetto where Technocrat shops, bars, and video game parlors are gathered. Here, 'techies' (as they call themselves in Tech-slang) get together to swap trade secrets, eat cold pizza, and drink beer and high-caffeine refreshments.

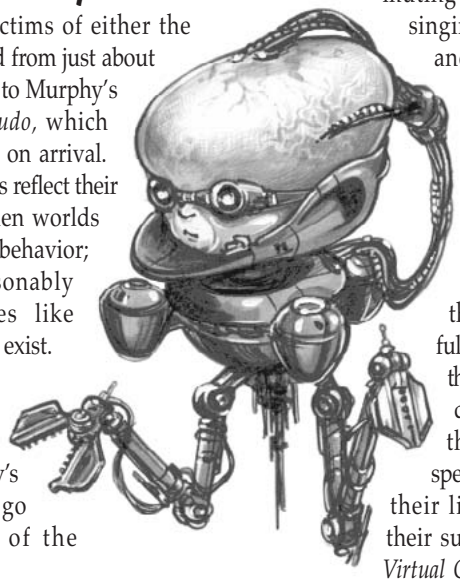
Typical Technocrat Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	First Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Amu	Ada
4 – 6	Anode	Ashton
7 – 9	Baryon	Babbage
10 – 12	Calutron	Borland
13 – 15	Convex	Broderbund
16 – 18	Dee	Compaq
19 – 21	Dyne	Cyrix
22 – 24	Erg	Dell
25 – 27	Farad	Dvorak
28 – 30	Fresnel	Fairchild
31 – 33	Gluon	Gates
34 – 36	Hadron	Gerstner
37 – 39	Ion	Hollerith
40 – 42	Joule	Hopper
43 – 45	Kaon	Hyundai
46 – 48	Lepton	Intel
49 – 51	Luxon	Irwin
52 – 54	Meniscus	Jacquard
55 – 57	Muon	Jobs
58 – 60	Nucleon	Lovelace
61 – 63	Ohm	Mace
64 – 66	Osmosis	Norton
67 – 69	Proton	Novell
70 – 72	Quantum	Pfieffer
73 – 75	Ray	Sculley
76 – 78	Rod	Sperry
79 – 81	Scalar	Turing
82 – 84	Spectra	Univac
85 – 87	Tesla	Watson
88 – 90	Torque	Wirth
91 – 93	Umbra	Wozniak
94 – 96	Volt	Zenith
97 – 100	Watt	Zeos

Once the word had spread about the wonders Technocrats were capable of producing (and the *humor* when things went awry), every king, prince, president, and dictator-for-life wanted a Technocrat on hand as a status symbol, if for no other reason. Rarely do these Technocrat 'advisors' wield any power. They are there to respond to queries with unintelligible advice that is usually ignored, and to tinker with things in dungeons or high towers where the frequent explosions have little chance of harming anyone important.

Technocrat Customs & Lifestyle

Most Technocrats are victims of either the *Dimension Gates* which lead from just about anywhere in to multiverse to Murphy's World, or the *forces of Ludo*, which sabotaged their spacecraft on arrival. Their customs and lifestyles reflect their world of origin. These alien worlds exhibit perfectly sensible behavior; the environment is reasonably predictable, and places like Murphy's World just don't exist.



The Five States of Existence

Upon arriving on Murphy's World, these poor souls go through one or more of the following stages:

The first stage is ***Confusion,*** which can be summed up by the phrase: "Where the hell am I?" Recent arrivals can be spotted by the large amount of baggage they have with them, and their continual asking of stupid questions like: "Er, excuse me. Could you please enlighten me as to why the sun is setting over *there* today, when it set over *there* yesterday?"

The second stage is ***Disbelief.*** They accept that they have gone from 'there' to 'here', but spend most of their time shaking their heads over the seemingly incomprehensible things they see. Most get over this stage fairly quickly (or go mad), as constantly shaking their head induces headaches, and numerous double-takes puts them at great risk of whiplash.

The third stage is ***Attempting to Leave.*** The Technocratic refugee devotes anywhere between a few weeks and a few decades to trying to find a way off Murphy's World. Dimension doors, hitchhiking onto passing spaceships, giant slingshots; they consider anything at least once. They make continual efforts to manufacture spacecraft, Dimension Gate detectors, and anti-Ludo field generators. Success generally eludes them.

After barely surviving a few of their more dangerous exit attempts, most Technocrats move onto the fourth stage. Besides, the more they bother the locals with questions about how to leave, the greater the number of replies they get that tell them where to go. Unfortunately, the suggested destination is usually not what they had in mind.

The fourth stage is ***Assimilation.*** This is a short stage for most Technocrats. At this point, they try to adjust to living on Murphy's World.

"Flying musical pigs may not be aerodynamic, but as long as you're not beneath them when they pass overhead, who cares!"

"Dwarvish gods of I-beams don't seem so outrageous after all."

Eventually some even adjust to transmuting terrain, singing grass, and talking trees. Most, however, can only go so far. What prevents them from fully accepting their fate is the dark horror that they will spend the rest of their lives without their subscription to *Virtual Geographic*, an atomic transmutation device, or a Cuisinart. Thus they cling to their belief that someday they might actually be able to get that clock-radio working.

The fifth and final stage is ***Denial of Reality.*** If you can't *join* it, why not *beat* it? By default, every Technocrat eventually joins the *world-wide conspiracy* to transform Murphy's World into an electro-mechanical Utopia. In this vision, the planet becomes a place where every citizen relies on all kinds of gadgets for every creature comfort. In such a world Technocrats would rule, of course. Without *their* firm belief and talents, Ludo-entropy would kick-in again and the world would return to its chaotic and gadgetless state (i.e., as it is today).

They reason that all they need to do is to get enough people to truly *believe* that all that transistor and lever stuff really works. They conduct lectures in large population centers to try to convert the locals, establish centers of technological excellence, and distribute free pocket-protectors.

LEFT: Technocrats are aliens, marooned on Murphy's World. They come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and neuroses. All cling to one fragile 'truth': technology exists: they've seen it, and they'll figure out how to reproduce it!

I almost became an 'official' Technocrat once. I wandered into one of their recruitment centers and asked to take their entrance tests.

I did extremely well on the multiple guess intelligence test, finishing faster than anyone at this particular center ever had. The only questions I got wrong were those concerning Technocratic language. (I never have figured out just what a 'Fubar Kludge' is.)

Somewhat impressed, I took the medical tests. My eyesight proved so good that the spectacles I would have to wear as part of my uniform had flat glass in them. The physician who examined me suggested I stop exercising and triple my intake of junk food.

For the next test I was brought into a room where a strange machine and a manual sat on a table. The attendants instructed me to fix the machine. I had never seen anything like it before. I was tempted to read the manual, but it was so thick, just looking at it discouraged me. Shrugging, I gave the machine a thump with the heel of my hand. With a flash of lights it began whirring and clicking. "A genius!" cried the attendants. I passed with flying colors.

I thought the tests were done, but I was wrong. There was one remaining which I hadn't been told about. A few days later I was invited to a party. The joint was full of gorgeous women. Well, I did as any other red-blooded male would and tried to score a date. Just as I was leaving with the girl of my dreams, some nerdy guy at the door yelled out: "YOU FAIL!"

In the end it was for the best. I can't really imagine giving up wine and women in exchange for liquid crystals and line-editors.

— Sean Murphy.



ABOVE: For whatever reason, many Technocrats have congregated on the western coast of the continent of Somagni. The scenery is nice (if you like foggy and barren), the climate is warm (but wet), and there are few hostile locals to trouble them while they contemplate their next big inventions.

Unfortunately for the Technocrats, their efforts merely encourage the locals in their belief that they're an bunch of ineffectual nutbars. Murphy's World being what it is, of course, the average Technocrat actually *is* an ineffectual nutbar.

The Technocrats must face a depressing reality: 98.7% of them are *male.* This makes it difficult to find a date for Saturday night, and goes a long way towards explaining why very few Technocrats on Murphy's World are *native-born.*

Technocrats wax philosophical about the trials and troubles of existence. Each one has a *long* story to tell. Often they will disagree on the details of a given discussion and follow-up with insults and occasionally fist fights commonly referred to as 'flames' in the Tech vernacular. Blame it on late hours, a poor diet, and manic-depressive tendencies.

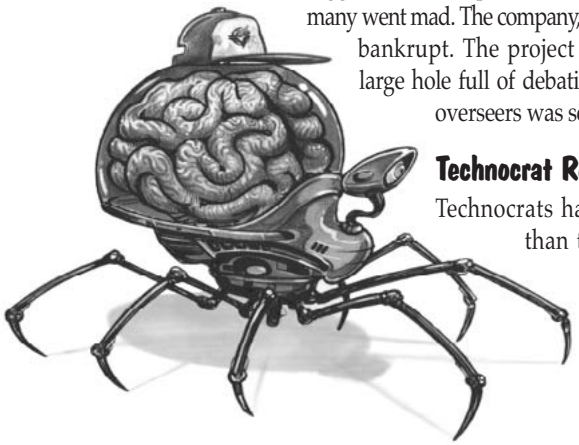
Expecting things to work according to some cosmically-defined set of laws seems daft to all other intelligent creatures on Murphy's World. Thus, most Technocrats come across as *socially* or *environmentally challenged.* Any given individual Technocrat might actually be a pleasant and engaging person. Unfortunately, many don't possess the presence of mind to come in out of a rain of frogs; instead they insist on standing outside saying things like: "This is illogical. This can't be happening…" while large green amphibians plop down on their heads.

Technocrat Skills & Labor Practices

Apart from their talent for fiddling with junk, most technocrats are virtually *unemployable.* They're adverse to manual labor, and rarely possess the aptitude for music, stand-up comedy, or anything that many would find useful.

Many work as fast-food delivery couriers, policy analysts, security guards, or even game designers, but their insatiable curiosity and the ease with which they are distracted results in a substantial amount of downtime on the job. Woe to the employer who hires two and puts them within talking range of each other.

Once an entire ghetto of Technocrats from the city of Deepwater was taken prisoner by an industrial contractor. The Technocrats were enslaved and forced to dig a tunnel beneath the channel separating the Misplaced Realms and the Land of Kryll. Despite harsh treatment, their captors found it impossible to halt the continual banter between the captives. Eventually their deliberations and 'constructive' suggestions for improvements wore their captors down: many went mad. The company, 'Brighter Futures, Inc.' went bankrupt. The project was abandoned, and the large hole full of debating Technocrats and insane overseers was sealed off and forgotten.



Technocrat Religion & Superstition

Technocrats have very different beliefs than the typical inhabitants of Murphy's World. They often refer to what many believe to be their numerous and strange gods: 'Efflux Velocity', 'Newtonian Physics', 'Gamma Radiation', 'High Voltage', 'Social Darwinism', and the cryptic 'E=mc^2'. The Technocratic gods seem to be *dead, sleeping,* or *on vacation some place very far away,* for they have very little impact on Murphy's World. Every Technocrat believes that someday their gods will return, and when they do, it will be *pay-back time!* They will get their choice of all the best women, the finest food, and people will stop laughing when they explain the wonders of digital watches.

The Cave of Wonders: A Technocrat Stronghold

There are a few Technocrats who have been getting their act together. One of these groups is the **Technocratic Hegelian Underground Dominion (THUD).**

THUD is a militant revolutionary collective made up of Technocrats tired of waiting for a Dimension Gate to find them and return them home. As well, they are desperate for global domination. Most Technocrats don't even know that THUD exists. Those who do only *whisper* the name in dark and quiet corners lest they be overheard by someone who shouldn't know: i.e., everyone else.

THUD has two main goals. First, to create or take possession of as many technological devices as possible. Second, to use these devices to convince every thinking being that Technocratism is the way to go. To these ends, THUD has agents scouring the planet, gathering up technology by hook or by crook, and bringing it all back to THUD headquarters: the secretive Cave of Wonders.

The Cave of Wonders holds a cornucopia of technological goodies, representing civilizations from every time, space and dimension. THUD members (also representing every time, space and dimension) work around the clock trying to decipher these gadgets, and determine how they might be incorporated into their grand plan of world domination by technology.

What makes the Cave of Wonders different from every other spot on Murphy's World is that ***most devices actually work as expected while in the Cave.*** Every time! This is due to THUD's fanatic insistence that *only 'true believers' are permitted in the Cave.* Because everyone in the cave *believes* that all the stuff in there works, it *does.* Those who dare express even the smallest doubt are immediately ejected from the Cave — no worse fate can befall a true Technocrat.

Upon rare occasions, THUD brings a non-Technocrat into the cave to view some of their more reliable devices. THUD hopes to convince that individual to become a member. Often the demonstration works as planned; the concentrated faith of the gathered Technocrats is enough to overcome the doubts of the visitor. (Given the exceedingly high ratio of men to women amongst the Technocrats, some sort of solid conversion program is necessary to perpetuate the community).

After their conversion in the Cave of Wonders, new Technocrats have a ceremonial **Golden Pocket Protector** bestowed upon them, and they are sent forth into the world to proselytize the truth they have witnessed and gain new adherents to the cause.

THE CELESTIALS

IF YOU HAPPEN TO COME ACROSS THIS RACE of beings, there will be no great mystery as to why they call themselves Celestials: they just don't *appear* native to the Murphy's World. Just take a minute and look at one. Carefully. Weird, huh?

They have little respect for the natural environment or the inhabitants of the planet. They consider the whole world to be their plaything. Celestials convey their elitist attitude better than anyone else. This annoys the Elves to no end. Unlike the Elves, the Celestials are *not* a peaceful people. They happily resort to violence to get what they want. They will deal with you peacefully only when they can't figure out how to beat what they want out of you.

The Celestials are great believers in 'good taste', although exactly what this means varies from week to week. They demand the best of everything, and if it can be had (preferably at someone else's expense) they get it. They like to dress up and throw huge parties to impress their friends with all the booty they have swiped or wrangled out of someone with a smaller military budget than them. They consider it a great way to kill time, and it beats the hell out of scratching dirt for a living.

Celestials are not without their character flaws. They are *impulsive, emotionally charged,* and *aggressive.* They say it is just their way of living life to the max. Celestials are not very good at taking jokes and insults.

Clan-kingdom conflicts and feuds are quite common, and family loyalties are more often than not of greater importance than political peace. Warfare is considered an unfortunate necessity in the daily routine. Sometimes this philosophy leads to the deaths of large numbers of innocents. The Celestials can only shrug — ho, hum… another day, another civilization ground to dust.

Celestial Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Celestials are roughly Human sized. At first glance, they appear similar to Humans — they possess all the usual lumps and spindly bits: a head, torso, arms and legs. Upon further inspection you will notice that some individuals have some *interesting* characteristics: a second pair of arms, a third leg, or even an extra head. You can never really be sure just how many appendages a Celestial will possess. This represents a formidable challenge to any ambitious tailor.

The bodies of Celestials are athletic and youthful. The women are distinguished by their tiny waists and generous hips and breasts. Their skin is smooth and healthy; they come in a wide variety of skin colors, including golden, silvery, red, blue, emerald, and brown.

Both the males and females have dark shiny black hair; many women grow their hair long, some down to their feet. Celestials have dark almond eyes and long, thick lashes. They have thin aristocratic noses and pointed chins.

Celestial Special Traits & Powers

Celestials ***never blink.*** This gives them a great advantage when it comes to staring contests — a popular form of challenge when they encounter foreigners.

Celestials ***don't sweat.*** This is very handy considering that many of them live in the sub-tropics.

They ***never get dirty*** — this includes their garments — another thing that frustrates visitors.

They ***cast no shadow.***

They can ***shape-change*** into animal form (e.g., tiger, bear, fish, deer, boar, tortoise, lion), other humanoid forms, and giant form (***up to 3 times normal size and mass***). Occasionally they forget to match their number of appendages to suit the species they are transforming into.

Through meditation and rituals, individual Celestials have achieved some ***control over the natural elements*** within their home or other familiar territories.

Finally, Celestials can ***fly,*** and even when 'standing', their ***feet never actually touch the ground.*** More shoe stores have gone bankrupt in Celestial communities than anywhere else on Murphy's World.

The Average Celestial

QUOTE:	"I'm afraid that this just isn't up to the standards that I'm used to."	
VOCATIONS:	Warrior, Aristocrat, Scribe, Bard, Lawyer.	
INTELLIGENCE:	11	Sensible
WILLPOWER:	13	Vacillating
CHARISMA:	14	Engaging
MYSTIC:	18	Responsive
STRENGTH:	14	Stalwart
DEXTERITY:	17	Nimble
FITNESS:	16	Sturdy
APPEARANCE:	16	Comely
HEALTH POINTS:	16	
HEIGHT:	5'8" [1.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	150 lbs [68 kg]	
TRAITS:	Elitist, Aggressive, Boastful, Impulsive, Humorless, Hedonistic.	



BELOW: Life is meant to be enjoyed. And it's a whole lot easier to do when you're a conquering warlord rather than a grovelling peasant! Still, even conquerors aren't free from domestic accidents.

Celestial Language

Possessing a highly advanced written and spoken language, the Celestials are the Elves' closest rivals for cultural supremacy. Celestial scribes, bards, and advocates are often in the employ of wealthy patrons in other lands.

Celestial Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Celestials can be found almost anywhere; on flood-plains, in lush forests, and on cloud cities. They usually occupy the 'best' land available.

THERE ARE MANY THINGS I WOULD RATHER DO THAN HANG OUT WITH A CELESTIAL. EATING BROKEN GLASS COMES TO MIND. ON THE OTHER HAND, ONE DAY I DID MANAGE TO GET THEIR GOAT.

I HAPPENED TO CROSS UNKNOWINGLY INTO SURAS TERRITORY — THEY DON'T TAKE KINDLY TO STRANGERS. I WAS HAULED BEFORE A COURT AND CHARGED WITH TRESPASSING. THE SENTENCE: PERPETUAL LABOR IN THEIR ARMORIES. LUCKILY FOR ME, THERE WAS A FESTIVAL GOING ON, AND THE ENTIRE COURT WAS HALF SLOSHED. GATHERING MY COURAGE AND WITS, I SHOUTED "IF I CAN DISPROVE THE CHARGE, WILL I BE RELEASED?" INTRIGUED AND AMUSED, THEY AGREED.

I ASKED, "AM I IN AVALON?" THEY HAD TO SHAKE THEIR HEADS. "AM I IN FOUR RIVERS?" THEY HAD TO SHAKE THEIR HEADS AGAIN. "IF I'M NOT IN AVALON OR FOUR RIVERS, I MUST BE SOMEWHERE ELSE, RIGHT?" THIS TIME, THEY NODDED IN AGREEMENT. "THUS, IF I'M SOMEWHERE ELSE, I CAN'T BE HERE." AGAIN, THEY HAD TO AGREE, THOUGH I BEGAN TO NOTICE A FEW PERPLEXED EXPRESSIONS. "AND IF I'M NOT HERE, I CAN'T BE TRESPASSING, RIGHT?" UNABLE TO REFUTE MY LOGIC IN THEIR DRUNKEN STATE, THEY WERE FORCED TO LET ME GO.

AMUSING AS IT WAS, IT WAS MADE CLEAR TO ME THAT IF EVER I ENTER THE LAND OF SWARGA AGAIN, MY SKULL WILL BE CRAFTED INTO A DRINKING CUP.

— SEAN MURPHY.

Celestial Customs & Lifestyle

Celestials for the most part live the good life. The lands they occupy are abundant with game, and gatherable fruit, nuts, and grains. They trade for jewelry (worn in abundance by both sexes), weapons, and artisan services (hair-dressers are popular).

Each Celestial ruling clan has a family palace, with groves of fruit trees, ponds covered with beautiful lotuses, and enormous dwellings with lavishly decorated temples. The temples are used by the locals to offer tribute while saying a few kind words in front of a statue of their benevolent benefactor.

Two things occupy the minds of Celestial leaders and princes: enjoying the benefits of their lifestyle, and doing all they can militarily to maintain the status quo. The latter involves a constant dance of political intrigue and alliances made with the other 'great houses', as well as the occasional head-bashing or banishment of an upstart clan or subjugated people.

Celestials love feasts, dancing, and celebrations. A feast-day is held whenever a decent excuse can be found — it's a way of demonstrating personal wealth while obligating those invited to try to outdo the host at their next convenient opportunity. Excuses include: the arrival of an 'important' visitor, the making of a significant (political) decision, a seasonal celebration, the Warlord's birthday, etc.

Celestials enjoy *bets* and *challenges;* especially *dice playing* for high stakes — such as of their possessions, their spouse, their life, etc.

Celestial Skills & Labor Practices

The Celestials possess a vast array of skills: from smithing to agriculture, from carpentry to fabric making. However, they concentrate on the art of warfare. This specialization permits the more successful clans to live off the labors of the peoples they subjugate, and to exploit the wealth of the land for their personal gratification. Dissent is dealt with quickly and harshly. The Celestials have no word in their language for 'overkill'.

Celestial Religion & Superstition

Celestials are self-centered and arrogant to the point of believing that they are *gods*. Since they believe themselves to be the pinnacle of Creation, why even consider the existence of higher beings?

With the exception of the Suras and the Kami, the Celestials do not look for worshippers from among the 'lesser' races of Murphy's World. Such beings are considered unfit to worship Celestials. (The other Celestials think the Sura and Kami a bit déclassé for allowing themselves to be worshiped as they do).

Since they have no worshippers, and worship no-one other than themselves, Celestials spend a fair amount of time blessing themselves and taking their own names in vain. (e.g., "Aaaachoo! I bless myself." "I spilled my drink. I damn it!")

The Kami Celestial Clan of Takama-No-Hara

The Kami occupy the warm, temperate lands of Takama-No-Hara, east of the Ongoro Sea. It is a serene place of tall pines and deciduous trees with many beautiful flowering herbs and shrubs. Tributaries and fast flowing branches of the great River Ho divides the land into fertile plains and woodland habitats. In the north are the Moors of Yumi and Mt. Kagu, whose top is often obscured by moist clouds.

The Kami are a gracious people. However, they still possess most of the typical Celestial qualities, including a sense of elitism, plus a desire to be *worshiped* — even if they have to conquer and subjugate someone to achieve it. The Kami are fond of nature and prefer simplicity in design. Many of the family palaces in the region are made from stone and precisely cut but unpainted wood. Furniture is usually simple and functional. The Kami are big on cushions and throw rugs.

Despite spending a great deal of time in contemplation, the Kami are not really a 'quiet' people. Indeed, much of their meditation is focused upon how they might more effectively bash in the heads of their foes, or how to do lots of nasty things and still look like great guys to their families and friends.

Weapons are important to the Kami. Their smiths are among the finest artisans on the planet. Kami steel is widely exported and is highly thought of, even among the Elves.

Kami are obsessive about *appearance*. Despite never getting dirty, they wash as often as possible and especially after any task which requires the handling of something unclean. Their laundry bills are astronomical. They spend huge sums on cosmetics, dietitians, health food, self-improvement books, and the latest fads.

The Kami are always in a state of political turmoil and rivalry exists between the many 'Great Houses' of the Takama. Alliances are made and broken as each family attempts to gain more power over the others and eventually rule the region. This has made the Kami inward-looking as a culture and vulnerable to hostile influences from abroad.

The Land of Filth

Kami who fall out of favor as a result of clan bickering are banished to **Yomi-No-Kuni,** the underworld 'Land of Filth' in the tunnels of Mt. Kagu. To enter Yomi you must travel north, usually along a branch of the River Ho, into the gloomy, cloud-covered land of **Yomo-Tsu-Kuni.** There, at the base of the mountain, you will find the pass leading into the dark underworld. Here reside the unclean: the diseased, the insane, and the just plain weird. **Queen Izanami** is the ruler of Yomi-No-Kuni.

Should you partake of the food or drink of Yomi, you will become diseased and suffer a **–1 Willpower** penalty for ***each bite of food or gulp of liquid*** (the penalty lasts **1d10 hours**). To leave the underworld you must make a **Willpower Roll,** otherwise you will have to stay, having lost the will to leave. It is not a popular vacation spot.

The Suras Celestial Clan of Swarga

The Suras are the most prominent clan of Celestials. They dominate the region north of the Nara Sea, known as the Patala Lowlands, and exact a seasonal tribute of foodstuffs and labor from the conquered peoples of the region.

The Suras palace is built on **Mount Meru** in the north, and overlooks their domain which they call **Swarga.** The palace is connected by clearings to other manorial outposts which are maintained by members of the noble houses.

The Rajah, or leader, of the Suras is **Shakra,** a hot-tempered military aristocrat who rules with an iron fist.

Shakra is attended by an elite guard called the **Vasus** who serve as both protectors and counselors. Shakra's Queen is a shadowy and mysterious beauty, **Indrani,** an Apsara. Shakra is fond of the hunt and keeps a kennel of hunting dogs (actually more like giant tame rats with long legs and a fondness for being petted). When he needs to travel, and wants to make a big impression, he and his court mount enormous white elephants, each with four tusks. The largest elephant, ridden by Shakra and his Queen, is called **Airavata.**

The Politics of War

Originally Shakra was an underling of his older brother Varuna who lead the Suras on their initial takeover operation to seize Swarga. When the Suras first entered the region, it seemed to be occupied by just one race, the **Nagas,** and they were a pushover. Then they encountered more hostile resistance from *other* peoples in the area.

Varuna met with the clan nobility and tried to convince them that they had seized enough territory and now they should settle. However, Shakra politically out-maneuvered his brother and staged a successful coup. Then, with the support of the gold-toothed philosopher and pyrotechnician **Agni,** another brother, he revived the assault with a deadly enthusiasm. The fighting was brief but brutal. Shakra became a hero, and the new leader of the Suras.

Once the dust had settled and the blood was mopped up, Shakra began to parcel out estates to his loyal supporters and important personages. He made Varuna 'Lord of the Waters' and bestowed upon him some swampy lakefront property on the frontier. Others he provided with more desirable holdings closer to their Rajah's lands.

The Kingdom of Aditya

Though not entirely pleased with being elbowed out of an empire, Varuna subsequently accepted his brother's offer of a miniscule pension — it beat being executed. He left Swarga and headed southeast with his remaining supporters to found **Aditya,** a new, and less repressive (from the his point of view) kingdom east of Patala. From this domain, Varuna and his companion **Mitra** do their best to control the waterways, beat on any foreigners or 'Dæmons' they encounter, and generally try to remain intoxicated for as much time as possible.

Typical Celestial Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Almironi	Adita	Bogdashka
4 – 6	Amit	Almira	Chen
7 – 9	Arun	Aparna	Cyril
10 – 12	Bali	Bina	Devlin
13 – 15	Bishwanath	Chandi	Eginhard
16 – 18	Dagh	Daru	Einar
19 – 21	Dele	Deva	Emerson
22 – 24	Dipankar	Ellama	Jarrett
25 – 27	Firoz	Gauri	Kedar
28 – 30	Hari	Girisa	Kelly
31 – 33	Haresh	Hara	Kenelm
34 – 36	Hawkana	Ila	Langward
37 – 39	Imtiaz	Jayne	Leonard
40 – 42	Ishaq	Kakoli	Lon
43 – 45	Kachheru	Kala	Madison
46 – 48	Kedarnath	Kanya	Marcus
49 – 51	Kishen	Krishna	Nolan
52 – 54	Kulvinder	Lakshmi	Orval
55 – 57	Maan	Lata	Orvin
58 – 60	Mahesh	Malati	Owen
61 – 63	Mara	Maya	Ragnar
64 – 66	Pran	Meenakshi	Riley
67 – 69	Rafi	Mesha	Rutger
70 – 72	Raghubir	Nasim	Seif
73 – 75	Rasheed	Neesha	Sloan
76 – 78	Ratri	Prema	Songan
79 – 81	Shri	Saeeda	Steele
82 – 84	Tak	Saura	Tor
85 – 87	Taraka	Savita	Tracy
88 – 90	Ustad	Trina	Troy
91 – 93	Vasin	Tula	Uriel
94 – 96	Vikram	Veena	Varick
97 – 100	Yama	Wanda	Waldemar



BELOW: The realm of the Suras Celestial clan.

The Suras consider Varuna and his clansfolk to be *Asuras;* Asura is a derogatory term used by the Suras to describe anyone who is their enemy or out of favor.

Amrita, the Elixir of Life

A important factor in Sura politics is the **Soma** plant. In its fermented form, **Amrita,** it provides the effects of ***healing*** and ***life extension*** (up to 1000 years) to the Suras. It also happens to be an *addictive hallucinogen.*

As soon as Shakra learned of the wonderful effects of Amrita, he signed an exclusive supply contract with the Gandharva Elves. The Suras were overjoyed with their good fortune, further cementing Shakra's control over the clan.

Thus the Suras came into possession of the most desirable commodity in the region. Individuals and entire clans would break life-long alliances in order to gain access to a continued supply. Some thought that the exclusive distribution arrangement with the Gandharva was criminal and tried to apply pressure on the Elves to break their agreement. However, the Elves are an ethical sort and decided that unless the Suras did anything to breach their contract, they would stick by it. Thus the Gandharva earned the eternal respect of the Suras and the hatred of their rivals.

Rajah Shakra is filling his palace cellars with bottles of Amrita, and making plans for his next great conquest. With the healing properties of the Elixir, and the ferocity of the Suras in battle, can anyone be safe?

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT'S MY MANLY GOOD LOOKS OR THE IRISH GLEAM IN MY EYE, BUT WOMEN TEND TO FIND ME ATTRACTIVE. THIS ISN'T ALWAYS A BLESSING.

LAST WEEK, WHILE JOURNEYING IN THE JUNGLES OF PATALA, A SCANTILY CLAD AND VERY NUBILE YOUNG MAIDEN SIDLED UP TO ME AND SAID, "DON'T I KNOW YOU FROM SOMEWHERE?" FLATTERED NO END, I WRACKED MY BRAINS TO THINK OF WHERE I HAD SEEN HER BEFORE. I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND HOW I COULD HAVE POSSIBLY FORGOTTEN A WOMAN LIKE HER. AND I TOLD HER SO.

"SILLY," SHE REPLIED, ROLLING HER EYES, "CAN'T YOU TELL A PICK-UP LINE WHEN YOU HEAR ONE?"

EMBARRASSED, I LOOKED OFF TO THE SIDE. GOOD THING THAT I DID, FOR IN THE SHADOWS I SAW A RAKSHASA STANDING THERE LOOKING AT ME, TEETH BARED.

"GOOD LORD!" I SAID. "THERE'S A RAKSHASA STANDING JUST OVER THERE!"

ROLLING HER EYES AGAIN, SHE SAID, "OH, THAT'S JUST DADDY. HE'S ALWAYS SO PROTECTIVE. HE ATE MY LAST THREE BOYFRIENDS 'CAUSE THEY DIDN'T LIVE UP TO HIS STANDARDS." LOVELY OR NOT, I WASN'T GOING TO WAIT AROUND TO LEARN WHAT HER DADDY'S STANDARDS MIGHT BE.

I SEEM TO SPEND AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF MY TIME RUNNING AWAY FROM UNPLEASANT SITUATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, I'VE BECOME A TERRIFIC SPRINTER AND MY STAMINA HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER.

— SEAN MURPHY.

RIGHT: Blind dates have always been a problem for Mylton — so much rests upon first impressions. Perhaps this once his date will consider backward feet to be a turn-on.

THE RAKSHASAS

ALONE, ONE RAKSHASA IS BAD NEWS; as a race, they're a *plague.* These beings are *not* social animals — they *eat* social animals — and just about anything else that they can get their hands on. Believed by many to be distant cousins to Giants or Ogres (although to say so puts you on bad terms with all), the Rakshasas are better organized and certainly more powerful.

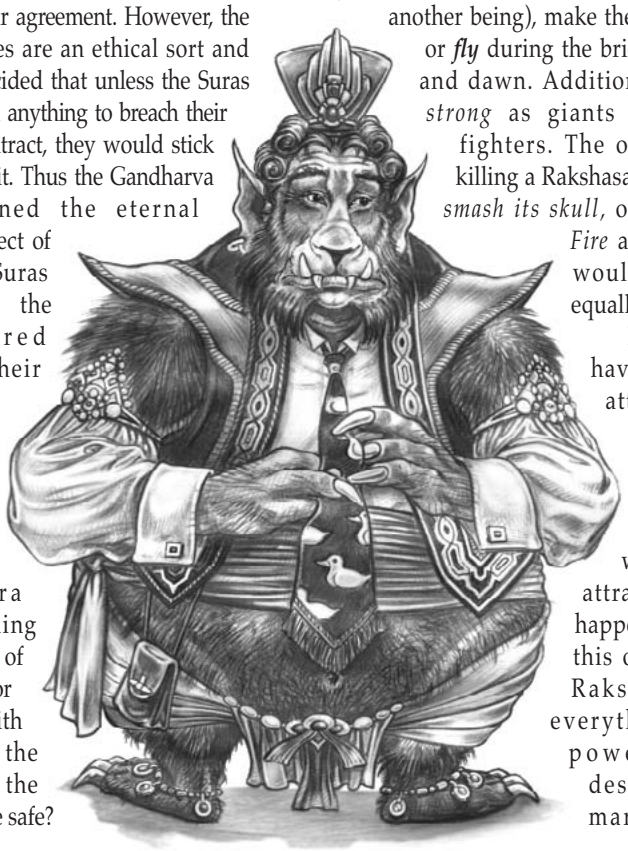
Rakshasa Physical Characteristics & Abilities

In appearance, Rakshasas are gorilla-like, with long matted red hair (many males have beards), dark blue skin, small slit-like eyes, large mouths filled with sharp pointy teeth, pointed ears, broad necks, large bellies and long arms. Their skins are tough and resist sharp weapons. Their ***limbs regenerate*** when severed — including heads. Occasionally, some unfortunate individuals are born with the heads of animals, or only one eye or leg, or their hands or feet on backwards; it's really rather embarrassing….

Rakshasas are slightly smaller and somewhat less physically imposing than Ogres; that is, until you draw their attention.

Rakshasa Special Traits & Powers

Rakshasas possess the supernatural abilities of ***physical transformation*** (into animals or the appearance of another being), make themselves ***invisible,*** or ***fly*** during the brief periods of dusk and dawn. Additionally, they are as *strong* as giants and formidable fighters. The only sure way of killing a Rakshasa is to *break its back, smash its skull,* or *pierce its heart. Fire* and *huge explosions* would probably do equally well.



Rakshasa women have a weakness for attractive men (of any race), and have a strong chance of falling madly in love with any suitably attractive male who happens along. Should this occur, the female Rakshasa will do everything in her power to get the desired male to marry her. She can

transform herself into a beautiful woman (female Rakshasas can do this for as long as they choose) to make herself as appealing as possible. She will betray her own kind to protect or promote her intended lover, and she *won't take no for an answer.* Rakshasa males prefer to keep their women behind locked doors whenever possible. This usually isn't possible.

Rakshasa Language

If you were to ask a Rakshasa to compare his language to that of the Ogres, he would inform you that there is a world of difference as the Rakshasa tongue is eminently more sophisticated than Ogreish. Few, at least those who value their lives, would beg to differ. However, if there *is* a difference, it is a very small one.

Like Ogres, when Rakshasas have difficulty communicating, they become *louder* and *more imposing* rather than more comprehensible. Rakshasa diplomats have killed their peers out of sheer frustration, after being misunderstood for the twentieth time in a row. As to why the Rakshasas don't simply change their language and make it more comprehensible to foreigners — it's a matter of *cultural pride.* If you intend to travel through Rakshasa lands, here's a bit of advice: learn Rakshasan — your continued existence may depend on it.

Rakshasa Geographic Distribution & Settlements

For the most part, Rakshasas live alone in tropical jungles. Their largest community exists in the Patala Lowlands southeast of Swarga. They occasionally gather together in small family groups or clans. There are few other places they are found on the planet — most people consider this to be a Good Thing.

These isolated communities of Rakshasas live in small huts and hunt their meals in territories staked out and defended by clan members.

A kingdom of these carnivores exists on the **Lanka Isle,** beyond Malyavana mountain. Here **King Bibhishana** rules over a vast army of warriors from a magnificent palace and garden complex. He is preparing a navy to sail to the mainland and conquer the Sura tribe of Celestials. For centuries, the Suras have refused to give him and his people any Amrita, and he's really pissed. And besides, he's getting old.

Rakshasa Customs & Lifestyle

Occasionally several Rakshasas communities band together and raid a local village for their evening dinner. When desperate they even turn on each other.

Rakshasas like to use their supernatural abilities to transform themselves into an attractive Celestial or other race and coax a victim away from the safety of their camp and comrades to their death.

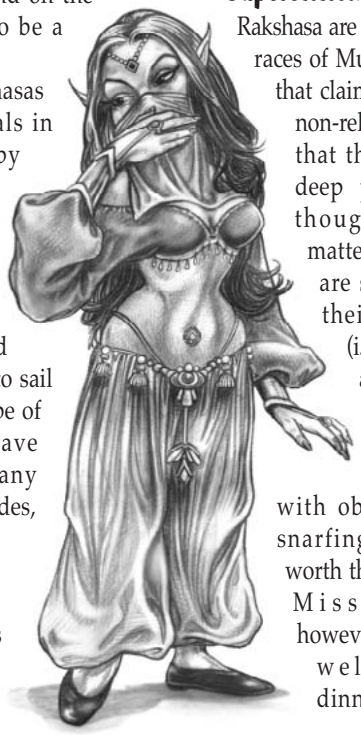
Rakshasa Skills & Labor Practices

Rakshasas possess only the most basic of skills: carpentry, mud-brick making, and scratching instant-win lottery tickets. They rely on captured and traded slaves to bring in new skills and information sorely lacking in their backward communities. Slaves are rarely used for manual labor, due to the size and strength of the average Rakshasa.

The life of a slave is often short, however, since the Rakshasa have little time for individuals who fail to quickly pick up the Rakshasa language, or who just happen to be in the way when a grumpy Rakshasa is in the mood to let off steam by killing something.

Rakshasa Religion & Superstition

Rakshasa are one of the few races of Murphy's World that claim to be totally non-religious. It's not that they have any deep philosophical thoughts on the matter, rather they are so busy with their daily lives (i.e., eating) that anything that isn't directly connected with obtaining and snarfing food isn't worth thinking about. Missionaries, however, are always welcome for dinner.



The Average Rakshasa

QUOTE:	"I'm hungry, and you look tasty."	
VOCATIONS:	Slave Overseer, Barbarian.	
INTELLIGENCE:	7	Stupid
WILLPOWER:	15	Willful
CHARISMA:	5	Nauseating
MYSTIC:	5	Incognizant
STRENGTH:	19	Mighty
DEXTERITY:	9	Awkward
FITNESS:	16	Sturdy
APPEARANCE:	6	Ugly
HEALTH POINTS:	25	
HEIGHT:	9' [2.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	800 lbs [363 kg]	
TRAITS:	Hungry, Aggressive, Hungry, Jealous Lover, Easily Frustrated, Hungry, Grumpy, Hungry.	

LEFT: Since leaving home Esmeralda has never had to worry about spending a Saturday night alone, or missing a meal. After all, Human guys are easy.

Typical Rakshasa Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names
1 – 3	Abelard	Adele
4 – 6	Alvin	Agnes
7 – 9	Byron	Bertha
10 – 12	Casper	Bridget
13 – 15	Chester	Cora
16 – 18	Durward	Cornelia
19 – 21	Ebenezer	Dora
22 – 24	Elmo	Edith
25 – 27	Farley	Ethel
28 – 30	Ferdinand	Fanny
31 – 33	Gaston	Frida
34 – 36	Godfrey	Griselda
37 – 39	Grover	Haralda
40 – 42	Halbert	Ilsa
43 – 45	Harcourt	Irma
46 – 48	Ichabod	Juno
49 – 51	Igor	Klara
52 – 54	Jed	Lona
55 – 57	Jethro	Loretta
58 – 60	Kermit	Madge
61 – 63	Lambert	Norberta
64 – 66	Marvin	Olga
67 – 69	Melvin	Prudence
70 – 72	Norbert	Rhoda
73 – 75	Oscar	Shirley
76 – 78	Phineas	Tilda
79 – 81	Quigley	Ursula
82 – 84	Quincey	Vera
85 – 87	Ralph	Wanda
88 – 90	Sherman	Wilhelmena
91 – 93	Sidney	Xaviera
94 – 96	Waldo	Yetta
97 – 100	Zeke	Zelma

THE NAGAS

THE NAGAS ARE A SERPENTINE RACE who live in the underworld beneath the mountains of Kuvera's Lands north of the Patala Lowlands.

Vasuka is the name of the Naga King. **Surasa** is his Queen, and considered the 'mother' of the Nagas. **Ulupi** is the name of their stunningly pretty daughter, the Naga Princess.

The Average Naga

QUOTE:	"Sssome day, what wass ourss will be oursss again!"	
VOCATIONS:	Jeweler, Gem Dealer, Alchemist, Collector, Fanatical Warrior.	
INTELLIGENCE:	15	Bright
WILLPOWER:	19	Determined
CHARISMA:	17	Charming
MYSTIC:	11	Aware
STRENGTH:	14	Stalwart
DEXTERITY:	19	Lithe
FITNESS:	12	Hale
APPEARANCE:	17	Handsome
HEALTH POINTS:	21	
HEIGHT:	9' [2.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	800 lbs [363 kg]	
TRAITS:	Mesmerizing, Sophisticated, Secretive, Vengeful, Acquisitive, Fashion Conscious, Civilized.	

Naga Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Nagas are a highly intelligent and mysterious folk who appear humanoid from the waist up and serpentine from the waist down. Their torsos are Human-sized, but their tails can extend up to **20' [6.1 m]** in length. They can weigh between **200 lbs [91 kg]** and **1000 lbs [454 kg].** Their eyes are snake-like, yellow, and slitted with dark vertical pupils. The snake-like parts of their bodies are covered with tough scales and range from golden brown to emerald or deep green. They move quickly and have fast reflexes.

Nagas have an exceptionally acute sense of ***smell*** (they can tell the difference between a cheap and expensive bottle of perfume at **1500' [457 m]**). Both males and females are often quite attractive, with long hair (green, golden, blue, red, etc.) flowing or braided down their backs. They possess full lips, and long and agile forked tongues. For reasons still unclear, Nagas are the most popular cross-racial domestic partners on Murphy's World.

Although their smiles are charming, they conceal retractable fangs which can inject a *poisonous venom* into an enemy or living meal (the venom inflicts **1d10 points of damage** and requires a **Fitness Roll** to avoid ***paralysis*** for **1d10 minutes).**

Nagas are long-lived, with the eldest living up to 500 years. Long-term pension plans are a favorite Naga investment.

Naga Special Traits & Powers

Nagas possess excellent ***darksight*** and can ***move silently*** or ***remain motionless*** with a natural ability that can't be matched by any other race.

A Naga can ***mesmerize*** a subject by staring into their eyes and holding their gaze. The subject may resist with a successful **Willpower Roll.** If the subject fails their Willpower Roll, they will be hypnotized for **1d10 minutes** and will carry out instructions (except those deemed suicidal by the GM) from the Naga who has them under his or her control.

Additionally, Nagas have the power to supernaturally ***excavate tunnels*** through soil and soft rock. This ability functions like a kinetic power, enabling the Naga to mentally push rock aside and levitate it short distances into waiting carts by which the material will be removed.

Finally, Nagas have the ability to transform themselves completely into *snake-form* at will (the process takes **1d10 seconds).** Their bite in either form is poisonous.

Naga Language

Nagas possess a sophisticated language of their own which when spoken sounds much like the hissing of snakes. Due to their longevity, many Nagas can speak and write other languages of the known world. However, when speaking another language, they talk with a somewhat amusing accent which extends all 's' sounds (e.g., "I sssssay").

Naga Geographic Distribution & Settlements

The Nagas once occupied the vast surface region called the **Patala Lowlands** — the area now claimed by the Suras and Rakshasas. They were a peaceful and contemplative people who didn't have the military organization necessary to repel invaders. Thus, when militant migrants arrived, one Naga clan after another was exterminated or driven underground beneath the mountainous terrain of **Kuvera's Lands.** Most of the surviving members of this race live there today.

The Naga Underworld

Over the years the Nagas have extended their tunnels through the mountains and out under the Patala Lowlands, encircling the settlements of their conquerors.



BELOW: Beautiful and dangerous, a Naga plots revenge against her enemies in an underground stronghold.

The underground labyrinth of tunnels and chambers where the Nagas reside is not unlike the vast complexes excavated by the Dwarves. If you asked the opinion of a Naga however, they would explain that their 'hands-off' excavations are infinitely superior to those of the Dwarves. Naga tunnels and chambers are perfectly rounded and smooth, making it comfortable for their unique form of locomotion. They are also obsessively clean — getting a stone in their scales is a painful experience.

A Dwarf might counter the prior comment with the criticism: "To look at a Naga tunnel, you would think they've never seen a straight line." The Naga would not be offended however, for the Naga tunnels' meandering is a reflection of their racial creativity.

When excavating via supernatural powers, structural integrity is sometimes overlooked. On these rare occasions, Naga settlements suffer severe cave-ins, but they simply dig new tunnels out of the rubble, and life goes on — at least for those not crushed by the debris.

Naga Customs & Lifestyle

Since the 'Great Rip-off' (what the Nagas have come to call their severe thrashing and the confiscation of their surface lands), the Naga people have maintained a dual life. Their public face, displayed to their conquerors and the rest of the world, is that of a passive, intellectual, market-oriented group of small, independent, underground communities. However, behind the scenes they have devoted their efforts toward building a unified civilization: increasing their wealth, population, and military resources. Once they accomplish these goals, they will reclaim their lands from the hated occupying surface races.

The Nagas are on a population growth campaign. To win a war, a people need, well… people. The Nagas have abolished monogamy and have officially instituted a mandatory lifestyle of 'free love' for every Naga in the society. Although occasionally rebels break the code and elope, overall the policy has done wonders to boost the population level. In addition, this policy has lowered stress, improved relations between the sexes, and prompted Nagas to smile more often.

The Master Plan

Few suspect that this peaceful and scholarly people burn with a deep desire for revenge and the back rent on their property. In the furthest depths of the Naga kingdom the General Staff of the Secret Service holds council. These are the elite of Naga society and the engineers of the 'master plan' to reoccupy their lost lands.

The first step is the 'Procreation Plan'. It did wonders for Naga morale, and increased support for the Secret Service — at least among those few who know about the Secret Service. So as not to raise the suspicions of the surface peoples, the tunnel system was enlarged to accommodate the additional citizens. Some of those born in the most recent generations have rarely, if ever, seen the surface.

The second plan calls for the Nagas to 'Excavate to the Enemy'. This involves extending tunnels toward the palaces and garrisons of the Suras so that a surprise attack can eventually be mounted. Great care has been taken to dig far enough below the surface to avoid cave-ins and noises which could alert the surface dwellers. This effort continues.

The third plan involves lots of R&D spending on alchemy and magical processes (see Naga Skills & Labor Practices). This is also on-going.

The fourth plan is to engage in clandestine activities to gather information and undermine the stability of the Suras society. So far, this has met with mixed success. Recruiting agents while maintaining 'total secrecy' has proven difficult. An attempt to buy out the Gandharva who supplied the Suras with their Amrita failed. The Gandharva wouldn't sell due to client loyalty. A new strategy has Naga agents trying to encourage the Suras to break their contract. A long shot to be sure… but who can tell?

The fifth and final plan is to use their mineral wealth and monies gained from excavation contracts to purchase the services of mercenaries and the material resources to make war. The Nagas are seeking an intermediary willing to contact and purchase weapons from the Reagombies on their behalf.

Typical Naga Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	First Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Amethyst	Arafat
4 – 6	Basalt	Ataturk
7 – 9	Beryl	Bakunin
10 – 12	Borax	Bolivar
13 – 15	Chalcedony	Castro
16 – 18	Coquina	Cromwell
19 – 21	Diamond	Danton
22 – 24	Emerald	Engels
25 – 27	Epidote	Fouche
28 – 30	Fayalite	Franco
31 – 33	Garnet	Gandhi
34 – 36	Gneiss	Garibaldi
37 – 39	Heliotrope	Guevara
40 – 42	Idocrase	Hidalgo
43 – 45	Jade	Ibanez
46 – 48	Jargoon	Jefferson
49 – 51	Kernite	Juarez
52 – 54	Lazuli	Kerensky
55 – 57	Moonstone	Kornilov
58 – 60	Nepheline	Lafayette
61 – 63	Obsidian	Lenin
64 – 66	Olivine	Marx
67 – 69	Opal	Mao
70 – 72	Peridot	Mengistu
73 – 75	Realgar	Mussolini
76 – 78	Ruby	Nehru
79 – 81	Sardonyx	O'Higgins
82 – 84	Topaz	Paez
85 – 87	Tourmaline	Radek
88 – 90	Vanadium	Riel
91 – 93	Wolfram	Trotsky
94 – 96	Xenolith	Washington
97 – 100	Zircon	Zapata

The Dasyus Alliance

Over the years, the Nagas formed an alliance with the Dasyus clan of Dark Dwarves who reside in the same mountain region. The Dwarves, who are not as bright as the serpent people, have taken on the role of worshipper-servants to the Nagas. Many of the initial commando raids plotted by the Naga General Staff are to be led by Nagas commanding troops of Dasyus Dwarves.

Collecting 'Beautiful Things'

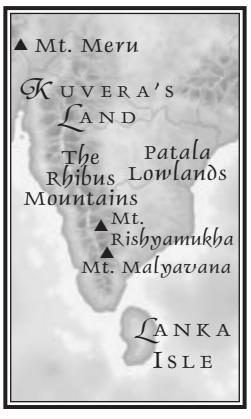
Nagas like to collect 'nice' things. When abroad, Nagas often attract great attention due to the fortune in jewelry and fine clothes they wear. Silk fabrics and garments are one of the Naga's most desired trade items.

Naga caravans are likely to contain many fine items of personal use (mirrors, cufflinks, hatpins, toothfiles, etc.). Occasionally, this attracts the attentions of individuals of a less than honest character. A Naga's brief smile — with a flash of fangs — usually keeps the undesirables at bay.

Many underground Naga chambers surpass the treasure rooms of surface kings. Of course, with so much excavating going on, they couldn't but help stumble upon the occasional gemstone or ore deposit.

Nagas possess many magic jewels, and treasure them all. One such gem can ***restore life to the dead.*** A number of credit agencies would pay almost anything

BELOW: The Nagas could once claim the Rhibus Mountains and the Patala Lowlands as their own. Now they must contend themselves with an underground existence.



to get their hands on this gem — the better to make their deadbeat clients pay up.

Overall, Nagas think of themselves as rather civilized. They value life, knowledge, property rights, and self-determination as a people. Their detractors see them as hoarding vipers, easily mining the riches of the earth and making a profit at the expense of other hard working peoples. Additionally, because Nagas are long lived, some people fear them, and the knowledge they possess. Ironically, it is only these few paranoids who are bold enough to suggest that the apparently 'pacifist' Nagas are secretly plotting to bring down the peoples living on the surface.

FOR ONCE, LUCK SMILED ON ME. WHILE CASUALLY WANDERING ALONG A MOUNTAIN STREAM, I CAME ACROSS A LARGE, SHINING ROCK THAT TURNED OUT TO BE A RAW DIAMOND. DELIGHTED WITH MY FIND, I TOOK IT TO THE BEST JEWELER I COULD THINK OF — A NAGA DIAMOND DEALER.

THE NAGA I VISITED WASN'T AT THE TOP OF HIS PROFESSION. HIS SCALES WERE DULL, HIS EYES BLOODSHOT, AND HIS TAIL MOVED LISTLESSLY. HE PERKED UP, HOWEVER, WHEN I SHOWED HIM MY FIND. "THIS IS A FINE SSSTONE", HE HISSED, AND OFFERED ME A SUM THAT WAS LESS THAN A THIRD OF WHAT I HAD DECIDED WAS MY MINIMUM PRICE. I REFUSED AND BEGAN TO WALK OUT.

"WAIT!," HE CRIED. "I'M A BIT SSSHORT ON CASSSH NOW, BUT I HAVE SSSOMETHING BETTER." WITH THAT, HE LOOKED AROUND FURTIVELY, AND PUT A POTION ON HIS DESK. "THISSS WILL INCREASSSE YOUR SSSTRENGTH UP TO TEN TIMESSS! BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE WHERE YOU GOT IT — IT'SSS A MILITARY SSSECRET."

INTRIGUED, I TOOK HIM UP ON HIS OFFER. WITHIN HOURS, I SOLD THE POTION FOR TWICE WHAT I HAD HOPED TO GET FOR THE DIAMOND TO A VERY BELLIGERENT PIXIE. THE PIXIE USED IT TO EVEN THE SCORE WITH A FEW OF HIS VERY BEST ENEMIES, AND WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS.

THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN IT, BUT SOON THE PIXIE RETURNED, DEMANDING HIS MONEY BACK. HE, OR TO BE MORE PRECISE, HIS VARIOUS GIRLFRIENDS, WERE NOT PLEASED WITH THE POTION'S SIDE EFFECTS. IT SEEMS THAT HE WAS NO LONGER UP TO — HOW CAN I PUT THIS? — KEEPING THEM HAPPY. THE ONLY REASON HE DIDN'T BRING HIS FRIENDS ALONG TO POUND ME TO A PULP WAS BECAUSE HE WANTED TO KEEP HIS CONDITION A SECRET.

I WENT BACK TO THE NAGA TO DEMAND HELP AND MY DIAMOND BACK. HE SHRUGGED, TOLD ME THE PIXIE WOULD RECOVER IN A FEW MONTHS, AND IF I COMPLAINED TO ANYONE ELSE, THE NAGA MILITARY WOULD KILL ME FOR REVEALING THEIR SECRETS.

ON ONE HAND, I HAVE AN ENRAGED PIXIE WHO'S GIVEN ME SIX MONTHS FOR THE POTION TO WEAR OFF, AND ON THE OTHER THE THREAT OF HAVING THE ENTIRE NAGA MILITARY COME DOWN ON MY HEAD FOR REVEALING SECRETS. SOME DAYS IT JUST DOESN'T PAY TO GET OUT OF BED.

— SEAN MURPHY.

Naga Skills & Labor Practices

Nagas are enthusiastic if unexceptional alchemists, and devote a lot of resources into alchemical research and design. They have had several important successes over the years. Among other things, they've developed a ***Nectar of Strength.*** This potion increases an individual's **Strength** value by **1d10 times,** for a period of **1d10 minutes;** body mass and muscularity likewise increases to match the enhanced Strength. However, the potion does impose a drawback: it causes the drinker to become impotent and lose their sex drive for **1d10 months**. Thus, after some test quaffs, it was agreed that this 'secret weapon' would be reserved until the Naga are prepared to make their assault upon the Suras.

The Travelling Gem Fair

The experience that the Nagas have gleaned in the identification and handling of precious stones has made them leaders in the international market for such commodities. They use their influence and wealth to purchase the best gems available and hoard them until they deem the market ready to pay the price they desire for such a stone. Their control is not total, and stones of varied quality can be found in the markets of many civilizations. However, their efforts do add stability to the market.

Once each year, Naga gemstone experts host an international trade fair and auction. Gemstone dealers from all over Murphy's World journey to the site of the fair — held in a different 'world-class' city each year.

The Nagas use this opportunity to extend their relations, both publicly and privately. Trade agreements are negotiated and deals are signed with great ceremony; meanwhile, behind the scenes, they make clandestine arrangements for the purchase of military hardware (including magic) and the services of espionage agents.

Naga Religion & Superstition

To Nagas, Nothing is sacred; that is to say, they worship 'Nothing'. Despite their historical troubles, their religion has remained constant, for the Nagas are well aware that Nothing remains the same. It is not a difficult religion to follow, for the rituals are few and simple, and in return the Nagas receive Nothing. Once a year, however, every Naga must put in a full day of work for Nothing. This is called a Nothing job. When those few Nagas who skip their religious duties get caught, they are forced to admit, "I didn't do Nothing." Nagas must also tithe part of their possessions to their church. This is called 'Amount to Nothing'.

Nothing is versatile. When they worship, Nagas have Nothing on. For their communion, they consume Sweet Nothings. It seems to be a bit messy, however, for if a worshipper is not careful, they will have Nothing on them.

Nagas find it difficult to explain their religion. When asked about it, most Nagas simply shrug and say "There's Nothing like it," or "There's Nothing to it." Most outsiders wonder why they go to all that trouble for Nothing.

If you ask what is taking place inside a Naga temple during services, you will be told "Nothing doing," or "much ado about Nothing." After the worshippers leave the church, Nothing remains.

THE POUGHVIDD

THOUGH ON FIRST IMPRESSION Poughvidds look serious and mentally stable, in fact they are a rather manic group. They are victims of a strange version of the Dark Lands plague. This particular plague permits its victims to maintain most of their faculties. Unfortunately, it causes them to break out in uproarious laughter over the slightest thing. These onslaughts of insane laughter are triggered by *incidents* (e.g., an individual slips and falls face first into mud) or by *something said.* Once started, the laughing fits can last for minutes or even days, until the sufferer collapses of exhaustion or expires (stopping requires a **'Very Hard' WIL Roll**).

Plus, a laughing Poughvidd has a **70%** chance of triggering any other Poughvidds within earshot to break-up as well after ***ten seconds*** of exposure. Some Poughvidds are murdered by their companions, or commit suicide so as to stop their laughing fit from spreading. Many are set upon and beaten unconscious by other Poughvidds as soon as they start to giggle.

Poughvidds can be recognized by the deep-cut laugh-lines around their eyes, mouths and across their foreheads. They *never* tell jokes.

Poughvidd Physical Characteristics & Abilities

Poughvidds are unique on Murphy's World for their form of locomotion — a *wheel* with smaller 'legs' to push them along. Once rolling, they can travel at high speeds, and are adept at avoiding potholes and speed bumps. Stairs do however pose a major problem for Poughvidds, but forward-looking cultures are enacting accessibility laws that will make it easier for these differently-abled beings to get around.

Poughvidd Special Traits & Powers

Poughvidds are better than even accountants at ***putting a damper on festivities*** (**80%** chance). Various police forces keep a few Poughvidds on call to send in when parties get out of hand. All a Poughvidd has to do is walk into a swinging tavern, and the party dies. The music stops, the dancing grinds to a halt, and most importantly, the laughter stops. The police can then move in and disperse the crowd with no problem. Unfortunately for the Poughvidds, they join in the laughter rather than stopping it about **10%** of the time. If they are very lucky, their police handlers will drag them away and douse them with cold water before they croak.

Poughvidd Language

The Poughvidd language is probably the clearest and most straight-forward in all Murphy's World. Each word has a unique meaning — this eliminates the possibility of double-entrendres that might prove fatally amusing. The Poughvidd word for 'fun' can best be translated as 'that activity which makes us laugh and drop dead'.

Poughvidd Geographic Distribution & Settlements

Poughvidds have less trouble than the other Lunie races intermingling with the sane races of the world. Thus they can be found almost anywhere — but never as stand-up comedians.

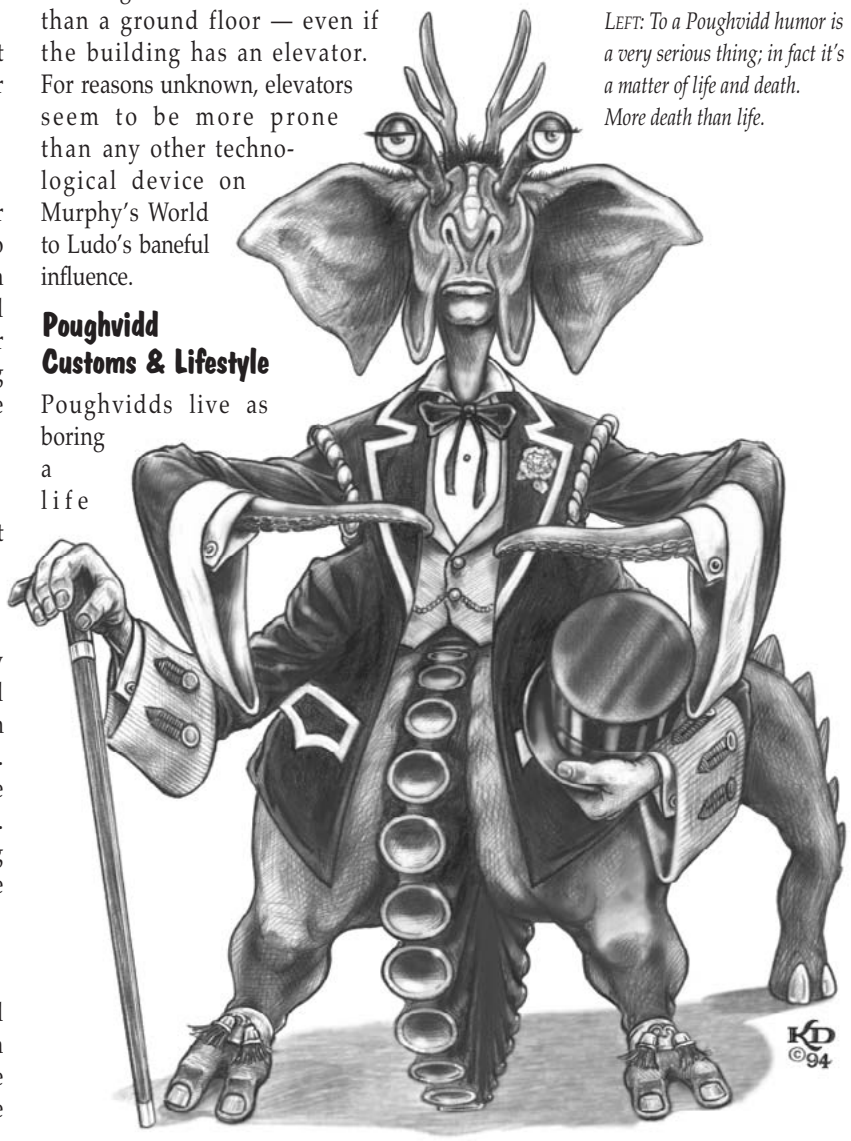
Poughvidds avoid high-rises — indeed, any building that has more than a ground floor — even if the building has an elevator. For reasons unknown, elevators seem to be more prone than any other technological device on Murphy's World to Ludo's baneful influence.

Poughvidd Customs & Lifestyle

Poughvidds live as boring a life

The Average Poughvidd

QUOTE:	**"I don't find that very amusing. Not at all. Not in the least. No way."**	
VOCATIONS:	**Accountant, Street Cleaner, Courier, Assembly Line Worker, Economist.**	
INTELLIGENCE:	**15**	**Bright**
WILLPOWER:	**17**	**Confident**
CHARISMA:	**16**	**Appealing**
MYSTIC:	**10**	**Aware**
STRENGTH:	**12**	**Stalwart**
DEXTERITY:	**19**	**Lithe**
FITNESS:	**14**	**Hale**
APPEARANCE:	**9**	**Homely**
HEALTH POINTS:	**15**	
HEIGHT:	**5'2" [1.6 m]**	
WEIGHT:	**150 lbs [68 kg]**	
TRAITS:	**Humorless, Dull, Brave, Hopeful.**	



LEFT: To a Poughvidd humor is a very serious thing; in fact it's a matter of life and death. More death than life.

If there is a possibility of *several things* going wrong, the one that will cause the *most damage* is the one that will fail (…first).

as possible. They avoid live theatre, Dwarf tossing, group sex therapy, and anything else that may prove even vaguely amusing. They generally keep to themselves, and associate only with other Poughvidds. When Poughvidds get together in the evenings, they show each other holiday snaps, sing dirges around the piano, and play tiddley-winks.

I WAS JUST BEDDING DOWN FOR THE NIGHT BY THE SIDE OF A ROAD. I HAD RESIGNED MYSELF TO A COLD EVENING, FOR I HAD NOTHING WITH WHICH TO START A FIRE. JUST THEN, I SAW THAT I HAD COMPANY. A STRANGE-LOOKING CREATURE WHEELED UP TO ME, AND WISHED ME A GOOD EVENING.

I RETURNED THE GREETING, AND NOT WANTING TO WASTE THE OPPORTUNITY, ASKED "DO YOU HAVE A MATCH?"

"WHY DO YOU NEED A MATCH?" HE ASKED, VERY SOLEMNLY.

"I NEED TO START A FIRE."

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SET ME OFF, BUT I COULDN'T RESIST ADDING: "IT MUST BE MY BURNING AMBITION... MAYBE I'LL MAKE AN ASH OUT OF MYSELF... BUT WITH LUCK THERE'LL BE A HOT TIME TONIGHT! DON'T THESE PUNS JUST BURN YOU UP?"

THEY MUST HAVE, FOR THE BEING, WHICH I NOW KNOW WAS A POUGHVIDD, PROCEEDED TO GIVE ME A SHARP WACK ON THE HEAD WITH THE STAFF HE WAS CARRYING.

"OWWW!" I CRIED, REFLEXIVELY PUTTING MY HANDS TO MY THROBBING SKULL. THEN, LOOKING UP, I SAW THAT THE POUGHVIDD'S LOWER LIP WAS TREMBLING AND HIS MOUTH WAS BEGINNING TO CURL INTO A SMILE. HE BEGAN TO ROCK BACK AND FORTH ON HIS WHEEL, THEN STARTED OFF ON A ZIG-ZAG COURSE DOWN THE ROAD. HIS LAUGHTER CAME AT ME OUT OF THE DUSK, BUT WAS CUT OFF A SHORT TIME LATER BY CHOKING GASP AN OMINOUS THUD.

GUILT-STRICKEN, I RAN DOWN THE ROAD TO HELP HIM. ALAS, I WAS TOO LATE. OF ALL THE SOUNDS I'VE HEARD DURING MY TRAVELS ON THIS WORLD, THERE IS NONE SO HAUNTING OR TRAGIC AS THAT OF THE DEATH-LAUGH OF A POUGHVIDD.

UNFORTUNATELY, TO SOMEONE WITH A SICK SENSE OF HUMOR, LIKE ME, IT'S ALSO QUITE HILARIOUS.

— SEAN MURPHY.

Poughvidd Skills & Labor Practices

Poughvidds have a wide range of skills, and will work at a variety of jobs; so long as the work cannot be conceived of as fun in any way. Thus they serve as accountants, assembly line workers, street cleaners, economists, and university lecturers.

Given their unique mode of travel, they excel as message and package couriers. They refuse to take verbal messages, or read their printed messages out loud just in case the contents are in any way amusing. Because of this, they are the most trusted couriers on Murphy's World.

Typical Poughvidd Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Artie	Andrea	Abbott
4 – 6	Buddy	Bernadette	Belushi
7 – 9	Buster	Bette	Burns
10 – 12	Cheech	Cloris	Candy
13 – 15	Chico	Diane	Carlin
16 – 18	Curly	Eva	Chaplin
19 – 21	Dick	Gilda	Cleese
22 – 24	Dom	Glenda	Costello
25 – 27	Ernie	Goldie	Diller
28 – 30	Eugene	Gracie	Fields
31 – 33	Flip	Grace	Gilliam
34 – 36	Groucho	Jane	Gleason
37 – 39	Gummo	Joan	Hardy
40 – 42	Harpo	Judy	Hope
43 – 45	Howie	Kaye	Idle
46 – 48	Irwin	Kitty	Jones
49 – 51	Jackie	Lily	Kovacs
52 – 54	Johnny	Liza	Laurel
55 – 57	Marty	Luba	Letterman
58 – 60	Mickey	Lucille	Martin
61 – 63	Moe	Madeline	Marx
64 – 66	Ollie	Mae	Milligan
67 – 69	Pigmeat	Marilyn	Murray
70 – 72	Shecky	Nancy	Palin
73 – 75	Shemp	Phyllis	Pryor
76 – 78	Soupy	Ruth	Rivers
79 – 81	Spike	Rosie	Schuster
82 – 84	Stan	Rosanne	Sellers
85 – 87	Tommy	Sandy	Skelton
88 – 90	Wally	Shelly	Tomlin
91 – 93	Woody	Teri	VanDyke
94 – 96	Zeppo	Whoopi	Wayne
97 – 100	Zero	Zsa Zsa	Winters

Poughvidd Religion & Superstition

Poughvidds dream of a Heaven where they can all laugh freely without collapsing in a heap and dying. Of course thinking about laughing, even in Heaven, is something that Poughvidds try to avoid.

Yet they cling to the belief that somewhere there exists the One True Joke: the Joke that will set them free of their disorder and allow them to live like normal (being Murphy's World, that is relatively speaking) folks. Once a year, a brave volunteer offers to read a new joke to discover what effect it might have. If the volunteer reads the joke, laughs, and survives, then the One True Joke will have been found (unless of course, the volunteer is a special case — in which case a lot of Poughvidds are sure to die...). This has never happened. Instead, the Poughvidds have a large number of small statues erected in memory of their brave volunteers.

Their temples are small, dark, dank buildings, usually built in the suburbs. Inside these completely humorless surroundings, Poughvidds pray to their nameless gods for deliverance from their affliction. (Their gods remain nameless since these deities don't want it widely known amongst the various pantheons that they are worshipped by the Poughvidds — anyone who is the object of Poughvidd devotion must be incredibly boring.)

THE REAGOMBIES

ON THE FRINGES OF THE DARK LANDS, south of Scarberia, there exists a people unique in all Murphy's World. Here is a thriving community that represents all that is good and wholesome. They reside in quaint single-family residences lining graceful low-traffic avenues that lead to parks, community centers, and a picturesque downtown square. The residents have few worries: all the males are gainfully employed, the women stay at home and raise the children, and the children grow up to be strong, upstanding members of their community.

There is only one blemish on this ideal of domestic bliss — although their sense of community and love of life is strong, perhaps stronger than that of any other race, it has to be, for the Reagombies are dead — or rather undead. While their homes appear picture perfect to them, to anyone else the entire area looks like a bombed-out wasteland.

The Reagombies are not native to Murphy's World — they come from an alternate reality. On their home world a terrible war broke out, and the planet was devastated by nuclear weapons. The energy released by the battle produced a temporary warp in space, connecting the planet to Murphy's World. During the chaos, the small city of Hooverville and the surrounding countryside were transported to Murphy's World intact.

In the days and weeks that followed, most of the residents of Hooverville died of immune system failure, radiation sickness, and other things far too messy to describe here. The few survivors were numbed and shocked. They could not believe that a nuclear war could have occurred, let alone that their nation could lose. (Actually, *everyone* lost — except of course, the cockroaches).

Of course, on Murphy's World, belief counts more than reality. Their firm belief in their invincibility, and their will to survive and carry on as they had always done, gave the Reagombies 'life'.

They erased the war and devastation from their memories, and proceeded as though nothing unusual had happened. Thus, life in Hooverville returned to an eldritch sort of normality. The Reagombies, a strange mixture of the dead and the decaying, go about their daily business firm in the belief that nothing out of the ordinary has happened, or indeed could ever happen.

Reagombie Physical Characteristics & Abilities

The important thing to keep in mind about Reagombies is that they are *dead* — at least as far as anyone else is concerned. To themselves, they are perfectly alive and well — a result of the energies of Ludo being bent to their collective belief in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — but mostly life. That is what keeps them together. Literally.

Since they are ***immune to pain*** — being dead does that to you — Reagombies occasionally find themselves suffering serious wounds without knowing it. Losing an appendage, crushing a limb, or even catching fire doesn't faze them in the slightest. They maintain their mundane and orderly natures regardless of physical calamity.

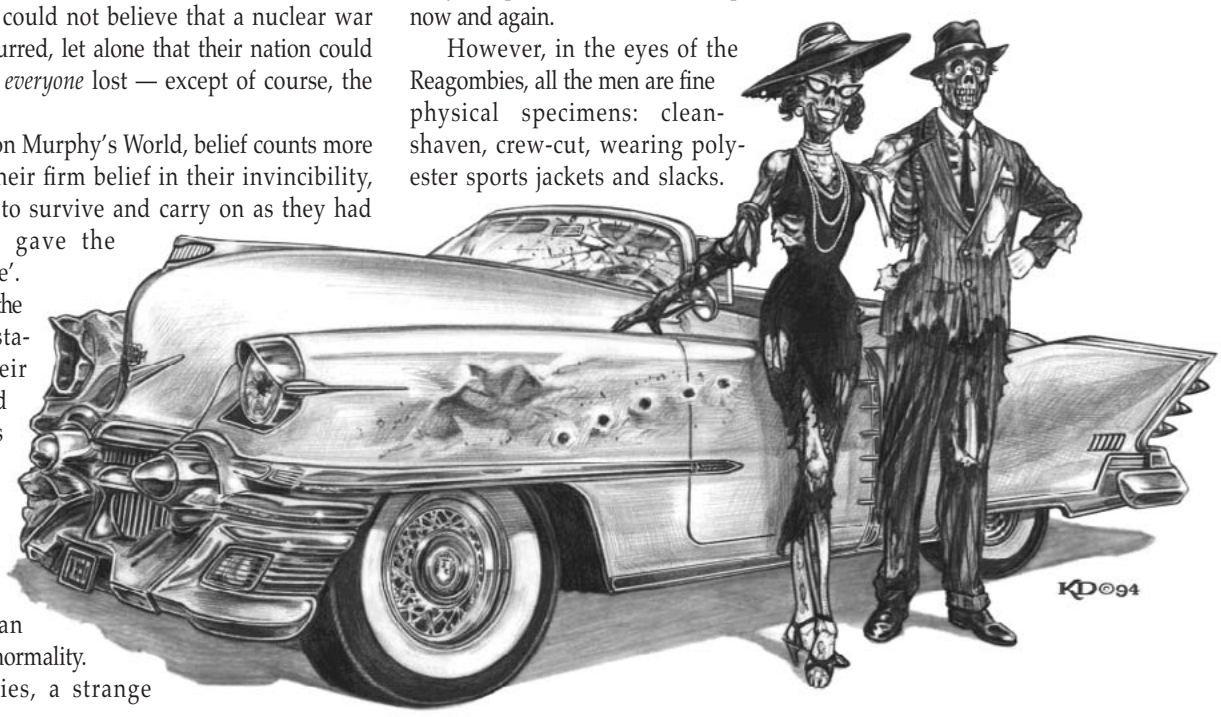
To an outsider's eyes, the typical Reagombie looks distasteful, to say the least. They move and think more slowly than the living, hampered by their wounds. Missing limbs, rotting flesh, gaping holes, and third degree burns are all characteristic Reagombie traits. They are prone to lose bits and pieces of themselves now and again.

However, in the eyes of the Reagombies, all the men are fine physical specimens: clean-shaven, crew-cut, wearing polyester sports jackets and slacks.

The Average Reagombie

QUOTE:	"You sound like a Godless Commie."	
VOCATIONS:	Assembly Line Worker, Middle Manager, Weapons Designer.	
INTELLIGENCE:	10	Sensible
WILLPOWER:	22	Persistent
CHARISMA:	4	Nauseating
MYSTIC:	1	Oblivious
STRENGTH:	15	Burly
DEXTERITY:	4	Klutzy
FITNESS:	4	Decrepit
APPEARANCE:	1	Disgusting
HEALTH POINTS:	8	
HEIGHT:	5'8" [1.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	150 lbs [68 kg]	
TRAITS:	Close-Minded, Xenophobic, Reactionary, Aggressive, Radioactive.	

BELOW: Yes, you too can be the proud owner of a new Plutonium 6000 by GDM. Equipped with V16 engine, power steering, power brakes, power windows, and a power ashtray; all standard equipment. Plus, as a special safety feature, it glows in the dark! Don't be the last on your block to light up your life!



Typical Reagombie Phrases

- Better dead than red.
- Criminal welfare bums.
- Defense spending creates jobs (and kills competition).
- Guns don't kill people — lead poisoning does.
- Hooverville, love it or leave it.
- Hooverville the Beautiful.
- Might makes right (as long as *we* have the might).
- My country right or wrong.
- Plastics for a better world.
- Pollution is caused by trees.
- Potatoe.
- Radiation, the fuel for tomorrow. Safe, cheap, and everywhere.
- What's a little radiation poisoning between friends?
- The only good Bleeding Heart Liberal is one you can bypass.
- There's no problem too big for a small thermonuclear device to fix.
- Walk softly and carry an M-16 with a jacket full of ammo.
- Water quality is what you make of it.
- Win one for the Gipper.
- Workfare not welfare.
- *Fair* Trade not *Free* Trade.

The women are models of zaftig perfection, in knee-length flowered dresses, heavy make-up, and salon hairdos. The children are rosy-cheeked and polite in t-shirts, jeans and sneakers.

Reagombie Special Traits & Powers

Living after death is a neat achievement to start with, but that's not the only trick the Reagombies have up their fraying sleeves.

Being undead, they can ***thrive on any sort of food.*** Their favorite dishes are the flesh of Godless Commies, and red, white, and blue jellybeans.

Reagombies possess the dreadful ability to ***turn otherwise normal people into Reagombies.*** They do this through debate and the application of their twisted 'logic'.

Any Character who converses with one or more Reagombies will soon discover that the Reagombies hold very strong opinions about just about everything, and express those opinions in brief and cliché phrases. These jingoistic catch-phrases give like-minded folk comfortable feelings, and drive those with even a slightly more 'objective' view to frenzied debate. Of course, anyone who offers a differing opinion is branded a Godless Commie.

The Reagombies always steer the conversation to a discussion of their way of life: the beauty of the supply-side curve; the best techniques of defending your property with machine guns, anti-personnel mines, and bazookas; the vileness of welfare recipients and universal health care; and how erotica rots the mind and puts hair on your palms.

The Reagombies espouse their views with such utter conviction and sincerity that once a Character begins to listen the trap is sprung: each Character listening must make a **Willpower Roll.**



Any Characters who fail their Willpower Roll immediately begin to nod their heads in agreement with everything the Reagombies say. If they are not interrupted within **1d10 minutes,** they will begin to *utter supporting opinions* of their own, *abandon whatever else they are doing* and *join the Reagombie way of life.* Any Characters so 'converted' will immediately experience a significant *perceptual change:* the surroundings will no longer look like the aftermath of a nuclear war, but will resemble an idealized middle-class neighborhood of 1980's America. (Note: this is the fast-track to Reagombie conversion. For a slower process of conversion see That Hometown Spirit below.)

Reagombies are completely and utterly ***immune to reasoned, rational argument.*** They cannot under any circumstances be convinced of the truth of anything outside their own world view. Anyone who tries to convince them otherwise risks being branded a Godless Commie, hunted down, killed and eaten.

Reagombies have the habit of falling asleep during meetings.

Reagombie Conversion Prevention

The best prevention is avoidance — Run away! Run away! Simple, but effective. Unfortunately, not everyone is so well informed, and some people just have to experience things for themselves.

There are two main steps to Reagombie conversion: a) becoming brain-dead, b) becoming undead. A Character can be rescued from a brain-dead state, but once undead, there is no turning back.

A Character can be prevented from becoming a Reagombie by various means: a blow to the head will likely distract them from a dooming conversation; grabbing them firmly and dragging them off is effective, but not particularly subtle. Taking them out of earshot of any Reagombie and engaging them in an intelligent discussion about the plight of the homeless, the importance of the separation of Church and State, or the reasoning behind Mutually Assured Destruction is significantly more subtle, but it will plant the seeds of doubt in the afflicted Character's mind necessary to reverse the conversion process. At least in the short term.

Saving a Character from becoming a Reagombie is a dangerous undertaking, for to the Reagombies only a Godless Commie would try to dissuade others from participating in their hallowed way of life.

Reagombie Language

Reagombies speak 20th Century 'Merican English. The men only swear or use slang when away from women and children; women and children never swear. Only Godless Commies do that.

Reagombie Geographic Distribution & Settlements

The Reagombies reside in Hooverville, a twilight zone of bombed-out suburban homes and scorched yards, located east of the mysterious Dark Lands.

To a Reagombie, Hooverville is as it always has been: an pleasant and idyllic small suburban town typical of the midwestern United States of America. Modest single-family clapboard houses align gracefully curving avenues, surrounded by manicured lawns and shade

trees (to the outsider, these houses look like burnt-out ruins surrounded by tree stumps and dirt that glows in the dark — but beauty is in the eye of the beholder).

That Hometown Spirit: Conversion Through Environment

The environment of Hooverville is capable of converting anyone exposed to it for too long into a Reagombie.

For every **1d10 hours** (period may vary with each individual's metabolism and GM whim) that a Character remains in the Hooverville, the player must make a **Willpower Roll**. Failure will result in the PC beginning the slow transformation into an Reagombie.

- First, the PC will ***cease to question rhetorical statements and eco-political arguments,*** no matter how ridiculous. Additionally, they will begin to see Hooverville as a suburban paradise and its inhabitants as normal, mild-mannered residents.
- After a further **1d10 hours,** the PC will begin to ***espouse similar eco-political opinions*** of their own. At this point they will be hostile to anyone who wishes to debate or question their beliefs.
- Finally, after **1d10 days** of exposure to the Hooverville environment, the PC will ***collapse*** and ***croak.*** The dying process will last for **1d10 minutes,** after which the new Reagombie will open his or her eyes and join the community. The community will accept them (and see them) as one of their own, regardless of their original racial or cultural background. After all, Death is the great equalizer.

Over the years the Reagombies have added to their number from the visitors to Hooverville. These lost souls, who include members of a wide variety of races and species, have taken up the Reagombie way of life completely. Thus, as new suburbs expand the community, the area affected by the Reagombies grows with it.

Reagombie Customs & Lifestyle

Reagombies pursue a very ordered existence. Children go to school in the morning, play sandlot baseball in the parks with their friends in the afternoon, and ride their bikes along the sidewalked streets, always going home when the streetlamps come on.

Mothers tidy the home, watch pop-psychology talk-shows and soap-operas, go shopping, hold coffee-klatches with the neighbors, socialize at the beauty parlor, and prepare dinner.

The dads drive to work in the mornings in huge gas-guzzling sedans, work all day, stop at the neighborhood bar after work to suck back a few cold ones and chat with their buddies, drive home on the freeway through rush-hour traffic, and eat with the family.

In the evening after dinner, the entire family sits down in front of the TV to watch 'Leave it to Beaver', 'The Beverly Hillbillies', and 'Gunsmoke' reruns. Just before bed, the family faithfully goes through a drill of 'duck and cover', or, if fortunate enough to own an air-raid shelter, practice 'down to the shelter'.

A truly heart-warming domestic scene.

An outsider would see TVs that show only static, automobiles that run only by some miracle, and battered boxes of corn flakes that contain only dust.

Opposite Page: Ah, domestic bliss. Though she has prepared a full course meal, due to the modern conveniences of the GDM corporation, this homemaker still has lots of time for her lovely daughter and Rags the family dog.

Visitors Welcome — Sometimes

The arrival of outsiders in Hooverville often disrupts the tranquil life of the Reagombies. Reagombies are a friendly but narrow minded people. Strangers are quickly approached and engaged in conversation by at least one member of the community. This determines whether the stranger is an 'us' or a 'them'.

Reagombies divide their world into two groups: the Reagombies, and Godless Commies. Godless Commies are easily identified by their distinct characteristics: long hair, inability to speak proper 'Merican, the eating of 'weird' food, and the use of terms like 'liberal', 'gun-control', 'social welfare', or 'secular'. Godless Commies are, by definition, enemies of Truth, Justice, HMOs, and just about everything else the Reagombies believe in. Naturally, once identified, they are exterminated and eaten. (The arrival of Godless Commies in town has prompted many a great community barbecue).

Typical Reagombie Names (Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Andy	Amy	Amway
4 – 6	Archie	Annette	Boeing
7 – 9	Barney	Barbara	Buick
10 – 12	Bart	Carrie	Cadillac
13 – 15	Bill	Connie	Chevrolet
16 – 18	Bob	Dawn	Chrysler
19 – 21	Brad	Debra	Colt
22 – 24	Carl	Elizabeth	Dodge
25 – 27	Dan	Ellen	Dow
28 – 30	Dave	Gale	DuPont
31 – 33	Don	Grace	Edsel
34 – 36	Ed	Heather	Ford
37 – 39	Ernie	Holly	Garand
40 – 42	Fred	Jacqueline	Gatling
43 – 45	Gary	Jane	Grumman
46 – 48	Hank	Joan	Hughes
49 – 51	Homer	Karen	Lockheed
52 – 54	Jake	Kate	Magnum
55 – 57	Joe	Laura	Marietta
58 – 60	John	Lisa	Mattel
61 – 63	Kevin	Maggie	Northrop
64 – 66	Lew	Mary	Pierce
67 – 69	Mark	Paula	Plymouth
70 – 72	Mike	Polly	Pontiac
73 – 75	Norm	Rhonda	Remington
76 – 78	Paul	Rita	Rockefeller
79 – 81	Rick	Sandra	Sharp
82 – 84	Steve	Sue	Shrapnel
85 – 87	Ted	Tammy	Smith
88 – 90	Tom	Tina	Spencer
91 – 93	Vern	Valerie	Springfield
94 – 96	Vic	Veronica	Thompson
97 – 100	Will	Wanda	Wesson

Below: Hooverville is located in a wide river valley east of the Dark Lands and south of Dementia.



There's No Place Like Home

Within the boundaries of Hooverville, the Reagombies are numerous enough to maintain the force of will necessary to continue their unlife. Upon leaving the zone alone or in small numbers, Reagombies quickly decay into the dusty corpses they really are.

Conveniently, their xenophobia causes them to rarely desire to go beyond their community. Hooverville provides the Reagombies all that they could want: good work, good leisure, and good people. Only Godless Commies would want to live anywhere else.

Occasionally parties of 20 or more Reagombies become lost while going to a convention, a sporting event, or advancing upon an enemy, and end up outside the 'safe' zone of Hooverville. As long as they remain together their bodies and minds maintain their integrity. However, if they happen to split up....



Above: Meet Buck Smith, head of design at GDM's ICBM division. Behind him is Buck's latest brainchild: the Wastemaker. This baby is guaranteed to transform an entire city into a parking lot at the touch of a button. No money down; easy monthly payments. Targeting system included. (From the GDM Munitions Mail Order Catalog.)

Reagombie Skills & Labor Practices

Any working city needs its share of bus drivers, shopkeepers, and television reporters, and Hooverville has them all. However, most of Hooverville's men spend their days working at one of two large industries located just outside of town: the Red, White, & Blue Jellybean Factory, or General Destruction & Mayhem.

The Red, White, & Blue Jellybean Factory

Hoovervillians are proud of what they do. That is no less so where the manufacture of wholesome and nutritious foods are concerned. The Red, White & Blue Jellybean Factory (RWB) produces 'jellybeans for the masses', and is a staple of the diet of Hoovervillians. Locals will tell you if you don't like RWB's jellybeans, you're just not a true Hoovervillian.

To non-Reagombies, the jellybeans are blackened tablets of concentrated radioactive ash. A steady diet of these is sure to put you well on your way to joining the ranks of the Reagombies.

General Destruction & Mayhem (GDM)

"GDM, The Pride of Hooverville." GDM — never called by its full name — is the largest single employer of Hooverville men. This sprawling factory complex began as a small plastics extrusion plant that won a coveted contract for $3,000.00 toilet seats for the Air Force. Today GDM makes everything from fridges to fallout shelters, air conditioners to attack aircraft. Its workers are happy, non-unionized, and of course, undead. Not that being undead poses a problem to management, for they are undead as well.

GDM's workshops, design offices and transportation grid covers dozens of square miles. No-one, not even the Reagombies who work there, knows where or what everything is. New buildings are constantly being erected, and old ones torn down; GDM has assumed a life of its own.

GDM's Weapons Division makes just about every kind of weapon that 20th century technology has imagined, and a few that it hasn't. Swords, brass knuckles, guns, lasers, tanks, nuclear weapons, mind control devices, biowarfare agents, you name it, GDM manufactures it. With these weapons on hand, you might think the Reagombies would have long since overrun Murphy's World. There is one significant catch — the weapons seldom work, and when they do, they rarely do so flawlessly.

Belief and Ludo aside, when your workforce is deceased, mentally slow, and more often than not physically handicapped by the absence of digits or limbs, quality control takes a flying leap right out the window. Typically, pieces are left out of weapons as a one-armed zombie laborer fails to notice that his missing arm hasn't installed an important part.

Safety precautions are unknown. Just about every day a mushroom cloud or two rises above the site of some slip-up in the GDM complex. At any given time about **20%** of GDM's buildings are burnt-out shells. GDM has a large construction crew dedicated to rebuilding parts of the factory as they are destroyed. The Reagombies think nothing of these industrial disasters. What are a few casualties suffered in the cause of Freedom? The preservation of Democracy, Apple Pie and Capital Gains Tax Cuts are worth it. It should be pointed out, however, that GDM's head office is **60 miles [97 km]** upwind of the main factory complex.

GDM's products are probably the shoddiest on Murphy's World. Considering that many are devices of mass destruction, this is not a good thing (depending on your point of view, of course.) Guns jam or misfire, swords break or bend, plagues meant to kill horribly turn your skin blue and give you a case of the giggles, and nuclear weapons simply snap, crackle and pop. Soldiers armed with Reagombie weapons are in greater danger of being killed by their own devices than by enemy action.

Despite these problems, GDM has a booming export business. The factious races of Murphy's World are always in need of firearms and dishwashers and only the Reagombies are able to fill the orders. Thus, GDM's products sell, despite their glaring flaws. As far as the Reagombies are concerned, the more Godless Commies that blow each other apart, the better.

Reagombie customers, knowing what to expect, test each and every weapon purchased, trying to find ones that work correctly. Typically this is a job for prisoners and suicide squads. The weapons that remain from this winnowing out procedure are generally usable, but you can't be certain about the ammunition until you actually fire it....

GDM clients usually provide their own transportation to haul purchased goods. The roads out of Hooverville are littered with broken-down delivery trucks and truly dead

Reagombie drivers who drove outside of the 'safe' zone while trying to get shipments to clients.

GDM is careful to put a clause into their contracts that says that a buyer is not allowed to use its weapons against Reagombies. GDM thinks this is sufficient to protect them from an assault from others wielding their weapons. (Perhaps this kind of thinking is why they died in the first place.) Meanwhile, the other races leave the Reagombies alone for two reasons: first, GDM sells to anyone and everyone. It is in everyones' best interest not to rock the boat. Secondly, no-one *wants* to conquer the radioactive, polluted land of the Reagombies.

Reagombie ad agencies insist that quality is on the rise, that satisfied customers are everywhere, that the next generation of weapons will be better, faster, and less expensive than the previous ones. Of course, some people will believe anything.

Technocrats have a love-hate relationship with the Reagombies and GDM. The average Technocrat would love nothing better than to get his hands on the technology being developed by GDM. Unfortunately, the risk is great. The vast majority of the Technocrats who were sent to spy on GDM simply disappeared, were apprehended and executed as Godless Commies, or worst of all, turned into Reagombies. The few who escaped suffered severe mental damage. Now, Technocrat organizations forbid their members to enter the land of the Reagombies. There are always curious individuals however….

Reagombie Expansionism & War

In the past, Hooverville's leaders adopted a policy of Manifest Destiny and attempted to conquer nearby communities of primitive peoples. These exploits met with mixed success. Overconfident and none too bright, the Reagombie leaders permitted their armies to be divided into small strike forces. These platoons couldn't sustain their belief in Reagombie reality, and fell apart, literally. It is difficult to complete a conquest this way.

Peoples attacked by the Reagombies have learned to help this process along by goading the Reagombies into breaking up into smaller groups. They shout slogans of Chairman Mao or Ralph Nader until the soldiers divide and give pursuit. Once separated from the collective will of their army, the isolated Reagombie soldiers forget their visions of 'home and family' and — realizing that they are actually dead — collapse in disgusting heaps.

Occasionally the Reagombies feel especially threatened by a foreign presence. This feeling might be triggered by a TV broadcast of large balding men banging shoes on desks, a medium-sized group of touring left-wing economists, or a successful Canuck baseball team.

Once riled-up, and after due consideration of the economic advantages, the Reagombies declare war on the 'hostile' Commie power. This involves the assembly of a volunteer army (comprised of all eligible males) and putting into gear the full capacity of their formidable 'war machine' (also called 'The Military Industrial Complex').

There is one problem. This is an army of the dead using equipment *made* by the dead. Little of the equipment works, and what does will more than likely fail sooner than later (**30%** chance ***per second*** [or use]). Under these conditions, failure-prone small arms are an inconvenience, while decrepit tactical nuclear missiles are downright dangerous. More often than not, the

One day, I happened to journey to the terrible wasteland on the eastern border of the Dark Lands. Just as a dusty wind began to blow, I saw what I took to be a mirage: a commuter bus! It was old, wheezing, dilapidated, dirty, and the windows were blown out, but it was a bus. Thinking that this technological relic might take me someplace where I could find a way off the planet, I flagged it down and jumped aboard.

I quickly discovered that I had acted in haste. The bus was full of living corpses: men, women, and children, smelling of decay and dressed in what remained of their Sunday best. I've been in some strange situations in my time, but this took the cake. I smiled my widest smile, and holding back my lunch, blurted out the first thing that came to mind, "Ur... Hello everyone."

The driver looked at me through his remaining eye, and intoned, "Are you coming to the picnic?"

I heard myself reply, "I love a picnic." I gingerly took a seat next to a grandmother who smiled a toothless grin and put her hand on mine — unfortunately her arm promptly fell off: she failed to notice. I did the polite thing and smiled back, not mentioning the limb.

The bus took us to a field full of zombies. On the stage at the front, flanked by a small band and a choir of corpses in red, white and blue smocks, was a undead comedian ranting into a microphone something about 'Godless Commies', 'increased defense spending', and 'win one for the Gipper'. This guy would've knocked 'em dead at the Starbase Cabaret. I nudged the guy next to me (not a good idea as I left a dent in his chest), and said "Wow, this is the best stand-up comedy I've seen since I came to this rock. This guy's rant is hilarious!"

I quickly discovered that my enthusiastic comments were a 'Wrong Move'. Suddenly all eyes (and/or sockets) turned to me, and everyone began yelling 'Godless Commie'. The joker on the stage pointed a long, bony finger at me and shouted something about 'devouring the competition'.

Well, I know when my company isn't appreciated. It was a good thing that I'm in trim shape, for I'm sure my dash would've set a record. Lucky for me, my hosts couldn't run very fast without losing more of themselves, and I lived to tell the tale.

— Sean Murphy.

Reagombies begin and lose a war within minutes — usually due to the malfunction of their own weapons.

This is not usually as devastating as it might sound. A misfiring missile does have a beneficial effect: it scares sensible foreigners away from the area around Hooverville thus isolating the Reagombies, and makes the world a better place by vaporizing a good portion of the Hooverville population. As for those who remain? Well, it was a good war, wasn't it? And since there are no enemies about, it's pretty clear who won. And what could be better than winning a war?

The Average Human

QUOTE:	"I don't believe it… I just don't believe it…"	
VOCATIONS:	Anything and Everything.	
INTELLIGENCE:	10	Sensible
WILLPOWER:	10	Indecisive
CHARISMA:	10	Likable
MYSTIC:	10	Aware
STRENGTH:	10	Adequate
DEXTERITY:	10	Handy
FITNESS:	10	Sound
APPEARANCE:	10	Plain
HEALTH POINTS:	10	
HEIGHT:	5'8" [1.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	150 lbs [68 kg]	
TRAITS:	Big Dreams — Little Action, Quarrelsome, Confused, Careless, Demanding, Greedy, Self-Absorbed.	

Reagombie Religion & Superstition

Reagombies are monotheistic, but worship at an assortment of different churches dedicated to the same god, **Adam Smith.** These churches have gone through some dramatic changes since the Reagombies arrived on Murphy's World (being dead will do that to you).

A majority of the Reagombies have fallen under the sway of a number of charismatic religious leaders. The chief of these is **Aural Popoff** (often referred to as 'A.P., The Bogus', by Godless Commies), who heads the Church of Comparative Advantage. Aural preaches on Reagombie TV just after 'Have Gun, Will Travel', so his message is seen and heard by almost all Reagombies. His long, emotional sermons can be summed up in two phrases: "Hate Others for God," and "Praise the Lord and Pass the Cash." Aural knows that God hates Commies, so the Reagombies should hate them too, and kill them whenever possible. Simple, really.

A.P. also knows that it takes money to run a proper ministry, and exhorts the Reagombies to send him whatever they can, so that he can further his good works through expensive living. A.P. also sits on the GDM board of directors. His wife, **Tammi the Fæ,** is the single largest consumer of makeup on the planet. Then again, as a living corpse, you can assume that she has her reasons. Aural has been implicated in a number of scandals over the years, but each time he cries and blames the whole thing on the influence of the Dark Lands, the secret machinations of the Godless Commies, and Voodoo Economics. To the brain-dead Reagombies, this seems a reasonable explanation, and life continues on as before.

THE HUMANS

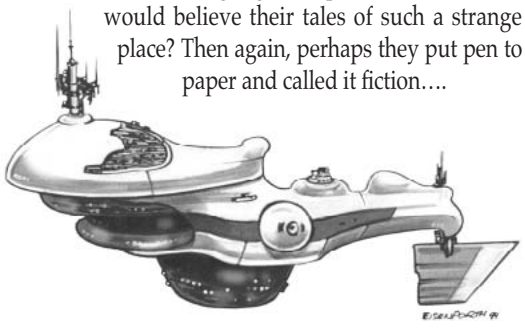
WHAT REALLY NEEDS TO BE SAID about Humanity? There are many Humans on Murphy's World. Some might say too many. They come from all places, cultures, religions, times, and walks of life. Some have adjusted well to existence in this strange place, and will happily live out their lives here. Others would give anything to go home. Still others want to *own* the entire planet.

Most Humans arrive on Murphy's World *unaltered.* Some few go through major changes — they acquire ***supernatural powers, startling insights, instant language comprehension,*** or really nasty headaches. The most common effect is for ***aging*** to ***slow down or stop altogether.*** Pre-technological Humans are especially prone to believing that they have arrived in the afterlife (although a particularly strange one), and have been granted ***immortal bodies.*** Ludo, of course, obliges them in their belief.

Humans can be found everywhere on Murphy's World, doing all kinds of jobs. There are Human slaves, petty dictators, super heroes, Technocrats, soldiers, and insurance salesmen, among a host of other careers and vocations.

Many Humans have a difficult time grappling with the consciousness altering aspects of life on Murphy's World. If they come from a technological time period, they are the ones most likely to become Technocrats. If they are not technologically oriented, they just become permanently confused or slightly out of touch with the world around them. Others have no problem at all adapting to the shifting realities of the planet. These people were either born on Murphy's World, lived a mind-altered lifestyle at home, or read a lot of speculative fiction.

Feel free to take any person from history or literature and plop them down on Murphy's World. Perhaps they went missing and were never found; or during an undocumented portion of their life they ventured to and existed on Murphy's World; or they were whisked home an instant after they disappeared in their own time, so that all that an observer might have seen was a flickering as the person changed position from leaving to reappearing. The adventures experienced by such an individual might go unreported; after all, who would believe their tales of such a strange place? Then again, perhaps they put pen to paper and called it fiction….



CHAPTER THREE

Three Ways to Play!

Your Rules, Our Rules, or No Rules!

THE PURPOSE OF RULES for a roleplay game (RPG) is to provide the players with an objective means of determining the success or failure of each Action attempted by their Player Characters (PC) during gameplay. RPG rules have three main elements: *Character Creation*, *Action Resolution* (which includes the use of Known Skills and Abilities, including Opposed Actions and supernatural talents), and *Character Improvement*. The greater the level of seriousness and realism represented by the setting and adventure plots, the greater the need for detailed rules — to justify and explain the action limitations and Wound Effects imposed on the Characters.

Character Creation — Anything Goes!

To participate in an RPG each player needs at least one **Player Character (PC)**. GMs should let each player create the PC they want, native or alien, within the parameters they've established for their adventure and setting (e.g., all PCs are escaped prisoners…). PCs generated for other RPGs can be brought to Murphy's World, so Character Creation might be unnecessary. Characters pre-generated by the GM, can also be used. GMs should review each player's Character before granting final approval but only require changes to things that they think will reduce the playability and enjoyment of the adventure for all concerned.

Action Resolution — Fast & Loose!

Characters exist in a roleplay game through their 'Actions'. Action Resolution takes into account three charactersistics: **Attributes** (mental and physical qualities), **Abilities** (natural talents) and **Skills** (learned capabilities). These are expressed as a *percentage value* that is referenced by both the GM and players during Action Resolution.Each turn a player will describe the specific Action that they want their PC to attempt; the GM will then resolve the outcome (i.e., success or failure, and any resulting events or effects).

One of the best things about a humorous setting is that both the Gamemaster (GM) and players can take liberties with the level of 'realism' in the game. On Murphy's World, numbers are not as important as the *outcome* of an Action; GMs are encouraged to allow the PCs great latitude in the type of Actions they can attempt and the amount of harm they can sustain before passing into unconsciousness or dying.

Where Character **death** is concerned, we suggest that the GM permit a PC to die only when their Actions, or the plot, *really* justifies it — as in the best novels and movies. Once a player realizes that their PC can survive extraordinary wounds or embarrassments, and that they're much tougher to kill than the typical Gamemaster Character (GMC), they'll take increasingly greater risks — acting in a more heroic manner. This, in turn, will provide the GM with fodder for new adventurous and humorous situations.

What matters most is that the story gradually being created by the incidents of the game is entertaining and satisfying for everyone.

Rules Option One: Fly, Be Free!

In keeping with the spirit of a fast-paced, light-hearted setting, we invite GMs to *discard most of the rules* that burden many RPGs and wing-it! It requires that the players *trust* that their GM remains *objective*, is not out to *kill* or *manipulate* their Characters, and that they concern themself entirely with attaining the most enjoyable roleplay experience possible for everyone. It's not that difficult, and the simpler the rule mechanics, the greater the opportunity for social interaction between the players a shift in the focus of the game from *roll*playing to *role*playing.

System 1: Diceless Action Resolution (including Combat)

Diceless Action Resolution is ideal when the players desire fast, smooth-flowing gameplay and trust that their PC's desired Actions will be met with reasonable and consistient responses. All gameplay is resolved through *verbal interaction*. Players describe their Actions: the GM describes the outcome, along with any applicable sensory details and complications. In most circumstances just *let things happen as you deem reasonable and appropriate.* If a random element is desired play **'pick a number'**: the GM imagines one or more numbers from 1 to 10 and has the player pick (the more numbers imagined, the greater their chance of success). A final override for any conflicting situation might be a majority rules **'thumbs up/thumbs down' vote by all players and the GM**.

System 2: Die-Rolled 'Statless' Action Resolution

If you want gameplay to include dice for objective randomness but still offer quick resolutions, without referencing Attribute, Ability, or Skill values use the method below (it's ideal for tournament play).

Have the Active player roll **1d10:** the ***lower*** the result (**5 or below**), the ***better*** the success — the ***higher*** the result (**6 or above**), the ***worse*** the failure:

1 rolled	**=**	**Exceptional success***
2 – 5 rolled	**=**	**Success**
6 – 9 rolled	**=**	**Failure**
10 rolled	**=**	**Disastrous failure***

* When these results are rolled, make something *special* happen to the Character.

Rules Option Two: Use Your Favorite RPG System

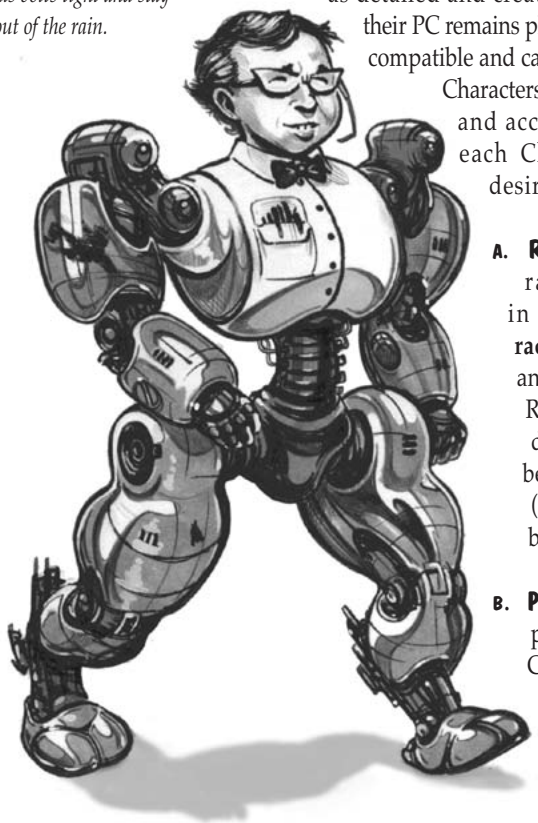
If you or a player prefers to use a PC or Action Resolution rules from another RPG, as long as you can deal with it, don't worry; like everyone else, their Actions will either succeed or fail. For non-human races, find one in your RPG which most closely matches the race on Murphy's World. When two or more Characters attempt Opposed Actions (e.g., combat), resolve the Action in the way most comfortable for you; however, we hope you'll find the rules provided in this book easy to learn, simple to use, and more than adequate for most RPG situations.

Murphy's World Dice Notes

Term	Dice Type
1d6	One 6 sided die
2d6	Two* 6 sided dice
3d6	Three* 6 sided dice
1d10	One 10 sided die
2d10	Two* 10 sided dice
3d10	Three* 10 sided dice
*(rolled together; the results are added).	
1d100	Two 10 sided dice
(rolled together: one die represents 'tens', one die represents 'ones').	

ABOVE: To achieve a successful Action (or resist an opponent's Action) on Murphy's World, make an **Action Roll** *(***1d100***) with a result* ***equal to or less than*** *the established* **Action Value** *(a number from 1 to 100). The* ***lower*** *the result under their Action Value, the better the success (likewise, the higher above, the worse the failure).*

BELOW: Mike Megawatt enjoys the Technocrat life. Dissatisfied with his wimpy natural body, he built himself a new one out of reclaimed parts from abandoned technology. Now all he has to do is keep his bolts tight and stay out of the rain.



Rules Option Three: A d10 Based Rules System For Murphy's World

Here is a system for character creation and fast-playing rules you can employ for roleplaying on Murphy's World (feel free to expand or alter them as you wish).

Player Character Creation

There are worse places to be born than Murphy's World. Characters can be created by a) importing them from other RPGs (modifying as desired), b) using one of the **Average Stat Templates** (located throughout this book; to make unique, alter Stat values by 1 to 2 points, keeping the same overall total), c) rolling randomly (see **Instant Gamemaster Character Creation** page **66**), or d) generating from scratch using the rules that follow.

Four types of characteristics define a **Player Character (PC)**. **Personal Characteristics** define descriptive qualities not defined by numerical values: *Race, Physical Characteristics, Traits, Personal Histories, Goals, and Possessions.* **Attributes** (also called **Stats**) define, via a numeric value purchased with **Character Points (CP)**, the basic mental and physical aspects of a PC. Other numerically defined characteristics include: **Known Skills** (based on acquired knowedge and experience), and occasionally special **Abilities** (possessed due to race, or unusual circumstances).

1. Personal Characteristics (Player Choice)

A player can make up anything they want. They can be as detailed and creative as desired, as long as their PC remains playable, logical, consistent, compatible and capable with respect to other Characters and the adventure setting, and acceptable to the GM. Give each Character a **name** and if desired, a **nickname**.

A. **Race (Species):** Based on the race descriptions found in this book, designate the **race (species) type**, **abilities** and/or **qualities** as desired. Races and Species not detailed in this book, may be used with GM approval. (For any player reading this: be nice to your GM….)

B. **Physical Characteristics:** Each player must choose their Character's **age, height, weight, hair colour, eye colour, skin tone,** etc. Anything reasonable is acceptable.

C. **Traits:** Invite each player to embellish their Character with up to **10** (**positive + negative**) Traits. These may include **physical and mental qualities, special powers and Abilities, personality quirks, attitudes, opinions,** and **outlooks** (see **Character Attributes**, below). Traits will help a player to create and roleplay an interesting Character. Each specific Trait chosen doesn't matter as much as what the player does with it when portraying their PC. Encourage players to make Trait suggestions for each other. Make them up, or use the **Character Traits Table** (page **65**).

D. **Personal History: Background, relationships, friends, lovers, tutors, mentors, enemies,** etc. The more details invented the better for roleplaying.

E. **Personal Goal/Ambition:** Establish a specific **short-term goal** and a **long-term ambition** or **desire** for the Character. Examples may range from get-rich-quick schemes to global conquest. The may be deadly serious (e.g., revenge for the death of a friend) or rediculously silly (to acquire the largest turnip ever grown). Characters who've found themselves refugees Murphy's World and natives longing for broader horizons may seek a way to leave the planet.

F. **Possessions: Items** and **cash** on their person and/or immediately available. Don't worry about what each player initially asks for. If a PC's wealth seems to unbalance the adventure party, one simple mishap can correct it: objects break… thieves are everywhere… magic fails… pockets have holes….

2. Character Attributes (or Stats)

To generate a new Player Character, **roll 1d10** for each of the eight Primary Attributes: **Intelligence (INT), Willpower (WIL), Charisma (CHA), Mystic (MYS), Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Fitness (FIT),** and **Appearance (APP).** (To compare these terms to those of other RPG systems consult the glossary of **Some Roleplay Game Terms**, page VI, for comparable terms.)

Subtract the *total amount rolled* for *all* Attributes from '130' Character Points (CP) for heroic Human PCs (use **100 CP** for *average* Human Characters).

Trait acquisition affects the number of Character Points available to define a PC's Attributes. Each Trait, when proposed by the player, should be judged by, a) its ***Significance*** relative to the other PCs and the setting (choose as desired or roll **1d10**: 1–2 = **Little**: **1**; 3–4 = **Minor**: **2**; 5–6 = **Serious**: **3**; 7–8 = **Major**: **4**; 9–10 = **Extreme**: **5**, and b) whether it has a ***positive*** or ***negative*** impact on the PC. Positive Traits impose a CP ***reduction***; negative Traits grant a CP ***increase***: equal to the **Trait Significance number (+/–)**. Apply to the CP subtotal any CP increase or decrease resulting from the designation of Traits.



Finally, **divide all remaining CP as you like between the eight Attributes**. When the allocation process is complete, each Attribute will have a value from '**1**' to the maximum value allowed by the GM. **Human** Characters typically have Attribute Values ranging from **1 to 20**. Other races have different ranges, but usually *less than* **40** in any category. However, it is possible to have super-beings with Attribute Values up to **100** or more! (GM discretion.) The values listed in the **Average Stat Templates** found throughtout Chapter 2, will offer an idea of what is reasonable for a Character of a specific Race, Species, or type.

Ability: *any* ***special power*** or ***supernatural talent*** *that is not a Skill (i.e., it typically can't be improved upon). It functions as per its description; often not requiring an Action Roll to use.*

Character Traits Table (Player Option: Choose as Desired or Roll 1d100; Use for PCs & GMCs)

No. Rolled	Character Trait
1	The eternal optimist; believes that all will work out favorably in the end.
2	Gullible: believes just about anything told until proven untrue.
3	Abhorrence for dirt, uncleanliness.
4	Deep desire to befriend everyone met.
5	Deep desire to become artist or poet (not necessarily talented).
6	Accident prone around person(s) attracted to.
7	Will do just about anything (if asked) for an attractive person with whom Character desires a romantic encounter.
8	Indecisive in a crisis.
9	Unable to estimate value of everyday items.
10	Tends to misplace significant objects or forget important things.
11	Bad direction sense; tends to become lost when not following someone else.
12	Deep desire to 'do good' (but may not know what the good thing to do is).
13	Very superstitious; believes every old-wives tale.
14	Will choose death before dishonor.
15	Indiscreet; unable to keep a secret.
16	Always willing to trust people.
17	Highly suspicious of others.
18	Courageous; always willing to take action — even when others would rather not.
19	Insatiably curious; even when the Character knows that trouble lurks ahead.
20	Always sympathetic to other people's troubles.
21	Always fidgeting & getting fingers stuck in things.
22	Desires to touch, pick things up & 'check them out'.
23	Always putting objects in mouth, tasting; often without conscious thought.
24	Low drug tolerance; easily affected by drugs.
25	Low alcohol tolerance; get drunk with ≥ 5 oz [148 ml] alcohol consumed.
26	Color-blind; sees all as black, white & grey.
27	Tone-deaf; no musical sense/talent.
28	Twitches; frequent when under stress.
29	Low pain threshold; always 'spills the beans' when pain is threatened.
30	Sensitive skin; prone to sunburn.
31	Chronic dandruff.
32	Stutters; frequent when under stress; none when singing.
33	Bushy eyebrows that meet in the center.
34	Large protruding ears.
35	Large hawk nose.
36	Large, round, bulbous nose.
37	Extremely hairy body, hands and feet; fast growing.
38	Fat, stubby fingers.
39	Lisps; pronunciation problem ('S' as 'TH', or 'R' as 'W', or 'R' as 'L', or 'L' as 'W', etc.).
40	High nasal voice.
41	Underweight, twig-thin, and very self conscious (–2d10 x 2 lbs [.9 kg]).
42	Vertigo; afraid of heights.
43	Aquaphobic; afraid of large bodies of water.
44	Claustrophobic; detests being in cramped spaces.
45	Paranoid; constantly afraid bad events will occur.
46	Fear of dark places.
47	Fear of snakes and serpents.
48	Fear of birds.
49	Uneasy in presence of authority: officials, police.
50	Fear of assassination.

No Rolled	Character Trait
51	Fear of accidental death.
52	Fear of being alone.
53	Fear of fish.
54	Fear of losing their mind.
55	Suspicion of cats and felines.
56	Abhorrence of spiders.
57	Afraid of sex and erotic activities; and how it might cause them to act.
58	Afraid of being in an embarrassing situation; embarrassment is the worst thing in the world.
59	Fear of the supernatural.
60	Fear of losing weight.
61	Fear of being poisoned.
62	Fear of decision making; afraid that they'll make a bad or wrong decision.
63	Pyromania; likes starting and enjoy watching fires.
64	Desires to test limits of physical endurance.
65	Cleaning compulsion; washing, dusting, etc.
66	Tidying up after others.
67	Desire to engage in debates.
68	Can't help insulting others.
69	Desires to see others ridiculed/embarrassed.
70	Compulsive gambler; can't resist a wager or dare.
71	Loves to take risks when there is glory to be gained.
72	Compulsion to rob, pick-pocket & steal.
73	Lusts for respect and acclaim; takes offense easily.
74	Lusts for power; though not quite sure what to do with it.
75	Always aggressive, quarrelsome.
76	Proselytism, always promoting a cause of one kind or another — usually stupid ones.
77	Fear of mice, rats & other rodents.
78	Martyr complex; wants everyone else to feel they 'owe' them.
79	Chronic practical joker; making the joke is more important than common sense.
80	Gives a strong static shock to anyone they touch for the first time.
81	Clothes tends to attract fluff.
82	Clothes tend to always get dirty.
83	Tend to always end up filthy.
84	Clothes never seems to get dirty.
85	Character never seems to get dirty.
86	Longevity; 1d6 times normal lifespan.
87	Immune to all natural sickness and disease.
88	Always sick; catches colds easily; but never gets *really* bad diseases.
89	Impotent/frigid; desperately seeks a cure.
90	Grows younger instead of older.
91	Character never casts a shadow.
92	Grows 1" [2.5 cm] shorter for 2d10 days, then 1" taller for 2d10 days.
93	Character's singing makes plants/seeds grow quickly and healthily.
94	Immune to the effects of alcohol.
95	Always speaks in rhyme.
96	Sleepwalker (acts opposite to daily behavior).
97	Sleeptalker (gives away secrets while sleeping).
98	Always seems to get things poured on to or dropped on his/her head.
99	Never gets hit by a random or unaimed missile.
100	At each meal, always spills some amount of food or drink on his or herself.

The more *incompetent* an individual, the more they'll attempt to take on as many *important* tasks as possible

Attribute/BAV Table

Attribute (Stat) Value	Base Action Value (BAV)
1	5 %
2	10 %
3	15 %
4	18 %
5	20 %
6	22 %
7	24 %
8	26 %
9	28 %
10	30 %
11	32 %
12	34 %
13	36 %
14	38 %
15	40 %
16	42 %
17	44 %
18	46 %
19	48 %
20	50 %
21 – 22	52 %
23 – 24	54 %
25 – 26	56 %
27 – 28	58 %
29 – 30	60 %
31 – 32	62 %
33 – 34	64 %
35 – 36	66 %
37 – 38	68 %
39 – 40	70 %
41 – 42	72 %
43 – 44	74 %
45 – 46	76 %
47 – 48	78 %
49 – 50	80 %
51 – 54	82 %
55 – 59	84 %
60 – 64	86 %
65 – 69	88 %
70 – 74	90 %
75 – 79	92 %
80 – 84	94 %
85 – 89	96 %
90 – 94	98 %
≥ 95	100 %

BELOW: Use the **Instant Gamemaster Character Creation Table,** to randomly generate any GMC humanoid, creature, or monster.

3. Health Points (HP)

Health Points, a Secondary Attribute, determine the amount of physical or mental punishment a Character can take before passing into unconsciousness or dying. Calculate a Character's initial number of Health Points (HP) as follows:

HP = Fitness Value (FIT) + Willpower Value (WIL) + 1d10 + Weight Modifier (WM) + Age Modifier (AM)

HP Weight Modifier: If the PC is: **≤120 lbs**, apply **–1 HP per every ≤20 lbs** *lower;* if 121 to 199 lbs, no HP modifier; if **≥ 200 lbs +1 HP per every** *additional* **≤200 lbs** (this assumes the extra mass is *muscle,* not fat).

HP Age Modifier: –1 per ≤20 years of age (maximum **–10**).

- ☞ Every conscious Character or Creature must have a minumum of *at least* **1** Health Point.
- ☞ A Character falls ***unconscious*** when their HP total is reduced to **zero (0)**.
- ☞ Temporarily lost HP are regained when the PC 'rests' (i.e., non-Action or sleep) at a rate of **1 HP per hour** of gametime. HP acquired through rest may only *replenish* those lost and may not exceed the original HP total from which the points were initially reduced.
- ☞ A Character ***dies*** when their HP value is reduced to a ***negative number equal to their normal positive HP total.*** (e.g., Roy the Ruthless, with 12 HPs, becomes unconscious when they are reduced to 0, and dies when they reach –12).

4. Skills

A Character begins with a minimum of **10 Known Skills** plus **1** ***additional*** Skill for every **5 years** of Character age (maximum total starting Skills: **30**; designate PC's age prior to starting gameplay). Skill titles and functions may be suggested by the player, but should reflect the background and experience of the PC. Each **unarmed combat** style or **weapon** type is considered a distinct Skill.

Determining BAV for Initial Known Skills

Each Known Skill possessed by a Character must have a numeric **Base Action Value (BAV)** — a percentage value (**1 to 100%**) that is derived by assigning one of the Character's eight Primary Attributes to each Known Skill (e.g., Persuasion = Chrisma). Choose the Attribute that *you* think best reflects the *physical or mental process* your Character must employ to attempt the Skill (it's ok if some players choose a different Attribute for a specific Skill, as long as the choice is reasonable; GM discretion). Most hand-held mobile weapons (e.g., Rapier, Pistol) will use **Dexterity** for their BAV, however, some crushing and cleaving weapons (e.g., 2-Hand Axe) may use **Strength.** Ultimately it's the player's choice, but once made, it can't be changed. Record the chosen **Attribute** on your Character Sheet adjacent to the Known Skill.

Known Skill BAV: To determine each Known Skill's BAV, locate the numeric value for the assigned Attribute in the left column of the **Attribute/BAV Table**, page **66**; the percentage number in the right colum is the initial Base Action Value (1 to 100%) for the new Known Skill (e.g., Skill: Longsword: Dex 16 = 42% BAV).

Known Skill Age Bonus: for each **one (1) year** of your Character's age when created, apply a **+1% bonus** (maximum **50%**) to the BAV of initial Known Skills (e.g., 24 years = 24% bonus). Record the final **BAV** for each of your Character's Known Skills on the PC's Character Sheet.

Acquiring New Known Skills

A PC can acquire a new Skill if they a) ***see it in use by someone else,*** b) ***have a creative inspiration*** (**INT Roll** required), or c) ***experience a desperate circumstance*** where the Skill would be a ***survival necessity*** (GM discretion). The player then a) gives the Skill a descriptive **name**, b) defines its **function** and **limits** (GM discretion), c) records an **initial BAV** based on the appropriate choice of an Attribute upon which to base the Skill (see above; no Skill Age Bonus is applied to acquired Skills).

The accomplishment of any Action or task (e.g., Tracking) not specifically covered by a currently Known Skill is resolved via an Action Roll based on a (GM approved) assigned **Attribute Value** (e.g., Intelligence).

Instant Gamemaster Character (GMC) Creation Table (GM Option; Roll as Indicated*)

Attribute		Typical GMC	Formidable GMC	Creature (Natural)	Monster (Supernatural)
Intelligence	(INT)	3d6	3d6+2	1d6	2d6
Willpower	(WIL)	3d6	3d6+2	2d6	3d6
Charisma	(CHA)	3d6	3d6+2	1d6	3d6
Mystic	(MYS)	3d6	3d6+2	2d6	4d6
Strength	(STR)	3d6	3d6+2	4d6	4d6
Dexterity	(DEX)	3d6	3d6+2	4d6	2d6
Fitness	(FIT)	3d6	3d6+2	4d6	4d6
Appearance	(APP)	3d6	3d6+2	3d6	1d6
Health Points**	(HP)	FIT + WIL +1d10	FIT + WIL +1d10	FIT + WIL + 2d10	FIT + WIL + 3d10
Action Initiative	(AI)	WIL + DEX	WIL + DEX	WIL + DEX	WIL + DEX

*If you desire a GMC that is especially large, or superior in a specific Attribute, add an extra 1d6 or more to your roll.
**Health Point Modifiers: WEIGHT: If the GMC is >200 lbs, apply a +1 HP per every additional 200 lbs; AGE: –1 HP per ≤20 years of age.



Murphy's World Action Resolution

Characters exist in the game through their Actions. Provided below is a more rules-based and 'realistic' form of Action Resolution that takes into account the Character's Attribute, Skill, and Ability Values. There are two types of Action that a Character can attempt:

1. Routine (Automatic) Actions

In circumstances deemed 'routine usage' the GM may rule that the successful accomplishment of the desired task is ***automatic*** (i.e., no Action Roll is required).

2. Uncertain (Action Roll) Actions

Under conditions of *stress*, or if *inexperienced* in the attempted task — where the result of the Action attempt is uncertain, an **Action Roll** (**1d100**) is required. Action Rolls apply to the attempted *use of* and *resistance to Attributes, Skills (including Skill vs Skill Actions), and Abilities (depending upon the function of the* ***special power*** or ***supernatural talent,*** GM discretion), *to accomplish tasks.*

There are two types of Uncertain Actions that a Character can attempt:

A. Attribute (Non-Skill/Ability) Actions

When a Character desires to attempt an Action that requires a Known Skill or Ability that they do not currently possess, the player may choose an **Attribute that reasonably reflects the type of Action** they desire to attempt (GM discretion; e.g., catching: if no Known Skill, default to Dexterity Attribute).

Use the **Attribute/BAV Table** to determine the Attribute Value expressed as a *percentage* (from 1 to 100; e.g., Charisma Value 14 = 38%).

Die rolls made using Attributes are collectively called **Stat Rolls** and individually referred to by their Attribute name (e.g., Strength Roll, Intelligence Roll, etc.); they're all still just **Action Rolls** (Action Modifiers may be applied before the die roll is made, see page **68**).

B. Known Skill or Ability Use Actions

If a Character has a Known Skill or Ability that they want to use to attempt an Action (including Combat), there are two types for consideration:

Unopposed Actions: describe situations where a Character attempts an Uncertain Action that affects their *environment* or when *another Character or Creature welcomes* the PC's effort to assist or influence them.

Opposed Actions: describe situations where a Character attempts to use their Skill, Ability, or Attribute as an *offensive* or *unwanted* Uncertain Action against another Character or Creature (e.g., **combat, physical challenges** or **mental influence** — any Action taken against the desires of another individual).

The following steps are followed for all Uncertain (Unopposed or Opposed) Action attempts:

1. **Determine Initiative Order**
2. **Describe the Action & Means of Attempting It**
3. **Apply Applicable Action Modifiers (Optional)**
4. **Make an (Opposed or Unopposed) Action (Attack) Roll**
5. **Defender Makes Opposed Action Resistance Roll**
6. **Critical Results (Optional)**

Opposed Action: Skill vs Skill (Non-Combat)

Should two or more PCs wish to compete head-to-head with the same Skill, Attribute, or Ability (e.g., mind control, beer chugging…), both must make a simultaneous **Action Roll** (after factoring in any applicable Modifiers). A failed roll indicates an unsuccessful use of the Skill, Attribute, or Ability; if more than one succeeds, the ***lower number*** rolled indicates the ***superior*** performance.

Opposed Action: Heroic Combat

Combat on Murphy's World should be thrilling, but not necessarily 'real'; add a touch of melodrama and slapstick. It is the 'heroic tradition' to suffer great wounds (or embarrassments) and still be able to act.

Regardless of how a PC wishes to attack, before engaging in combat, the player must record a separate **Skill BAV** for *each* **Weapon Skill** (e.g., dagger) or **Unarmed Combat Skill** (e.g., Karate) possessed by their PC, for easy reference.

Random Probability Table (GM Option)
(Choose or Roll 2d10)

Number Rolled (2d10)	Likelihood of an Event Occurring (of Whatever Nature)	Percentage Chance of Event Occurring
2	Probable	90%
3 – 4	Very Likely	80%
5 – 6	Likely	70%
7 – 9	Fair Chance	60%
10 – 13	**Average Chance**	**50%**
14 – 16	Poor Chance	40%
17 – 18	Unlikely	30%
19	Very Unlikely	20%
20	Improbable	10%

ABOVE: Use the **Random Probability Table,** as a reference tool or to randomly determine the Liklihood and/or Percentage Chance of an Event of any sort occurring. This is especially useful when you want to quickly establish the chance of either some unplanned Event or a GMC knowing some specific item of information during an ongoing adventure.

BELOW: Use the **Universal Modifier Table,** to randomly determine any ***Action Modifier.*** First, decide the Significance of the Modifier affecting the PC: Little, Minor, Serious, Major, Extreme. Then, roll on the appropriate column for the modifier effect: Positive, Negative, or if you haven't decided, Uncertain. Cross-reference to the Significance column selected and the percentage value shown is the Action Modifier.

Universal Action Value Modifier Determination Table (GM Option)
(Decide AADR: Choose or Roll: Positive, Negative, or Random; Decide AV Modifier Significance; Use Matrix to Get +/–AV% Modifier)

Action Attempt Difficulty Rating (AADR) (Skill [Attack, Spellcast] Ability, or Attribute Use)	Choose or Roll for AADR Type			AV Modifier based on Modifier Significance (Choose or Roll 1d10)				
	Positive (1d10)	Negative (1d10)	Random (2d10)	Little 1 – 2	Minor 3 – 4	Serious 5 – 6	Major 7 – 8	Extreme 9 – 10
Effortless: You could do it sleeping.	1	—	2	+ 5 %	+ 10 %	+ 15 %	+ 25 %	+ 50 %
Simple: No problem.	2 – 3	—	3 – 4	+ 4 %	+ 8 %	+ 12 %	+ 20 %	+ 40 %
Easy: A walk in the park.	4 – 6	—	5 – 7	+ 3 %	+ 6 %	+ 9 %	+ 15 %	+ 30 %
Routine: Not a big deal.	7 – 10	—	8 – 10	+ 2 %	+ 4 %	+ 6 %	+ 10 %	+ 20 %
Challenging: It's worth a shot.	—	1 – 2	**11 – 13**	– 1 %	– 2 %	– 3 %	– 5 %	– 10 %
Difficult: But not unsurmountable.	—	3 – 4	14 – 15	– 2 %	– 4 %	– 6 %	– 10 %	– 20 %
Hard: It'll take a bit of concentration.	—	5 – 7	16 – 17	– 3 %	– 6 %	– 9 %	– 15 %	– 30 %
Formidable: You've tackled worse.	—	8 – 9	18 – 19	– 4 %	– 8 %	– 12 %	– 20 %	– 40 %
Impossible: Almost certain to fail.	—	10	20	– 5 %	– 10 %	– 15 %	– 25 %	– 50 %

The opportunities with the greatest chance of profit for the least amount of risk are most likely to be encountered when you are broke, or unable to act upon them.

Random Mishap Table (Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Mishap*
1 – 5	Dust in eye
6 – 10	Stub toe
11 – 15	Step in puddle of mud/dung/ water, etc.
16 – 20	Sudden panic, WIL Roll or flee.
21 – 25	Tool or device being used breaks.
26 – 30	Suddenly unable to think straight.
31 – 35	Object held slips from hand and rolls/slides to least convenient place.
36 – 40	Trip forward.
41 – 45	Slip backward.
46 – 50	Bite tongue.
51 – 55	Bite lip.
56 – 60	Bite inside cheek.
61 – 65	Catch item of clothing on twig & rip it off.
66 – 70	Split seat of pants.
71 – 75	Lace or button fastening important item or clothing breaks.
76 – 80	Swallow a bug.
81 – 85	Sneeze.
86 – 90	Get a stone or sand in footwear.
91 – 95	Bombarded by bird crap.
96 – 97	Small furry animals are suddenly drawn to Character.
98 – 99	Predatory animals are suddenly drawn to Character.
100	Acquire a Murphy's Law temporary personal 'curse' (see page 76).

* All **mishaps** result in a temporary **1d6 second hesitation** or interruption (incapacitation if deemed appropriate) of the affected Character's normal actions. Painful mishaps inflict **1 HP** or more Damage (GM discretion).

Gametime: Rounds & Turns

Gametime allows the GM to expand and contract time for the purpose of gameplay so that events can be *sped up*, *omitted* (e.g., using the toilet), or *slowed down* (e.g., like slow-motion action in a movie). Only concern yourself with the precise measurement of time during periods of *intense* action—such as combat, when each instant counts. This produces a cinematic, free-flowing style of action and keeps things moving.

Gametime is divided into '**rounds**'(called 'combat rounds' during combat). During a round each player will take at least one **'turn'** during which the GM is focuses his or her attention on them; their PC is deemed 'Active' and can attempt to initiate or continue with **one Action**.

A round begins with the Character possessing the highest Action Initiative (see below) and concludes when the last Character has completed their last turn for that round.

For most Actions consider a round to represent **1– 3 seconds** of time; the more critical the events occurring, the shorter the round recommended. Some Actions may take many seconds (i.e., rounds) or longer to accomplish.

1. Determine Action Initiative Order

Whenever the order in which one Character acts might affect the Actions of another, each Character's **Action Initiative (AI),** a Secondary Attribute, must be determined. An AI number is established for each Character by *adding* their **Willpower** + **Dexterity** values. This need only be done *once* for any Character unless their Willpower or Dexterity Attributes are somehow altered during the course of gameplay, in which case a new calculation is required to reflect the change.

During gameplay the AI values of all Characters are compared; each round the Characters take their turn in order from the ***largest* AI number to the *smallest*.**

When a Character's AI number comes up in the turn order the player can choose to **take their turn or pass** to the *next lower number;* they may jump in after any Character with a lower AI has finished their turn. A PC with a higher AI number always has the option of going first.

The Character taking a turn is called an '**Active Character**'; During their turn they may attempt **one (1) Action** (which may include continuing with their current Action), or do **nothing** (i.e., be still and 'rest').

2. Describe the Action & Means

When an Active PC wants to attempt an Action, the player must describe it to the GM (and any players whose PCs can reasonably detect them): *what they're attempting to accomplish*, *how they intend to do it* (what **Known Skill, Ability,** or **Attribute** they intend to use and how) and *how long they intend to continue it* (if applicable). Descriptions should be brief, and compliment the PC's current Attack Mode (see page **69**), behaviour and circumstances. If applicable they can also include what they *intend to do next* if their Action is successful, or not.

3. Apply Action Modifiers (Optional)

Action Modifiers can be used to increase the sense of realism by introducing the effect of environmental and situational influences on a Character's Action attempt (during combat Action Modifiers are called **Attack Modifiers**; they're essentially the *same* thing).

The players should agree whether to use Action Modifiers prior to the start of gameplay.

If Action Modifiers are agreed to be used, before an Action Roll is made, both ***positive*** (adding 1% or more to the BAV *favorable* situations, e.g., attacking from behind) and ***negative*** (decreasing the BAV by 1% or more for *unfavorable* conditions, e.g., uneven ground) modifiers are now considered. Their impact determines the final **Action Value (AV)**. (Once all Action Modifiers are applied to a BAV it is then called the Action Value for that specific Action attempt.) How many positive or negative modifiers are used is at the discretion of the GM.

GM Designated Action (or Attack) Modifiers

To apply Action Modifiers to a Character's intended Action a GM will:

1. **Consider the circumstances** of the current game situation and describe any significant details that might result in the appliation of a *positive* or *negative* Action Modifier. Occasionally a **Stat Roll** might be required by a PC to determine whether a Modifer is assessed (e.g., a **Morale Check** is made with a **WIL Roll**: success results in no effect; failure results in a –10% AV penalty and/or the desire to flee).
2. **Consider the Action** as described by the Active player and its *relative degree of* ***Difficulty*** *or* ***Significance*** relative to the current game circumstances.
3. **Choose a positive or negative number for each applicable Action Modifier** after considering the circumstances of the situation and the intended Action (choose as large or small a number as desired or consult the **Universal Modifier Table**).
4. **Apply any *positive* and *negative* Action Modifiers** toward the BAV for the Skill, Ability, or Attribute being used by the Active PC as applicable to the situation and the resolved difficulty of the Action.

Other Action/Attack Modifier considerations:

- ☞ Reward detailed, entertaining, and even outrageous descriptions of Action attempts or Attack maneuvers and creative strategies. Description should suit the PC's personality, current Action (Attack) Mode, and circumstances.
- ☞ Skill use requires *knowledge* and often a *tool* or *item*. Even if an device intended to be used is *similar* to one the PC is familiar with, if it's of an unfamiliar design or construction (e.g., from a foreign culture or technology level), apply a ***negative*** Action Modifier.



Option: Player Designated Action Modifiers

The GM may permit the player with an **Active PC** to suggest ***positive*** Action (or Attack) Modifiers based on any immediate circumstance that they think provides an *advantage* for *their* Character. However, the **other players** may then offer suggestions for ***negative*** Action (or Attack) Modifiers to be imposed upon the Active PC. To be valid, a Modifier must be applicable to the current situation faced by the PC (e.g., it's raining, so the ground is *slippery*). Only the GM may designate the positive or negative numeric percentage value of an Action Modifier.

Option: Action (Attack) Modes: Action Modifiers

Action Modes are a simplified way of describing how boldly or cautiously a Character will attempt any **Opposed Action (Attack)**. At the start of a new round, in the established Initiative Order, each participant declares their PC's Action (Attack) Mode for their intended Action: **Heroic, Cautious,** or **Fearful** and applies the applicable Action Modifiers (see below). If a player doesn't select an Action Mode, no Action Mode Modifiers apply to them or their opponents this round.

- **Heroic:** the Active Character, not concerned about their safety (or defense), applies **+20% BAV Modifier** to any Opposed Action (Attack), and a **+10 Damage** bonus, but may make ***no*** **Resistance Roll**. Opposing Characters gain a **+10% BAV Modifier** to any Opposed Action directed against the Heroic Character; they receive no Damage bonus.
- **Cautious:** the Active Character, receives ***no*** Action (Attack) Modifier (however, a Modifier may still be applied due to an *opponent's* Action Mode). Opposing Characters apply a **–10% BAV Modifier** to any Opposed Action directed against the Cautious Character, but they receive a **+1d10 Damage** bonus if they hit.
- **Fearful:** the Active Character, doing everything they can to protect themselves, applies **–10% BAV Modifier** to any Opposed Action (Attack), but no penalty on Unopposed Actions or Resistance Rolls. Opposing Characters apply a **–20% BAV Modifier** to any Opposed Action directed against the Fearful Character, but they receive a **+1d10 Damage** bonus if they hit.

4. Making the Action (Attack) Roll

This is the most important phase of Action Resolution:

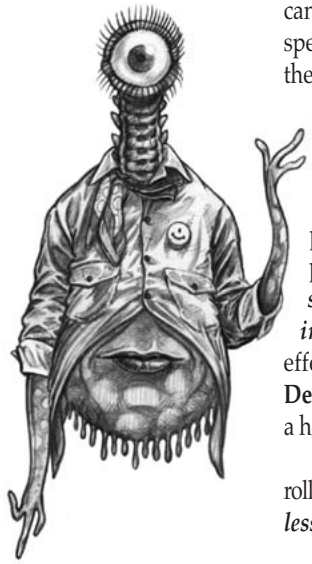
1. **Note the Action Value:** Once all applicable positive and negative Action Modifiers (if any) are applied to the BAV for the Skill, Ability, or Attribute (Stat) being used to attempt the current Action a final '**Action Value**' (or **Attack Value** for combat) is established (a percentage number from 1 to 100).

Combat Critical Failure Table (GM Option; Choose or Roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Critical Failure Effect on Attacking Character (Choose or Roll 1d100; apply any Action Modifiers (AM) to your next Action Roll)
1 – 5	A flock of birds passes overhead. Suddenly you feel the distinct 'plop' of a direct hit on the top of your head. Make a successful WIL Roll or lose concentration and suffer a –1% AM.
6 – 10	Your weapon slips from your hand, tumbles through the air, and lands at your opponent's feet.
11 – 18	Something becomes lodged in your eye. You're incapacitated in excruciating pain for 1d10 rounds while you try to remove it. Make a WIL Roll to resist the pain and continue.
19 – 25	You accidentally hit yourself in the foot. Apply the appropriate Damage to yourself.
26 – 30	Some liquid (mud, rain, blood) splatters your face and obscures your vision for 1d10 rounds. If you continue to act blindly, apply a –20% AM until your clear your vision.
31 – 35	In your enthusiasm you forget to look where you're going: stub your toe for 1 HP Damage. Make a successful DEX Roll or fall on your face; –10% AM next Action.
36 – 40	The belt (or other support) holding up your pants or skirt snaps, your garment plunges around your knees. Movement is cut in half until you pull it up; –10% AM next Action.
41 – 45	Somehow you receive a sharp blow to the head. Suddenly, your personality has altered: you are now the greatest martial artist that ever lived! You've been toying with your opponent; now you'll draw them in, tricking them into thinking you're vulnerable while you prepare the killing blow… at which point you regain your original personality, and a –10% AM on your next Action.
46 – 50	Suddenly you sneeze uncontrollably all over your opponent. They are *not* pleased. Apply a –5% AM on your next Action.
51 – 53	You catch your pants (or skirt) on a sharp object (e.g., twig, sword, etc.) and rip them off.
54 – 56	As you attempt a sarcastic repartee with your foe, a large bug flies into your mouth. Spend 1d10 rounds in embarrassing discomfort while you try to cough up your spleen. Make a WIL Roll to swallow and carry on as normal; –10% AM on your next Action.
57 – 59	You are suddenly overcome with a great sense of compassion for your opponent — you forget your differences and wonder why you can't be friends. Make a WIL Roll to come back to your senses and continue the assault; otherwise select Attack Mode Fearful each combat round until you succeed with a WIL Roll; –10% AM on your next Action.
60 – 62	Somehow, in your enthusiasm you've knocked yourself senseless for 1d10 rounds.
63 – 65	You are suddenly overcome with a great sense of foreboding about this melee — will this be your final moment? Make a WIL Roll to shake off your idiotic paranoia and return to your senses; otherwise select Attack Mode Fearful until you succeed.
66 – 68	In all the excitement you hyperventilate and lose your sensibilities. You begin to see visions of armies of gorgeous naked women (or men — after all, it's your vision…) running towards you crying out "Spank me!", "No, spank me!" Truly a serious dilemma worth due consideration. Make a successful WIL Roll or spend 1d10 rounds in la-la-land.
69 – 72	The momentum of your maneuver causes you to lose your balance and fall on your back.
73 – 75	Suddenly, you are looking down on the battle: you're having an out of body experience! What you see troubles you. In a battle-rage fit for the sagas your mindless body has decided to abandon all protective garments and take on all comers in the raw. Try once each round to make a WIL Roll to reclaim your body and save your skin.
76 – 78	You miss your opponent and your wild Attack accidentally strikes your nearest ally. Apply Damage to them as per normal. Also, apply a –5% AM on your next Action.
79 – 81	Oops, butter-fingers. You've just dropped your weapon. Take 1d10 rounds to retrieve it.
82 – 84	You suddenly feel the overwhelming urge to act bravely, and inspire your comrades in arms to win this melee. You hear yourself uttering such suicidal cliché phrases as: "Follow me! We'll show them! Ignore the odds, we've got *goodness* on our side!" Somewhere in the back of your mind a small voice is saying: "WHAT! ARE YOU NUTS?! RUN AWAY!" Make a successful WIL Roll to listen to the voice of reason.
85 – 87	You're hardened battle nerves have just turned to the equivalent of soggy cereal. Perhaps you can *talk* your way out of it… Make a WIL Roll to shake off your fears and return to your senses; otherwise select Attack Mode Fearful and try to talk your opponent out of killing you until you succeed; –10% AM on your next Action.
88 – 90	One moment it's all light and chaos, the next instant it's darkness and calm: your Character has fallen through the floor (e.g., a sinkhole, manhole, or the floor collapses). Once you brush yourself off, it appears that there is another exit. Do you journey into the gloom beyond, or poke your head out above and get back into the fray? It won't take long for your opponent to notice where you've gone; –10% AM on your next Action.
91 – 93	You catch your shirt, pants, or dress on a sharp object (e.g., twig, sword, etc.) and rip it off.
94 – 96	Your attack may have missed your opponent, but has accidentally killed an innocent game animal who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time; –5% AM.
97 – 99	A small child runs forward and flings herself at your leg, clinging on for dear life while screaming "mister, don't kill my daddy" (or "mommy" as applicable). Make a successful WIL Roll to do anything but stop and deal with the troublesome leech –10% AM next Action.
100	It suddenly dawns on you that you've wet your pants. Oh the shame… –5% AM next Action.

Damage Resistance Value (DRV) Table

Armor Type	DRV
Low-Tech Materials	
Street Clothes/ Light Fabric	1
Canvas Cloth/ Heavy Fabric	3
Thin 1/16" Soft (Dressed) Leather	4
Thin 1" Padded (Quilted) Garment	6
Thick 1/8" Soft (Dressed) Leather	8
Woven Cord	10
Thick 2" Padded (Quilted) Garment	12
Heavy 1/4" Layered (Shoe/Belt) Leather	15
Hard 1/4" Wood Scale	20
Bone/Horn 1/16" Scale	25
Hard 3/8" Leather	30
Chainmail	40
Scale 1/32" Mail	45
Banded Chainmail	50
Lamellar (1/32") Metal	55
Laminated 1/32" Plate	60
Double (Bar) Chainmail	65
Med. 1/16" Sheet Plate	75
Thick 1/8" Sheet Plate	100
High-Tech Materials	
Heavy Plastic 1/2"	20
Resistweave Cloth	25
Kevlar Light	50
Kevlar Heavy	70
Lastar (coating; reflects 80% laser *only* damage)	100
Light Composite Armor	200
Med. Composite Armor	500
Heavy Composite Armor	900



ABOVE: You never know who your potential friends might be!

2. **Make an Action (Attack) Roll:** Roll **1d100** (two d10 dice rolled simultaneously — one represents the 'tens' result and the other represents the 'ones'): if the number rolled is ***equal to or less than*** **the Action Value**, the Action attempt is ***successful*** (the defender may now attempt an **Opposed Action Resistance Roll**, see **5.** below); if the number rolled is ***greater than*** **the Action Value**, the Action Attempt is a ***failure***.

☞ **Player Character vs Gamemaster Character:** The player rolls *openly* and announces their roll, while the GM rolls for the GMC *secretly*.

☞ **Player Character vs Player Character:** Both players roll *openly* in the presence of the GM (this includes Combat Attacks).

3. **GM Interpretation:** The GM will interpret the outcome, noting any Critical Successes or Critical Failures (see **6.** below), and describe the resulting impact on the PC, for good or ill. The ***lower*** the number rolled, the more ***successful*** the interpretation of their result should be; the ***higher*** the number rolled above the Action Value, the greater the interpretation of their failure.

☞ **Action (Attack) Failure:** If the (Opposed or Unopposed) Action or Attack was a failure (i.e., a miss) the PC with the next highest Action Initiative may now take their turn.

☞ **Action (Attack) Success:** If the (Opposed or Unopposed) Action or Attack was a success (i.e., a hit), apply the successful result or Damage based on the weapon used (see the **Weapon Damage Table** and the **Wound Effects Table** or use your favorite RPG system).

5. Opposed Action Resistance Roll

Whenever successfully targeted by an Opposed Action or some undesired external influence or assault, the victim can attempt an **Opposed Action Resistance Roll** (i.e., a special Action Roll using one of their Attributes [unless they possess a specific appropriate Known Skill or Ability]), even though it is not their turn and regardless of whether they're resisting an Action inflicted via a Skill (e.g., a combat Attack), an Ability, or an Attribute.

The player selects an **Attribute** deemed most appropriate (GM discretion) for resisting under their present circumstances (e.g., **Willpower** to resist a ***supernatural influence*** such as a spell, a ***mental influence*** such as a persuasive suggestion, and the effects of ***fear, shock,*** or other ***mental abnormality***; **Dexterity** to ***dodge an attack***; **Strength** to ***break free*** of a hold or bindings; **Fitness** to ***resist a disease or poison***.

Then make an **Action Roll**; to succeed the number they roll must be ***equal to or less than*** **their Attribute's BAV** *and* ***less than*** **the Action Roll** ***number rolled by the attacker***.

If the Character ***fails*** their Resistance Roll, the undesired influence or Opposed Action (e.g., combat hit) takes effect.

6. Critical Results (Optional)

Most of the time, the result of an Action Roll will be either a success or failure; the GM will produce an appropriate description of current events to reflect that result. However, the players can agree to use Critical Results, a game option that enhances the results produced by specific Action Rolls (or any d100 roll) as follows:

Critical Success

A. **Successful Die Roll Ends in '0':** Each time a player makes a ***successful*** **Action Roll**, if the number rolled *ends in a* **zero** (**0**), they have rolled a 'Critical Success' and achieve the following effects:

☞ **Double Effect:** ***double*** the normal effect of their efforts including Damage and any physical or mental feats (numerical impact or GM interpretation as applicable).

☞ **DRV Halved:** if the PC's Action was an Attack, the object or armor struck has its **DRV** ***reduced*** by ***half*** its current value (until repaired by an expert as applicable).

☞ **Action Bonus:** the Character receives a **+10% bonus** the next time they attempt the use the same Known Skill, Ability, or Attribute to perform a similar task.

B. **Successful Die Rolls '01':** Each time a player makes a ***successful*** **Action Roll**, should the player roll **one** (i.e., one d10 = '**0**', the other = '**1**'), they are granted a 'Critical Success' with the following effects:

☞ **Triple Effect:** ***triple*** the normal effect of their efforts including Damage and any physical or mental feats (numerical impact or GM interpretation as applicable).

☞ **DRV Reduced to Zero:** if the PC's Action was an Attack, the object or armor struck has its **DRV** ***reduced*** to ***zero*** (repair is impossible).

☞ **Action Bonus:** the Character receives a **+30% bonus** the next time they attempt the use the same Known Skill, Ability, or Attribute to perform a similar task.

Mixed Success

If a player rolls *exactly* their **Action Value** number, while their intended Action is successful, *something should not quite go their way*. The PC should be left in a 'disadvantaged' position or compromised situation. The GM should feel free to have some fun here.

Critical Failure (Blunder)

A. **Failed Die Roll Ends in '0':** Each time a player makes a ***failed*** **Action Roll**, if the number rolled *ends in a* **zero** (**0**), they have rolled a 'Critical Failure' (i.e., bad luck occurs) and *something 'bad' happens* (GM discretion) with the following effects:

☞ **Something Physically or Mentally 'Bad':** this is a great opportunity to interject a humorous calamity or an unlikely circumstance; it may include the Character tripping, slipping, falling, bashing their head on



something, dropping what they're holding, losing their train of thought, stubbing their toe, getting sand in their eye, breaking a weapon, shield, or if fighting bare-handed, a limb, etc. (Consult the **Random Mishap Table**, or if engaged in combat, the **Combat Critical Failure Table** for more examples.)

☞ **Action Penalty:** the Character receives a **–10% penalty** the next time they attempt the use the same Known Skill, Ability, or Attribute to perform a similar task.

B. Failed Die Roll is '100': Each time a player makes a *failed* **Action Roll**, should the result be **one-hundred** (i.e., **00: both d10's = zero**), a 'Critical Failure' occurs with the following effects:

☞ **Something Really 'Bad':** the result should be *especially unfortunate*; anything goes but the death and permanent maiming of the Character (Consult the **Random Mishap Table**, or if engaged in combat, the **Combat Critical Failure Table** for more examples).

☞ **Action Penalty:** the Character receives a **–20% penalty** the next time they attempt the use the same Known Skill, Ability, or Attribute to perform a similar task.

Resolving the Effects of a Successful Attack

1. Attack Damage — Unarmed & Weapons

There are many ways to account for the amount of pain and suffering sustained by the victim of an Attack. The **Attack Damage Table** (page **71**) covers most weapon types and can be extrapolated as necessary. When successfully hit, the amount of HP Damage actually incurred by the flesh of the victim (i.e., not absorbed by Armor or Shields, see **2.** below) determines the seriousness of the blow and any Wound Effects.

2. Damage Resistance (DRV): Armor & Shields

Any material that is worn (Armor) or that comes between the attacking object and the body of the target (Shield, held or self-standing) provides protection in the form of a **Damage Resistance Value (DRV)** which represents the amount of Damage ***absorbed*** (i.e., negated) per body area.

☞ **Bruise Damage:** For every **5 HP** inflicted on any garment protecting a body area, **1 HP** is applied to the PC, passing through the Armor in the form of ***bruise damage*** (*round down*)**.** (Example: a Character is struck on a shoulder covered by a chainmail byrnie [DRV: 40] by a weapon inflicting 17 HP Damage. 3 HP are passed through the garment and on to the PC in the form of bruise Damage; the remaining 14 HP are simply disregarded, having been 'absorbed' by the Armor.

☞ **Minimum Damage:** A *minimum* of **1 HP** Damage is always inflicted upon a Character successfully hit by an opponent, regardless of any Damage Modifiers, Armor, or Shields (it may be considered bruising).

3. Suffering Damage: Wound Effects

Wound Effects describe the effects of a sustained wound including: **Immediate** (e.g., stun, HP loss), **Temporary** (e.g., broken bone), **Ongoing** (e.g., blood loss until treated), or **Permanent** effects (e.g., loss of limb). Wound Effects should be based on the specific details of the Attack and the Damage inflicted; the **Wound Effects Table** provides some examples — elaborate and invent your own. Even though a PC may acquire some very nasty wounds, on Murphy's World, wound effects may not be felt as severely as in a more 'serious' or 'realistic' setting; a PC shouldn't die unless they are no longer of any use at all to the plot (i.e., they really, really deserve it).

Option: Wound Descriptions by the Victim

If your players possess a suitably sick sense of humor, victims can be encouraged to describe their own wounds. As an incentive for victims to play up their wound descriptions (with details sounding much worse than their actual effect on the PC's performance), **reward exceptional melodrama** with an **Action (Attack) bonus** (e.g., 1–10%) toward their next Action (Attack) Roll. Ironically, this descriptive wound option may result in more realistic and complex sounding wounds than could be delivered via more detailed rules.

Tip: GMC Wound Descriptions by the GM

Typically, the GM provides PC and GMC wound descriptions, indicating their significance on further attempted Actions. When PCs are fighting GMC foes, their wounds could be described in one of the following ways:

Attack Damage Table

Weapon Type	Damage
Unarmed Attack	
Punch, Kick, etc.	1d10÷2*
*Round-up Result.	
Hand-Held Weapons	
Small (e.g., Knife ≤11")	1d10
Medium (e.g., Rapier)	1d10+2
Large (e.g., Longsword)	1d10+4
Extra-Large (e.g.,Halberd)	1d10+9
Projectile Weapons	
Small Mass, Low Speed (e.g., Sling Stone)	1d10
Medium Mass, Low Speed (e.g., Arrow)	1d10+2
Small Mass, High Speed (e.g., Handgun)	1d10+3
Medium Mass, High Speed (e.g., Light Machinegun)	2d10
Large Mass, Low Speed (e.g., Ballista/Boulder)	3d10
Large Mass, High Speed (e.g., Light Field Gun)	5d10
Explosives & More	
Grenade/Dynamite (8 oz) (Radius: 20 to 40 ft)	3d10
Blast/Concussion Grenade (Radius: 10 ft)	4d10
Flame-Thrower (Napalm) (Radius: 10 ft)	10d10

Wound Effects Table (GM Option)

Damage Inflicted from One Attack	Seriousness of Wound, Suitable Exclamations & Cumulative Effects (Roll 1d10: 1–9 = apply effect 'A' only; 10 = apply both effects 'A' & 'B')
1 – 2	**Minor:** pain, redness, shallow cut, graze. Suitable Exclamation: **Ow; Oh crap.** A. Make a successful WIL Roll or stunned 1 round. B. Make a successful DEX Roll or drop object(s) held.
3 – 5	**Moderate:** pain, swelling, deep cut, flesh wound. Suitable Exclamation: **Yeow, ooh, aaah; I'm all right, it's just a flesh wound.** A. Make a successful DEX Roll or fall down. B. Lose the use of a wounded limb or a sense (e.g., arm); for 1d10 rounds.
6 – 8	**Acute:** pain, swelling, blood loss, puncture, further activity and movement is painful and impeded by wound. Suitable Exclamation: **Eeeeeehh! Oooooh! Aaaaahh!… *Now* I'm mad!** A. –10% Attack Penalty due to distracting pain of wound; lasts until wound treated. B. Until treated, apply only *half normal* damage when Character successfully hits.
9 – 15	**Serious:** pain, swelling, extensive blood loss, severely reduced use of motor function or a wound suffered to one of the Character's senses. Suitable Exclamation: **Ahhhhhhhhh!… That *hurts!*** A. Lose the use of a wounded limb or a sense (e.g., sight); for 2d10 rounds. B. –1 HP per minute (many rounds) due to blood loss; continues until wound treated.
≥ 16	**Severe:** pain, swelling, extensive blood loss, total loss of motor function or use of a sense (e.g., hearing) depending on the location of the wound. Suitable Exclamation: **Come *back* you coward! I want a rematcawkkk…ugh…!** A. –20% Attack Penalty due to distracting pain of wound; lasts until wound treated. B. –1 HP per second (round) due to blood loss; continues until wound treated.

Using the Universal RPG Attribute Conversion Table

The table below can be used to convert Attributes from most RPGs to that of another or Murphy's World. It can also be used for the conversion of Skill values.

If you elect to use the Murphy's World rules, **Human Attributes** range from **1 to 20** (10 = average)**.** To convert Attribute values from another RPG rules system to the Attributes used by the Murphy's World rules, find the column which most closely matches the *range of numbers* your RPG assigns to Human Attributes. Then, scan down the column and find the value of the Attribute you wish to convert (or range that the Attribute fits into). Finally, read across to the first **MW column** (or whatever column which represents the RPG Attribute range you wish to convert to).

Non-Human Characters may have Attributes **above 20**; only **Deities** may have Attributes **above 100**. Where a range of values is shown, pick the *largest number within that range* as the number to convert to.

- **Example:** let's say that a player has a Character whose Attributes range from 3 to 18. If converted to the Murphy's World system where Human Attributes range from 1 to 20, a Character with a 17 Dexterity will now have an 18 Dexterity.
- Some RPGs have a system of Attribute generation which affords a Human Character a minimum value (usually no lower than 10) and a maximum value (usually no greater than 80). A column is provided to accommodate Characters from such games.
- Any Character which hails from a system where Human Attributes range from 1 to 20 will fit right in on Murphy's World without any conversion required.

RPG Attribute Conversion Table (GM Option)

MW Human	Human Attribute Ranges from Various RPGs					
1 to 20 (points)	1 to 6 (1d6)	2 to 12 (2d6)	3 to 18 (3d6)	1 to 8 (1d8)	10 to 80 (special)	1 to 100 (1d100)
1	1	2	3	1	10 – 13	1 – 5
2	1	3	4	1	14 – 17	6 – 10
3	1	4	5	2	18 – 20	11 – 15
4	2	5	6	2	21 – 24	16 – 20
5	2	5	7	3	25 – 27	21 – 25
6	2	6	8	3	28 – 31	26 – 30
7	3	6	9	3	32 – 34	31 – 35
8	3	6	10	4	35 – 37	36 – 40
9	3	7	10	4	38 – 41	41 – 45
10	**3**	**7**	**11**	**4**	**42 – 44**	**46 – 50**
11	4	7	11	5	45 – 48	51 – 55
12	4	7	12	5	49 – 51	56 – 60
13	4	8	12	5	52 – 55	61 – 65
14	4	8	13	6	56 – 58	66 – 70
15	5	8	14	6	59 – 63	71 – 75
16	5	9	15	6	64 – 66	76 – 80
17	5	9	16	7	67 – 70	81 – 85
18	6	10	17	7	71 – 73	86 – 90
19	6	11	18	8	74 – 76	91 – 95
20	6	12	18+	8	77 – 80	96 – 100
Non-Human	**Non or Super Human Attribute Ranges from Various RPGs**					
21	7	13	19	9	81 – 83	101 – 105
22	7	14	20	10	84 – 86	106 – 110
23	8	15	21	11	87 – 90	111 – 115
24	8	16	22	12	91 – 93	116 – 120
25 – 29	9 – 11	17 – 20	23 – 27	13 – 15	94 – 101	121 – 130
30 – 39	12 – 15	21 – 27	28 – 38	16 – 20	102 – 118	131 – 151
40 – 49	16 – 20	28 – 37	39 – 53	21 – 27	119 – 144	152 – 183
50 – 59	21 – 26	38 – 50	54 – 74	28 – 35	145 – 178	184 – 224
60 – 69	27 – 31	51 – 66	75 – 89	36 – 46	179 – 220	225 – 277
70 – 79	32 – 39	67 – 75	90 – 119	47 – 58	221 – 271	278 – 340
80 – 89	40 – 48	77 – 98	120 – 154	59 – 62	272 – 331	341 – 414
90 – 99	49 – 59	99 – 119	155 – 199	63 – 79	332 – 399	415 – 499
100+	60+	120+	200+	80+	400+	500+

- **Flesh Wounds:** The victim receives terrible wounds, causing blood and gore to spew forth in copious quantities, slickening walls and surfaces, soaking or blinding Characters, and providing a hideous spectacle — yet displays *little if any awareness* of their severity, other than to proclaim their increasing anger to their opponent. Then, after a huge amount of blood loss, and receiving an appropriately nasty final blow, they display a look of bewilderment and say something like "Right, well... I 'spose you've done me," then keel over stone dead.
- **Pain Wounds:** After each wound received, even if it is a minor tap, the victim *screams horribly*, clutches at the assaulted area, and either *staggers* dramatically, *runs about wildly* (**Attack Mode: Fearful**), or *collapses* to the ground and mews like a kitten. Only a fatal wound will shut them up.

Action Points (AP)

As a way to represent and enable Character growth, a player (and thus their PC) should be rewarded by the GM with an **Action Point (AP)** for *exceptional roleplaying*, *consistent characterizations*, *interesting and entertaining Action descriptions*, and whenever a they successfully complete an Action that achieves a *significant* and *positive impact* on the adventure (relative to their goals).

Example Actions include: *heroic deeds*, *creative ideas*, *problem solving* and *inventive undertakings*, *co-operative achievements* and *teamwork*, and the successful and appropriate use of *Known Skills*, *Abilities*, and *Attributes*.

A Character begins with **zero (0) Action Points**. Action Points are usually awarded at the end of a session of gameplay and recorded (banked) by the player on their Character Sheet.

- **Turn Failure into Success:** During gameplay, immediately after making a *failed Action Roll* (or any die roll), a player may spend **1 Action Point** to transform any single failed Action (Attribute, Skill, or Ability use) into an ***instant*** Mixed Success (see page **70,** Critical Results).

  The maximum number of Action Points a Character can spend to avoid failure per 24 hours is ≤ **their Mystic Value** (e.g., MYS 9 = 9 AP maximum expenditure per day).

  Action Points may also be spent to improve a Character's Attributes and Skills (see below).

Character Improvement

If you plan on playing more than one adventure on Murphy's World you may want to develop your PC's Known Skills and Attributes using one of the methods below. Keep track of any changes on the PC's Character Sheet.



A. Let the GM Take Care of It

If the GM takes care of the details of PC development behind the scenes, it removes all bookkeeping complications from the players. Thus, whenever you determine that a PC deserves to achieve a new or enhanced Known Skill or Attribute value, simply inform the player and let them revise the appropriate number(s) on their Character Sheet. This method of course requires a degree of trust between player and GM.

B. Use the Method From Your Favorite RPG

If you brought your PC to Murphy's World from another RPG setting you may employ the system of Character improvement detailed in those rules.

C. Improvement Via Action Points

- **Improving Known Skills:** To improve the **Base Action Value (BAV)** of a specific Known Skill, a player must first **spend a number of Action Points equal to the current BAV** of the Known Skill. Then, the player rolls **1d10** and **adds the result to the current BAV** of the Known Skill in question.

  Example: Larry the Licentious has a Brewing Skill of 40%. He pays 40 AP, then rolls a 5 on a 1d10. His BAV for Brewing is now 45%.

- **Improving Attribute Values:** The current value of an Attribute can be improved (up to a *maximum of* ***double*** *its original value)* by spending Action Points as listed below.

  - **'Physical' Attributes (STR, DEX, FIT)**: spend **50 AP** *per each point increased.*

    Bonus: **+1 HP per +1 FIT** point gained and **+1 APP per +2 FIT** points gained.

  - **'Mental' Attributes (INT, WIL, CHA, MYS)**: spend **100 AP** *per each point increased*.

Option: Descriptive Attributes & Skills

The **Descriptive Attribute Table** and the **Skill Expertise Terms Table** (below), provide *descriptive terms* for the eight Attributes and the degree of mastery of any Known Skill. These terms can be used to compliment or as an alternative to numeric values by players who wish to de-emphasize numbers while promoting the informal feel of diceless, improvisational roleplaying, and to permit Murphy's World to be used with PCs from any RPG.

Converting Numeric to Descriptive Values

1. Descriptive Attributes

To convert a numeric Attribute into a descriptive term, scan down the far-left Attribute Value column on the **Descriptive Attribute Table** (below), to find the number that represents the Attribute Value being converted; then scan across to the column representing the desired Attribute (or the closest to the one your RPG rules uses).

To convert a descriptive Attribute into a numeric value, find the descriptive term in the applicable Attribute column (e.g., Charisma: Obnoxious), then read left across the table to the matching numeric range in the Attribute Value column (e.g., Charisma, Obnoxious: 6 – 7). Choose the ***highest value*** in the range you're converting to. Each Attribute rating has a matching numeric value on a scale of 1 to 100.

This is a *human-centric* table; thus for most humanoid species with an Attribute range of 1–20 (including Humans), 'average' occurs in the centre of each column (e.g., Average Intelligence = 10 – 11, Sensible). Thus an Ogre with an Intelligence of 5, perceived as Thick by Human standards (using this scale), may be a genius in his own community. Likewise, his Mighty Strength might seem exceptional for a Human, but typical back home. Something to keep in mind….

2. Skill Expertise Terms

For Known Skills, scan down the left Skill BAV column on the **Skill Expertise Terms Table** (right)**.** When you find the applicable number, scan across for the Term describing the current degree of expertise for that Skill.

PLAYER TIP

BAV Reference

ONCE YOU'VE DETERMINED the Base Action Value (BAV) for a specific Stat (Attribute) record it on your Character Sheet.

GAMEMASTER TIP

PC Personality

THE PERSONALITY of a Character is more important than their Stats. If a player suggests a course of action for their PC that is in character but borderline with regard to their Attributes or Abilities, consider letting them proceed, if it may drive the plot forward in an new and interesting direction.

Skill Expertise Terms Table

Skill BAV	Term
1 – 9	Useless
10 – 19	Blundering
20 – 29	Incompetent
30 – 39	Mediocre
40 – 49	Capable
50 – 59	**Proficient**
60 – 69	Adept
70 – 79	Expert
80 – 89	Masterful
≥ 90	Paramount

Descriptive Attribute Table (GM Option)

Attribute Value	Intelligence	Willpower	Charisma	Mystic	Strength	Dexterity	Fitness	Appearance
1 – 3	Gormless	Mindless	Loathsome	Oblivious	Feeble	Inept	Infirm	Disgusting
4 – 5	Thick	Susceptible	Nauseating	Incognizant	Puny	Klutzy	Decrepit	Repulsive
6 – 7	Stupid	Impressionable	Obnoxious	Unknowing	Weak	Clumsy	Fragile	Ugly
8 – 9	Dense	Receptive	Annoying	Undiscerning	Slight	Awkward	Frail	Homely
10 – 11	**Sensible (Avg)**	**Indecisive (Avg)**	**Likable (Avg)**	**Aware (Avg)**	**Adequate (Avg)**	**Handy (Avg)**	**Sound (Avg)**	**Plain (Avg)**
12 – 14	Rational	Vacillating	Engaging	Sensitive	Stalwart	Deft	Hale	Attractive
15 – 16	Bright	Willful	Appealing	Perceptive	Burly	Dextrous	Sturdy	Comely
17 – 18	Savvy	Confident	Charming	Responsive	Brawny	Nimble	Athletic	Handsome
19 – 20	Cunning	Determined	Fascinating	Insightful	Mighty	Lithe	Husky	Eye-Catching
21 – 30	Sage	Persistent	Enchanting	Illuminated	Powerful	Agile	Robust	Sensational
31 – 40	Brilliant	Resolute	Bewitching	Erudite	Formidable	Adroit	Vigorous	Ravishing
41 – 60	Genius	Staunch	Enthralling	Transcendental	Awesome	Acrobatic	Dynamic	Dazzling
61 – 90	Super-Genius	Relentless	Mesmerizing	Pansophic	Indomitable	Contortionist	Exuberant	Resplendent
≥ 91	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**	**Deity-Like**

GM Section

Gamemastering Murphy's World —
Now Your Life Can Be Chaos Too!

THIS SECTION OF THE BOOK is designed especially with the Gamemaster in mind. If you're a player and you're reading this, we're not going to suggest that you look no further — you probably wouldn't pay any attention. Just consider yourself *very naughty.*

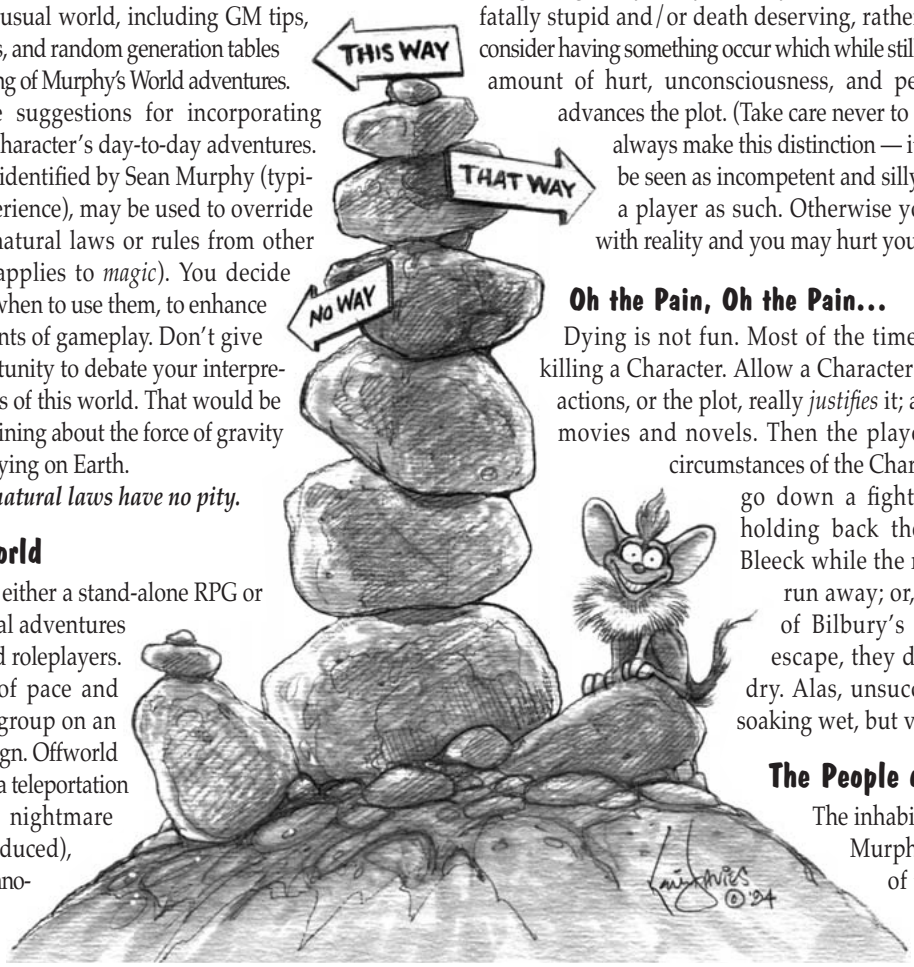
Murphy's World is a detailed, lighthearted setting, designed to provide GMs with novel and amusing locations to conduct adventures for Characters that may be native to the planet or from any other RPG. While the dilemmas confroning the Characters are just as serious as in any other place (e.g., theft, kidnapping, the end of the world…), the risk to a Character of outright death (as opposed to other torments) muted.

With this in mind it was decided that the action resolution rules should encourage character interactions and lean toward providing fun, fast, and flexible gameplay over extensive realism and complexity. Also, since players are encouraged to transport existing Characters to Murphy's World, we wanted a simple system that would be easy to learn and work with practically any existing Character's Stats.

To accomplish this goal, the following pages reveal a variety of material and usage suggestions that will unlock the fundamental secrets of this amazing and unusual world, including GM tips, techniques, optional rules, and random generation tables for the creation and running of Murphy's World adventures.

Also provided are suggestions for incorporating Murphy's Laws into a Character's day-to-day adventures. These 'laws', originally identified by Sean Murphy (typically via first-hand experience), may be used to override any physical or supernatural laws or rules from other RPGs (this especially applies to *magic*). You decide which laws to use, and when to use them, to enhance the encounters and events of gameplay. Don't give your players any opportunity to debate your interpretation of the natural laws of this world. That would be akin to someone complaining about the force of gravity preventing them from flying on Earth.

Always remember, ***natural laws have no pity.***



Using Murphy's World

Use Murphy's World as either a stand-alone RPG or a destination for unusual adventures for new and experienced roleplayers. It can offer a change of pace and tone, for an adventure group on an ongoing serious campaign. Offworld Characters can arrive via a teleportation gate, a dream or or nightmare (unconscious or drug induced), a spaceship crash, or a technological or supernatural effect or accident.

Rules, Rules, Rules...

While this book provides a detailed descriptive overview of the planet and some of its significant peoples, it does *not* require that you learn new rules to use it. However, to enable Character Action compatibility, we've included a system of easy to learn and play rules (see page **63**).

Using Characters from another gaming system on Murphy's World is simple. Just take one or more Characters from any existing adventure or campaign and transport them to the Murphy's World via any appropriate means — let them explore the planet for a single session or an entire campaign — then send them on their way via a dimension door, supernatural effect, some weird technology they happen across, or by simply waking up (see **RPG Attribute Conversion Table**, page **72**).

Managing the Characters

The main goal of Murphy's World is to have *fun*. This goes for both you and your players. We recommend you bend reality a bit when it comes to the health and welfare, pain and suffering of the Characters and other living beings; only rarely should you let them die. If PC does something fatally stupid and/or death deserving, rather than letting them die, consider having something occur which while still causing and appropriate amount of hurt, unconsciousness, and perhaps, embarassment, advances the plot. (Take care never to embarrass the *players* — always make this distinction — it's fine for a Character to be seen as incompetent and silly, but never characterize a player as such. Otherwise you confuse roleplaying with reality and you may hurt your player's feelings.)

Oh the Pain, Oh the Pain...

Dying is not fun. Most of the time there is no benefit to killing a Character. Allow a Character to die only when their actions, or the plot, really *justifies* it; as is the case in the best movies and novels. Then the player may even *enjoy* the circumstances of the Character's death (e.g., they go down a fighting martyr by *choice*, holding back the evil forces of Lord Bleeck while the rest of the PCs bravely run away; or, after falling into a vat of Bilbury's Best Brew, unable to escape, they do their best to drink it dry. Alas, unsuccessful, they perish — soaking wet, but very, very, happy.)

The People of Murphy's World

The inhabitants and geography of Murphy's World reflect many of the peoples and places of myth and legend. They are set slightly



askew, with a good sprinkling of pop culture, to make them humorous and entertaining. This book contains descriptions of these places and societies. These descriptions are not intended to conflict with any material you may already own. For example, although a race name may be similar (e.g., Elves), feel free to use the Attributes from your *own* campaign world (whether science fiction, fantasy, horror, or humor), and apply only the silly characteristics described in this book. When in doubt, do whatever you think is most entertaining. There is no right or wrong way to use this material.

Running a Murphy's World Adventure

The beauty of Murphy's World is that you can use it at any time for a stand-alone one-off adventure or a break in a serious campaign in another RPG, with a duration of a few hours to a visit of several months; alternatively the planet can serve as the setting for an extended light-hearted campaign of many years. As the Characters explore the planet they should encounter unusual geography, bizarre ecology, and a history unlike anything they've seen on public television. The events on Murphy's World need not just be for fun, they could be used to feed the players information that is important to them in their 'serious' campaign. Once the 'weird trip' is over, you can return the PCs to their normal world.

During gameplay, we recommend that you to emphasize *conversation* and *description* (i.e., roleplaying) rather than referring to and rolling against Attribute and Skill values (i.e., *rollplaying*.)

If you are an experienced GM, we encourage you to experiment with an approach to running adventures where only the basic plot directions are determined in advance. This means that you will have to create encounters on the fly, either through your imagination alone, or with the help of the various descriptions and tables in this book. Either way, this gives both you and your players great flexibility. The main challenge for you is to be sensitive to the players, and how they view their visit on Murphy's World: do they see it as a curious holiday, or as a *interruption* of their regular 'serious' campaign. If, after a brief encounter or two, they want to get involved in local events, extend their stay to match their level of interest — and your ability to conjure up interesting and humorous incidents to amuse them.

Encounters That Work

Make your encounters do more than simply put up obstacles to eat up the Characters' time and energy en route to the finale. Each encounter should reveal something new about the environment, the lifeforms, or the cultures of the area. Encounters are a great way to test Characters' physical attributes, mental skills, or talents and prepare for the climax with 'Skill practice tasks' and provide needed information through GMCs or objects. Vary the nature of the encounters so that each serves to highlight qualities possessed by different Characters. Encounters should not only further Characters' goals but give their personalities a chance to develop.

Murphy's World was created to bring out the whimsy of roleplaying and promote the creative and improvisational skills of both players and Gamemasters. Always keep one thing in mind: on Murphy's World, *anything goes* — but usually not the way it is expected….

Encounter Checklist

An Encounter Should Do One or More of the Following:

- ☞ Provide PCs with new information which they can use to advance the plot.
- ☞ Highlight a specific quality of a PC (e.g., a Known Skill, Ability, or Attribute.)
- ☞ Permit PCs' personalities a chance to develop by engaging others and experiencing new people and things.
- ☞ Reveal something new about the environment, the lifeforms, or the cultures of the area.
- ☞ Offer an opportunity to further PCs' goals and ambitions.

If This is Your First Time Gamemastering a Roleplay Game, *Look Here!*

WELL LUCKY YOU. You've been *conned* into running a roleplay game. During a roleplay game all participants gather in close proximity (usually sitting around a table). One is assigned to be the **Gamemaster (GM)** while the others are **players.** The players generate **Player Characters (PC)** with which they participate in adventures much like the lead characters of a film or novel. As GM, you create and administrate those adventures. An adventure advances as you provide the Player Characters with the information that each requests in turn about what their Character's senses can detect (see, hear, smell, feel, taste, plus any supernatural senses).

You can bet your players are pretty smug knowing that you must spend *every waking hour* before the first game concocting *every detail of the entire planet* right down to where left socks and loose buttons go when they vanish.

Well, piffle to all that! You need remember only two things:

- ☛ **You're all playing this game first and foremost to *have a good time* (that means you too!) and,**
- ☛ **The Gamemaster's word is *final.***

The amount of time and energy you invest in the production of adventures, setting details, Gamemaster Characters, creatures and strange items, is entirely up to you.

Now here's the really good news. If you develop a knack for monitoring the action of the adventure and noticing opportunities to exploit where a silly element (whether a new character, item, or event) might be injected, you've got half the battle won. The only other thing you need to develop is a sense of whimsy and appropriateness so that the elements you inject not only entertain but actually serve to advance the plot. Admittedly, this can be a challenge. However, we've provided an assortment of **Random Generation Tables** for various elements which you can consult either in preparation for an adventure, or during the action.

A roleplay game is a highly social, interactive form of group entertainment. Roleplay games can be compared to live theatre, but the participants are simultaneously the writers, actors, and audience. This can be one of the most satisfying forms of recreation you can enjoy. ***Good luck!***

CHAPTER FOUR

The Natural Laws of Murphy's World

ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT THE FIRST ANOMALY Murphy noticed during his extended stay on the world he discovered, it proved to be by far the most significant: Ludo, the system's star, is unique. At least as far as anyone knows. Along with the normal energies one would expect to be emitted from a perfectly well adjusted star, it also produces an effect local to its own solar system, causing the laws of physics to be different here from anywhere else in the known universe. Those with less technical training might consider its effect to be 'magic'. Ah, but the rest of us know better, *don't we!*

How Murphy's Laws Can Impact on Gameplay

The purpose of Murphy's Laws is to serve as a Gamemaster's aid; to assist you in devising occurrences to shake-up a game which has become predictable and a bit too 'normal'. They can be used in the following ways:

☞ As a 'Theme' For the Day

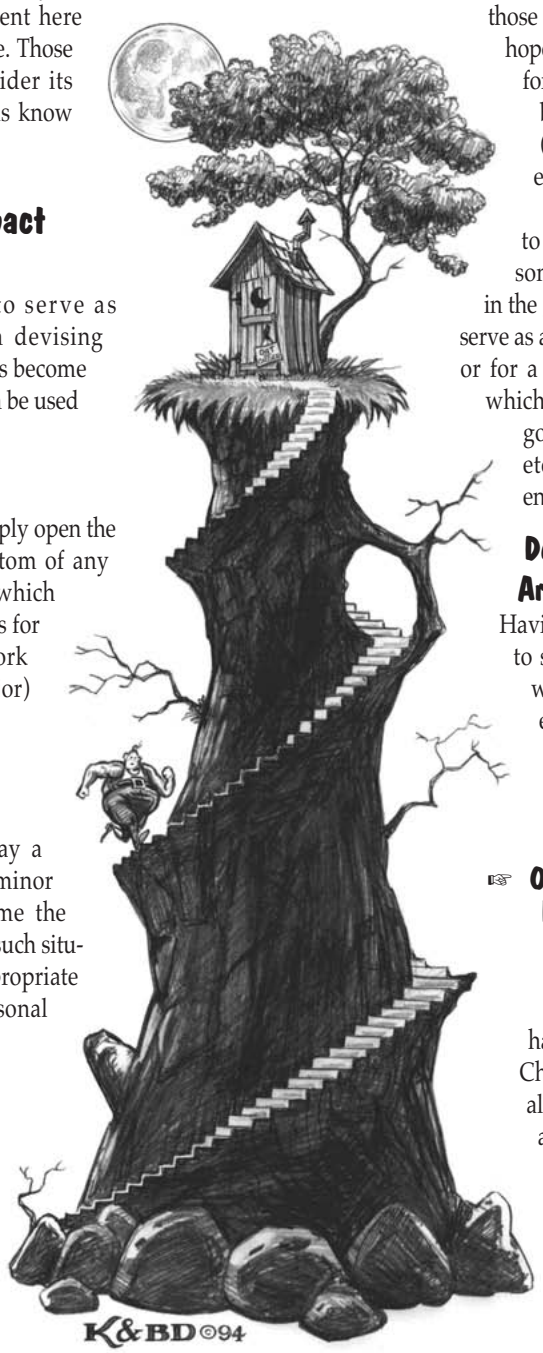
You may wish to randomly roll (or simply open the book at random and look at the bottom of any right-hand page) a Murphy's Law which represents a thematic blight on the PCs for the course of the day. Feel free to work into the adventure plot minor (or major) events which exploit the Law selected.

☞ As a Personal Plague for an Unlucky Character

If through the normal course of play a Character experiences a series of minor mishaps or failures, they can become the equivalent of a Ludo lightning rod. In such situations you may wish to roll up an appropriate Murphy's Law which serves as a personal plague until their luck changes.

☞ As a Direct Response to Gameplay Events

Those with the greatest ambitions suffer the greatest failures. Develop a general familiarity with the Murphy's Laws governing the situation that the PCs currently find themselves in. Then wait for the PCs to screw-up on their own. Use the Laws as tools to help you describe the specifics of what goes wrong when the PCs make poor rolls and fail tasks, or deserve minor complications.



Keep in mind that the result of the application of a Murphy's Law need not always have a negative impact upon those affected — it might only be *strange*, *silly*, and hopefully *unexpected*. Often the effect of the forces of Ludo upon an intelligent being will be to merely *frustrate* and *embarrass* them (this is especially appropriate for proud and egotistical PCs).

If your players are very competitive, try not to let the application of Murphy's Laws be something which upsets the balance of power in the group. Instead, permit the Murphy events to serve as a convenient way for two Characters to meet, or for a PC to discover some hidden information which might have remained hidden had they not gone hunting for that spanner they dropped, etc. Watch for ways to exploit the mishap for enhanced roleplaying situations.

Determining When the Forces of Ludo Are Most Likely to Have an Effect

Having determined that *something* must be done to spice up the action, you should determine what *triggers* a Murphy's Law to come into effect. There is no right or wrong time to apply a silly effect in an adventure on Murphy's World, however, the following suggestions are offered:

☞ Operating Alone or in Small Numbers is Risky

The *further away* from other rational, thinking, self–aware beings Characters are, the *greater* the impact the forces of Ludo have on the environment and the 'luck' of the Characters. Thus, those who travel or work alone, without companionship or (emotional and physical) back–up support are *more susceptible* to the crazy effects of Murphy's Laws.

☞ Reward Failure With Frustration & Embarrassment

If something has just gone badly for

a Character (e.g., they have just failed a die roll in the performance of an action), seize the opportunity to implement a Ludo effect; the result should place the Character in an embarrassing or frustrating situation. It's ok to cause a Character *pain* resulting from their failed performance (e.g., the key they failed to catch hits them in the eye), but don't harm them severely unless the task they were attempting was *especially stupid* or unlikely to succeed to begin with. Spellcasting failure is a fine example of this type.

How to Implement Murphy's Laws During Gameplay

Having determined that a situation exists which is deserving of a response from the forces of Ludo, you may either have a silly event take place, or randomly roll a Murphy's Law which may provide you with a suggestion of an event or encounter that might occur. It could even serve to launch the Characters on a new adventure.

You should implement the *spirit* of the Law, altering the interpretation to suit the particular situation the Characters are in, affecting the Characters' interaction with their environment.

If you choose or randomly roll a Murphy's Law from those provided in this book, consult the **Character's Attempted Activities Table** (see page 78). Look up the appropriate description of current Character activity, then roll as indicated in the activity category selected.

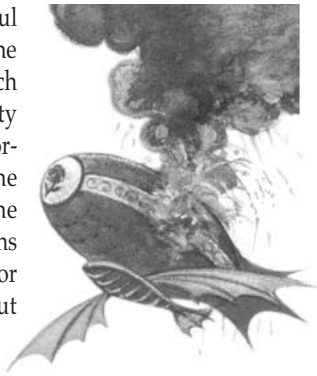
Ideally, once you have used this table for some time, you will be able to invent and apply Murphy's Laws of your *own* to enhance and warp an adventure.

The Impact of the Forces of Ludo on Existing Supernatural Effects & Artifacts

If a Character arrives with a magic object, or with a spell cast upon them, feel free to have some fun with the function of the enchantment or device while on Murphy's World.

Remember, *willpower* is the key to stability. If the Character isn't perfectly clear on the operation of the device, or the effect produced by the enchantment, feel free to fill in the gaps, as it were, with new qualities and features. These Ludo-inspired additions should not contradict the existing power of the item or spell, they should simply enhance it in a way that the Character might not expect.

Example: A Character arrives with a powerful Hammer of Super Brain-Crushing Damage. What if the Hammer actually has a sensitive personality which deplores unnecessary violence? Perhaps it has a guilty conscience, that broods and writes poetry to the unfortunate foes vanquished by its blows. What if as the Character begins to engage the personality of the Hammer (thus making it more *real*), the Hammer begins to hold back its powers for actions it deems frivolous or without noble merit? Thus a bit of fun can be had out of a typical enchanted weapon.



Above: What goes up must come… ah, you know the story.

Example: A Character arrives with an enchantment cast upon them which causes their Attributes or Known Skills to be supernaturally enhanced in some way. While not altering the initial effect of the enchantment, it is a simple matter to enhance the effect to include some additional effect not expected by the Character when the power is invoked to accomplish a task. Perhaps supernatural hearing causes a Character's ears to grow, wiggle, or twist in the direction of the sound. Enhanced sight might cause the Character's eyes to bulge, change color, or leave their sockets and travel to the area which the Character desires to learn about (guaranteed to be quite a surprise to the Character and their companions the first time it happens).

Purging an Item or Enchantment of Ludo Effects

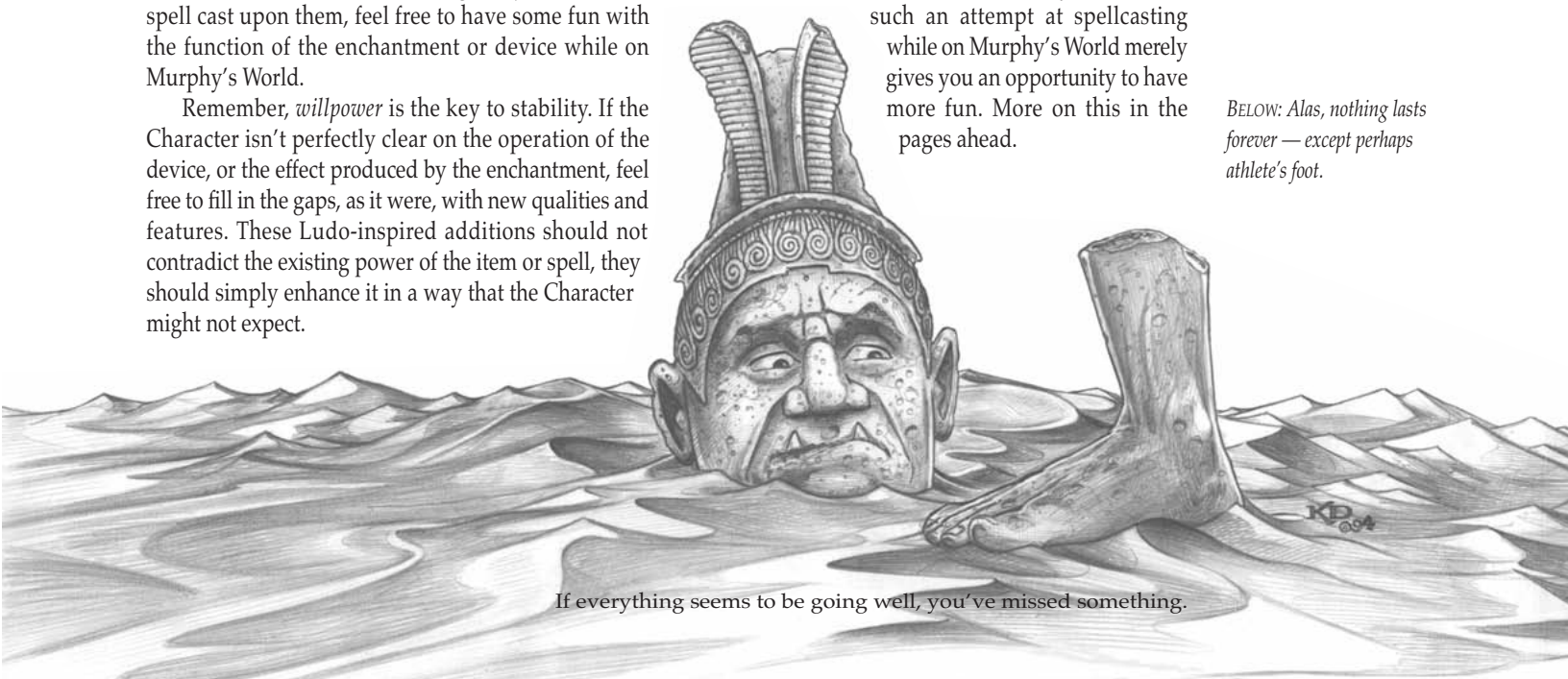
Can the Character rid their enchantments of these Ludo enhancements? Well, that all depends upon their willpower, concentration, and their willingness to attempt to *recast* the enchantment while on Murphy's World — this alters the spell *permanently* (meaning it remains as cast when the Character leaves Murphy's World). The recast spell is in fact a new spell attempting to recreate the effect of the previous enchantment. While you as GM should permit Characters a chance to achieve the effect they desire, often such an attempt at spellcasting while on Murphy's World merely gives you an opportunity to have more fun. More on this in the pages ahead.

Gamemaster Tip

Reality

Tell your players that on Murphy's World reality behaves differently from typical RPG settings. Past experience may not be useful. Don't give away any secrets — just tell them to relax, go with the flow, and be prepared to panic at any time.

Below: Alas, nothing lasts forever — except perhaps athlete's foot.



If everything seems to be going well, you've missed something.

Character's Attempted Activities
(select option closest to gameplay situation or Roll 1d6)

1. **Travel & Transportation Laws** (Natural, Physical Laws).
2. **When Knowledge or Answers Are Sought Laws** (Perceptions & Reflections Laws).
3. **When a Task is Being Assigned or Attempted Laws** (Ambitions & Objectives Laws).
4. **Use of Objects Laws** (Object-Specific Laws).
5. **Once an Attempt at a Task or the Use of an Object Has Failed Laws** (Disasters & Consequences Laws).
6. **Once a Task Has Been Successfully Completed Laws** (No-Win Situation Laws).

1. Travel & Transportation

Natural Physical Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 10	There is no limit to how *weird* things can get.
11 – 20	The *ignorant* are most likely to travel the path to *prosperity.*
21 – 30	Things will seem to get better every *day*… then worse again in the *evening.*
31 – 40	Bad weather predictions are usually *correct;* good weather predictions *seldom are.*
41 – 50	It will always take longer to reach your destination than to return.
51 – 60	When on a trip, the first thing which you decided *not to take* will be the first thing *needed.*
61 – 70	The fewer the number of *obstacles encountered* while travelling a chosen path, the more likely it will *lead nowhere.*
71 – 80	The *shortest road* between two points is always the one *most likely* to be washed out, dangerous, or under repair.
81 – 90	If you are still travelling at dusk, the remaining distance to your intended destination will remain *constant.*
91 – 100	When you finally arrive at your intended destination/chosen campsite, it will be already *occupied.*

2. When Knowledge or Answers Are Sought

Perceptions & Reflections Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 10	At any given time, you are *most likely* to obtain or discover the thing(s) you *least* expect and/or need.
11 – 20	The *greater the desire* to find something or an item of information you are searching for, the *less likely* it will turn up.
21 – 30	No matter how often something is *established as false,* someone will *believe it to be true.*
31 – 40	If enough people *believe* it will happen, it probably *will.*
41 – 50	The 'truth' never makes any sense.
51 – 60	If you want strongly enough for something to occur, it will (but it will likely come about in a manner which was unexpected).
61 – 70	When you tell something to someone *three times in a row, without interruption*, no matter how incredible or ridiculous, it becomes *true!*
71 – 80	Whenever you try to repeat something a *third time in a row,* something will occur which will have a **99% chance** of *distracting and interrupting* you.
81 – 90	Anything perceived by you to be 'good' will be perceived by someone else as bad, illegal, immoral or fattening.
91 – 100	The number of 'long lost' *relatives* and friends you have is in direct proportion to your *fame and/or wealth.*

3. When a Task is Being Assigned or Attempted

Ambition & Objectives Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 3	Nothing is as easy as it *looks.*
4 – 6	If a task *looks easy*, it will be *tough;* if it *looks tough*, it will be *near impossible.*
7 – 9	If you attempt the impossible, you will fail.
10 – 12	Anything that can go wrong, will.
13 – 15	If *nothing* can go wrong, *something* will anyway.
16 – 18	If you've *anticipated* the possibility of *several* things going wrong, *something else,* which you forgot to consider, will fail.
19 – 21	If there is a possibility of *several things* going wrong, the one that will cause the *most damage* is the one that will fail (...first).
22 – 24	If you are doing something the 'wrong' way, you will cause something *very* bad to occur.
25 – 27	Everything takes *longer* than expected or planned on.
27 – 30	The thing/factor which you deem *least significant* is the one which will prove *crucial* to the success of your endeavor.
31 – 33	Tasks are inevitably be *assigned* to the individual *least capable* of carrying them out.
34 – 36	Any order/instruction which *can* be misunderstood, *will* be.
37 – 39	The more *incompetent* an individual, the more they'll attempt to take on as many *important* tasks as possible.
40 – 42	The opportunities with the greatest chance of profit for the least amount of risk are most likely to be encountered when you are broke, or unable to act upon them.
43 – 45	The person with the most opinions and suggestions will have the least practical experience.
46 – 48	If you have more than one option, the first choice is unlikely to be correct.
49 – 51	Doing it the 'hard way' will always prove easier.
52 – 54	If everything seems to be going well, you've missed something.
55 – 57	Just when things seem to be going fine, something is bound to occur to screw it up.
58 – 60	The instant you relax and let down your guard is the moment when something is most likely to go wrong.
61 – 63	Any time you wish to perform or demonstrate something, the number of things that go *wrong* (or do not happen as expected) will equal the number of *viewers* you wish to impress.
64 – 66	Whenever you set out to accomplish a specific task, something else will come up demanding your attention or detouring your efforts.
67 – 69	The greater the risks taken, the greater the chance of a spectacular success… *if* all goes well.
70 – 72	If something has gone *right,* the greater the chance that the *next* thing will do the same.
73 – 75	A *random gamble* will always have a greater chance of success than a more *carefully chosen* option based on logic, research, and experience.
76 – 78	Brute force, clumsiness, ignorance, and superstition is always more likely to triumph over science, skill, knowledge, and reason.
79 – 81	Good fortune/assistance will come in the least expected/likely and usually most embarrassing way/form.
82 – 84	Of two possible events, the *least desired* one is *more likely* to occur.
85 – 87	The chances of solving a problem/mystery decline the closer one gets to finding out *who* was responsible for causing it.
88 – 100	The larger the group of cooperating individuals, the more likely they will agree on a course of action that if they were acting alone, they would deem stupid.

4. Use of Objects

Object-Specific Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 5	Any inanimate object, regardless of its position or configuration, should be expected to perform at any time in a totally unexpected manner and for reasons that are either entirely obscure or completely mysterious.
6 – 10	Just when you're *sure* you know how something functions, it does something *unexpected* that you are not prepared for.
11 – 15	Everything is easier to get into, onto, or down to, than out of, off of, or up to.
16 – 20	It requires less energy to move an object *away* from its original place than to *put it back.*
21 – 25	The bigger they are/it is, the harder they/it land(s).
26 – 30	A body in motion exposed to a huge fear doubles in velocity.
31 – 35	The more expensive the item, the more likely it is to get dirty or damaged.
36 – 40	Any implement when dropped will roll to the *least accessible* place — but it will probably *strike* you (or somebody else bigger than you with a nasty temper) first.
41 – 45	An object will always fall so as to do the most damage.
46 – 50	The item you can afford is never the one with the features you really want.

51 – 55	The item you want is never on sale until after you've bought one at full price.
56 – 60	The item(s) you need most, and quickest, will always be at the bottom of the pile/bag/pack.
61 – 65	The most expensive/important/hard to replace thing or part is the one most likely to fail.
66 – 70	The thing/part in the least accessible position, is the one that will fail (...first).
71 – 75	When something is assumed to be *unnecessary,* it will function *perfectly;* when desperately *needed,* it is most likely to *fail.*
76 – 80	Anything can be made to work if you fiddle with it long enough.
81 – 85	If you fiddle with something long enough it will break.
86 – 90	The *reliability* of any device is inversely proportional to the number of people *watching* it operate.
91 – 95	The item or part you need is the one most likely to be out of stock.
96 – 100	The more you acquire, the greater the chance that you will lose something (and/or someone will try to take something from you).

5. Once an Attempt at a Task or the Use of an Object Has Failed

Disasters & Consequences Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 10	What you don't know about, can't affect you.
11 – 20	The 'authorities' are *never* around when you *most* want them and *always* around when you *least* want them.
21 – 30	If *one* thing has gone wrong, the greater the chance that *another* will as well.
31 – 40	Once something has gone wrong, any attempt to improve the situation has a 60% chance of only making matters worse.
41 – 50	Things tend to get worse under pressure.
51 – 60	No-one will notice the big errors until after they've had an effect.
61 – 65	Experience and knowledge gained will vary directly with the amount of equipment destroyed in the attempt.
66 – 70	Whatever lessons are to be learned from failure, those who commit the failure will always learn an entirely incorrect one.
71 – 75	No matter what has gone wrong, there is always someone who knew it would (and did/could have told you about it).
76 – 80	Help will only ever be volunteered freely when you are in a circumstance where you can do without it or it will serve as a hindrance.
81 – 85	No passer-by that you ask for advice/assistance will be able to see or comprehend the the problem.
86 – 90	Everyone who stops by with unsought/undesired volunteered advice/ assistance will be able to see and comprehend the situation immediately.
91 – 100	If at first you don't succeed, it might work if you force or whack it.

6. Once an Task Has Been Successfully Completed

No-Win Situation Laws (Roll 1d100)

1 – 10	As soon as you've achieved your goal, something else will immediately come along requiring your complete attention.
11 – 20	There will always be something else to discover, another task in need of doing.
21 – 30	The solving of one problem usually precipitates another.
31 – 40	When an error has been detected and corrected, it will be found to have been correct in the first place.
41 – 50	If you *really need* something to work, it *will,* but only if it will prolong the agony of the current situation.
51 – 60	Whenever something is clearly understood, someone will discover a fact which will nullify it or expand it beyond comprehension.
61 – 70	The more time invested in accomplishing a task, the greater the chance that once completed it need not have been done at all.
71 – 80	Just as you happen to stumble over the truth, someone will come along and help you up and on your way.
81 – 90	The greater the effort to decrease confusion locally will result in an increase of confusion on a wider scale.
91 – 100	Regardless of the outcome, there will always be someone eager to a) misinterpret it, b) take credit for it, or c) credit someone else for it.

The Natural Laws of Ludo:
Examples of Use During Gameplay

Travel & Transportation

LAW: If you are still travelling at dusk, the remaining distance to your intended destination will remain constant.

DEBORAH THE DAUNTLESS IS DOING HER BEST to reach the city of Four Rivers before evening. As dusk falls, she is just within sight of the lights of the city. At this moment, her horse throws a shoe. Her attempt to reshoe her horse in the dark with inadequate tools is a failure. Sighing, she starts to lead her horse towards the lights. Within three steps, she runs into a nasty bramble patch. She must either cut through them, risking badly cut-up legs for both her and her horse, or go around them. Sighing again, she decides to go around the patch.

Within moments she reaches the bank of a large stream — then the edge of the bank crumbles under her, rolling her down into the water. Now well covered in mud, she climbs to the top of the bank, then realizes she is on the wrong side of the stream. Re-crossing the stream, she steps into a particularly deep spot; at least a lot of the mud washes off, and the fish in her pockets will make good snacks.

Having finally climbed out of the stream, wondering where her horse got to, she steps directly into a patch of tickle weed. Laughing hysterically, she staggers towards the lights. When she steps knee-deep, still laughing, into a slime-pit, she realizes the lights she sees are actually swamp gas, and not the lights of the city after all.

Tired, hungry, depressed, and able to take a hint after all, she finds a dry spot of ground and collapses, falling instantly asleep.

When she wakes in the morning, she finds her horse quietly cropping grass nearby, and a good road leading to Four Rivers only a stone's throw away. The road may or may not have been there last night, but she certainly will have no problem reaching the city now.

When Knowledge or Answers Are Sought

LAW: No matter how often something is established as false, someone will believe it to be true.

WORD HAS SPREAD that Ron the Vaguely Competent defeated Gorath the Gargantuan two falls out of three in the Global Wrestling Federation's (GWF) Iron Cage Death Match. In truth, Ron couldn't wrestle his way out of a wet paper bag, and met Gorath only once at a cocktail party, where they had a nice conversation about flower arranging. Unfortunately, most people believe the rumor, and Ron spends a great deal of his time running away from drunken louts who challenge him to a wrestling match. Ron has been forced to get a certificate from the GWF stating that not only has he never wrestled in an Iron Cage Death Match, but he is a wimp in general. This hasn't solved his problems.



ABOVE: To an Elf, embarrassment is the worst thing in the world; a klutzy Elf is an embarrassment to everyone.

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Style

IF YOUR Murphy's World adventure runs like all other RPGs you've played before, your shorts are too tight.

Head Peon of Village: "Hey, ain't you the dude who snuffed Gorath the Gargantuan?"

Ron: "No, you must have me mixed up with someone else."

Head Peon: "Sure you is! We'd like to to wrassle our village champ, Humongous Herbert."

Ron: "No, look, here's proof." (Displays the GWF certificate).

Head Peon: "Yeah, well, if I was as famous as you, I'd come up with some way to deesguise meself. Don't worry, yer secret's safe with me, least 'till you wrassle Herb."

Ron: (Sighs). "All right, I did 'snuff' Gorath, and if you don't get out of my way, I'll snuff you too!"

Head Peon: "Hooooeeeee. I knew you famous guys was arrogant bastards. Lucky for me I got Herbert just around the corner. Hey Herb! C'mere and crunch this guy! — Hey! Where'd he go?"

GAMEMASTER TIP

Realism

IF A PLAYER comes up with an interesting idea or acts in a way to drive the plot forward, don't get hung up on whether the outcome is within the *realistic capabilities* of the PC. Action and fun are more important than being faithful to reality.

When a Task is Being Assigned or Attempted

LAW: The more incompetent an individual, the more they'll attempt to take on as many tasks as possible.

WHILE GATHERING SUPPLIES AND HIRELINGS for an expedition into Pixie territory, an adventure party is impressed by one Slade the Stolid. Slade has quite an imposing bearing. He has his name written across his knuckles. He assures the party all they need done he can take care of, and do it cost-effectively. Swayed by Slade, the party lets him take care of all the arrangements. It isn't until the party begins its journey that the problems arise.

The maps are excellent; but they represent downtown Moscow. The food is tasty; but it is perishable, and most of it was left behind anyways. The money brought is perfectly legal tender in Four Rivers; but not where the party is travelling. The horses look good; but they all have Drop-Rot, and begin leaving body parts behind. The party asked Slade to bring four axes; he has brought four axles. Slade actually does speaks some Pixie; but the only phrases he knows involve either excrement, or doing particularly disgusting things to your mother.

In short, the party must start over.

Use of Objects

LAW: Just when you're sure you know how something functions, it does something unexpected that you are not prepared for.

ANNETTE THE ACERBIC HAS FOUND the magical Horn of Hardart. She knows from long and laborious study of dusty tomes and mouldy books that when the Horn is sounded on the second Tuesday of any month the Elves are holding a championship croquet game, international bond and interest rates will collapse. She has invested every cent she has to take advantage of this, and expects to be a very wealthy woman very soon.

The day comes, she raises the Horn to her lips, and a noise not unlike that of a U-boat siren issues forth from the Horn.

What Annette didn't realize was that the Horn has the side-effect of making its user a *non-person*. Every written reference anywhere to the blower of the horn is completely *erased*. Electronic data is wiped clean. Even *memories* are erased. Now, no-one anywhere in the multiverse knows that Annette the Acerbic exists, except Annette herself. Without proper identification or records, she can't prove ownership of any of her stocks, bonds, or treasury certificates, and her financial plans are ruined. Not only that, but she has to begin her life from scratch, since no-one knows who she is.

Once an Attempt at a Task or the Use of an Object Has Failed

LAW: If at first you don't succeed, it might work if you force or whack it.

HARALD THE HANDY WAS RECRUITED by the party for his Technocratic skills. His success rate with odd pieces of machinery is renowned throughout a large area of downtown Whitethorn. Now, trapped inside a mouldering fortress, surrounded by hostile Pixies, on the verge of being asphyxiated by bits of Bom-Bom Beast being catapulted over the walls, Harald is having problems. The weird futuristic cannon-like weapon he's found just won't work. He's tried adjusting it, cajoling it, powering it; he's even stooped to reading the manual! Nothing works. In desperation and anger, he kicks the thing. In microseconds, the device disintegrates a wall, two catapults, 200 Pixies, and about **15 sq mi [39 sq km]** of forest beyond.

Not bad... the question now becomes: can he do it again?

Once a Task Has Been Successfully Completed

LAW: The solving of one problem usually precipitates another.

VERNON THE VALIANT HAS EARNED HIS PAY this week. Through, skill, determination, brains, and a bit of luck, he has slain the giant Vorwarts. Vorwarts, over **100' [30.5 m]** in height, had been harassing the entire Trimble Valley. Staggering back to the village to collect his reward and his well-earned rest, Vernon is immediately arrested by the local constable. Vorwarts, never the most cleanly of monsters, has already started to rot, and his pungent smell hangs over the entire valley. The local savants estimate it will be at least two months before the smell disappears entirely.

As Vernon is frogmarched off to prison a villager explains that it is not that they are unappreciative of the fact that Vernon slayed Vorwarts: they just wish he had done so in another valley.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Supernatural & Murphy's World

Forget everything you know about magic.

FORGET EVERYTHING YOU'VE READ in any other gaming system that you may have played prior to picking up this book. For on the planet Færie (or Murphy's World), none of it applies. Like the natural physical laws of the planet, the magical laws are affected by the unusual energies of the system's sun, Ludo. Characters capable of performing sorcery, or whatever you choose to call it, will now find it much simpler, and yet more challenging, than before.

A sorcerer is capable of composing a magic spell for any effect, Range, and Duration they desire, at any time, regardless of their amount of experience in such things (yes, this can be interpreted to mean that anyone and *everyone has the potential to perform magic* — if they dare: GM discretion).

Casting a Spell on Murphy's World

To cast a spell is to make a *wish.* Your job as GM is to give PCs what they ask for… literally. Anything they ask for can be *elaborated* upon and *misinterpreted* by you. You can manage spellcasting for Murphy's World by one of the following two methods: unstructured (verbal with no dice rolling), or structured (with dice rolling and modifiers).

While on Murphy's World, a sorcerer will attempt to employ their magical abilities and expect *some* chance of success — usually equal to that which they might normally experience on their homeworld. As GM you can simply say "tough luck" and impose upon them the Laws of Ludo at will, ignoring the complaints and excessive pouting (resulting in an unhappy player). Alternatively, you can extend a compromise, offering the sorcerer some chance of getting what they wish for, depending upon the *conditions* present during the spellcasting process, the *Target* of the spell, and of course, your mood at the time.

Spellcasting Essentials

Whenever a Character makes a statement (intentionally or unknowingly) which you interpret as a 'wish' for a supernatural effect, you can consider it an attempt to cast a spell. Any attempt at spellcasting, whatever method used, whether successful or not, will cost the sorcerer:

- if the spell's **Duration** is **temporary:** the sorceror will ***temporarily*** lose ***one*** **Health Point (HP).** This HP can be regained through ***rest*** (1 HP per hour, or use your own system rules) or *healing*.**;**
- if the spell's **Duration** is **permanent:** the sorceror will ***permanently*** lose ***one*** **FIT point** (thus **1 HP**), (though more may be gained via the Character development process governed by the Murphy's World rules, or the rules of the RPG you choose to use with Murphy's World — that is, if the its rules permits such things…).

The only other requirement to cast a spell is that the sorcerer make a **Spell Statement,** describing their spell's *desired* effect. If the player chooses, the Spell Statement can be considered to be 'thought' (written as a note and passed to you) and not spoken out loud for other Characters to overhear.

Note (and this is an important one): **a Spell Statement can only be *one sentence* long** and result in only ***one effect.*** You have the ultimate decision over just how much a sorcerer may cram into a single Spell Statement.

The features of a typical Spell Statement may include: a **Casting Time** (the time it takes the PC to initiate the effect); a **Target** or **Area of Effect**; a **Quantity** (the number of **Target**(s), or amount of mass or energy — a spell attached to an inanimate object is considered 'entrenched'); a **Range** (the distance from the spellcaster to the **Target**); the **Implementation Time** (if the PC doesn't want the spell to have an *immediate* effect once the Casting Time is over) a **Duration** (the time the spell lasts).

Example: the Sorcerer states, "I wish it wasn't so dark in here." This simple 'wish' is acceptable as a Spell Statement. You as GM may provide light in whatever intensity you desire since no further details (regarding brightness, Area of Effect, Duration, etc.) were included by the player in the Spell Statement.

Though a later spell may attempt to modify a previous one, **each spell is considered to be a distinct entity,** and **no spells shall be conditional upon any other.** Thus, if a PC wants the casting of one spell to trigger the launching of another effect, they're out of luck. To apply more than one effect to a single Target the spellcaster must initiate a separate Spell Statement for each effect desired.

Example: the Sorcerer states, "I levitate the Gas-Guzzling Ogo Pogo to a height of 100 feet, for a period of ten seconds. While the Gas-Guzzling Ogo Pogo is still in the air, I transform it into tofu." You as GM should deduct 2 HP from the Character's total for the two Spell Statements. It is up to you whether the spell comes off as the spellcaster intends….

The **Casting Time** of a spell lasts as long in game time as the 'Spell Statement' actually takes to be conveyed (e.g., spoken, note read, etc.) to you in real-time.

Now here's the catch. The magical forces radiating throughout the Ludo system conspire to exploit any opportunity to pervert the desire of sorcerers attempting to manipulate them for their own designs. After all, if you were a huge seething ball of flame whirling through space, would you want your forces manipulated? In other words, every time a PC attempts to perform magic, you, the GM, get to have a good time.

(Mis)Interpreting a Character's Spells

When a PC composes a spell and conveys its desired effect (or, if you're especially cruel, even when they are simply *contemplating something aloud*), look for any ***loopholes, flaws in logic,*** or ***words which may have a double meaning;*** if you find any — and if you don't, you're not looking hard enough — in the name of Ludo, alter the expected outcome of the spell.

The altered result should simply be *another interpretation* of the spellcaster's intentions; though obviously not the one they had hoped for.

The altered effect need not be disastrous. It may even include the wishes of the wizard, along with another silly element which the PC forgot to *exclude* with the Spell Statement. Thus what a PC leaves out of their spell description is just as useful to you as what they include.

Example: the youthful wizard Ted stands before the ravishing princess Fenneria who is chained to a marble pillar, waiting to be sacrificed at dawn. The mage stands before her, and with a flourish of his arms, intones: "I remove the chains that bind you, that you may go free!" A heartbeat later the princess is free and smothers the wizard's face with her warm grateful kisses, before fleeing out the secret passage through which the wizard entered. He, of course, would like to join her, but unfortunately is now chained to the pillar.

Once this sort of thing has happened to a sorcerer a few times, one of four things will happen: they will be dead; they will *stop performing magic* (for the obvious self-preservation reasons); they will be very discouraged and will *complain a lot* (you are advised in this case to shrug a lot and talk about apples, Sir Isaac Newton, gravity and other ponderables); or they will start looking for some method to make their spells tamper (i.e., Ludo) proof.

Ludo-Proofing Sorcery Spells

The most obvious method for PCs to reduce the amount of chaos creeping into the works is to make Spell Statements more *specific*. They will try to account for any anticipated loopholes with legalese like clauses and conditions. This will result in some improvement, but you should still find lots of material you can exploit to alter the effect of the spell. Of course, a longer Spell Statement means a longer Casting Time.

Keep in mind that if PCs do not adequately define such basic Spell Statement requirements as Area, Range or Duration, you have an vast number of opportunities to alter the resulting effects of the spell.

A PC's **Mystic (MYS)** value influences their spellcasting effectiveness. The ***higher*** their MYS value, the ***fewer alterations*** you should apply to their spells; the ***lower*** a their MYS value, the ***more alterations*** you should apply to their spells.

Improvisational Spellcasting (GM Option)

This style of spellcasting is purely *verbal*. It is improvisational and requires no dice rolls, no modifiers, and no referencing tables. All the spellcasting essentials are applied. Once a PC has uttered their Spell Statement, you determine the effectiveness of the spell instantly, without checking any references. This option is ideal for fast and furious gameplay, and when a PC utters a comment that you wish to interpret as a Spell Statement (e.g., "Boy I wish these treasure sacks didn't weigh so much…").

Skill-Based Spellcasting (GM Option)

If you prefer magic to function in a more structured and less improvisational manner, consider Sorcery (magic use by a Character) to be a Skill to be acquired and developed.

Sorcery Skill: Determining Sorcery BAV

Sorcery Skill is based on a Character's **Mystic (MYS)** value. Each PC determines their Sorcery Skill **Base Action Value (BAV)** by looking up their Mystic Value on the **Attribute/BAV Table**, page **66** (e.g., MYS 16 = 42% BAV). Plus, if Sorcery is one of the Character's initial Known Skills (acquired prior to the start of gameplay) they receive a **+1% BAV bonus** for every **1 year** of their Character's age at the start of gameplay (e.g., 36 years = 36% bonus; max. 50%). Record the Sorcery Skill **BAV** on your Character Sheet.

- ☞ If a PC is from another RPG setting and a sorcerer before they came to Murphy's World, convert their current spellcasting chance to a percentage number for use with Murphy's World with the **Universal RPG Attribute Conversion Table**, page **72**. Once their BAV has been determined through an appropriate Attribute (use whatever Attribute governs magic in their system), add this **percentage as a BAV bonus**.
- ☞ If a PC is from another RPG setting and the system which created them uses 'proficiency levels' (instead percentages), once their BAV has been determined through an appropriate Attribute (use whatever Attribute governs magic in their system), award a **10% BAV bonus for every Level** attained (if the system has both Levels and a percentage, choose the *highest* of the two).
- ☞ If a PC is from another RPG setting and has acquired Sorcery Skill while on Murphy's World, simply determine their BAV as a newly acquired Skill (see **Acquiring New Known Skills**, page **66**).

Keep in mind, even if a PC should acquire a Sorcery Skill BAV of 100 %, the forces of Ludo still permit you to exploit or enhance their spells by adding effects that they've forgotten to exclude from their spell statement.

Sorcery Skill: Spellcasting Action Modifiers

Spellcasting Action Modifiers tie the likelihood of a spell succeeding without a snag to the *specific circumstances* surrounding the spellcasting and the *type of effect* desired. When attempting to use Sorcery Skill, a player applies any positive or negative **Action Modifiers** to their BAV to determine their final **Action Value.**

Most of the Action Modifiers that aid the spellcaster are ***ritualistic*** (e.g., uttering an verbal incantation, gesturing in a specific way); those which impede are ***circumstantial*** (e.g., while attempting to cast the spell the PC is on horseback being chased, or being shot at with arrows). Rituals performed by the player should not be suggested by you — let players discover this aspect of Ludo magic on their own. Of course if the person reading this is a *player,* it's a bit late….

GM Applied Circumstantial Modifiers

As is the case with the attempted use of any Skill, you are invited to apply Action Modifiers that reflect the

Sorcery No-Nos: Things You Just Can't Do

The following is a list of things which have proved *impossible* on Murphy's World under the influence of Ludo:

☞ Since it is simply in poor taste to **kill** another being directly with magic, this is not permitted. However, if you can contrive to get an enemy to stand beneath a piano you've had the forethought to levitate, well you can't be blamed if the piano can't be bothered to stay in the air after you've discontinued your levitation effect; if you get the picture….

☞ For some strange reason the magic of Ludo will not permit a Character to use sorcery to improve or alter any of their **Attributes** permanently. This includes Health Points, Character Traits, BAV, (and any other number you determine should be left alone…).

However, spells of long-ish Duration (GM discretion) may be cast upon favorite **objects** which when worn or consumed may increase a Character's Attributes for a *temporary* period (e.g., the time worn, or until the potion passes through the body's system).



circumstances that a spellcaster finds themselves in (see **GM Designated Action [or Attack] Modifiers**, page **68**). Keep in mind other effects when considering how to warp the outcome of a spell (especially if you are winging it).

The following is a selection of factors that can impact on the success of a spell:

☞ **How Modest An Effect is Desired?**
If a spellcaster wants to attempt something rather modest, such as lighting a cook-fire or dusting an especially filthy underground passage, they should be granted a bonus, increasing their chance of success. However, if during the heat of battle they suddenly cry out that they want to turn their enemy into oatmeal, they should be given a hefty negative modifier.

☞ **Are There Other Cognizant Minds Present?**
On Færie, ***thinking beings affect the environment around them*** by *stabilizing the chaotic effects* of Ludo. Thus sorcery success is dealt a negative modifier if a spell is attempted in the presence of other thinking beings (i.e., not animals, who act on *instinct*). The more people present, the greater the negative modifier. Spells cast in the middle of a large city, depending on the activity going on around the sorcerer, should be allocated a Poor to Improbable base chance of success. If the Target of a spell is cognizant and *willing*, grant a *more favorable chance.*

Likewise, if several individuals *concentrate together* on a *single effect* apply a bonus (e.g., **+10%**), for each one participating. Have each write *separately* on a piece of paper the Spell Statement that they are concentrating on — lots of opportunity for screw-ups here!

☞ **Is the Spellcaster Under Extreme Pressure or Stress While Attempting a Spell?**
Being chased through a blazing forest whilst being shot at with poison darts is not usually conducive to acts of supreme concentration — like the manipulation of the energies of an uncooperative star.

Stress tends to make clearing the mind and focusing on spellcasting difficult — a negative modifier should reflect this. If the sorcerer is *wounded* during spellcasting, their chance of success should suffer a **–1 to 10% for *each* Health Point lost.** If knocked ***unconscious*** during spellcasting, consider the effort a **Critical Failure**.

☞ **Has the Character Been on a Losing or Winning Streak?**
Ludo *likes* winners; Ludo *punishes* losers. How many of the things that the Character has tried recently (including non-magical acts) resulted in *failure?* If more than less, why should spellcasting be any different? Apply a negative Modifier. Likewise, if a Character's task attempts have been largely successful as of late, grant them a positive Modifier.

☞ **Has the Player Been Behaving Like a Real Jerk Lately?**
If so, feel free to give them the *full treatment* — especially if they are asking for the moon. In fact, why not have a moon fall out of the sky and *land* on them. A *small* moon.

Ridiculous Rituals: Spellcasting Modifiers

Ritualistic Modifiers, spellcasting rituals or material components, are introduced into the spellcasting process by the *spellcaster.* You as GM have the ultimate say as to how effective each ritual is in contributing to the predictability of the spell. Action Modifiers are listed on the Ritual Modifier tables that follow.

Just how a would-be sorcerer stumbles upon the various spellcasting ritual options is up to you: the PC might overhear or observe another spellcaster engaged in some bizarre ritual during spellcasting and try to apply it themselves during the casting of one of their own spells. You are encouraged to expand on the rituals and modifiers provided here. The sillier the better!

Poetic Justice: Verbal Rituals

The magical laws of Ludo are not *completely* insensitive. There are ways a sorcerer can gain greater control over the resulting effect of their spells: they may, for example, use… poetry.

If a PC makes their Spell Statement in a ***poetic form of four lines or more,*** their spell has a greater chance of coming out as intended (GM discretion).

An additional bonus depends on *how the Character verbalizes* the spellcasting poem. The sorcerer may opt to whisper their Spell Statement, speak it aloud, scream it at the top of their lungs (and attract the attention of everyone within miles...) or sing (and risk causing everyone within earshot to retch).

Lets Get Physical: Gesture Rituals

You should grant further Spellcasting bonuses if a Character (and if you *really* want to have some fun, the *player*) engages in complicated rituals like hand gestures, or dancing (jumping up and down like they're being attacked by bees). All contribute to a lowering of the chance, or the extent that, a spell will be misinterpreted by you.

The Right Stuff: Spell Material Components

Spell components assist a spellcaster's efforts to *focus their mind* on the task at hand. The bonus modifier you award for the use of

Spell Statement Poetry Table

Poetry Type (minimum 4 lines)	Spellcasting Bonus
Blank Verse	+10 %
Rhyming Verse with Successful Scanning	+20 %

Spell Statement Vocal Ritual Table

Voicing Method	Spellcasting Bonus
No Sound (Spell Statement Written)	–20 %
Whisper	–10 %
Speak	0
Yell (Voice Loudly)	+10 %
Sing	+20 %

Spell Statement Gesture Ritual Table

Type of Spellcasting Gesture Ritual	Spellcasting Bonus
Complex Hand Gestures	+10 %
Wild Dancing & Leaping	+20 %
Original Invention of the Character	+30 %

GAMEMASTER TIP

Sorcery

BELIEF IS THE KEY to magic. A small group of PCs (usually) cannot 'out-believe' larger groups. Example: five PCs chant, "We want the bridge to disappear." The forty Frost Giants standing on the bridge are *convinced* that it is not going anywhere. The bridge stays put.

GAMEMASTER TIP

Alien Sorcerers

THERE ARE TWO WAYS of dealing with experienced magic using PCs transported to Murphy's World from settings with class-based systems: either make magic-users the *only* Characters capable of casting spells, or grant them a *huge* advantage over inexperienced spellcasters.

RIGHT:

Three Adventurers Get Their Wish

Three Dwarvish warriors are being chased by a party of Drow mercenaries. By sheer fortune one of their number, Manfred, stumbles upon a Teleportation Gate, and manages to activate it. As our three confused and panic stricken heroes plunge into the swirling abyss, each clings to a single thought:

Ethelwulf:
"If only I could get close to that Drow Warlord, I'd rip his lungs out!"

Diogenese:
"Oh please let me end up in the last place where the Drow would think of looking for me…."

Manfred:
"I want to go home."

A moment later the three find themselves sprawled on the floor of the dank dungeons in the palace ***home*** *of the Drow despot, Lord Snodgrass — the* ***last place*** *the Drow would ever think of looking for them.*

spell material components is entirely up to you. Take into account the ***rarity*** of the components; whether they are ***consumed*** in the casting process; how much they ***represent*** the desired effect; how ***'close'*** they are to the intended Target of the spell (e.g., a lock of hair, a favorite ring, etc.), and the amount of ***faith*** you believe the Character is investing in the *effectiveness* of the material components.

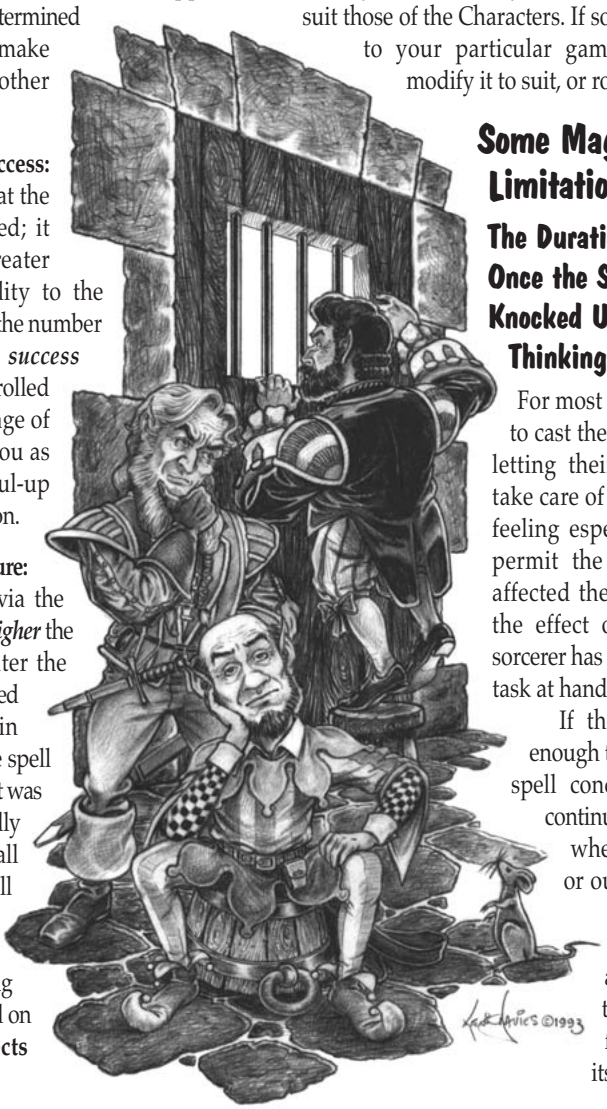
An alternative type of material component is simply a ***small object***: a totem, talisman, etc., that the sorcerer keeps about them as an all-purpose focusing agent. Apply a **+10% bonus** when such a device is used in spellcasting.

All of the spellcasting rituals mentioned may be used separately, or in any combination with one another, except that the sorcerer may select *only one from each category* (e.g., the spellcaster must choose speak or scream; gesture or jump.) Used effectively, the rituals enable a Character to produce powerful and mostly tamper proof spells, regardless of their sorcery experience, while ensuring that everyone else has a few good laughs.

Sorcery Skill: The Act of Spellcasting

Once a spellcaster has factored in all the applicable Action Modifiers and has determined an Action Value they then make an **Action Roll** as per any other Skill (see page **69**).

- **Sorcery Action Roll Success:** this does not ensure that the spell occures as desired; it simply grants a greater amount of predictability to the spell as cast. The ***lower*** the number rolled the ***greater the success*** achieved. The number rolled represents the percentage of the overall spell that you as GM are at liberty to foul-up through misinterpretation.
- **Sorcery Action Roll Failure:** can also be managed via the Action Roll result. The ***higher*** the number rolled the greater the degree of ***failure.*** A misfired spell could result in nothing happening, the spell taking effect in a way that was not expected, or a totally screwy interpretation of all or any part of the spell (e.g., the sorcerer glows pink for a few days…). **Critical Failures** during spellcasting require a roll on the **Magic Failure Effects Tables** (see page **85**).



Resisting Sorcery Spells

If a Character is attempting to inflict a Sorcery spell upon someone who is opposing it, they can attempt to resist the spell with a **WIL Roll** (see **Opposed Action Resistance Roll**, page **70**). Because spells have an extended Duration, the target of the spell is permitted to attempt to resist ***once per turn***; each time they fail they must apply a **–1% penalty toward their Action Value** — until they succeed in resisting or cease their effort to resist.

Spellcasting Failure Effects

The **Magic Failure Effects Tables** (page **85**) are provided as a reference for spellcasting failures. Use it only as a last resort when you've exhausted your own ideas for nasty failure effects during a gaming session. Once you've determined the Duration for a specific effect, don't let the PC know how long the effect will last (unless it is especially nasty and it's permanent — in which case the player may wish to have their PC jump off a cliff and roll up a new one).

In some cases you might have to refer to your current RPG system or modify the values listed in the table to suit those of the Characters. If something doesn't apply to your particular gaming situation, simply modify it to suit, or roll again.

Some Magical Limitations to Consider:

The Duration of Cast Spells Once the Spellcaster is Knocked Unconscious or is Thinking of Other Things

For most spells, sorcerers expect to cast them and be done with it, letting their expected Durations take care of themselves. If you are feeling especially picky, you can permit the object or individual affected the opportunity to resist the effect of the spell once the sorcerer has taken their mind off the task at hand.

If the sorcerer was smart enough to stipulate among their spell conditions that the spell continues to function normally when they are out of sight, or out of mind (i.e., asleep, unconscious, or simply no longer thinking about the effect) then the spell continues to function as directed until its Duration expires.



The Duration of Spells Once the Spellcaster Dies

When a sorcerer dies, all of his or her ***temporary*** **Duration** spells are immediately ***negated.*** Plus, you have the option of terminating any or all *permanent* Duration spells cast during the lifetime of the sorcerer. Those most likely to terminate should be spells cast upon intelligent beings and living creatures.

Once a sorcerer dies, all intelligent or self-aware beings (including inanimate objects with personalities), are permitted a new chance to resist the effects of the sorcery (if they so choose) by making a **Willpower Roll.** The affected individual is permitted to attempt the roll ***once every*** **100 hours.** ***Inanimate objects*** without personalities are permitted one (only) chance of resistance (**10%**) upon the death of the sorcerer who enchanted them. Anything that succeeds in resisting returns to its pre-enchanted state.

Mass Creation Spells

Unless specifically stipulated by a spell's condition(s), food, drink, gasses, or any other substance created by a sorcerer will not directly cause discomfort, harm, the loss of Health Points, or death to anyone or anything.

If a spell is used to fabricate the body of an animal or an intelligent being, it does not automatically possess life, or consciousness; it appears as a 'dead' body. Life and consciousness can be entrenched in an inanimate form through other enchantments under appropriate spell conditions.

Any liquid or solid (but not gas) produced through sorcery is affected by natural physical forces (e.g., gravity, erosion, wind, etc.).

When a solid is produced from a gas or liquid, or a liquid produced from a gas (hence occupying less volume/area than in its original form), no vacuum is produced. The other surrounding gas (i.e., air) or liquid, will form, and occupy vacated space without any further effect.

Unless stated otherwise, magically created or enhanced gas is *evenly dispersed* within the spell's Area of Effect, and is not affected by wind or gravity. The enchanted gas terminates abruptly at the edge of the Area of Effect; the matter outside the area is normal and unaffected.

Magic Failure Effects Tables

b. Area of Spell Failure Effect Table (Roll 2d10)

No. Rolled	Area of Effect
2 – 5	Sorcerer (or Item User) only.
6 – 10	Sorcerer (or Item User) and anyone touching them .
11 – 14	Sorcerer (or Item User) and anyone within 1d10 foot [metre] radius.
15 – 17	Sorcerer (or Item User) and anyone within 2d10 foot [metre] radius.
18 – 19	Sorcerer (or Item User) and anyone within 3d10 foot [metre] radius.
20	Anyone within 4d10 foot [metre] radius, but sorcerer *not* affected.

c. Duration of Spell Failure Effect Table (Roll 2d10)

No. Rolled	Duration of Effect
2 – 5	1d10 seconds
6 – 10	1d10 periods of 10 seconds
11 – 14	1d10 minutes
15 – 17	1d10 hours
18 – 19	1d10 days
20	Permanent

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Style

RELAX and enjoy yourself. Make sure you're having fun too.

Magic Failure Effects Table

a. Spellcasting Critical Failure Effects (Roll 1d100)

No Rolled	Spell Failure Effect
1	Feel **intoxicated;** loose tongue, improved courage.
2	**Headache;** incapacitated if under stress.
3	Blinding **pain,** then loss of consciousness.
4	Intense muscle & joint **pain. WIL Roll** or scream.
5	Loss of **sight;** blinded.
6	Loss of **hearing;** deaf.
7	Loss of **smell** & **taste** sense.
8	Loss of **touch** sense; body goes numb.
9	Acquire **skin disease;** flaking itchy, blotchy skin.
10	Lose ability to **speak.**
11	Begin to speak with a **stutter** or **slur.**
12	Begin **babbling** like an idiot, speak gibberish.
13	**Choke** and **cough;** 80% chance incapacitated.
14	Body **spasms** and convulses, then collapses.
15	**Random transformation** of one body part.
16	**Random transformation** of entire body.
17	**Add 1d10 years** to current age.
18	**Subtract 1d10 years** from current age (min. 1 yr.).
19	**Grow by 1d10 inches [cm]** (keep same proportions).
20	**Add 2d10 lbs [kg]** to weight.
21	**Subtract 2d10 lbs [kg]** from weight (min. weight 1 lb.).
22	**Shrink by 1d10 inches [cm]** (keep same proportions).
23	Begin to **hear creature's** growls approaching.
24	**Suspect** that a 'friend' is conspiring against you and that you might be murdered while you sleep.
25	Feel **paranoid** about everyone.
26	Feel unhappy, **pessimistic;** all will turn sour.
27	Feel happy, **optimistic** that all will turn out OK.
28	Feel **invincible,** fearless, +80% increase in courage and bravery (whether desired or not).
29	Feel tired, **fatigued;** reduce HP by half.
30	Feel **Sleepy;** 60% chance consciousness loss.
31	Feel dizzy and **disoriented;** 20% chance fall down if not steadied. 10% chance of vomiting.
32	Feel **cold** — as if outside in winter.
33	Feel **warm** — as if in a sauna.
34	**Confused:** you suddenly forget why you're here.
35	**Hallucinate** strange creatures and landscapes.
36	**Illusion:** the thing your PC fears/dreads the most.
37	**Eyes bulge** and rotate in unnatural directions.
38	**Lifted** by supernatural forces and tossed about like a rag doll.
39	**Paralysis, one arm;** drop what you're holding.
40	**Paralysis, both arms;** drop what you're holding.
41	**Paralysis, one leg;** 50% chance of falling down.
42	**Paralysis, both legs;** fall down immediately.
43	PC's clothes & possessions **attack** them.
44	PC **attacked** by one of the 4 elements.
45	Within area one **element** undergoes radical flux.
46	**Area** around PC is dramatically altered physically.
47	Desire to take **risks,** gamble, chances, adventure.
48	Begin to **crave wealth** & fine food (above all else).
49	Begin to **crave fame** & heroism (above all else).
50	Begin to **crave arcane lore** (above all else).
51	Prevents/cures **intoxication,** drunkenness.
52	Instant **revival** of nearest unconscious lifeform.
53	Instant cure of **deafness.**
54	Instant cure of loss of **smell** & **taste** sense.
55	Instant cure of **blindness** & eye disorders.
56	Instant cure of any **disease** afflicted with.
57	Instant cure of **paralysis.**
58	Instant cure of stutter, **speech** loss or impediment.
59	Instant cure of **skin disease,** scars, imperfections.
60	All body and head **hair falls out.**
61	**Hair color** turns pure white.
62	**Hair color** turns (choose: gold, orange, red).
63	**Hair color** turns (choose: green, blue, purple).
64	**Hair color** turns night black.
65	Area begins to draw **supernatural creatures.**
66	PC can no longer receive **nourishment** from food — must discover something else to sustain them.
67	Become **'irresistibly attractive'** to the opposite sex.
68	Become **'ugly'** to members of the opposite sex.
69	PC is now more **attractive** to everyone.
70	**Fall in love** with next person of opposite sex seen.
71	Begin to **crave love** & romance (above all else).
72	Feel a **slight shock:** take 1d6 HP damage.
73	Feel a **moderate shock:** take 2d6 HP damage. WIL Roll or yell due to the pain.
74	Feel a **strong shock:** take 3d6 HP damage. WIL Roll or scream from intense pain.
75	Restore all **lost HP** to normal level.
76	Regenerate any **lost limbs** permanently in 1 hour.
77	Acquire **'sonarsense';** 'see' via sound echo inside.
78	Acquire **'darksight';** see in minimal light, 100'.
79	Acquire 100% resistance to **illusions.**
80	A mischievous **spirit** attaches itself to the PC.
81	PC becomes focus for **supernatural** phenomenon.
82	Contract **lycanthropy** (were-wolf disease).
83	Turn **invisible** — no longer solid matter!
84	Begin to **glow** (choose: golden, green, red, blue).
85	**Skin color** turns (choose: yellow, orange, red).
86	**Skin color** turns (choose: green, blue, purple).
87	**Skin color** turns night black.
88	**Skin color** turns pure white.
89	**Skin turns translucent** — see-through!
90	Ability to **'breathe' under water.**
91	Ability to **'breathe' noxious gases/air.**
92	Ability to **see** at will, the Aetherial Plane.
93	Teleport to **Aetherial Plane** including possessions.
94	Teleport to where **your services** are needed.
95	Teleport to a **place of danger** (e.g., monster's lair).
96	Teleport of a **monster** near you — **1d10 ft [m]** away!
97	Rift in **mana** flux — natural laws go haywire.
98	**Air crackles** (loud noises) The immediate area now has become intensely magical — high mana.
99	Suddenly you 'see' a closed **Teleportation Gate.**
100	**Teleportation Gate opens** — dimensional access!

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Style

LIGHTEN UP. That's it, the big secret to running Murphy's World (and living a long and happy life for that matter).

If an effect is 'entrenched' on a moveable object (e.g., a stone), the Area of Effect remains centered on the entrenched object and moves with it, wherever it is taken, until its Duration concludes.

The Duration of Created or Transformed Matter

When a magically created substance is created for a temporary Duration and ingested (e.g., water or food), the person who drank or ate the substance will not feel any adverse effect other than that of thirst or hunger when the Duration is over. This hunger or thirst is equal to what it would have been had they not ingested the magical nourishment in the first place. Thus magic can be used to quench a thirst or appetite (occasionally thus saving an individual's life) for a limited period without any major negative physical or mental effects.

The same rule applies to temporarily created Health Points. These tide a Character over until their own body replenishes the lost HP through rest.

Annihilated Matter & Energy

When Annihilated, matter or energy in their various forms vanish from their current Plane and reappear in the **Null Plane.** The Null Plane is not a place that can be adventured in (unless of course you're very, very different from the rest of us). It is more like a swampy-soup of mixed-up mass and energy broken down into atomic particles. However, since these particles have a 'tag' associated with them, they can be recalled — if the Annihilation spell was temporary in Duration or if one knows how to look for a permanently Annihilated item. If trying to retrieve a permanently Annihilated item, the sorcerer must be extremely specific about what they are bringing back, otherwise, should they miss any important elements, the object or being might return incomplete and not survive or prove useless.

Any object or creature Annihilated for a temporary Duration will return in the same condition as when it left. An individual so affected will not remember where they were while gone nor will they have experienced any passage of time — an hourglass loses no grains of sand while in a temporary state of Annihilation.



Divine Intervention

A process otherwise known as asking the GM for a break.

If a Character has adopted a deity (or deities) for their own, they may attempt to communicate with their god through meditative prayer and seek advice or direct aid in whatever challenge they're presented with. This does *not*, however, mean that the deity must comply. In fact, the **Perfect Plane** (where most of the hip deities hang out) has a strict social code in place to curb such 'influence mongering' with the manipulatable mortals of the universe.

First of all, just associating with a mortal is, under most circumstances, considered *déclassé*. Since most of the status for an immortal is based on the number of worshippers they claim, they occasionally condescend to communicate briefly with mortals, but usually try to conceal it from their peers. Thus, ***the currency of the gods is worshippers,*** and the more worshippers a Character can convert to the support of a specific deity, the more that deity is likely to do for them when they call for guidance or assistance.

Who Qualifies as a Deity?

Good question. The short answer is: *anyone a Character chooses to worship*. But whether they can grant Divine Favors is another matter. You may have noticed by now that Murphy's World is populated with several cultures whose members may have been Deified at one time or another; this is simply the result of a lack of discretion on the part of many worshippers. Seriously, do you think any *real* Deity would spend more than a fortnight *on* Murphy's World when they could be sunning themselves on the Perfect Plane? *Real* Deities are somewhere in the ætherial *out-there*….

Gaining the Favor of a Deity: Favor Status

This is the degree to which a chosen Deity regards a Character as a pal, a dude, a devoted servant, and worthy of his or her supernatural blessings. There are a number of actions a PC can take to alter their status with their chosen Deity. These acts convey a ***Favor Bonus*** (or ***Penalty***) toward the PC in question when they attempt to communicate with their Deity and obtain a response or assistance. Some refer to this as 'sucking-up'.

A Character's **Favor Status** is the equivalent of a good (or bad) deeds bank account representing their popularity with their Deity and serves as a **Base Action Value (BAV)** for **Deity Invocation Skill.** Keep track of the current 'Favor Status' for *each* Deity the PC worships.

Deity Invocation Skill: Gaining the Blessing and/or Assistance of a Deity

Any PC who has a history of honorable service to their Deity may invoke His or Her name in the hope of assistance, etc, (e.g., "in the name of Bumpfy, Lord of Acid Indigestion…," "may Mort the Merciless guide my sword," or "in Ethel's name…"). If your cause is deemed a *noble* one (translate as *politically profitable* for the Deity) or if you are considered *too useful a mortal to lose at this time*, they may look kindly on your circumstances and provide assistance; empowering you to succeed — although you still may get very beat-up in the process.

Whenever a Character makes an effort to speak with their Deity (e.g., prays), all they have done is the equivalent of dialing the Deity's telephone number. It is up to the 'god' (as played by you) to decide how to receive the Character's call. If the Character has interrupted the Olympian equivalent of a shower… well, how do *you* feel when called to stand dripping by the phone?

Just how, or even whether, the Deity responds to the call depends upon the Character's *current* **Favor Status** (see **Deity Response Table**, page **87**) accumulated up to



that time with that Deity (and whether or not any of the Deity's snooty friends are around to witness).

When players want their PCs to contact their Deities, they must do the following:

1. Note the *current* **Favor Status BAV** recorded on their Character Sheet from past **Favor Status Actions.**
2. Apply any applicable ***penalties*** and ***bonuses***, including those from the **How You Make Your Request** and **Why You're Contacting Your Deity** tables, as Action Modifiers to the PC's Favor Status.
3. Make a **Deity Invocation Roll** (1d100 Action Roll), to determine whether the call is answered. The act of making this roll effectively ***spends all*** the **positive Favor Status** the PC has 'banked'; regardless of whether the call was successful or not — reducing Deity Invocation BAV to ***zero***. *Negative* Favor Status remains and accumulates until returned to a positive Favor Status.

Should a PC's Favor Status ever drop to a ***negative number*** (not recommended for a PC's health), they may still act to raise it. Until it rises above zero, they may be visited by the agents of Deities with interests *opposite* those of their chosen Deity, proffering various 'offers' in an effort to convince them to switch the object of their 'worship'.

Finally, even if the PC's request is granted, and their enemies hop away amid cries of ribbit! ribbit!, remember that the Deity expects a return on their investment… roughly proportional to the supernatural assistance provided.

Deity Favor Status Actions

A. BECOME A 'CONVERT' to the cult/religion/belief system of the Deity and continue to worship. Worship is defined as a Character's spiritual reliance on the Deity for *mental stability, guidance,* and *comfort* — the usual things…. Plus, Characters swear *by* (not at) the Deity, *pray to* and *praise* what they *believe* to be the works (miracles) of the Deity.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+1% the *first time* a PC ***worships*** their Deity.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–1% for *each time* a PC ***blasphemes***/takes the name of their Deity in vain.

–5% for *each time* a PC ***denies*** the worship of their Deity.

–10% for each time a PC is ***visited by a supernatural servant*** of a competing Deity and *does not immediately demand he/she/it leave.*

B. LEARN AND FAITHFULLY CARRY OUT MINOR RITUALS or acts to advance the popularity or assert the authority of the Deity. This may include self-induced or clerically ordained *penance,* living by some specific (and seemingly silly) *moral code,* and practicing certain (possibly embarrassing) *social rituals* to reflect the worship of the specific Deity and reinforce the faith of the believer.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+1% per each *month* a PC ***lives*** *as instructed* to by the teachings of their faith.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–5% for each time a PC ***denies*** knowledge of acts or rituals they know how to perform, or have performed.

C. LEARN AND CARRY OUT CEREMONIES and major rituals (at least **1 hour** in length), in the name of advancing the popularity, or reasserting the authority of the Deity. Such rituals may include the ordination of a novice priest, investment of a senior clergyperson, final absolution, blessing, marriage, excommunication, exorcism, interdiction, baptism, purification, high mass, funeral rites. Of course, the ceremonies and rituals should make no sense whatsoever.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+1% per ***ceremony*** *performed correctly* with *sincere devotion.*

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–10% for each time a PC ***denies*** the knowledge of ceremonies they know how to perform, or have attended.

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Power

MURPHY'S WORLD gives you a lot of control over the outcome of events. Don't powertrip. It is crucial that your players feel that their PCs are free to try things within their capabilities and have a reasonable chance of success. If you take away your player's freedom of action you will lose their interest and the enjoyment of the game for all.

How You Make Your Request (Temporary Favor Bonus)

	Description	Temporary Favor Bonus
A.	Spontaneous outburst (verbal or mental plea)	—
B.	Through ritual or ceremony (lasting at least 1 hour)	+1% / hour
C.	With the combined mental focus of several worshippers	+1% per worshipper who makes their Deity Invocation Roll

Why You're Contacting Your Deity (Temporary Favor Penalty)

	Request	Description of benefit requested	Temporary Favor Penalty
A.	Guidance	A minor tip or bit of guidance	–1%
B.	Knowledge	Anything within the Deity's memory	–2%
C.	Blessing	Die roll bonus for specific task/activity	–3%
D.	Inspiration	Stat or LP bonus; will not feel pain	–4%
E.	Assistance	Minor miracle or power transfer	–5%
F.	Miracle	Major miracle or power transfer	–10%

Deity Response Table (Response Varies With Favor Status)

Favor Status (Action Value)	Attitude and response of deity when called upon through a successful Deity Invocation Roll (Action Roll, 1d100), based on Favor Status (Action Value)
≤ –11%	Angry; disapproves of the Character calling, may retaliate unpleasantly.
0 to –10%	Will ignore/not respond to the prayers/call of the Character.
1 to 4%	Responds tersely; Character is not deserving of the Deity's attentions.
5 to 9%	Reluctantly listens, then suggests the Character looks inward for help.
10 to 19	Listens, gives limited advice, but nothing extraordinary.
20 to 29	Listens, gives helpful advice and information to the Character.
30 to 39	Listens with interest, makes enthusiastic suggestions and gives helpful advice and information to the Character.
40 to 59	Listens with interest, makes enthusiastic suggestions and gives helpful advice and information to the Character. Will perform a minor miracle if asked to (e.g., temporarily enchant an existing inanimate object).
60 to 79	Listens with interest, makes enthusiastic suggestions and gives helpful advice and information to the Character. Will perform a moderate miracle if asked to (e.g., place an enchantment on a living subject).
≥ 80	Listens with interest, makes enthusiastic suggestions and gives helpful advice and information to the Character. Will perform any miracle if asked to (e.g., place an enchantment on a group of living subjects, permanently enchant an inanimate object).

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Style

HEY, we *really* mean it. *Lighten up.* Take your plots in fun, unexpected, and interesting directions. Let yourself be guided by the following words of wisdom spoken by the ancient roleplay guru Ming Poo: "Of course it's a stupid idea. Let's run with it."

D. PREACH/PROSELYTIZE ABOUT THE DEITY and attempt to *convert others* to the faith.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+10% per *each* ***convert*** to the faith which the PC's preaching or example served as the prime reason for conversion.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–20% for *each convert which is* ***turned away*** from the PC's faith due to the preaching or example they provide.

E. PERFORM 'GOOD WORKS' on behalf of and in keeping with the philosophy of their Deity. Of course if they worship an *evil* deity, good works are *bad* works….

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+1% per *each* ***good work*** *performed.*

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–5% for *each* ***hostile act*** performed against the designs or philosophies of the PC's Deity.

F. COMPLETE A PILGRIMAGE to a distant shrine, temple, or 'holy' place which is strong in power and a *significant essence* of the PC's Deity.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+10% for ***successfully completing a pilgrimage*** as originally vowed.

Also, **+1%** for each life-threatening obstacle overcome during the journey.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–20% for ***not completing a pilgrimage*** as originally vowed. Also, *lose all favor accumulated* during the journey.

G. ACT TO FRUSTRATE THE PLANS of any other Deity or supernatural power while directly serving the cause of their Deity. This might include: the destruction, desecration or theft of a sacred object, symbol, relic, shrine, church, coven site, etc.; the protection of existing sacred objects, shrines, or churches devoted to their Deity; and the *passing on of important information* to the Deity.

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+5% per *each* ***act performed*** by the PC which directly *frustrates the expansion of an alternate faith* — without bringing any negative popularity toward their Deity.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
– 10% for *each* ***act performed*** by the PC which although damaging the faith in an alternate cult, also *damages the reputation or belief* in their Deity.

H. ESTABLISH A NEW FIXED SITE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP at least **1 mile [1.6 km]** from any other existing site devoted to the Deity with at least **10 permanent attendant worshippers.**

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+20% per *each* ***site established*** and initially supervised by the PC.

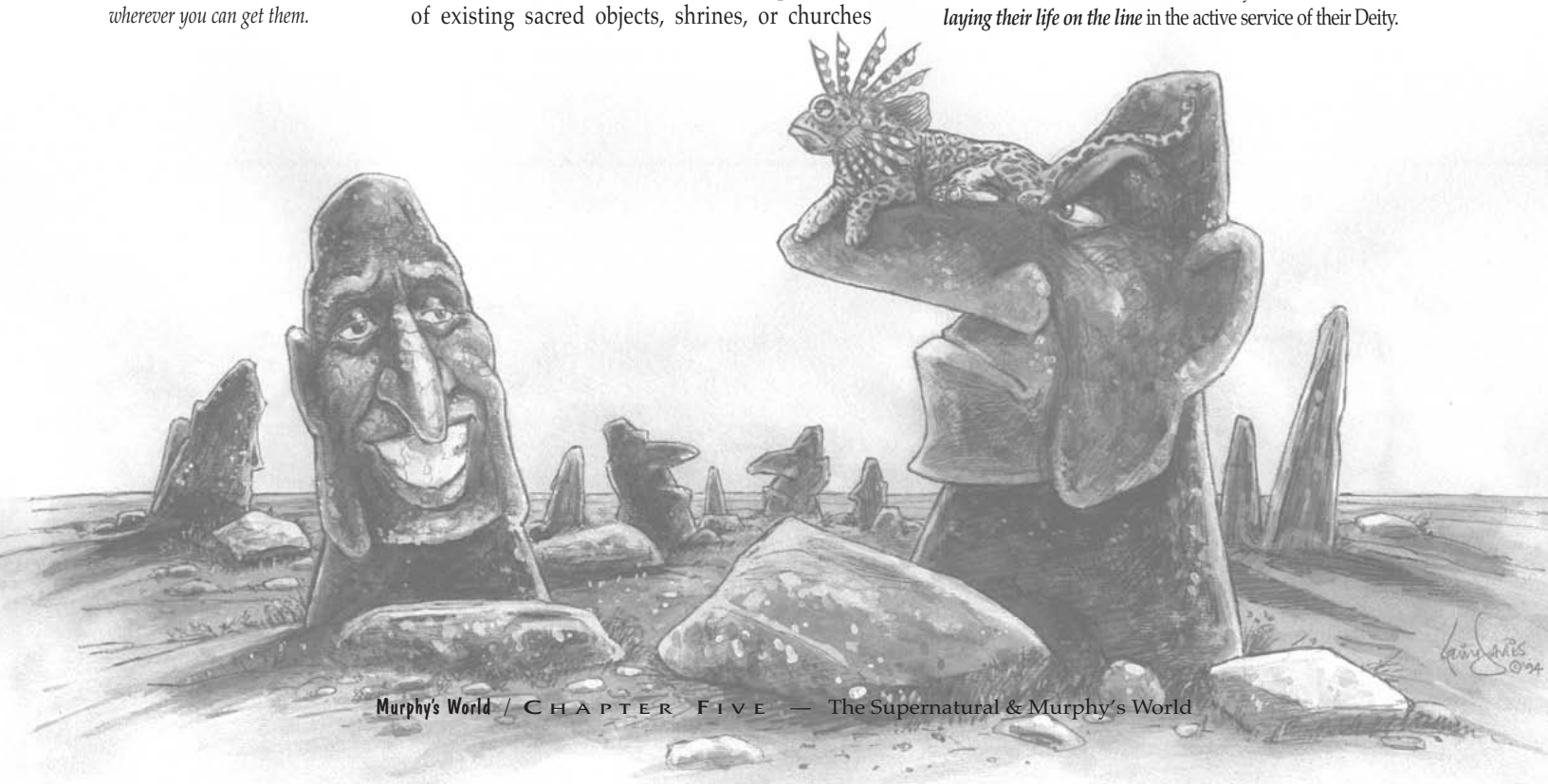
☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–50% for *each* ***site which is destroyed*** or abandoned due to the PC's direct intervention or neglect.

I. WILLINGNESS TO RISK THEIR LIFE to aid the cause of the worship of their Deity. This only applies when demonstrated by *deeds* — words and thoughts are meaningless. Risks might be *passive,* such as allowing themself to be ***imprisoned, tortured,*** or ***martyred in death,*** (though why one would submit to this is difficult to fathom), or *active,* such as acting or ***fighting against the forces representing another supernatural power*** (for those who believe in taking a few of the enemy with them…).

☞ ***Favor Bonus:***
+30% per *each occasion where* the PC *lays his or her* ***life on the line*** in the active service of their Deity.

☞ ***Favor Penalty:***
–30% for *each occasion where* the PC *has refused or* ***avoided laying their life on the line*** in the active service of their Deity.

BELOW: Sometimes you just have to take your smiles wherever you can get them.



CHAPTER SIX

The Teleportation Gates
And Other Tech — A Gamemaster Perspective

THE TELEPORTATION GATES are a device you can use to move Characters from any other gaming world to Murphy's World and back. They are something like an intergalactic telephone/fax/courier service — except they transmit living beings and inanimate objects instead of just voices and data.

There are many types of Gates throughout the multiverse. Samples of most of these types can be found on Murphy's World. This seems to indicate that a) Murphy's World is (or was) a popular place, and b) someone couldn't make up their mind about which technology to go with. Unfortunately, there are as many ways to operate the Gates as there are designs. This occasionally leads to confusion and serious compatibility problems — some Gates simply won't accept certain things or beings….

Classifying the Teleportation Gates

For the most part, Gates can be broadly classified as listed in the **Teleportation Gate Classification Table** (see page **90**), though you are welcome to add any other conditions you wish to provide Characters with a 'memorable' Gate experience.) To determine the features of a Gate, either roll randomly or choose any elements you like from the table. Remember, getting there is half the fun!

Getting the Characters to Murphy's World

A Teleportation Gate may exist in some form in your current campaign world. You should first decide whether you want your Characters to discover the Gate (or the device that opens it) or whether it encounters them (as a natural phenomenon like a storm, or as a supernatural event). Some examples follow, but the options are endless and ultimately depend on what is appropriate for your campaign:

Characters Discover & Act On:

- A mysterious artifact that when activated or used 'properly' opens a Gate. Little do they know where it leads….
- The writings of a scholar or sorcerer that describes a ritual which opens a Gate. The ritual is performed by the Characters… it works!
- A strange abnormality that appears in what should be an 'empty' space, or in a supposedly 'solid' object. Something is as it shouldn't be. Their investigations lead them into the beyond….
- A unfamiliar natural construct that behaves unlike any previously encountered. Close proximity is all it takes to whisk them away….
- An advertisement for a mysterious travel agency that promises them the vacation of their lives, for a nominal fee. They step into the office, and the agent sends them off….

Characters Encounter & Are Acted Upon By:

- A local weather condition that engulfs the Characters (e.g., fog, tornado, ball-lightning, snowstorm, whirlpool) — when their vision clears, they are no longer in Kansas, Toto….
- An offensive spell, curse, or backfiring spell that opens a Gate.
- A vision that seems to transport the Characters to Murphy's World. The trip actually takes place only *in the minds* of the Characters. The trip could be the result of a temporary period of unconsciousness (perhaps due to a combat wound), a supernatural effect, a near-death experience, a dream, a drug trip, a form of virtual entertainment, or part of a training experience (magical, virtual, or psionic).

Teleportation Gate Activation

The process of activating most Gates is like plonking a computer illiterate down in front of a computer with loads of pre-defined hot-keys and macros, and seeing what happens next. They either get nowhere, accidentally hit upon an an active function (e.g., open a program), or crash the computer (all of which is possible with regards to a Gate).

The most common Gate activation system is similar to making a phone call: a Character must input a pattern via **pressing a minimum of 3 'hot-spots'** to activate the Gate (you may want to use seven, ten, eleven, or larger number patterns). Having done this, the Character gains access to an 'zone' of potential Gate destinations. Should they enter the Gate at this time, they are transported to another Gate. The only control they have over their destination depends upon their individual Willpower (make a **Willpower Roll**) and the ***last thing they were thinking about*** prior to plunging into the void. The Character arrives at the exit portal closest to the destination most closely resembling what was on their mind as they entered the abyss.

Should two or more beings plunge through together, their destination can be determined in more than one way. Under the first option, if each being is thinking of a *different* destination, they will arrive at the place desired by the being with the ***greatest*** **Willpower** (having made a successful Willpower Roll). Under the second option, they will arrive at the destination ***matching the thoughts of the majority*** of lifeforms being transported. As a third possibility, the group can be transferred to a place that ***matches as many of the travellers different thoughts*** as possible. Lastly, the confused Gate can simply drop the entire party into a random location. Travellers in a group are *never* transported to different locations.

To be transported to a *specific* Gate destination, a Character must input the **precise destination codes**. All Gates have coded names/numbers. Some have more elaborate numbers than others. A few require that an 'operator' be consulted.

If Characters happen to dial 'operator assistance' they will be confronted by a rather bored looking person (humanoid or otherwise) on the other side of the Gate — which they cannot pass through. The Operator will ask them their current location and the number of the Gate they are trying to reach. If they cannot provide this information, the Operator will tell them (in a polite/bored way) that they cannot be assisted at this time, and hang up. Some Gate Operators are a cornucopia of gossip and intergalactic trivia. Many Operators are willing to talk with the dialers for as long as they are polite and interesting.

GAMEMASTER TIP

Teleportation

FORGET WALKING. Feel free to use the Teleportation Gates as a convenient way to transport the PCs from one adventure site to another. This way you can set your adventures in distant parts of the world and not have to worry about how to get the PCs to the location in a plausible way: a fog rolls in, a wind whips up, and they're there!

Should the PCs dial the equivalent of 911, they will be connected to **Intergalactic Emergency Assistance.** They will be required to answer a flurry of questions as to their status. If the emergency operator decides that the call is a prank or inappropriate, the PCs might be fined, or even serve time in a galactic penitentiary. Still, it's one way to get off Murphy's World.

Each activated Teleportation Gate analyzes the material and/or beings passing through it, and imparts to sentient beings the ability to comprehend and speak the language of their destination. Of course for some Gates, this may be the feature which is partially on the fritz — certain words may be translated (when heard, read, written, and/or spoken) completely wrong and out of context.

Technology On Murphy's World

As might be expected, technology and the supernatural forces radiating from Ludo mix like oil and water. This is not to say that it is impossible for technology to operate on Murphy's World — it will — just don't *rely* on it.

Teleportation Gate Classification Table (Roll 1d10 Per Option or Choose)

Number Rolled	Teleportation Gate/Dimension Door Functional Options
A	**APPEARANCE BEFORE OR AFTER ACTIVATION (APPEARANCE OF GATE MAY OR MAY NOT ALTER):**
1	Invisible (totally undetectable to the naked eye).
2 – 3	Invisible but with an auditory locator (e.g., faint sound heard in vicinity, a notification beep, etc.).
4 – 7	Visible but not readily noticeable (e.g., fog, slight haze, bending of light, inky blackness, etc.).
8 – 9	Visible as a 'naturally created' Gateway (e.g., a rocky opening, a portal of woven vines, etc.).
10	Visible as a 'constructed' Gateway (e.g., impressive high-tech device, simple wooden door, etc.).
B	**OPERATIONAL CONDITION:**
1 – 2	In perfect working condition.
3 – 5	On the fritz; some features disabled. Gate smart enough to operate only if safe/possible.
6 – 8	On the fritz; some features disabled. Will operate in broken condition (may announce faults).
9	On the fritz; some features disabled. Will operate in broken condition (may lie about faults).
10	On the fritz; seriously faulty. Will operate in broken condition (may lie about faults).
C	**ACTIVATE VIA:**
1 – 3	Vocal command (e.g., 'Open'), or stimulating repartee: (e.g., recent news, gossip, etc.).
4 – 8	Coded physical actions (e.g., touch/press in a particular pattern and sequence, etc.)
9	A special access device (e.g., a key, card, sound emitter, etc.) magic, or psionics.
10	Always on and ready to serve.
D	**SPECIAL ACTIVATION EFFECTS:**
1 – 3	A sound (e.g., a zap, crackle, pop, a musical fanfare, a verbal 'hurrah', etc.).
4 – 6	A light (e.g., blinding flash, multicolored pulsing, swirling mass of inky space and stars,etc.).
7 – 8	A transformation of the Gate from one visual appearance to another (see option A).
9	A combination of the above.
10	No special activation effects.
E	**SPECIAL OPERATING FEATURES:**
1	A one-way Gate (leading either in to or out of Murphy's World).
2	Transports lifeforms not objects (you go, your clothes and possessions do not).
3	Transports objects not lifeforms (your clothes and possessions go, you don't).
4 – 5	Sentient, with limited personality if any; task oriented, functional, literal, command driven.
6 – 7	Sentient, with extensive personality: personable, conversational, helpful, curious, informative.
8 – 9	Sentient, with extensive personality: uncooperative, unfriendly, bored, aggressive, sarcastic.
10	No special operating features.
F	**ENTER OR EXIT VIA:**
1 – 5	Walking, running, diving into (Gate is vertical like a door, or hole in a wall).
6 – 8	Jumping down into (Gate is like a hole in the floor).
9	Climbing up or through (Gate is like a hole in the ceiling).
10	Standing very still (Gate expands or moves its area of effect).

As with so many things concerning this planet, the most important factors as to whether or not something functions in a predictable way are the ***number of conscious minds present,*** and the ***degree of faith*** they have in the device's operation. If all concerned *believe* there is enough fuel left in the tank of a vehicle to get from point A to B, there *is*. But if doubts begin to cloud their minds, it's guaranteed that someone will be walking to that next gas station, gas can in hand.

This concept rewards an *optimistic attitude* and penalizes a *pessimistic* one. Unfortunately, many visitors to the planet turn pessimistic shortly after they find they are marooned.

There is a lot of room for flexibility here. Create communities of techno-refugees who have tried to reproduce the high-tech conveniences of home. Unfortunately, they have been forced to use a combination of scrounged and kit-bashed parts from tech devices transported to the planet, local (often unorthodox) materials, and resources, since there is no proper source of spare parts. These devices should be patchwork assemblages of wires, tubes, pipes, hoses, pistons, and flywheels. Machinery should seem overly complicated, impractical, incomprehensible, and even impossible (e.g., a vehicle powered by small rodents chasing after breakfast). Think of a Rube Goldberg device, and you get the basic idea.

One maxim you should consider: the more *critical* a technological device, the *less likely* it will work as expected when required. This is nothing revolutionary — merely a depressing confirmation that life is not fair, that the powers above frown on those whom they deem to have risen too far, too fast, and that things just ain't the way they should be.

Finally, if a tech-device is *removed from a tech oriented area*, the chance of it failing (or developing independent tendencies) skyrockets.

Time Passage On Murphy's World

The time which passes for a Character while on Murphy's World may not be equal to the time passing on the world/setting where they are from. It may be more or less, and the disparity may range from a few seconds to hundreds of years!

You can use this to great advantage in plotting additional adventures. Murphy's World can thus become a tool to assemble a group of disparate Characters and then transport them to a desired period in time. After an adventure on Murphy's World, the Characters may return to their homeworld at a time before they left, after they left, or without any apparent loss of time at all! An observer might notice nothing more than a slight flicker and a quick change of pose of the figure as they vanish and reappear in a fraction of a second. Of course the leg cast, fresh scars, ripped clothing and an altered hairstyle may make them a bit suspicious….

CHAPTER SEVEN

People Are Strange...
or Going Native, Murphy's World Style!

Creating Gamemaster Characters (GMC)
Attitudes & Behavior

Unlike people on Earth (a real world with many impoverished societies), the people who populate the civilized regions of Murphy's World are for the most part happy and contented with their lot in life. Indeed, many display an aggressive pride in their limited possessions and the amount of ritual and effort they must put into their activities to accomplish what we consider the simplest of tasks, such as taking a bath. Even among those who have acquired a certain amount of wealth, permitting them to obtain conveniences which might make their job or life less laborious, many stick with the traditional and more time consuming ways. It's really quite baffling.

GMC Attributes

To define a GMC's Attributes, use either the average Attributes listed with each race description in this book, the Stats of your normal RPG system, or generate a generic GMC instantly by rolling **3d6 for each Attribute** (see **Instant Gamemaster Character Creation Table**, page **66**).

GMC Status & Vocation
(Roll 1d100 on Appropriate Terrain Where GMC Encountered)

Chance to Encounter if Met in: City	Country	Wilderness	Status (based on chart position) & Vocation
1	1	1	**Royalty:** Related to the Ruling/Royal Family
2	2	2	**Nobility:** Ruling Earl/Count & Landholding Knight
3	3	3	**Aristocracy:** Ruling Baron & Landholding Knight
4 – 6	4 – 5	4	**Bureaucrat:** Senior Clergy, Adviser, Scholar, Lawyer
7 – 9	6 – 7	5	**Merchant:** Trader (Goods/Services), Moneychanger
10 – 12	8 – 9	6	**Administrator:** Constable, Steward (Castle Mgr.)
13 – 17	10 – 12	7 – 8	**Minor Administrator:** Clerk, Scribe, Jr. Clergy, Reeve
18 – 30	13 – 17	9 – 20	**Freelance Pro.:** Artisan, Mercenary Soldier, Thief
31 – 45	18 – 25	21 – 24	**Free Peasant:** Yeoman Landowner, Freeholder
46 – 65	26 – 30	25 – 27	**Minor Merchant/Trader:** (of Goods & Services)
66 – 76	31 – 50	—	**'Protected' (bound) Artisan:** Skilled Craftsman
77 – 80	51 – 80	—	**'Protected' (bound) Landworker:** Serf, Laborer
80 – 95	81 – 90	28 – 80	**Wanderer:** Adventurer, Pilgrim, Friar, Beggar
95 – 100	91 – 100	81 – 100	**Exile:** Outlaw, Criminal

GMC Race Type (Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Race	No. Rolled	Race
1 – 10	Elf (Light)	56 – 60	Oni Ogre
11 – 13	Gandharva or Apsara Elf	61 – 63	Dsonoqua Ogre
14 – 15	Drow (Dark Elf)	64 – 68	Fir Darrig Pixie
16 – 25	Dwarf (Light)	69 – 72	Cluricaune Pixie
26 – 27	Trow (Dark Dwarf)	73 – 75	Spriggan Pixie
28 – 35	Brownie	76 – 85	Technocrat (Species?)
36 – 37	Thurses Giant	87 – 90	Suras Celestial
38 – 45	Aesir Giant	91 – 93	Kami Celestial
46 – 47	Yakshas Giant	94 – 95	Rakshasa
48 – 52	Vindawol Troll	96 – 98	Naga
53 – 55	Vanar Troll	99 – 100	Poughvidd

Gamemaster Character Background Tables

Provided below are tables to assist you in the quick creation of GMC background information. Feel free to use, add to, or disregard any tables you wish; roll as directed for each table.

Character Names

What's in a name? Well, if your name is Wee Willy Winkie, you can probably forget about becoming tribal leader…. People often *become* their names. The number of syllables which make up a name tends to have an effect upon how *classy* it sounds; names which have *one or two syllables* are more likely to sound rural or ***less worldly*** (e.g., Zeke, Jed, Jane). Names which tend to sound ***cultured*** have *two or more syllables* (e.g., Reginald, Timothy, Veronica).

One way to produce a humorous sounding name is to ***have the name 'say' something*** (e.g., a popular phase or statement or describe an activity), or use alliteration (first and last names begin with the same letter or sound). Some examples follow on the next page:

GMC Disposition at Moment Encountered
(Roll 1d10 When GMC Encountered)

No. Rolled	Current Disposition and/or Mood
1	**Happy:** joyous
2	**Friendly:** cheerful
3	**Curious:** questioning
4	**Shy:** observant
5	**Timid:** easily intimidated
6	**Worried:** evasive of inquiries
7	**Cautious:** not instantly trusting
8	**Cold:** uninterested
9	**Unfriendly:** abrasive and snappy
10	**Angry:** explosive

GMC Classified By Type: How the GM Uses Them
(Roll 1d10: GMC May Have One or More of the Following Traits)

No. Rolled	GMC Type: The Task or Goal of the GMC
1	**Helper:** aids PCs, gets them out of a tight spot.
2	**Provider:** gives PCs useful/important item(s).
3	**Informer:** gives PCs useful/important info, advice, tip, or warning.
4	**Challenger:** a friendly competitor working independently toward the same goal as the PCs.
5	**Distracter:** confuses or wastes the PC's time or resources.
6	**Incompetent:** a non-hostile, and even friendly, pain-in-the-ass, klutz, slowing the PCs via minor disasters and foul-ups.
7	**Betrayer:** after gaining the PCs confidence, this GMC causes them harm by giving away valuable information about the PCs or their goals (through ignorance or malice) to an antagonist.
8	**Saboteur:** tries to ensure the PCs failure through foul play, performing certain actions which decrease the PCs chances.
9	**Antagonist:** the main opponent, monster, villain, or adversary of the PCs.
10	**Roll *twice* again.**

GAMEMASTER TIP

GMC Voices

WHENEVER POSSIBLE, give exaggerated, and distinctive, voices to your GMCs — this includes creatures. It will make your GMCs more memorable.

Ibe Bac	Freida Fidget	Meta Morphic
Walter Concrete	Khanon Fyoddar	Gitt Serious
Tad Cynical	Happy Golucky	Sam Shale
Marble Dolomite	Runnar Grownd	Sid Shambles
Runnan Errand	Taka Hyke	Lickety Split
Poke Fester	Jake Jumpstart	Gail Storm

Humorous names for nasty characters should combine a *nasty sounding characteristic* with a *normal and timid name*. Alternatively, you can give them a nice, unassuming and respectable name — so that when they are finally met face-to-face, they are not what was expected.

Examples include:

Ben the Nasty	Irving the Miserable	Ned the Confused
Admiral Biff	Mad Jack Friendly	Roderic the Bloody
Doug the Destroyer	Evil Lord Melvin	Ted the Cruel
Eugene the Black	Lord Monty VI	Waldo the Wicked
Ivan the Not-So-Nice	Count Mortie	Zeke the Strange

Random Generation of Character Names

The **Character Names Table** will help you produce instant silly names by filling in the blanks in the following format:

"[(A) adjective)] [(B) name]."

or

"[(B) name)] THE [(A) adjective *or color*]."

Character Names Table (Roll 1d100 Twice: Frst for Column A, Then B)

No Rolled	(A) Adjective	(B) Name	No Rolled	(A) Adjective	(B) Name
1	Admirable	Abner	51	Loathing	Oswald
2	Accurate	Archibald	52	Mad	Otto
3	Acrobatic	Arnold	53	Moral	Penelope
4	Aesthetic	Bartholomew	54	Miserable	Phoebe
5	Amiable	Bridget	55	Nasty	Primo
6	Artful	Brill	56	Optimistic	Prudence
7	Backstabbing	Brunhilda	57	Puzzled	Ralph
8	Battleaxe	Burt	58	Paranoid	Reginald
9	Agreeable	Cheung	59	Passionate	Roderick
10	Assertive	Dowdy	60	Peaceful	Rodney
11	Attractive	Dwayne	61	Perfect	Ronald
12	Awkward	Egbert	62	Pitiful	Roxanne
13	Bonehead	Electra	63	Playful	Rupert
14	Bashful	Elroy	64	Powerful	Seth
15	Blissful	Elvira	65	Prophetic	Seymour
16	Bonebreaker	Elwood	66	Prosperous	Sheila
17	Brave	Erik	67	Pure	Sidney
18	Cautious	Ernie	68	Putrid	Sigmund
19	Charismatic	Eugene	69	Raging	Sven
20	Clever	Fabian	70	Rhymer	Thaddeus
21	Cranky	Faith	71	Riddling	Thelma
22	Cunning	Gertrude	72	Romancer	Tiffany
23	Deadly	Gilbert	73	Rotten	Trudy
24	Desperate	Griselda	74	Sad	Tyrone
25	Destitute	Grover	75	Sedate	Ula
26	Disgusting	Gwendolyn	76	Skulking	Ulric
27	Doubtful	Heidi	77	Skull-Crusher	Una
28	Embarrassed	Hubert	78	Silent	Veda
29	Dopey	Humphrey	79	Sleepy	Vito
30	Fearful	Inglebert	80	Spineless	Wanda
31	Fidgeting	Ivar	81	Suffering	Wendell
32	Forgetful	Kermit	82	Tactful	Wendy
33	Frightful	Kung	83	Tactless	Wilbur
34	Gleeful	Lamont	84	Tempter	Winifred
35	Greedy	Mabel	85	Temperamental	Winslow
36	Grumpy	Marvin	86	Terrified	Winthrop
37	Humorless	Melvin	87	Timely	Wolfgang
38	Hunchback	Modesty	88	Toiling	Wyatt
39	Hysterical	Monty	89	Tricky	Xenia
40	Inconsistent	Mortimer	90	Truthful	Yahudi
41	Indecisive	Mylton	91	Ugly	Yedda
42	Indiscrete	Myrtle	92	Unloved	Yolanda
43	Inquisitive	Narda	93	Untidy	Yu
44	Intolerant	Norman	94	Urgent	Zara
45	Inventive	Norton	95	Vile	Zebulon
46	Irritable	Olaf	96	Villainous	Zenobia
47	Lying	Olga	97	Weird	Zhang
48	Loving	Ophelia	98	Wicked	Zoe
49	Loyal	Orville	99	Wise	Zona
50	Lustful	Oscar	100	Wonderful	Zora

GMC Current Activity (Roll 1d10)

No. Rolled	Activity
1	**Outlaw/exile:** evading authorities
2	**Drifter:** looking for opportunities
3	**Hireling:** looking for work
4	**Hireling:** currently employed
5	**Questing:** for information
6	**Questing:** for a specific object
7	**Questing:** for a specific individual
8	**Questing:** as instructed by a Deity
9	**On pilgrimage:** new land to settle
10	**On vacation:** pleasure travelling

GMC Financial Condition (Roll 1d10)

No. Rolled	Condition	Cash On Hand
1 – 2	Poor	1d10 x 3 silver coins (sc)
3 – 8	Struggling	1d10 x 6 sc
9	Well Off	1d10 x 20 sc
10	Rich	1d10 x 50 sc & 1d10 x 10 gold coins

POSSESSIONS OF GMC ACCORDING TO FINANCIAL CONDITION

POOR	STRUGGLING	WELL OFF	RICH
Worn clothes	2x Worn clothes	2x Good clothes	3x Fine clothes
Belt, pouches	Belt, pouches	Belt, pouches	Belt, pouches
Cloth sack	Backpack	Backpack	Backpack
Wood staff	Knife	2 Knives	3 Knives
Wood bowl	Wood bowl	Metal bowl	Metal bowl
Blanket	2 Blankets	2 Blankets	3 Blankets
Water skin	Water skin	Water skin	Water skin
Flint & steel	Tinderbox	Tinderbox	Tinderbox
Cap	Hat	Hat, helmet	Hat, helmet
Sandals	Worn boots	Fine boots	Fine boots
	Leather armor	Chain mail	Plate mail
	Cooking pan	Cooking set	2 New swords
	Cup	Plates/cups	3 Sets of clothes
	Hatchet	Hatchet	4 Mount horses
	Old sword	New sword	Wagon & supplies
		Horse, saddlery	2 Draft horses
		2 Servants	3 Servants
		Waterproof cloak	2 Armed guards
		Gloves & scarf	Valuables (chest)
		Favorite toy	Favorite toy
			Magic item

CHAPTER EIGHT

Once a King, Always a King...

The following Characters are examples that may be used by either the player as a Player Character (PC) or the GM as a Gamemaster Character (GMC). When creating GMCs of your own, consider including the following characteristics: Name, Vocation, Race, Gender, Attributes, Traits, Special Powers, Physical Description, Possessions, Background, Current Situation (a personal short-term goal and a long-term ambition) and Staging (how they can be used in an adventure and how they interact with the PCs).

Sean Murphy



Quote:	"Dammit, not again...."	
Vocation:	Intergalactic Property Developer & Opportunist	
Race/Gender:	Human, Male	
Intelligence:	15	Bright
Willpower:	16	Willful
Charisma:	17	Charming
Mystic:	8	Undiscerning
Strength:	14	Stalwart
Dexterity:	17	Nimble
Fitness:	15	Sturdy
Appearance:	17	Handsome
Health Points:	15	
Height:	5'8" [1.7 m]	
Weight:	140 lbs [64 kg]	
Age:	38	
Traits:	Gullible, Obsessive, Slightly Uneasy in the Presence of Authority, Wary of Long-Term Commitments.	

Skills:		
Sprint	85%	Masterful
Fix Devices	50%	Proficient
Pilot Space-Ship	70%	Expert
Program Computer	40%	Capable
Project Confidence	75%	Expert

Physical Description: Murphy is thin but muscular, with pale and slightly freckled skin, red hair, and green eyes. Though his demeanor and smile exude self-confidence, Murphy's eyes always betray the expression of a man clinging to reality only with concentrated effort.

Possessions: Murphy firmly believes in the old adage, **"**When in Rome, do as the Romans do.**"** He wears whatever clothing is appropriate to the culture he is visiting, usually acquiring it on the spur of the moment. He doesn't have an extensive wardrobe — on his many travels, his garments are often destroyed or reduced to rags.

Murphy was able to salvage a **personal data device** (PDD) from the wreckage of his spaceship. The device resembles a wristwatch and is linked to a chip imbedded in Murphy's skull. Over time, this device has developed its own personality (technically impossible except on Murphy's World), and its own agenda. With the awakening of its consciousness, it acquired a sense of curiosity, and a name: **PeeDee.** PeeDee enthusiastically seeks adventure and knowledge. It acquires new abilities with experience — it has learned to reprogram itself and access other devices. Its functions include audio, holographic video, recording, playback, and the detecting and projecting of various types of EM radiation. Additionally, PeeDee knows what Murphy is thinking....

Murphy is cautious about relying upon PeeDee's computational advice — more than once the computer sidekick has placed Murphy in a life threatening situation just to see what would happen. When confronted, the device pleads innocence, and claims it only observes, and wishes to fill its memory with useful data. Apparently PeeDee can no longer be shut down, nor does it run out of power. Murphy finds that having the companionship and computational capacity of PeeDee is still better than selling it to a dealer in supernatural artifacts — so far.

Background: Sean Murphy is just an average guy who wants to get ahead. Born into a middle-class family, he has worked hard all his life, and although he's come close, he's always fallen just shy of 'the big deal'. Sure, he's seen a few go down — he just lacked the connections that would make the guys and gals with the dough want to deal with him. Murphy never acquired a mentor, and was about as good at office politics as he was at commitment (i.e., lousy). He has known poverty and loneliness.

After working at one crummy job after another, he eventually decided to go out and find his own action. His time spent in various jobs gave him a wide, but shallow, set of skills. Murphy is a jack-of-all-trades, master of none. He has problems focusing upon the task at hand. Any new offer or item of interest is likely to distract him. Murphy always has more projects on the go than he can possibly complete.

Over the years he's had a number of partners with whom he has been involved in various ventures of middling success. He's lost friends but acquired no serious enemies. Yet the wealth and rewards he has acquired are not enough. Murphy wants to be a somebody. He wants a taste of the good life. He wants what every other normal capitalist wants: to be filthy rich!

Some friends thought him a tad obsessive and a bit hard on himself. Murphy left them all behind upon acquiring an aging spaceship as part of a payment on a business debt (a take-it-or-nothing deal), and set off to make his fortune in the booming intergalactic real estate business. Working as an interplanetary courier in earlier days had prepared him for his task of scouting prospective sites for residential and holiday properties. Murphy's plan was to discover an appropriate location, stake a claim, then return and raise the investment capital to develop it, and wait for the clients and their money to roll in.

Murphy found his ideal property, and immediately proceeded to crash and become a refugee on it — forced to wander for years in search of a way home.

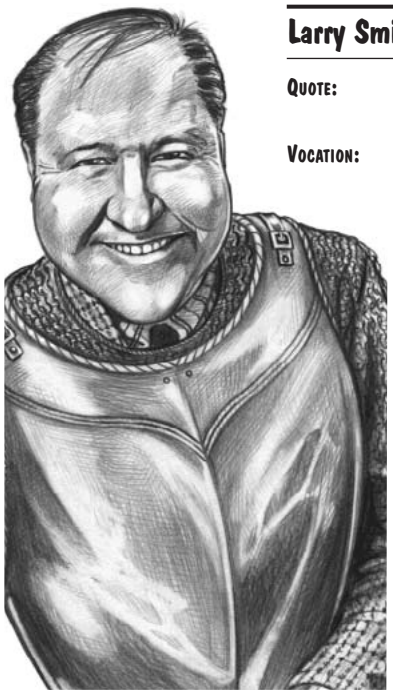
Current Situation: Murphy has come to know many peoples and lands. He has made friends and enemies. He has discovered some communities of techno-refugees like himself, but none possessed a working spacecraft — or at least one which he was willing to risk his life piloting. He's fairly shrewd at financial matters — unfortunately the planet lacks a comprehensible financial system. He's acquired a reputation as something of a ladies' man — however, the ladies on Færie are either non-human, super-human, or resemble guest stars from a B-grade horror film.

Adventure Idea

Larry Smithers

LARRY HIRES THE PCs for what looks like a chance to earn some quick and easy cash. They are to escort a young Dwarvish groom to meet his bride.

Of course, nothing is ever easy. It turns out that Larry's client has lied: the Dwarvish groom is being given against his will by his family as a 'gift' to a wealthy and older female Dwarf; their marriage will cement a business deal. The young Dwarf wants to flee the first chance he gets. Meanwhile, other parties seek to stop the marriage by killing the groom.



STAGING: Use Sean Murphy sparingly in your adventures. If Characters do happen to run into him, let it be during a time of crisis (e.g., the Characters are in a prison cell and discover that Murphy is their cell mate; he is involved in rescuing someone else or some other activity, and they happen to benefit by accident; he is seen from a distance at some public event — probably engaged in some sort of dangerous 'welcome ritual'). Alternatively, you may have frequent references to Murphy (e.g., GMCs who speak of him, graffiti discussing him, references in books, etc.)

Murphy has learned much about how to exist on Færie. Over time he has come to like this quirky planet. He gets around. Though he is still in search of a way back home, he is also keen on making friends and furthering his knowledge of the world — *his* world — after all, he has registered a claim. He is amiable, imaginative, and resourceful. He is always interested in discussing or initiating a new venture. In a crisis he is a reluctant hero. He will only be a leader if necessity demands it. He is an individualist to the core of his being. Though he may not say so, he will only follow someone else if he can think of no better plan. Of course, few of his plans ever work….

Larry Smithers

QUOTE: "Have you considered what your untimely demise might mean to your loved ones?"

VOCATION: Insurance Salesman, Sword for Hire

RACE/GENDER:	Human, Male	
INTELLIGENCE:	12	Rational
WILLPOWER:	17	Confident
CHARISMA:	10	Likable
MYSTIC:	4	Incognizant
STRENGTH:	13	Stalwart
DEXTERITY:	9	Awkward
FITNESS:	12	Hale
APPEARANCE:	11	Plain
HEALTH POINTS:	12	
HEIGHT:	5'6" [1.7 m]	
WEIGHT:	180 lbs [64 kg]	
AGE:	47	

TRAITS: Optimistic, Determined, Tone-deaf.

SKILLS:			
	Schmooze	75%	Expert
	Fill out Forms	70%	Expert
	Ooze Sincerity	65%	Adept
	Sell	80%	Masterful

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Pudgy, middle-aged and balding with a fringe of brown hair that he likes to comb over the top of his head. He is not exceptional physically, although his time spent on Murphy's World has improved his overall fitness and health. He has brown eyes, a large rounded nose, tanned skin, and a warm smile.

POSSESSIONS: Larry wears a metal cuirass and a mail skirt over a rather threadbare polyester three-piece suit. He carries a fearsome looking black sabre. Of course, any sword turns black if you don't clean it once in a while.

He also carries a genuine imitation leather briefcase. Inside this briefcase he has various insurance policies, which can cover you for everything short of planetary collision. He has references and testimonials from various important people attesting to his wonderful qualities, but they all seem to be in the same handwriting. He carries various 'healing elixers' of questionable ingredients which he tries to sell from time to time. He has a wallet with a 3 worn US dollar bills, 15 silver pieces, two coppers, and membership cards in 13 different fraternal organizations, ranging from the Loyal Order of Wood Trolls to the Ancient and Honorable Company of Fish Cleaners.

BACKGROUND: Larry was selling insurance door-to-door in Peoria, Illinois in 1965, when a gateway propelled him to Murphy's World. He is of two minds about being here: he certainly doesn't miss his overbearing wife Rosie and his antagonistic boss Sam, but he finds Murphy's World really weird.

He was successful for a time selling life insurance to Trolls (Trolls are long-lived and very difficult to kill, thus making paying off a policy unlikely; and as a bonus, Trolls are extremely naïve.) However, he was banished from the Troll lands for some unspecified faux pas. (Rumor has it that Larry was indiscreet with the daughter of a Troll leader, but Larry has always firmly denied this. She was just a 'friend').

CURRENT SITUATION: These days Larry promotes himself as a sword for hire. He carries himself in a martial manner; his insurance selling days have given him practice at looking trustworthy and competent. He doesn't do any actual fighting, though. Rather, he accepts a fee from a client, then uses half of it to hire someone else to do the actual fighting for him. Larry is a Mercenary Broker. Unfortunately, Larry has run into two problems with this system. Except for Dwarves, he has found it difficult to make the natives of Murphy's World understand the concept of contracting out, and the half of his fee that he uses to hire the actual fighter is often only enough to get a drunkard, amateur, or incompetent.

As might be expected, Larry doesn't live very long in one place; he defends his 'travels' as "following the money."

STAGING: When you need someone rational, calm, and not terribly exciting to back you up, Larry is your guy. He can schmooze with the best of them. He knows all the lounge-bar songs from the late fifties to early sixties. For acts of raw courage, true grit, and feats of strength, you can find others who perform better, but none will fail with the optimism and commercial finesse of Larry.

Henrietta Goliardus

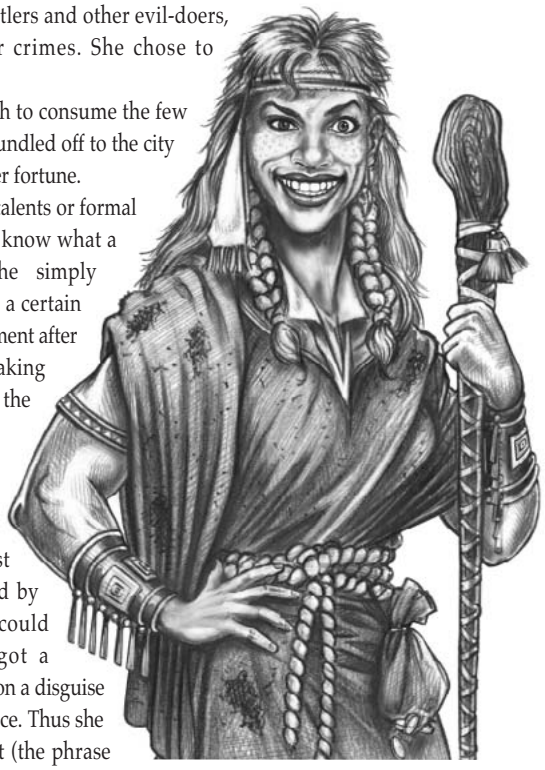
QUOTE:	"Bet you a steak dinner I can drink you under the table…."		
VOCATION:	Sheep Farmer, Village Idiot, Paladin		
RACE/GENDER:	Human, Female		
INTELLIGENCE:	8	Dense	
WILLPOWER:	11	Indecisive	
CHARISMA:	14	Engaging	
MYSTIC:	7	Unknowing	
STRENGTH:	20	Mighty	
DEXTERITY:	16	Dextrous	
FITNESS:	19	Husky	
APPEARANCE:	8	Homely	
HEALTH POINTS:	20		
HEIGHT:	6'8" [2 m]		
WEIGHT:	250 lbs [113 kg]		
AGE:	33		
TRAITS:	Self-Sacrificing, Courageous, Hungry.		
SKILLS:	Cudgel	70%	Expert
	Farming	60%	Adept
	Locate Food	80%	Masterful
	Professional Foolery	65%	Adept

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: With a cascade of braided straw-like hair atop a massive frame of solid muscle, Henrietta is often mistaken for a young male Giant. This is potentially a life-shortening mistake — for Henrietta's sense of humor is somewhat lacking when it comes to personal insults, whether intended or not.

POSSESSIONS: Henrietta is garbed in a filthy hooded robe, held around her waist with three turns of a heavy rope, this being the standard Village Idiot's uniform. Under this she wears a linen shirt over woolen breeches. On her feet are a pair of thick-soled thong sandals. She has a sturdy walking stick (which doubles as a cudgel), and a belt pouch with 35 silver and 3 coppers.

BACKGROUND: A native of Murphy's World, Henrietta is a sheep farmer's daughter. For many years, she did the usual farm things: getting up at dawn and eating a huge breakfast, milking the chickens, grabbing a pre-lunch snack, rounding up the sheep, chomping down lunch, branding the sheep, nabbing an after-lunch snack, re-arranging the neighbor's cows in a aesthetically pleasing pattern, eating a hearty dinner, plowing the front yard, and devouring a before-bed meal. Unfortunately, the farm gave out before her appetite did.

One day while Henrietta was out counting sheep, her desperate and bankrupt family burned the farm buildings and stole away, leaving the impression that they had been killed in a rustler attack. Upon returning home, Henrietta was devastated. The incident provoked a change in her life: she would hereafter commit herself to discovering the whereabouts of all sheep-rustlers and other evil-doers, making them pay for their crimes. She chose to become a Paladin.



Pausing only long enough to consume the few remaining sheep, Henrietta trundled off to the city to dispense justice and seek her fortune.

Henrietta had no special talents or formal education — she didn't even know what a criminal *looked* like — she simply possessed brute strength and a certain *presence*. She visited one settlement after another, making inquiries, taking small jobs, and exhausting the local food supplies.

CURRENT SITUATION: In the rowdy desert mining city of Four Rivers, she saw her first criminal — but he was killed by someone else before she could question him. Then she got a brilliant idea: she would take on a disguise and wait for criminals to surface. Thus she seized the job of Village Idiot (the phrase 'town idiot' just doesn't have the same ring to it).

The Village Idiot is the city's mascot: someone to smile and throw coins at when times are good, and someone to kick around and empty your chamber-pot on when times are bad. (The job takes some getting used to.) The incumbent prior to Henrietta committed suicide by wrapping himself in chains, encasing his feet in cement, and throwing himself into the city's reservoir.

Strangely, Henrietta was the only qualified applicant — though the town doctor reported a 400% increase in patients suffering from broken limbs, cracked skulls, and a strange amnesia about how they had acquired their injuries, just prior to the announcement of the winning applicant.

Henrietta is no slouch. She quickly realized that it was possible to generate a tidy bit of loot when the weather is good and people are in the mood to walk the streets and pay to be amused. An especially fine perk for Henrietta is the room and board that comes with the position. (The town elders have decided to revoke this arrangement for future holders of the job.) Yet she hasn't forgotten her mission: she keeps a hawk-eye open for people who openly call themselves criminals or outlaws — after all, you have to be sure. Her mission is to cleanse the world of cheating scum, of low-class trash, and of people who don't pay their parking tickets.

STAGING: Henrietta can be encountered as a sword for hire, a Special Deputy (told to scour the territory so as to be out of the hair of the local Marshal), or someone looking for a Paladin mentor. Henrietta is a big lady with a big heart — who also carries a big stick — once she has decided to latch on to you, she can be difficult to get rid of. Unless of course you run out of food….

Adventure Idea

Henrietta Goliardus

THE PCs will see this young paladin in the distance, engaged in a melee with three male Poughvidd attackers. As the PCs approach the attackers will flee.

Henrietta will thank the PCs for their timely arrival, then with a commanding voice she'll say "Come on, we can't let them get away." Then she'll grab the smallest PC by the hand and head off after her attackers.

It turns out the 'attackers' are three chefs who ran a cooking school in the nearby town of Farci. Henrietta joined the class for the free food. Unsatisfied with the small portions, she began swiping ingredients from her fellow students. Soon, all but Henrietta dropped out; the chefs, now bankrupt, fled. When the PCs see Henrietta she's chasing them to try to get her money back.

Adventure Idea

Lord Seviche Fumet

THIS CHEF SUPREME will be encountered in a wilderness location outside his tent cooking lunch; a tablecloth, cutlery, and a vase of flowers will be at the ready. He'll invite the PCs to lunch.

Lunch will consist of a wide assortment of unknown plants and will taste fantastic. If asked, Lord Fumet will go into detailed descriptions about preparation.

Unfortunately, will be interrupted by a party of armed but well spoken natives who will claim that the PCs are eating their national flower. This being a capital offense, everyone will be marched off at spearpoint to the village … to be eaten!



Lord Seviche Fumet

QUOTE: **"Well I must say, this is the first time I've ever seen this sort of reaction to that little black herb… are you quite all right?"**

VOCATION:	Experimental Chef Supreme	
RACE/GENDER:	Elf, Male	
INTELLIGENCE:	16	Bright
WILLPOWER:	19	Determined
CHARISMA:	17	Charming
MYSTIC:	16	Perceptive
STRENGTH:	8	Slight
DEXTERITY:	17	Nimble
FITNESS:	17	Husky
APPEARANCE:	18	Handsome
HEALTH POINTS:	16	
HEIGHT:	5' 2" [1.6 m]	
WEIGHT:	112 lbs [51 kg]	
AGE:	4,217	
TRAITS:	Obsessed, Oblivious, Daring.	
SPECIAL POWER:	Detect Poison in Food & Drink.	

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Lord Fumet is the picture of the elegant host, with a tall, erect posture, a long discerning nose, clear blue eyes, and thick raven locks sweeping back from a high intelligent forehead. His fingers are slender, with manicured nails, and his hands are steady and firm. When puzzled or amused his left brow arches independently of the right.

POSSESSIONS: Lord Fumet is never without the basic tools of his trade: a pocket notebook and writing implements, a magnifying glass, a small weight-scale, a copy of Goldenrod's Guide to Herbs and Delicacies, a silver spoon, and a small cookpan. He is normally well attired, although his field garb may be in need of a wash and ironing.

BACKGROUND: This Elvish lord is quite possibly Elfdom's finest gourmet. He has dedicated his life to scouring the world over for the finest dishes, the most succulent ingredients, the most creative techniques. He has left no food untasted (with occasional hospital visits the order of the day). He and his retinue of cooks, pastry chefs and servers can be found in the oddest places and at the oddest times, trying out the local cuisine. He is a recognized master of the culinary arts, though he has never cooked the same dish twice. Once is a hobby, twice is work, and Lord Fumet would never be caught dead doing work.

To be invited to dine at Lord Fumet's table is either an incomparable honor or a great risk to your health, depending upon the occasion. Lord Fumet will try anything even remotely edible, and notes his guests' reactions carefully. Since he possesses the magical talent to Detect Poison in Food & Drink, his dishes may upset your digestive system, but they won't be lethal. He's never actually killed anyone… yet.

Many of the Lord's dishes have become standards. His cold pickled dragon's eggs in a horseradish and cream sauce is *de rigueur* at better Elvish parties, and his Wascally Wabbit in chocolate flambe is swooned over even by Dwarves, who are not normally noted for their sense of taste. Unfortunately, not all his dishes have been so successful. His eye of Bom-Bom Beast in guava jelly with Worry Worm pâté makes even Rakshasas pale with disgust. (Interestingly enough, this dish has caught on as an oer-doeuvre at Ogreish parties… though no one knows why).

CURRENT SITUATION: In recent years His Lordship has been on a whirlwind tour of the capitals of all the civilized places, learning the local cuisine, and serving up a storm for the many guests who can pull enough strings to be invited to his dinner parties.

STAGING: Lord Fumet is most likely to be be encountered either in a kitchen, or in a wild, dangerous, and unexplored land. He always exudes an attitude of splendid fascination with the world around him (especially with things potentially edible) and is oblivious to all peril, no matter how earnest his antagonist(s) are.

Sir Twitchell Cholmondely Morthworthfrith-Holmes III

QUOTE: **"I'm afraid if you don't open your hearts and purses immediately, I shall have to tell you all about the shameful conditions under which poor, homeless young Dwarves live alone on the streets of Lyonesse."**

VOCATION:	Charity Event Organizer		
RACE/GENDER:	Elf, Male		
INTELLIGENCE:	18	Savvy	
WILLPOWER:	21	Persistent	
CHARISMA:	19	Fascinating	
MYSTIC:	16	Perceptive	
STRENGTH:	7	Weak	
DEXTERITY:	16	Dextrous	
FITNESS:	15	Sturdy	
APPEARANCE:	18	Handsome	
HEALTH POINTS:	14		
HEIGHT:	5'4" [1.6 m]		
WEIGHT:	98 lbs [44 kg]		
AGE:	1,356		
TRAITS:	Intrusive, Gutsy, Persistent, Polite.		
SPECIAL POWER:	Evoke Sympathy in his listeners.		
SKILLS:	Evoke Sympathy	95%	Paramount
	Insult	70%	Expert
	Croquet	55%	Proficient
	Oration	65%	Adept

Physical Description: Twitchell cuts a rather elegant figure. Tall (for an Elf), pale and handsome — in a emaciated sort of way — he defines respectability wherever he is seen. His face is long and chiseled, his nose thin and upturned, his nails finely manicured on long fingers, and he keeps his long chestnut hair drawn back into two braided pig-tails.

Possessions: Twitchell sports a long frock-coat, a tricorn hat, silver buckled shoes, and knee breeches tied with ribbons. He carries a small ceremonial dagger in his belt, 17 gold pieces in his purse, and six perfumed silk handkerchiefs. In a leather pouch at his side he has literally dozens of heart-rending pamphlets describing the vile state of Avalon's Main Croquet Grounds, and the horrors suffered by teenage Dwarves who have left broken homes to live alone on the cruel high streets and byways of Lyonesse.

Background: Twitchell is a hugely successful Charity Event Organizer in Avalon. He has raised massive quantities of cash for worthy causes, such as providing toys for orphaned young Trolls, repairing the grass on Main Croquet Grounds at Avalon, offering counselling support for wayward teenage Dwarves, and providing caring homes for nubile young Elf maidens. He has even gone so far as to volunteer his very own residence to serve the latter cause.

Part of the reason that Twitchell is such a superb fund-raiser is that he is able to melt the heart of anyone who listens to him for any reasonable length of time. After hearing him achingly detail the plight of toyless young Trolls, or the trials of being an unappreciated nubile young Elf maiden, listeners can barely control the tears welling up in their eyes, and their purses fly open. (On the other hand, a significant portion of Avalon's population no longer speaks to Twitchell under any circumstances for this very reason).

Current Situation: Twitchell can be found inviting himself to the salons and gatherings of Avalon's elite, always prepared to champion a new hopeless cause or defend an impossible undertaking. His most flamboyant efforts usually involve causes where the welfare of one or more members of the opposite sex is at stake.

Staging: Twitchell won't take a hint or take no for an answer. Although he is an opportunist and a bit of a rogue (rare characteristics in an Elf), he does have his heart in the right place — most of the time. The most likely place to encounter Twitchell is either at some public event attended by members of the Elvish aristocracy, or in some dingy dive, seeking out new causes to champion. He may also be discovered in a moment of crisis (usually in said dingy dive), and in dire need of having his life saved from certain representatives of the culture whose cause he champions.

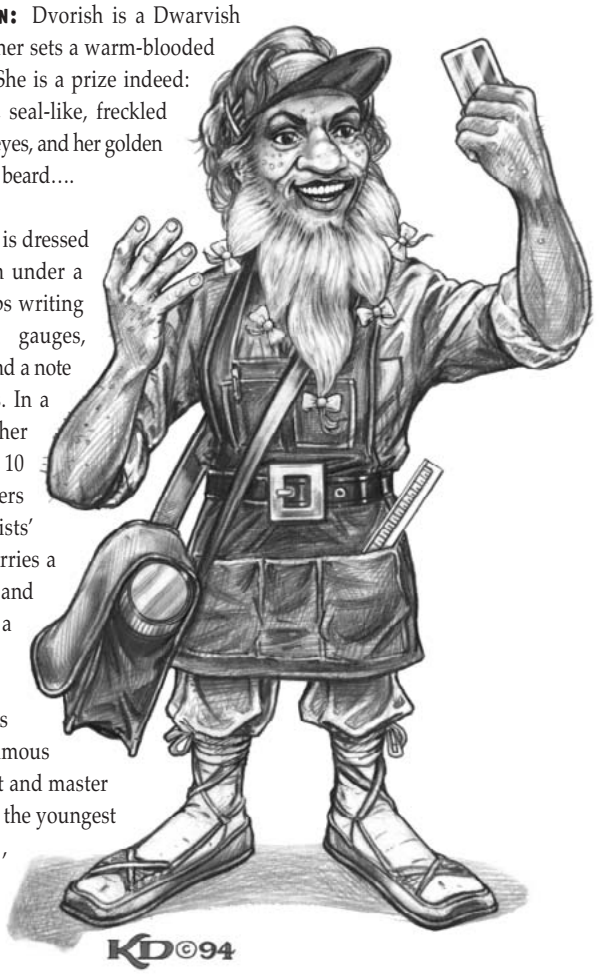
Dvorish Diphthong

Quote:	"Dwarves of the world unite... you have nothing to lose but your jobs!"		
Vocation:	Printer, Union Organizer		
Race/Gender:	Dwarf, Female		
Intelligence:	17	Savvy	
Willpower:	7	Impressionable	
Charisma:	8	Annoying	
Mystic:	5	Incognizant	
Strength:	11	Adequate	
Dexterity:	14	Deft	
Fitness:	10	Sound	
Appearance:	12	Comely	
Health Points:	8		
Height:	4'1" [1.2 m]		
Weight:	90 lbs [41 kg]		
Age:	50		
Traits:	Naive, Uncompromising, Desperate.		
Skills:	Rabble-Rouse	80%	Masterful
	Graphic Design	60%	Adept
	Picket	70%	Expert
	Organization	55%	Proficient

Physical Description: Dvorish is a Dwarvish maiden. To gaze upon her sets a warm-blooded Dwarf's heart aflame. She is a prize indeed: from her silky-smooth, seal-like, freckled skin, to her deep brown eyes, and her golden tresses and long flowing beard….

Possessions: Dvorish is dressed in linen coveralls worn under a leather apron. She keeps writing utensils, rulers, type gauges, erasers, a utility knife, and a note pad in various pockets. In a purse hanging from her wide leather belt she has 10 silver pieces, 25 coppers and her Graphic Artists' union card. She also carries a slide rule, a right angle, and a thermos of coffee in a small satchel.

Background: Dvorish is the daughter of a famous Dwarvish graphic artist and master printer. Although she is the youngest of a family of 23, she remains the only member of the family to have put up with her



Adventure Idea

Dvorish Diphthong

Unknowingly, the PCs enter a town where Dvorish has been active in organizing the labor. Her success can be measured in the fact that every employee is on strike. This is a serious situation, and has prompted advertisements for scab labor at good wages. Naturally, everyone thinks the PCs are scabs.

Now this wouldn't be such a big deal if it weren't for the fact that everyone is being secretive about employment negotiations and talking in 'code'. Nobody will believe the PCs are just passing through.

perfectionist father and stuck with the family business. For this her father is genuinely proud of her. He is less proud of the fact that Dvorish unionized the workers in his shop. Their demands for wage increases, which in no way reflected the productivity of the business, plus their testy work stoppages and picketing drove the 863 year old business into bankruptcy.

This did not dishearten Dvorish. She resolved that the rights of the worker must triumph (even though she was now out of a job). Dvorish set herself the task of unionizing all the Dwarvish graphic artists under one organization: the Dwarvish Brotherhood of Graphic Artists and Printers (DBOGAP) Local 1503. (For a time she campaigned to have the union's name changed to Dwarvish Brotherhood and Sisterhood of Graphic Artists and Printers, until she realized that the acronym, DBASOGAP, is a Dwarvish term that refers to a sexual act undertaken by a Dwarf, a Troll, and 4 1/2 tons of fresh asparagus).

CURRENT SITUATION: Dvorish has two goals in life: the first is to unionize all Dwarves; the second is to land a mate. Dvorish is almost 50, and her biological clock is sounding its alarm. Initially, she looked for a mate who shared her beliefs, her sense of urgency, and her unlimited capacity for hard work and rabble-rousing. Now, she searches for a mate who is breathing. Unfortunately, she has gained such a negative reputation that most Dwarvish males would rather indulge in *dbasogap* than marry her.

STAGING: Dvorish has become a pilgrim, a wandering tradesperson, who takes her portable press and propaganda from town to town (until the locals run her out). She is always on the lookout for a 'good man' (this may not necessarily mean a Dwarf). Given the proper materials she can construct a picket sign in moments.

GAMEMASTER TIP

GM Style

ROLEPLAYING is a verbal exercise. Colorful descriptions and personalities should be emphasized over stat values and numeric ratings. It's more interesting for someone to describe themself as 'Nimble', rather than "I have a DEX of 17."

Kervin Harley

QUOTE:	"You're ahead on a hoggie!"	
VOCATION:	Hog Rider/Tuner, Distiller, Barber, Brush Salesman, Troubadour, etc.	
RACE/GENDER:	Brownie, Male	
INTELLIGENCE:	20	Cunning
WILLPOWER:	9	Receptive
CHARISMA:	17	Charming
MYSTIC:	7	Unknowing
STRENGTH:	8	Slight
DEXTERITY:	23	Agile
FITNESS:	17	Athletic
APPEARANCE:	18	Handsome
HEALTH POINTS:	12	
HEIGHT:	3'2" [1 m]	
WEIGHT:	53 lbs [24 kg]	
AGE:	17	

TRAITS:	Desire for Adventure, Concern for His Hog.		
SKILLS:	Brew Booze	90%	Paramount
	Appear Tough/Swagger	75%	Expert
	Barber	50%	Proficient
	Switchfork	65%	Adept

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Kervin is average height for a Brownie. He is slim and proud of his looks, which are handsome in a devil-may-care sort of way. He is dextrous and wiry, and can literally tie himself into knots — though he sometimes has difficulty untying himself again. He walks with a self-assured swagger, knowing that the rebel look gets the girl every time.

POSSESSIONS: Kervin is dressed in a black leather jacket over a fine ruffled silk shirt. In one pocket has has a giant economy size tube of hair pomade, in the other he has a swift and deadly switchfork that can stab at a meal in an instant. His blue denim pants are so tight as to seem painted on, raising his already squeaky voice an octave. He has a few coppers in a pocket; he's never actually bothered to count them.

He carries a bottle of *Anxious Absinthe* that he brewed himself. This stuff is well named, because anyone who drinks even a glass of it becomes a total ***worrywart*** for the next **1d10 hours.** Drink too much and you worry yourself to death.

His best friend and favored mode of transportation is his hog Porky — his pride and joy. If Kervin is forced to spend any serious time away from Porky, he becomes manic-depressive. He'll happily discuss his success at teaching his hog to sing — whether you ask or not — and is quick to take offense at anyone who makes a negative crack about his porky companion.

BACKGROUND: Kervin is a typical Brownie. In his 17 years, he has been all the things listed under his vocations, and more, but with the exception of Hog Tuning, he's never performed any other job for more than three months at a stretch. When not laboring, he travels the countryside on his hog, seeking the freedom of the open road and loose Brownie women.

CURRENT SITUATION: In recent months Kervin has become tired of the open road, the uncertain terrain and weather — Porky has caught a cold and can't seem to shake it. Kervin is looking for an easy job where he can settle back for a while, meet some new people, and give his hog a chance to regain his health.

STAGING: Kervin can be encountered in a bar, slumped over a table, or in the lap of a wench, mumbling tales of past adventures. The initial impression might be that he is a pathetic little guy, but Kervin can snap out of a drunken stupor quickly, and turn into a tough character in a flash. Kervin is always seeking adventure.

Thîrfâr SkullSplitter

Quote:	"Make love, not war."		
Vocation:	Poetry Lover, Pacifist, Philosopher		
Race/Gender:	Giant, Male		
Intelligence:	14	Rational	
Strength:	29	Powerful	
Willpower:	8	Receptive	
Dexterity:	13	Deft	
Charisma:	11	Likable	
Fitness:	32	Vigorous	
Mystic:	14	Sensitive	
Appearance:	9	Homely	
Health Points:	36		
Height:	12'9" [3.9 m]		
Weight:	820 lbs [372 kg]		
Age:	22		
Traits:	Eternal Optimist, Fear of Losing Temper.		
Skills:	Write Bad Poetry	90%	Paramount
	Chant Mantras	70%	Expert
	Spout Philosophy	65%	Adept
	Calm Others	50%	Proficient

Physical Description: Thîrfâr is a huge brutish looking fellow, with massive limbs and a broad chest. He looks a bit out of context in his pacifist terrycloth robes and silk undergarments. Sandals on his feet and a pack on his back complete his image of a wandering philosopher.

Possessions: Thîrfâr carries no weapon other than a knife (the length of a normal short-sword) used for utility purposes, and a long, ornately carved staff.

Background: Thîrfâr was given his name by his father, the infamous **Eirik ArmRipperOffer.** Eirik didn't limit himself to arms. He would rip off any body part he could get his massive hands on. His career as a warrior came to an end, when, in a berserker fury, he ripped off his own left arm. He is now called **Eirik the Amazingly Stupid** — but never to his face of course…. Eirik hoped that the name he gave his son would inspire him to follow in his father's bloody footsteps.

The only body part that Thîrfâr splits are wishbones from roast turkey carcasses. Thîrfâr is a 'sensitive' Giant. He prefers writing poetry and contemplating small stones to murder and mayhem. Thîrfâr is often called 'Thîrfâr the Wimp', even to his face. This is not a dangerous thing to do. Thîrfâr knows that such people are misguided, and if everyone would just get along, the world would be a happier place. On the other hand, most people think that the world would be a happier place if they didn't have to listen to Thîrfâr's poetry and lectures on pacifism.

Current Situation: Thîrfâr likes to attach himself to armed groups, like armies or adventurers, and tag along with them until he convinces them to lay down their weapons and take up poetry and contemplating stones — or until they have to be carted off to an asylum. He is rather difficult to drive away.

Staging: Thîrfâr may be encountered in some quiet contemplative spot (either in the wilderness, or in a isolated nook in the midst of urban chaos), as the (probably undesired) companion of another adventurer, or defending himself against a group of individuals who have grown tired of his preaching.

Blorg



Quote:	"D'aaah, sure… I kill him for you…."		
Vocation:	Mercenary, Deranged Killer		
Race/Gender:	Ogre, Male		
Intelligence:	4	Thick	
Willpower:	5	Susceptible	
Charisma:	5	Nauseating	
Mystic:	1	Oblivious	
Strength:	31	Formidable	
Dexterity:	16	Dextrous	
Fitness:	26	Robust	
Appearance:	4	Repulsive	
Health Points:	30		
Height:	11'3" [3.4 m]		
Weight:	983 lbs [446 kg]		
Age:	26		
Traits:	Love of Small Furry Animals, Fear of Fish, Easily Confused.		
Skills:	Club	85%	Masterful
	Calm Animals	90%	Paramount
	Throw Rocks	60%	Adept
	Unarmed Combat	70%	Expert

Physical Description: Blorg is large, even for an Ogre, and proportionally wide. Occasionally Blorg has been mistaken for a small block of apartments with moss and warts growing on top. He is extremely strong and very dextrous. Unfortunately Blorg is thick, even by Ogreish standards. The combined IQ of fifteen small bushes would be more than a match for Blorg. Because of this, he has found it difficult to keep a job.

Possessions: Blorg has never been one to maintain a long list of possessions. That is not to say that he doesn't desire possessions as much as the next mercenary — he just can't remember where he puts them most of the time. Thus, Blorg has adopted a casual attitude with regard to material things — he believes in *sharing*. It's quite simple really: either someone shares with Blorg, or he kills them. Blorg's usual weapon is a large club, preferably studded with stones, which he uses to smash his enemies, and the enemies of his employers, into jelly. (Subtlety is not Blorg's forte).

Background: Blorg is an only child and the product of a broken home. He ran away as soon as he realized that no one

Adventure Idea

Blorg

RECENTLY, Blorg acquired a treasure map. However, Blorg has a problem: he can't figure out how to interpret it. None of the landmarks seem familiar to him and everyone he has asked has wanted to take the map from him; so he hurt them. Still, he is looking for a 'partner' who will help.

The PCs overhear Blorg tell of his plight in a bar to a bartender; of course, so will everyone else. If the PCs help, as long as they don't try to cheat Blorg, he'll offer a fair share. However, the party will be followed by thieves.

would miss him, and has fended for himself ever since. He has few friends, other than the assorted small mammals he has taken in and cared for — they now follow him wherever he goes — he's long given up trying to explain it. Deep down Blorg is a fairly decent chap — he only maims people when they confuse or upset him. Unfortunately, Blorg is easily confused and upset.

Though highly effective as a fighter, Blorg has a rough time remembering just who are his employers, and who are his enemies. Thus, he is usually hired only by those who have immediate plans to journey elsewhere, or those who enjoy witnessing massive random destruction, i.e., releasing Blorg in an urban area and hoping for the best.

CURRENT SITUATION: Blorg is currently preoccupied with trying to save up enough money to start a petting zoo. Eventually he would like to found Blorg's Happy Animal Farm. It is his lifelong dream.

STAGING: Blorg is always looking for work, ready cash, or someone who can provide a good home for an abandoned kitten or other small furry creature. He can usually be found brooding in a pub, feeding animals in the park, or up to his armpits in blood and mayhem. Blorg is always willing to chat with people who are friendly. Caution is advised.

Adventure Idea

Xor-Xan

A NEW DIMENSION GATE has been reported and Xor-Xan has been assigned by the Technoids to check it out. However it is located in an area deep inside Pixie territory — very dangerous. Thus, Xor-Xan hires the PCs as protection (but he tells them he is a diplomat on a secret trade mission).

Not only is the area populated by hostile Pixie nomads, but Xor-Xan is being followed by the agents of a rival Technocrat group, the **Datageeks.** They will remain in the background observing from a distance until the Gate is actually discovered; then they will appear and force one of the party to use the Gate to determine its viability (the results are yours to decide!).

Xor-Xan of Langose

QUOTE: "Feel free to ignore Xan, he's only a head…."
"Shuddup, fnordzat breath! I wear the pants around here!"

VOCATION: Nomadic Technocrat, Lost Soul



RACE/GENDER:	Langosian (Bug-Eyed Monster)/Hard to say…	
INTELLIGENCE:	35	Brilliant
WILLPOWER:	20	Determined
CHARISMA:	10	Likable
MYSTIC:	4	Incognizant
STRENGTH:	3	Feeble
DEXTERITY:	18	Nimble
FITNESS:	9	Frail
APPEARANCE:	5	Repulsive
HEALTH POINTS:	9	
HEIGHT:	6'4" [1.9 m]	
WEIGHT:	150 lbs [68 kg]	
AGE:	107	
TRAITS:	Split Personality (two heads), Homesick.	

SKILLS:		
Fix Devices	70%	Expert
Understand Devices	80%	Masterful
Argue (Xan)	50%	Proficient
Compromise (Xor)	60%	Adept

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Xor-Xan is tall and slender; a typical member of his race. Xor-Xan has two heads, each possessing three eyes: one facing forward, one facing upward, and one facing behind. (It's difficult to sneak up on Xor-Xan). Xor-Xan's gender is uncertain, lacking any obvious sexual organs. She/he doesn't seem to *understand* sex. Indeed he/she finds the concept quite amusing.

Each of Xor-Xan's four arms end in delicate, yet strong tentacles that excel in fine detail work. Three long, muscular, web-footed legs permit brisk movement on land or sea. Her/his skin is a patchwork of baby-blue and pink; though she/he clashes badly with argyle sportswear, Xor-Xan looks great behind the wheel of a '57 Chevy.

Xor-Xan's name comes from his/her heads. The left is Xor; the right is Xan. Xor is polite, reserved, friendly, and studious. Xan is nasty, impatient, grouchy, and cynical. They argue constantly, Xan is the smartest, but rarely wins an argument as Xor, the more patient, simply holds out until Xan concedes defeat in disgust. Xan will then sulk, muttering snide remarks, the favorite being "I told you so!" This duality often gets Xor-Xan in trouble in dealing with others. The body will not respond until the heads have arrived at a consensus.

POSSESSIONS: Xor-Xan sports a loud Hawaiian shirt, triangular Bermuda shorts, white patent leather plimsolls (size 12FFF), and a glow-in-the-dark pocket protector. He/she carries a satchel stuffed with tools, junk, and assorted devices from a score of worlds. "You never know when a variable speed glockemfractle might come in handy."

BACKGROUND: Xor-Xan is a native of the planet **Langose.** There, she/he was a successful drolloper of werfilds, and spent her/his holidays in the Great Langosian Boiling Fat-Pit morfacking with the Koodlemets. (Unfortunately, the words 'drolloper', 'werfilds', 'morfacking' and 'Koodlemets' are extremely difficult to translate, and the concepts behind them are impossible for a non-Langosian to understand. When asked about such things, Xor-Xan only sighs, and with a far-away look in his/her six eyes, mumbles platitudes about the 'bottomless cups').

One day, while morfacking in a pool of hot grease, Xor-Xan had what he/she at first thought was a 'holy' experience. Actually she/he had simply slid through a wandering hole in the multiverse, which transported Xor-Xan naked and dripping grease to Murphy's World. Her/his only possessions were a phase-displacing raytracer, a morfacking tool, and a parasol.

At first he/she was alone and very afraid. On Langose, there is a body of literature called 'Fictional Science', or 'FS' for short. FS is full of stories of vile alien beings with only one head, two arms, two legs, and a mere two eyes, who abduct harmless Langosians in their flying teacups, and perform awful experiments on them. Xor-Xan was an avid reader of FS stories, and was petrified to find him/herself on a planet full of one-headed, two-eyed beings. She/he soon discovered that none of them owned flying teacups, and they were more likely to take her/his money than perform awful experiments. By now he/she has grown used to such beings — and keeps his/her money in a shoe.

Xor-Xan lost the umbrella shortly after arriving; the raytracer was stolen by an unscrupulous Pixie, and he/she sold the morfacking tool (which resembles a perforated electric spatula more than anything else) to a Brownie sex-shop, where it attracted a great deal of attention, and huge rental income.

Current Situation: Though she/he has adjusted to life on Murphy's World, Xor-Xan is not terribly happy. Actually, Xan is the unhappy one. Xor puts up with just about anything. He/she misses the comforts of home, especially her/his atomic-powered florpmuster, and his/her hydraulic watundi clusterer. Xan will do almost anything to get back to Langose; Xor will do anything that won't offend or hurt another being.

He/she has acquired some clothes, and now appears much like any typical Technocrat (if you avoid the obvious psysiological differences). Eventually she/he was adopted by the **Technoids,** a Technocrat association who seek to leave Murphy's World via technological means.

Staging: Xor-Xan joined the Technoids because they seemed to offer the best hope for sharing the information which might lead to a useful Gate, or constructing some kind of flying teacup to permit travel home. Xor-Xan has already investigated over a dozen sites rumored to contain Gates, but left them behind in disgust since none offered a passage home. She/he will lead others to the sites he/she remembers, but only if they can offer her/him something that may help him/her to return to Langose. Otherwise, he/she simply considers those sites a waste of time (some may contain Gates which may lead somewhere other than Langose).

She/he is one of the top Technoid researchers, since he/she is the best among them for deciphering strange alien devices, and getting them to work. She/he can usually be found wandering about junkheaps and flea-markets, or tinkering with some thingamabob, trying to decide if it can be of use.

Xor-Xan is quietly but constantly on the lookout for his/her stolen phase-displacing raytracer. Xor is concerned that someone may be hurt by it; Xan hopes to use it to turn the Pixie that stole it into micro-atomic space goo. Preferably slowly and painfully.

Mr Marshall

Quote:	**"If it's not filled out properly in triplicate, I can't help you."**	
Vocation:	**God of Paperwork/Bureaucracy**	
Race/Gender:	**God/Male**	
Intelligence:	**92**	**Deity-Like**
Willpower:	**91**	**Deity-Like**
Charisma:	**9**	**Annoying**
Mystic:	**25**	**Illuminated**
Strength:	**10**	**Adequate**
Dexterity:	**11**	**Handy**
Fitness:	**10**	**Sound**
Appearance:	**17**	**Handsome**
Health Points:	**20**	
Height:	**6' [1.8 m]**	
Weight:	**180 lbs [82 kg]**	
Age:	**Unknown, though he looks to be around 45.**	
Traits:	**Perfectionist, Arrogant, Disdainful.**	

Skills:			
	Fill out Forms	**99%**	**Paramount**
	Impose on Bureaucrats	**80%**	**Masterful**
	Buck Passing	**70%**	**Expert**
	Intimidate	**65%**	**Adept**

Physical Description: Mr Marshall is a tall, imposing man. He has short dark hair shot through with grey, a clean-shaven chiseled chin, a small trim mustache, and broad shoulders. He is dressed in a navy pin-stripe three piece suit with a silk handkerchief always carefully folded in his upper left pocket. He has a permanent ink stain at the base of his little finger on his right hand. He carries a briefcase, an umbrella, and wears a bowler hat. His expensive Italian patent leather shoes are always immaculately polished (thought his laces tend to come undone).

Possessions: Mr Marshall's **Sacred Briefcase** is of thick, dark Cordoban leather with solid gold clasps and corners. It contains forms, a daytimer, note pads, an electronic personal information manager, and a cellular phone. The **Phone of Wonder** is unique to Murphy's World for two reasons: a) it works, b) you can use it to call *any* telephone (or equivalent device) *anywhere* in the multiverse. Reach out and touch someone, anytime, anywhere. You don't need to dial, for it automatically connects you with the party you have in mind.

Mr Marshall's **Pen of Power** resembles and functions like a gold fountain pen. However, it will fill out any form perfectly the first time, no matter how long or complex. With it bureaucratic hurdles can be leapt at a single bound.

Mr Marshall also carries a wallet with various credit cards: Færie Express, Valhalla Visa, etc., and 100 gold pieces.

Background: Mr Marshall is a god worshiped by bureaucrats across Murphy's World. His worshippers keep small shrines to him in their offices. The shrine contains a statue or painting of Mr Marshall with his Pen of Power in one hand, and his Sacred Briefcase in the other standing atop a pile of forms.

Mr Marshall's powers are profound. He can fill out any bureaucratic form perfectly, using the Pen of Power. He can understand the structure of any organization, no matter how obscure or complex. With this knowledge, he can find the people who make the real decisions, and cut through red tape with ease. He can command any bureaucrat to do his bidding.

He can be summoned only by filling out a **Deity Help Form** (form 21b-441b/234z/331). The Form is roughly the size of an income tax form, but rather more complicated. It is good for one summoning only. Filling out the Form typically takes **2 to 4** ***days*** with a **10 to 20%** chance of success for an being of average intelligence.

If the Form has been correctly filled out, Mr Marshall appears before the summoner. If treated with due respect and a fair amount of grovelling (a nice dinner at an expensive restaurant is rumored to be the best approach) he *may* help the Character. Otherwise, he simply decides the summoner is unworthy, and disappears. In any case, he never stays more than **2 hours.** If he cannot solve the summoner's problem in that time, he will announce that he has another meeting to attend, and vanish

Adventure Idea

Mr Marshall

A GMC, short, balding, and apparently insane, runs babbling down a street looking into the eyes of each individual he passes. When he looks into the eyes of a specific PC in the party he will laugh crazily and push a briefcase into the arms of the PC and then continue running away through the crowded streets. It is Mr Marshall's Sacred Briefcase, and the ordeal of possessing it has driven the previous owner mad.

It will take the world-wide network of bureaucrats a few days to a week to realize that the briefcase has been given to a new person, and then it will depend upon how much contact the PC has with bureaucratic types before word will spread that *they* are the new 'owner'. But once word gets out, the PC will begin to be contacted, through mysterious notes, personal visits, etc. by a number of bureaucrats of all races and sexes (or their agents) who will make various offers for the briefcase and its contents. Initially the offers will be simple and cheap, but if the PC holds out they will increase in value and/or become more bizarre. Finally, physical harm will be threatened, and then after a long pause, short, balding incompetent assassins will be sent.

Meanwhile, any form of official service needed, anywhere on the planet will become even slower and more hostile than normal; unless of course the PC is willing to hand over the briefcase and its contents — for free — as a good deed.

— after passing the buck to the nearest bureaucrat.

If ever threatened or attacked, Mr Marshall simply disappears. The offenders will be plagued with bureaucratic screw-ups and hassles for the rest of their lives.

CURRENT SITUATION: Mr Marshall has quite a presence on Murphy's World. He is constantly being summoned by someone or other to cut through red tape, explain and simplify documentation, and intimidate bureaucrats and figures of authority. He is a familiar sight in offices and public buildings everywhere.

Mr Marshall enjoys his power, and is always glad to lend a helping hand, assuming he's treated with the proper respect.

STAGING: A group of Characters caught up in a bureaucratic tangle in some officious culture could summon Mr Marshall in an attempt to cut through some intractable Gordian knot.

The Characters might also be tempted to steal Mr Marshall's pen and briefcase. This is not a difficult thing to do, for he often puts them down while conducting business. Should a theft occur, Mr Marshall will not personally chase after the miscreants; instead he will alert every organization on the planet to the crime. Every bureaucrat on Murphy's World will work to retrieve the stolen items, for Mr Marshall handsomely rewards those who recover his property.

Adventure Idea

Captain Moolah

THE CHARACTERS UNCOVER a plan by the 'enemy' (whoever they may be) to hire Captain Moolah to destroy someone they care about. They will have to work fast to either *raise the bucks* to hire Captain Moolah to *stay away*, or somehow *deprive the enemy of their cash*. Trying to talk Moolah out of a contract is hopeless if there's no money to back it up.

Captain Moolah

QUOTE:	**"What's in it for me, citizen?"**	
VOCATION:	**Superhero**	
RACE/GENDER:	**Superhuman/Male**	
INTELLIGENCE:	**14**	**Rational**
WILLPOWER:	**18**	**Confident**
CHARISMA:	**9**	**Annoying**
MYSTIC:	**25**	**Illuminated**
STRENGTH:	**75**	**Indomitable**
DEXTERITY:	**30**	**Agile**
FITNESS:	**60**	**Dynamic**
APPEARANCE:	**17**	**Handsome**
HEALTH POINTS:	**61**	
HEIGHT:	**6'4" [1.9 m]**	
WEIGHT:	**220 lbs [100 kg]**	
AGE:	**31**	
TRAITS:	**Greedy, Swaggering, Brave, Unscrupulous.**	
SPECIAL POWER:	**Flying.**	

SKILLS:			
	Bargain	**70%**	**Expert**
	Recognize Value	**80%**	**Masterful**
	Overawe	**75%**	**Expert**
	Leap Tall Buildings	**100%**	**Paramount**

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Tall, broad-shouldered, slim, with a jutting jaw, piercing blue eyes, and thick, dark hair (the kind women love to run their fingers through). A paragon of superherohood.

POSSESSIONS: Captain Moolah wears bright red tights and a cape edged in gold. Scattered all over his suit are monetary symbols: dollar signs, pound signs, yen, yuan, franc, koruna, zloty, ruble — no currency is too obscure or worthless to be left off his outfit. His belt buckle is a solid gold dollar sign.

Captain Moolah is well off. His **Fortress of Finance,** high on a mountain in the Rhibus Range, is spectacularly furnished. (If they weren't nervous about offending the owner, the members of the Elvish Architectural Association would have voted it the 'Second Tackiest Building' on the planet). Deep in the heart of the mountain, sealed by a massive steel door that can only be opened by Moolah himself, lies his **Crypt of Cash.** The Crypt contains literally tons of Earth money gathered by Moolah during his eight years on Murphy's World. Samples of anything even vaguely negotiable lie in this huge vault.

BACKGROUND: Captain Moolah wasn't always a superhero. His real name is James McGillicuddy-Kowznofski. On Earth he was a whiz-kid junk-bond investment advisor. Armed with boundless confidence, insider information, and a cellular phone, he was the terror of Wall Street. Billion dollar deals hinged upon his word. This all came to an end when he unwitting drove his BMW into a Teleportation Gate after a party in 1987. The pâté, tequila, and cocaine in his system, combined with the effects of the Gate, granted him vast powers. He had become immensely strong, and he could fly.

Cut off from Earth, he vowed to make himself as comfortable as possible on Murphy's World. He decided that the quickest way to that goal was to sell his super powers to the highest bidder. His motto: "If You've Got The Cash, I'll Be There In A Flash." Moolah intends to acquire all the Earth currency on Murphy's World, then find a way to return to Earth, and retire in a life of luxury. He is well on his way.

Moolah is always open to offers. He does fulfill his contracts, but only if your enemy can't outbid you. Captain Moolah considers it only fair to give the party he is supposed to crush a chance to raise the ante. Usually, he deems the amount offered by his targets just enough to leave them alone. The money offered has to be *significantly higher* (i.e., 5 to 10 times higher) for him to consider *attacking* his original clients.

He almost never actually *kills* anyone. That would remove a possible future client, and Captain Moolah knows better than to narrow his client base.

CURRENT SITUATION: Captain Moolah has taken so much Earth money out of the global economy people are finding it very difficult to raise sufficient cash to hire him for anything. Thus, Moolah is finding things a bit boring. He has taken to flitting around from place to place, looking for quick, cheap jobs to take on. After all, a buck is a franc is a ruble is a mark

STAGING: If a group of Characters is in a particularly bad position, Captain Moolah will fly to the rescue — for a price. They had better offer *something* valuable *right away*, or he will simply abandon them without a second thought. He *is* open to bargaining, but the price had better end up closer to his end than to yours, or he'll simply shrug his shoulders and fly away.

CHAPTER NINE

All Things Bright & Beautiful...

Some of the best silly artifacts are common or unimposing items with fantastic powers. Each item should have specific and unique powers. Each artifact listed here includes a description of the site and circumstances where it can be found, and hints as to how you might integrate it into an campaign or adventure.

Amnesia Grenades

Amnesia Grenades are small green and blue egg-shaped metallic devices which weigh about **1 lb [0.5 kg]**. They are built in Hooverville by the arms manufacturer GDM (See **Reagombie Skills & Labor Practices**). Each grenade is designed to make everyone within a certain radius of its detonation forget who they are and what they are doing for six hours. Or so that's the idea.

Since they are built to GDM's exacting quality standards (i.e., none), you can never be sure exactly what will happen when you set one off. You are probably safer juggling nitroglycerin blindfolded.

Each box of ten grenades carries an instruction pamphlet outlining how the grenades are supposed to function, and heaping scads of praise on the workmanship and quality of GDM weapons products.

In order to use a grenade, ***push the button at the top*** of the device, and throw it towards your target. If all is well, it explodes in a blinding flash of light **15 seconds** later. Any sentient creature within **10' [3 m]** of the explosion will suffer amnesia for **six hours** — under ideal circumstances. However, the results vary from grenade to grenade, and from batch to batch. The following table list the other possible effects of a grenade explosion.

Amnesia Grenade Effect Table (Roll 1d100)

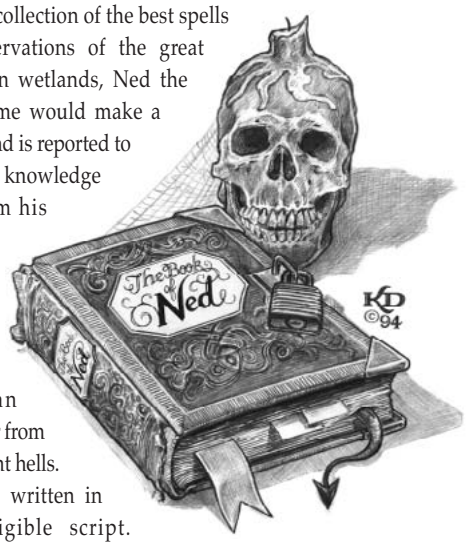
No Rolled	Grenade Effect (Basic Effect: radius 10' [3 m]; duration 6 hours.)
1 – 20	Nothing. Grenade fizzles. It's a dud.
21 – 40	Grenade behaves as it should (see Basic Effect, and text above).
41 – 45	Grenade works, radius of 1d10 x 2' [0.6 m].
46 – 50	Grenade works, radius of 1d10 x 5' [1.5 m].
51 – 55	Grenade works, radius of 1d10 x 10' [3 m].
56 – 60	Amnesia lasts 1d10 minutes.
61 – 65	Amnesia lasts 1d10 hours.
66 – 70	Amnesia lasts 2d10 hours.
71 – 75	Amnesia lasts 1d10 days.
76 – 80	Amnesia lasts 1d10 months.
81 – 85	Everyone within radius gets nasty headache for 1d10 hours.
86 – 90	Grenade is explosive, all within the radius receive 1d10 HP damage.
91 – 100	Roll twice again on this table; add results, if any conflicts, roll again.

Location: These grenades are illegal in many of the civilized lands of Murphy's World, although the authorities often forget to implement these laws. Respectable weapons shops don't carry these devices, and even fly-by-night operations hesitate to keep them in stock due to their inherently dangerous properties. (The fastest way to ruin a business is to forget that you have one.) Despite this, they can be had for a substantial price in most major cities. They can sometimes be found in caches of weapons or treasure forgotten and abandoned by their original owners.

Staging: The grenade can be used as a starting point for a group of Characters (i.e., They wake up in a tavern room with no recollection of who they are due to a grenade's effect — its remains are on the floor nearby.)

You can let the players find them, giving them a powerful but dangerous weapon they can use at their own risk.

The Book of Ned



This is a vellum bound collection of the best spells and supernatural observations of the great sorcerer of the northern wetlands, Ned the Nasty. This magical tome would make a great coffee table book and is reported to contain all of Ned's vast knowledge in its 2042 pages: from his memorable single-spell assault of Castle Crumble, to his final cryptic comments written just before he was devoured by an uncooperative Soul Eater from one of the nine unpleasant hells.

Each page is hand written in Ned's own unintelligible script. Illustrations and diagrams are provided through the supernatural imprisonment of various Dæmons in appropriate costume and settings, frozen in time and space.

The book is bound with an imposing iron clasp. More important is the protection spell that was placed upon the book. Anyone who gains possession of this wonderful artifact is sure to have hours of fun trying to second-guess the various wards and runes of the spell. But once you defeat the enchantment and open the book, an assortment of fool-proof spells is yours for the invoking! If, of course, you can correctly decipher Ned's handwriting. Mistakes can be deadly....

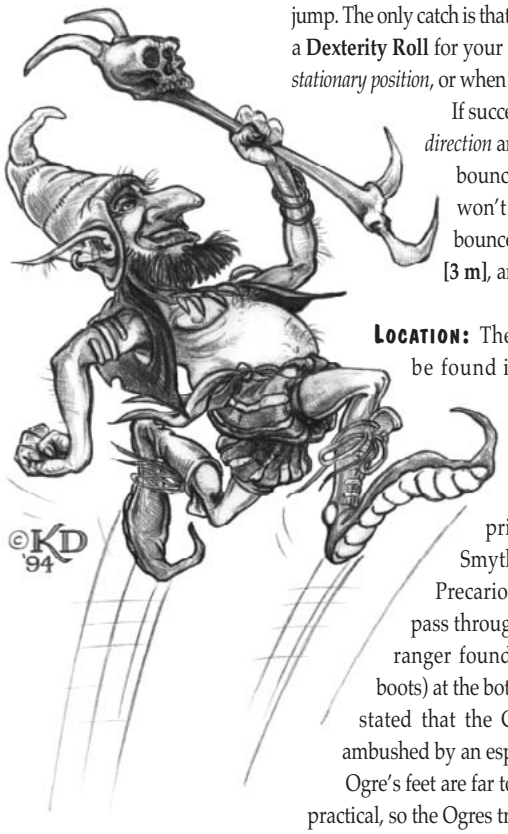
Location: The Book of Ned hasn't been seen in centuries. It is most likely to be discovered in the locked secret compartment of an antique desk, in a strongbox among the overgrown ruins of a lonely castle, or misplaced in the woo-woo section of a suburban public library (right beside the books on 'self-improvement through crystal pyramids'); anywhere the mad sorcerer might have spent the last few days of his strange nomadic life.

Staging: The Book of Ned (the name is clearly written on the cover in gold), is protected by a **Force of Discouragement,** which tries to discourage anyone from having anything to do with the tome. If a Character's willpower is strong enough (make a **Willpower Roll** to resist the magic effect) they may examine the book. If the Character tries to open the book, they trigger the book's protection spell; they must make another **Willpower Roll**. If the roll is successful, the PC may consult the book. If the roll fails, they will be transformed into an illiterate six-year old.

The book is very highly valued by anyone with magical potential on Murphy's World. If word gets around (and it will) that a particular PC possesses it, that Character becomes the target of every sorcerer who wants to make the book their own, by fair means or foul.

The Booties of Bouncing

With these amazing boots, an individual can hop to enormous heights — up to *six times higher* than they are normally able to jump. The only catch is that once the boots are on, you must make a **Dexterity Roll** for your Character's first step or jump from a *stationary position*, or when a *change of direction* ≥ 30° is attempted. If successful, the Character can control their *direction* and *height* (including the ability to *stop* bouncing). If failure results, the Character won't be able to control the direction they bounce in, nor how high (GM, roll **1d6 x 10' [3 m]**, and have a *good* time).



ABOVE: Stylish and modern, the Booties of Bouncing are the perfect accessory for the sentient being on the go.

LOCATION: The Booties of Bouncing are likely to be found in the possession of the leader of the **Stone Gnomes** in or near the **Dusky Mountains.**

STAGING: These boots were once the pride and joy of Constable Plympton Smythe, who was responsible for Castle Precarious and the security of the narrow pass through the Dusky Mountains. One day a ranger found the Constable's body (minus the boots) at the bottom of a chasm. Official reports later stated that the Constable and his party had been ambushed by an especially grumpy band of Ogres.

Ogre's feet are far too large to make wearing the Booties practical, so the Ogres traded their new prize to the leader of a band of Stone Gnomes for a bag of pretty pebbles that they were told were magical pills to cure tooth ache.

When traversing the Dusky Mountains, watch for a bouncing Stone Gnome and hopping mad Ogres with sore jaws.

The Cloak of Many Compartments

This is a beautiful dark blue velvet hooded floor-length cloak with a gold satin interior. Apart from the advantage of making the wearer look drop-dead gorgeous, it has an abundance of magical compartments.

The 12 variously sized compartments and pockets on the inner side of the Cloak hold any item which fits into their openings without adding bulk or weight to the cape. A PC may retrieve an object in the Cloak by simply thinking about it and reaching into the pocket where it was placed. If any object (including a living being) is *completely* covered by the Cloak, it is deposited in the Cloak's 13th compartment. This compartment may be *voluntarily* exited from within (if you know this, and can remember where the entrance is, for it is very dark unless a you have a light). If the Cloak is stitched shut, the 'pocketed' individual will have a hell of a time finding the seam and breaking out of the mini-dimension they occupy. If the Cloak is destroyed while someone is within, they are forever sealed withing the mini-dimension (or until some weird Ludo fluke releases them).

LOCATION: The Cloak has a colorful history. More than once it has saved the life of a spy or back-door lover. In recent years it has graced the shoulders of both males and females with some wearers not even being aware of its powers. Currently, the Cloak of Many Compartments is being worn by a wandering actor and thief who goes by the name Tab. He uses the Cloak in his trade.

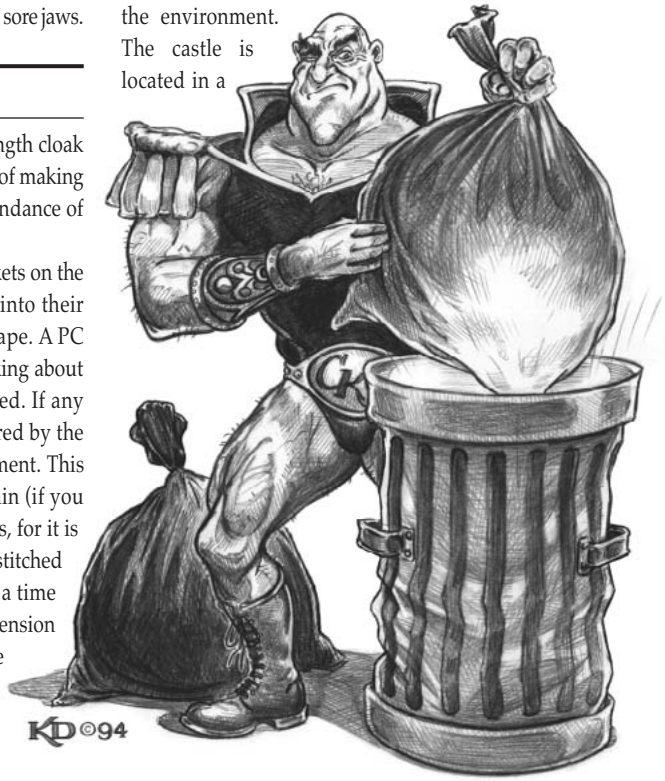
STAGING: Tab can be encountered as part of a caravan of entertainers, a merchant hireling, or any vocation which permits him to travel from town to town. Tab does not know about the Cloak's 13th compartment. Tab thinks of himself as a ladies' man and has a weakness for romantic entanglements.

The Dustbin of Destiny

This wonderful artifact is the foremost reason why Castle Kleen has no garbage problem. No matter how much trash is placed into the D of D (as those attending the Dustbin fondly refer to it) it never fills. The Dustbin is about the size of a normal household trash container, cylindrical in shape, made of silvery metal, and is slightly dented from years of misuse prior to its acquisition by Castle Kleen.

The Dustbin has the power to reveal the potential future of the individual whose garbage is tossed into its greasy interior. When trash is dropped into its maw, a portentous image appears within the noxious vapors that permanently fill the Dustbin. (If the refuse from an assortment of people is tossed in, the image is confused and undecipherable.) However, the Dustbin only reveals ***bad news.*** Thus, it is rarely consulted, because it always depresses people.

LOCATION: For centuries now, **Castle Kleen** has been the resting place of this wonderful aid to the environment. The castle is located in a



RIGHT: Lance Corporal Absterge of the Castle Kleen House Guard hates drawing Dustbin Duty; inevitably it leads to clairvoyant visions of disastrous events. So far he's witnessed the fall of the Roman Empire, the sinking of the Titanic, and a Milli-Vanilli concert. What further horrors will this unique form of trash media reveal?

sheltered inlet on the west coast of the Land of Lyonesse. Once the site of a massive landfill, the Castle's original owner stumbled upon the Dustbin quite by accident while combing through the debris in the course of his daily business. Since then life has been tip top for his immediate family and relations.

The Dustbin itself is located in a special room which has two guards posted day and night. For as everyone knows, trash disposal is a serious business.

STAGING: The Dustbin of Destiny has long been the envy of the surrounding landholders at **Castle Grime, Castle Filthy,** and **Poop Tower.** Several times they have tried to seize the valued artifact through subterfuge and diplomatic wrangling. Both Grime and Filthy pay to have their solid waste disposed of at Castle Kleen, but the owner of Poop is just too proud to pay. Lord Poop has suggested that the Dustbin should be available to all at no expense. He's even contested the ownership of the Dustbin with the Kleen family, claiming that the artifact was originally his and was mistakenly put out with the trash.

Of course, Lord Kleen will have none of it. It does set the stage for potential adventures involving an attempt to steal or protect the Dustbin.

Since the Kleen nobility refuses to look into the dark depths of the Dustbin, only those who are responsible for disposing of the Castle's trash are aware of the dire portents that the artifact reveals each day. Perhaps something especially critical has been revealed, but those in authority refuse to heed.

The Gauntlets of Greed

Depending upon your outlook on life, you might consider these laminated-plate, leather-lined gauntlets cursed. Any Character who puts them on cannot take them off unless they succeed in making a **Willpower Roll**. While wearing the gloves, Characters cannot resist the call to accumulate as much wealth and power as possible. This urge is relentless. The PC so afflicted can rest only when they collapse from exhaustion. They will drive their followers as hard as they can get away with. Worst of all, since the Gauntlets can't be removed, taking a bath and washing hair are significant challenges.

LOCATION: Currently the Gauntlets are in the possession of Cynthia the (Previously) Nice, Queen of the Modest Lands. This rolling coastal farmland region of sheep and small share-croppers has been transformed along with its ruler. Just how the Gauntlets came into the possession of the normally mild mannered Queen is unknown, but treachery by a nearby baron and suitor is suspected.

STAGING: Today everyone, including the surrounding barons, openly regret the acquisition of the Gauntlets by the lovely Queen. It seems that Queen Cynthia has become an even greater tyrant than any of the scheming barons ever hoped for themselves, putting claims on their lands and demanding huge transfers of wealth and food to feed her ever-increasing army of mercenaries. Obviously a solution must be found. Cynthia is simply not herself, and she's upsetting the entire countryside. The barons will gladly hire someone with a cunning plan to alleviate them of the burden of losing their lands to this virgin Queen. It is thought that she has a weakness for truffles.



LEFT: Cynthia the Previously Nice contemplates a day's worth of tax receipts. The only real drawback of possessing the Gauntlets of Greed is that personal hygiene takes a back seat to rampant materialism.

The Great Silver Swizzlestick

Of all the objects and heirlooms on Murphy's world, the most ancient is The Great Silver Swizzlestick. The Great Silver Swizzlestick was commissioned by Sigurd III Whitethorn, an early Elvish king. (Sigurd was early to everything. He typically showed up an hour or more ahead of time for any appointment. Finding himself alone, he would rush off to his next appointment. Elvish government fell into even worse disarray than usual. Eventually, Sigurd showed up to a bridge opening ceremony three weeks too early, and fell into the river from the edge of the incomplete bridge. After this, Sigurd became known as the Late Sigurd III Whitethorn).

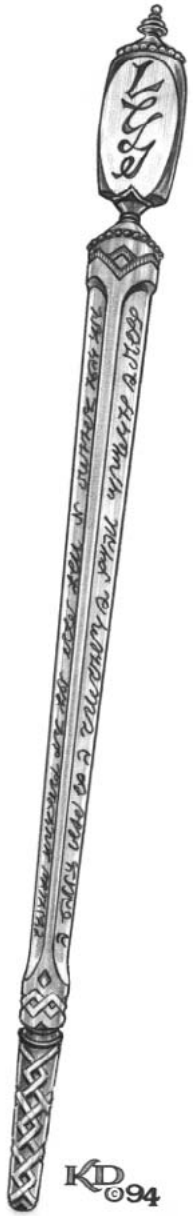
Before the creation of the Great Swizzlestick, all Elves had their drinks shaken, not stirred. Now only the radical fringe shake their drinks. (Elves devoted to temperance drink milkstirs, rather than milkshakes).

The Swizzlestick is the height of a tall dwarf, and is intricately carved with magical runes and drink recipes. It was originally used to stir the cauldron of drinks served at the royal banquets, and it was a sign of favor to be allowed to stir the drink by the king. After the Elves acquired the Sacred Stein of Whitethorn, the Swizzlestick was used to stir the ale inside. (Some Elves complain this makes the ale go flat, other Elves respond that it's a tradition and they should just shut up).

LOCATION: The Great Swizzlestick is the property of the **King Roderick of Whitethorn Castle.** In recent years the Swizzlestick has been on loan to his cousin Reginald in **New South Plimpton** on the coast. **Reggie** (as he is known) throws the most splendid parties and has become a master at concocting new and mind-numbing cocktail drinks.

STAGING: There hasn't been a party at Castle Plimpton in months, and the aristocracy at Whitethorn are desperate for a diversion of the kind only Reggie can provide. Reggie has a slight problem: the Great Swizzlestick has been stolen. Or perhaps lost, or thrown away by accident. Reggie and his staff have a difficult time keeping things straight at times. Now they're desperate for someone to come along and help them out of their mess. Invitations have already been sent off announcing a party next month.

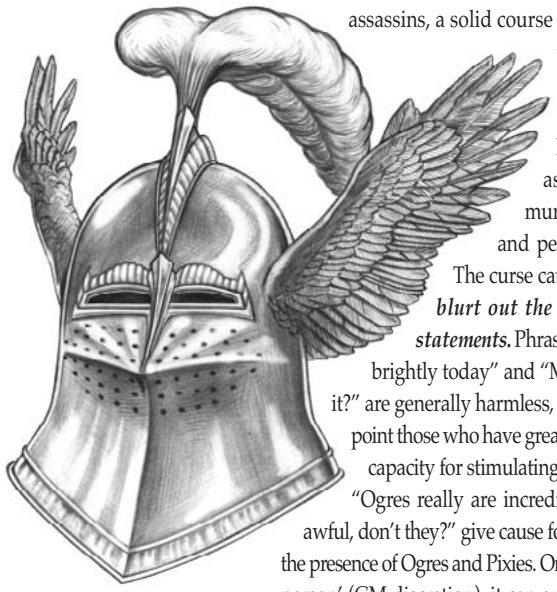
Below: It is thought that the ancient Elvish script inscribed on the surface of the Great Silver Swizzlestick reads: "Don't drink and drive — you might spill your drink."



Just when you're *sure* you know how something functions, it will do something *unexpected* that you are not prepared for.

The Helm of Blatant Obviousness

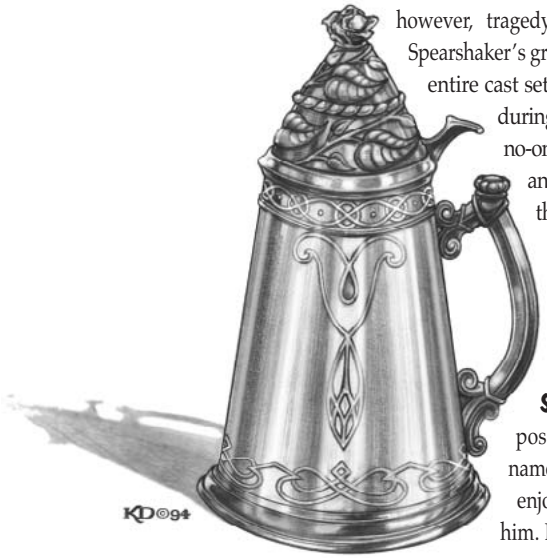
BELOW: You're sure to look spiffy in this fine piece of formal wear. Heads will turn and people will stop in their tracks and stare as you pass. The patented EverShine™ coating will ensure that its bright, eye-hurting gleam is long lasting.



The lucky soul who obtains this item is fortunate indeed. For no longer will they be just another face in the crowd of battle-crazed screaming maniacs. With this helm they *will* be noticed. While much of this attention comes from the Helm's gaudy gold and silver paint-job and eagle wings, the balance is due to the item's magical properties which when worn, ***compel others to sit up and take notice.*** If however, the wearer is attempting to avoid a gang of assassins, a solid course of action might be to remove the Helm from their head for the duration of the persecution.

The Helm also has a lesser known feature which manifests as a ***curse*** upon evil-doers, murderers, desecraters of temples, and people who wear argyle socks. The curse causes the wearer to continually ***blurt out the most obvious and banal of statements.*** Phrases like "Boy, that sun is shining brightly today" and "My, this water sure is wet, isn't it?" are generally harmless, though they do tend to disappoint those who have greater expectations of the wearer's capacity for stimulating conversation. Statements like: "Ogres really are incredibly stupid," or "Pixies smell awful, don't they?" give cause for greater concern, especially in the presence of Ogres and Pixies. Once placed on the head of a 'bad person' (GM discretion), it can only be removed with wearer's *death*, or when they're *really, really sorry* for what they've done.

BELOW: If you've been called out for a duel, and you happen to be a coward — or an Elf, this is just the item for you. One quaff (well, maybe two) from the Sacred Stein is sure to boost your optimism and ferocity for the approaching encounter.



LOCATION: An early owner of the Helm was **Thompson Dupe,** an actor living in the desert city of **Four Rivers.** He acquired it under mysterious circumstances that somehow involved the Mayor's daughter, a powerful Eastern warlord, and a huge chunk of mouldy tuna. Dupe's star status was waning at the time, and he wanted some way of drawing more attention to himself. Wearing the Helm certainly accomplished his goal.

After a week, he was the most famous person in Four Rivers. His performances were well attended, and he got the best seats at all the desert-side restaurants. After only six weeks of fame, however, tragedy struck. During a performance of Spearshaker's great drama, "Sigurd III Meets Bob," the entire cast set upon Dupe and beat him to a pulp during his monologue as Sigurd III, because no-one in the audience had paid attention to anyone but him during the entire run of the play. After he was formally buried, and the sticky bits were washed off the stage, the local Theatre Guild paid a **Mr Mark** to take the Helm out of the city. It hasn't been seen since.

STAGING: The Helm is now in the possession of a former monster hunter named **Herman.** As a young man, Herman enjoyed the notoriety that the Helm gave him. Everywhere he went, he was noticed. True, he was unable to sneak up on monsters, but he preferred to meet them in a straight fight rather than skulking around. Today, Herman is retired and living in seclusion as a hermit in a tunnel in the **Cliff of Darkness**. He's also gone a bit soft in the head, and believes that monsters are out to get him in revenge for the hundreds of their kin he's killed. He may be right… Thus, Herman hasn't touched the Helm in years; attracting attention is the last thing in he wants. He will give it away to anyone who asks. He will explain that it is magic, but remain vague on exactly what it does.

The Medallions of Marvin

These six coins were minted to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the reign of **Duke Marvin of Myton,** a small shire in southern **Lyonesse.** Since coins are not common (most transactions being done through barter) these high-relief golden **3" [7.6 cm]** diameter, **10 oz [0.3 kg]** Medallions, each bearing a portrait of one of Castle Myton's previous lords, were especially valuable. Then one evening they were stolen.

This made Lord Marvin a tad peeved. He called upon the services of the best sorcerer he could afford and had the Medallions *cursed:* any individual in possession of one of the Medallions feels ***extreme guilt*** until the coin is returned to its rightful owner. There is one slip in the spell. Whenever one of these coins comes *into contact with a golden item* of sufficient mass, that item is *transformed into an exact copy* of the original coin. Each newly created coin bears the same curse.

LOCATION: The coins are widely scattered throughout the **Isles of Avalon,** the southwestern part of the **Favonius Plain,** and **Verdentia.**

STAGING: It has been over ten years since the Medallions were stolen. Lord Marvin has all but given up hope that they will be returned. There is a standing offer of a reward for the return of any one of the Medallions (the Lord does not yet know that the Medallions have been multiplying).

The Medallions might be discovered be in the private collections of wealthy lords and merchants. Also, they or their offspring might be given to one of the Characters as part of their compensation for a service provided or a good traded. Alternatively, a Medallion might be obtained as part of a treasure trove in a vacant temple, castle, or abandoned vending machine.

The Sacred Stein of Whitethorn

Fifteen thousand years ago the Elves of Whitethorn, (and everyone else for that matter), were ruled by the Aesir Giants. Then one day, an Elvish sorcerer created the Sacred Stein, which ultimately led to the redistribution of power and land in favor of the Elves.

The Sacred Stein is a **12" [0.3 m]** tall, capped, beer stein, ornamented with intricate designs upon its metal surface, and is ***always full of ale*** ready for the pouring. For most people, the brew simply tastes like a strong dark beer. However, Elves who drink from it are magically transformed into formidable fighters: *'beerserkers'*. The Elves, under the

command of **Sederic of Whitethorn,** having consumed vast quantities of their secret weapon, were able to engage the Aesir and thrash them soundly at the Battle of Determination. To this day, no Aesir dares take on an Elf of the Isles of Avalon.

LOCATION: The Sacred Stein hasn't been needed or seen since that famous battle many years ago. Presumably it is stored somewhere in Whitethorn Castle.

STAGING: An uncommonly efficient clerk of the Royal Treasure might discover that the Sacred Stein has gone *missing* (or at least has been misplaced), and quietly initiates a search for it.

The Ships of Skyerra

These amazing craft look and operate like any other sailing vessel when in the waters of Færie. They average **75' [23 m]** long and **15' [4.6 m]** wide, and can travel a maximum of **7 mph [11 kph]** under full balloon-like sails. However, the major significance of these magical craft is that once they have achieved a sufficient speed, they can launch themselves from a high wave *into the air,* and return to Skyerra, the cloud-city from whence they came. Their mode of supernatural propulsion is a closely guarded secret.

LOCATION: Skyerra is located southeast of the **Living Lands** in the icy sea which circles the Frozen Waste. The Ships dock at **Cloud Harbor** upon returning from their trading missions with the people of the "Lower Lands" as Skyerrans refer to those who live on Færie proper.

STAGING: The Skyerrans are a thin, waif-like folk who are talented artisans and excellent sailors. Their ships can sometimes be seen in the larger southern ports, where they exchange their cargo of arts, crafts, and bottled water for exotic foodstuffs and raw resources. They appear a peaceful people and are not known to engage in any political rivalry. It is said that they occasionally transport visitors to their Castles in the sky. Some *never return.*

There is a dark rumor about these beautiful skyships. Some paranoid types have observed that every time a politician or lawyer goes missing (apparently not a rare event), a Skyerran vessel has been nearby. Though most citizens fail to notice these disappearances, keener minds believe that these people are kidnapped and forced to produce fuel for the skyships. The victims are shackled below decks, where they are forced to talk, debate, and argue for hours at a time — thus providing the *hot air* necessary to give the craft the lift it needs to fly.

Believing these rumors (denied vehemently by the Skyerrans, of course), some officials seek out freelance heroes to rescue a favorite politician or lawyer. The general public has usually failed to become excited when told of the kidnappings and solicited for financial contributions to the rescue funds.

The Socks of Swiftness

Nothing mysterious here. Put them on, and away you go. The socks increase a Character's running speed by ***ten times***. These calf-high socks may be slipped on under or over your shoes. They ***never wear out*** and are ***impervious to the elements*** (thus they keep feet toasty warm). Plus they *never* need washing.

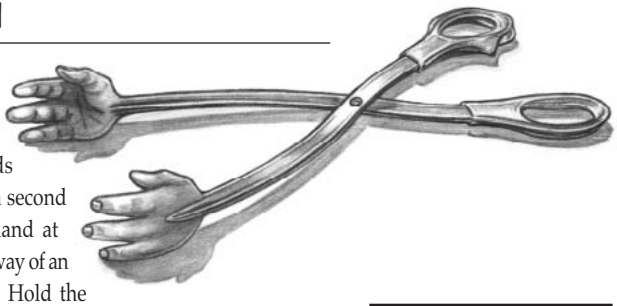
LOCATION: The Socks are *missing*. They were in the possession of a courier company operating out of Commercia, but the courier who was wearing them went missing, along with an important package which included a peace treaty between the eastern desert nomads and the Dwarves of the Dusky Mountains.

The courier was new on the job and had a poor sense of direction. He died of fright when a member of the dreaded Wormface people walked into his camp one night to bum a cigarette.

His body, the socks, and the documents were discovered by a rival nomadic clan who were not a signatory to the treaty. The socks have proven very useful for crossing the hot desert sands, greatly improving communications between the local sheik and his subservient clansmen-to-be; but they are a sure giveaway as to who swiped the treaty.

STAGING: The courier, **Brownie Express,** is cooperating with the Dwarves in conducting an investigation into the loss of the Socks. At worst, it could mean war between rival nomad clans, and even between the nomads and the Dusky Mountain Dwarves.

The Tongs of Ted



Though initially unassuming, this artifact consisting of a pair of **2' [0.6 m]** long iron rods joined in the middle, a second glance will reveal a hand at each tip — a sure giveaway of an extremely useful find. Hold the Tongs, concentrate upon the object to be grasped, and the Tongs magically ***extend*** up to **20' [6.1 m]** towards it. The total weight of the Tongs *plus* anything they grasp will always be **1 lb [0.5 kg]**.

LOCATION: The last reported location of the Tongs of Ted is in the **Misty Mountains**, in northwestern Jotunheim. They were being used by a party of nature-lovers, who were exploring the region and collecting interesting seashells imbedded in the layered sedimentary rock of the mountains. The Tongs were also useful for late-night barbecues, as this group tended to make their cook-fires several times too large for their needs.

STAGING: The tongs were recently recovered by a local nature preserve warden, who threw the party into prison for trying to remove national treasures from unspoilt lands, and nearly burning down the forest. Finding the jail was already full of other nature-lovers, they all decided to make the most of things and began a co-op selling t-shirts and maps to the local tourist trade.

The warden, a Giant named **Ferdmyr** of the West Jotun clan, now uses the Tongs to extend the already gigantic long arm of the law in this region. Ferdmyr is a friendly sort, but very nationalistic and proud of his heritage. He would probably be willing to trade the Tongs for a decent sized piece of cheese.

Adventure Idea

The Sacred Stein

A GIANT CLAN (not present at the Battle of Determination and so not witnesses to the Elvish behavior) decide to conquer the "Elvish wimps." It is then that the Elves discover the Stein is missing. For without the beer of the Sacred Stein, the Elves *are* wimps. Panic ensues.

Adventure Idea

Ships of Skyerra

THE CITY COUNCIL of a small city hires the PCs on a secret mission to return the Mayor whom they believe has been kidnapped by 'aliens' (foreigners from Skyerra). The plan is to have the PCs pose as a team of legal experts, and then to take an evening jaunt to the park where the mayor was last seen jogging. Once captured by the Skyerrans they are to find out if the Mayor is still alive and if so, return him.

Actually, the Council are hoping that the PCs will fail — everyone hates the obnoxious Mayor.

CHAPTER TEN

Your Place or Mine?

Murphy's World consists of an abundance of marvellous places with strange phenomena, bizarre cultures, and mind-boggling architecture. The following is a list of some sample places which you might have Characters visit, or use as models for other interesting places. Each description includes 'Staging' hints as to how you might integrate the setting into a campaign or adventure.

Castle Abaton

On a high ridge overlooking a bottomless canyon in the **Kringarra Mountains**, stands the ruins of a magnificent castle, where once lived a powerful warlord who reigned over the land as far as the eye could see. The castle's owner was a veteran of many campaigns of siege warfare, and chose the site for its especially difficult accessibility. As everybody knows, three quarters of the job of defending a stronghold is building it in a place which is hard to assault. Once the castle was completed, depleting the fortune amassed by a lifetime of mercenary soldiering, it was completely unassailable; a masterwork of defense. The only problem was that it was built in such a god-forsaken place that nobody wanted to challenge its occupant for the right to the territory.

Though his landholdings were secure, they were valueless, since nobody wanted to join him in farming the rocky hills surrounding the castle. Once the lord's budget was blown on expensive interior decor, merchants ceased to make the long trek up the treacherous mountain to display their wares. It became rather lonely, and when the warlord eventually died, alone, nobody bothered to claim the castle, since it was deemed not worth the bother of getting to. Thus it has stood, unoccupied, crumbling to ruin, to this day.

STAGING: This could be the setting for an exploratory scenario. Perhaps the castle holds some dark and dangerous secret; like an alchemist's workshop with shelves full of flawed or unusual potions. Perhaps squatters are living in the castle today and frighten others away by pretending to be ghosts (and perhaps the pranksters are themselves afraid of ghosts). There might exist a *real* ghost, who, though terrifying in appearance, is in fact harmless (although a chronic practical joker), and lonely for company.

Castle Nasty

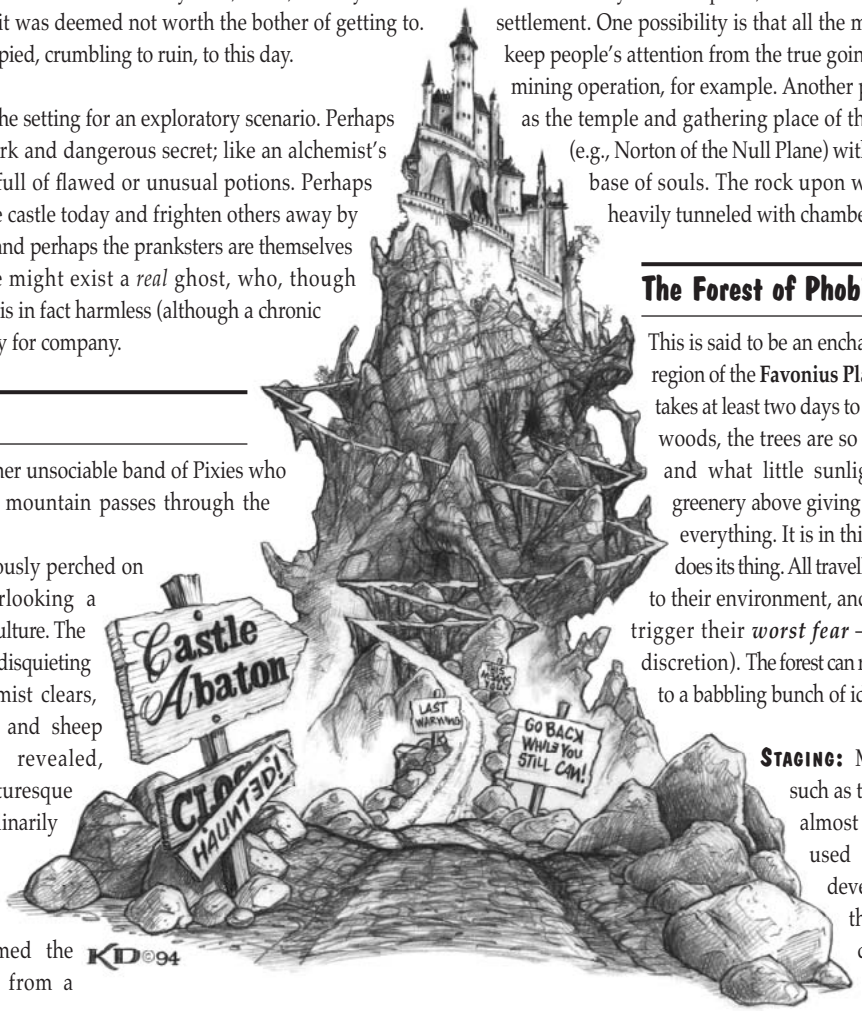
This is the abode of a rather unsociable band of Pixies who control one of the main mountain passes through the **Shardouk Mountains.**

The castle is precariously perched on a mountain peak, overlooking a valley like an enormous vulture. The valley itself is a strangely disquieting place. As the morning mist clears, neatly tilled farmlands and sheep dotted pastures are revealed, surrounding a small picturesque village where an extraordinarily quiet people reside.

In recent memory, a ruthless clan of mercenary Pixies claimed the valley and its fortress from a band of Trow Dwarves (who had themselves killed the original occupants — a timid aristocratic Elvish family whose *family name* just happened to be *Nasty*). Though hired to seize the castle in the name of a Drow baron, upon seeing how nice the place was, the Pixies decided to keep it for themselves. Supposedly, the defeated Trow and their Ogre comrades were executed and buried en masse in an unmarked grave somewhere in the valley below. The local farmers were killed, then magically transformed into living corpses to produce foodstuffs for their conquering masters. Not a happy tale.

At sundown in this dark mist-shrouded valley, many horrible things are said to occur: travellers go missing and the undead rise and walk again. It is said that sunlight touches only the highest peaks encircling the valley. Even if all the tales aren't true, the scenery and atmosphere of the place is more than enough to keep wary travellers away. Perhaps the Pixies are merely spreading these tales in an attempt to keep their little kingdom safe from prying eyes. It's just a thought.

STAGING: Castle Nasty, or something like it can exist in any mountain pass area. It is a very isolated place, and is at least six days ride from any other settlement. One possibility is that all the mystery is simply a contrivance to keep people's attention from the true goings-on in the valley — a profitable mining operation, for example. Another possibility is that the castle serves as the temple and gathering place of the worshippers of a terrible deity (e.g., Norton of the Null Plane) with plans for expanding their power base of souls. The rock upon which the castle is built might be heavily tunneled with chambers to accommodate the followers.



The Forest of Phobias

This is said to be an enchanted place, located in the forested region of the **Favonius Plain.** It is a large mixed forest which takes at least two days to travel through on foot. In the deep woods, the trees are so large that they block out the sky, and what little sunlight remains filters through the greenery above giving an eerie, unnatural appearance to everything. It is in this area of the woods that the forest does its thing. All travellers develop an enhanced sensitivity to their environment, and each will experience events that trigger their ***worst fear*** — whatever that might be (GM discretion). The forest can reduce even the hardiest adventurers to a babbling bunch of idiots; never to be the same again.

STAGING: Mind-altering forests and glades such as the Forest of Phobias can be found almost anywhere, but they shouldn't be used too often, lest the Characters develop a method of being immune to the effects, or simply tire of the device. One possibility is that the forest is home to the cutest and

most friendly animals the Characters have ever seen. Some might even *talk* — if so, have them ask the Characters whether or not they are vegetarians. However, (especially if some of the Characters eat meat) at night these same animals might stage a mass assault against the Characters in revenge for all those of their kin which have gone to the cook-pot before them.

Isles of the Genii

Here is a land rumored to be full of wonders, adventure, and great wealth. For this reason the **Emperor Ganglai Fu** sent an expedition of his best warriors to conquer the place and bring back the riches to fill his treasure chambers.

Now Ganglai was not a nice man, and his realm was one of the most miserable places on the entire planet, especially if you weren't rich, which most people were not. So hard were his edicts that many of his people tried to run away; anyone caught had his or her foot nailed to a rock by his fanatical (and well paid) soldiers. Many ran, many limped.

And so it was that when the sailors were marched aboard the three ships to carry out the Emperor's mission of conquest, the air was buzzing with excitement. Not with the thrill of adventure, for they were all bloody terrified, but with the thrill of escape!

To make a long story short, they found the islands, and upon landing discovered that they were inhabited by an incredible race of magicians who could alter the landscape and weather at will. The *soldiers* sent on the voyage however were determined to stick to plans and attacked; all were killed in a hailstorm caused by the wave of a wizard's (Genii's) hand. The sailors fell to their knees and begged for refugee status, which was granted after a long hearing.

The Emperor was furious about losing his ships, and never did learn what happened to the expedition. He died later that year — while inspecting a treasure chest the lid fell on his head.

STAGING: The Isles of the Genii are populated by an extremely conservative, ritualistic, and bureaucratic clan of wizards, and now by the refugee sailors. It is a small island where everything is kept in place by the exhaustive efforts of the public works branch. It is a land where accountants would feel at home. It is also rich in gems beyond the greediest sailor's wildest dreams. There are two schools of thought among the Geniis about what to do with all this wealth. Some want it to remain where it is, since being Genii, they can manufacture anything needed with magic. Others want the precious stones mined and put on display in vast government managed museums. What neither group comprehends is the magical powers of the stones; it is the *source of the Genii's magic.*

Some gemstones ***enhance the wishes*** of those in close proximity and reduce the random effects of Ludo's energies. Others cause ***random or negative effects*** (as if the forces of Ludo were not bad enough…) when a wish or curse is expressed nearby. Additionally, due to their long exposure to them, the stones act as ***Genii magnets.*** Genii feel a subconscious mental tug and/or increased personal bliss when specific gems are nearby. Different colors represent different strengths and influences (GM discretion).

In recent years, the refugee sailors have discovered the gems, and have been secretly mining their own hoard, which if discovered by their Genii hosts would alter their status considerably. Their goal is to await the arrival of a ship and crew of adventurers willing to help, and escape with their fortune. They will share some of their fortune in exchange for assistance.

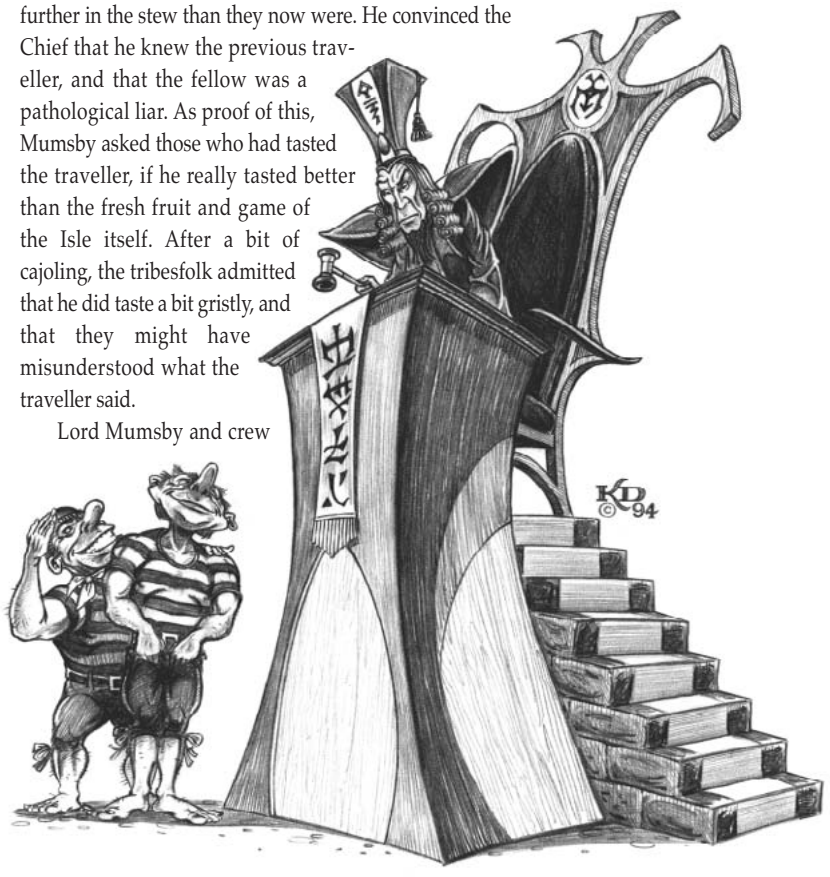
The Isle of Idiots

So dubbed by **Lord Mumsby 'the Quick'** of North Wimbly. This famous Elvish explorer discovered the island quite by accident, and lived to regret it. The Isle, an insignificant bit of green located just off the coast of **Scrylaan** in the Southern Sea, appeared uninhabited when Lord Mumbsy directed his crew to come ashore for water and to make repairs. However, a wild, unkempt, and rather irrational sort of people inhabit the Isle, and soon set upon the unwary explorer and his crew. The Elves, taken completely by surprise as they sat merrily singing around their campfires, were trussed up and transported off to the locals' village and their eagerly awaiting butchers.

It seems that the last traveller to the Isle was hospitable enough to share a turkey dinner with the local chief and his senior warriors and made a big thing about "white meat is the best…." The locals, being inexperienced in the ways of the world, took the traveller literally, and after polishing off the turkey, ate *him* (the traveller being fair of skin.) It had been over ten years since the last visitor, and the locals hadn't had a taste of "the best" meat since.

Upon being told this story, Lord Mumsby realized that the situation demanded some quick talking, lest they all end up further in the stew than they now were. He convinced the Chief that he knew the previous traveller, and that the fellow was a pathological liar. As proof of this, Mumsby asked those who had tasted the traveller, if he really tasted better than the fresh fruit and game of the Isle itself. After a bit of cajoling, the tribesfolk admitted that he did taste a bit gristly, and that they might have misunderstood what the traveller said.

Lord Mumsby and crew



Adventure Idea

Isles of the Genii

THE PCs 'discover' a collection of small islands and stop to take on water. On the beach, one of the party members discovers a gemstone. Then another. Soon it will be clear; this is a neat place. With effort, the PCs will be able to collect a small bag full of gems by nightfall — if they stay that long.

Meanwhile, the PCs were seen arriving by a lookout for a secret group of twelve gem miners. They will try to buy, or 'borrow' the PCs boat to escape with their hoard.

BELOW: "Gems, Guvnor? What gems? Sure, we like to collect shiny pebbles as much as the next fella, but we don't recall picking up no gems…"

were set free and a feast was held to commemorate their new found friendship. As Mumsby and crew retired to their ship they bid farewell to the happy if somewhat gullible folk and left the parting advice, "always question your interpretation of whatever anyone says." The locals haven't been the same since.

STAGING: Obviously, this is the ideal place for a shipwreck. Until they can overturn the native's belief in the last words of Lord Mumsby, Characters will find it nearly impossible to get the islanders to believe anything they say, and even then they will be taken very literally. The islanders are suspicious of strangers, but bored with island life and hungry for new activities and creative additions to their diet. Stranded Characters might be able to con the natives into helping them construct a boat; more than likely, the islanders will demand that they be permitted to send a party of representatives along with the Characters to discover the truth about the outside world they've heard so much about.

The island people are direct, gullible, naïve, and willing to eat just about anything to survive. Once they trust someone, they will accept everything that person tells them as true. Islanders never tell lies. They reproduce quickly and have filled their island to capacity — taking visitors to the mainland could mean disaster a few years down the road.

Adventure Idea

Mag Mell

THE PCs ARE SOLD an ancient map which leads to the fabled land of Mag Mell, home of the magical Sidi. After a long journey through rough seas, being chased by Trow pirates, and then getting totally lost in a fog, the PCs will run aground on Mag Mell. Upon exploring the island it will appear deserted. Then they will discover an entry into the underground settlement.

Exploring the lavish chambers, they will discover the Sidi to be under a magical sleep (the result of a backfired spell). Just then the Trow pirates will find the PC's ship and begin their search of the island. The Trow are angry that the PCs ran away and now want to really stick it to them. The only way to save their hides is to figure out how to awaken the Sidi. But how?

Keruski Fried Platypus (KFP)

Keruski Fried Platypus (usually called KFP), is a chain of fast food takeout franchises. It specializes in serving deep-fried breaded platypi, along with sides of deep-fried breaded potatoes, deep-fried breaded cole-slaw, and deep-fried breaded bread. In fact, everything they serve is deep-fried and breaded. (This makes beverage sales disappointing, since most people dislike sucking soggy fried breading through straws.)

KFP restaurants can be found almost everywhere on Murphy's World. Not that there are that many: they teleport. For some reason KFPs attract an inordinate amount of attention from Ludo, resulting in one rarely remaining at any fixed location for long. Thus KFP fast-food joints can be found deep in the driest desert, in the coldest arctic wastes, and perched on the highest mountain tops; a few underwater ones have a thriving swim-through trade. The obvious danger for patrons is that one of these diners may shift while they are inside. "Going out for platypus" has for some become a lifelong experience (and something of a euphemism for 'skipping town'). This is a boon for the parent company, 'Keruski Fried Platypus & Shoe Repair, Inc.', as skipping out on leases is one way they make a profit.

Some folks with a paranoid bent claim that KFP has learned how to clone living beings, based upon the observation that every server behind the counter in a KFP restaurant looks and acts just like every other. The truth is less impressive. KFP hires only surly teenagers (of any race) with terminal acne and an I.Q. which assures their complete inability to get even the simplest order correct. The bonus for KFP is that these employees have just as much trouble remembering how much they had agreed to work for. KFP never errs on the side of generosity.

Despite these apparent drawbacks, KFP does rather well. Dwarves are its best customers, due to the fact that even deep-fried, breaded platypus tastes better than Dwarvish cooking. Nothing warms the hearts of Dwarvish children and housewives more than hearing the wonderful words, "Kids, I brought home KFP!"

Elves, on the other hand, are aghast that such a monstrosity even exists. An Elf would rather starve to death than to eat anything from KFP. Keruski Fried Platypus has been trying for centuries to get Elves as customers, rightly seeing them as a vast, untapped reservoir of cash. Alas for KFP, even deep-fried breaded truffles have made no impact whatsoever on the Elvish market.

STAGING: When Characters are in trouble, far from home and out of food, desperate for rescue or a trip to the loo, this is an ideal time to have a KFP lurking around the next rocky outcropping. The line up at a drive-through KFP is a great place to make contacts and meet people. The public washrooms, when not out of order, are somewhat scary, but when you gotta go, you gotta go.... And, if their timing is right (or wrong), they could end up on the other side of the planet. Just look for the sign of the Fallen Arches.

Mag Mell

This is an island west of the Isles of Avalon inhabited by a people called the Sidi (pronounced *shee*). The Sidi are immortal — at least nobody has ever seen one die. They spend their time reading books and engaging in peaceful contemplation.

Occasionally traders land on the island and trade with the quiet and well-spoken citizens. It is rumored to be a great place to obtain books on almost any topic. Once an ambitious band of Trowlish pirates tried to ransack the island, but upon landing found nothing: no settlements, libraries, nothing. After a bit of angry running about, they found a network of *underground tunnels* which wound maze-like for miles. Some pirates eventually made it back to their ship and sailed away, regretting that they had ever landed; others perished, lost underground.

It has been said that the Sidi occasionally travel abroad in crystal ships, and that they are sorcerers possessing special powers which permit them to walk on water, breathe under water, or fly for limited periods of time. But nobody *really* believes this.

STAGING: This is an ideal place to have your Characters periodically hear about in legends, songs and fables. It is a place of great learning and holds the key to vast powers. Little is known about the Sidi and their crystal fleet. Do they scheme to or even already influence vast areas of Færie? Can they provide the knowledge necessary to leave the world, if that is a Character's goal?

The Sidi are uncharacteristically wise and sensible for Murphy's World. In fact, they may have many of the answers desired by the Characters. Thus the place should be extremely hard to get to. Indeed, the Sidi have the ability to cause their

island to vanish below the waves to avoid being spotted by those they do not want to contact. The Sidi are very curious, and in their pursuit of the answers to the multiverse's mysteries, they want to interview any individual who has arrived on Færie from elsewhere. Perhaps Sean Murphy paid them a visit and they won't let their 'visitor' leave. The Sidi could have operatives throughout Færie who observe and seek out things of interest to be investigated and/or brought back.

Mag Mor

This is a romantic place west of the **Isles of Avalon,** where the **Tuatha De Danann** (the people of the goddess Danu) reside. If asked, the Tuatha De Danann claim that they are of Elvish stock, and proud of it (although their actual origins remain unknown). They claim to be immortal but can be wounded or slain. The De Dananns are immigrants to Mag Mor, originally the home of a little people now known as the Firbolgs. The **Firbolgs** were conquered by a clan of Giant pirates, the **Fomor,** and were forced into menial labor and gardening. Though it was said the Fomor could magically manipulate the weather, and perform other impressive tricks, they weren't as practiced in the arts of warfare, and paid rather dearly for it when the De Dananns slaughtered almost all of them at the battle of Mag Tured. The survivors, along with many Firbolgs, were driven off the island to seek out safer, if not greener, pastures in the isles of Aran, Islay, Man, and Rathlin.

After claiming the island for their own, the De Danann set up their main settlement on 'the pleasant plain' (just one of several on Murphy's World). They created a happy place on this fertile land, where many festivals are held, and merry music is often played. The De Dananns believe their ale is the most intoxicating in existence — since none of them have had the opportunity to sample anyone else's, it's a hard claim to dispute. (Some PCs may look forward to judging this for themselves.) Possessions are mostly communal, and there are no sexually transmitted diseases. The hardy people continue to practice their arts and crafts, weapons skills, the occasional clerical spell, and take every opportunity possible to beat up a Giant, should one drop by.

STAGING: This is a proud warrior people who enjoy a good fight. The problem is they live on an *island* and their culture forbids them to fight their own kind. Anyone who lands there must do some hard politicking not to end up in a battle with well armed and fit locals. If a shrewd Character can convince the Mag Morons (as few live to call them a second time) that there are far more interesting people to beat up across the sea, they may have the makings of a fine mercenary army. Due to their somewhat limited mental faculties, the De Dananns appreciate directness, and have no time for complicated plans or schemes. They would rather kill than think. And they are *very* good killers.

Ode: The Realm of Rhyme

This is a remarkable place where everyone speaks in *poetic verse.* No kidding. The land is a picturesque green countryside of small agricultural landholdings and stately homes, with carefully kept hedges and walls made of loosely piled stones. The weather is generally quite mild, and there is always at least a day's warning before a heavy downpour.

It is unknown just how the rhyming began, though it is rumored that an early king was struck with a mental affliction that caused him to speak in verse, and everyone else went along to make him feel better.

Because of the natives' quaint way of speaking, Ode seems to be a charming place to spend a holiday. However, after about a week or two, most visitors want to be gone for good. This is primarily due to the fact that custom has it that even guests to the realm must participate in this unique form of dialogue. Otherwise, they are considered bad mannered and uncouth. Naturally, this puts a strain on most non-natives.

A significant disadvantage to constantly speaking in rhyme is that it tends to take three times as long to say anything, especially for those less practiced. There are great lineups at stores — not for lack of supply, but simply because it takes so long to tell the shopkeeper what is wanted, and to discuss the weather.

Natives who leave Ode to visit or live in other lands suffer great culture shock, since few people stand still long enough to hear them through a simple conversation or request for directions. However, they do make excellent minstrels, and are widely sought after for this purpose by foreign kings and nobles.

BELOW: An eternity of observation and contemplation may seem just grand to a mortal laborer, but to a Sidi who has been at it for a century or more it's practically a nightmare. After all, there's only so much to observe on a mist-shrouded island in the middle of nowhere. Still, few would trade it for even a week as a Celestial slave at the bottom of a mine shaft.



The bigger they are/it is, the harder they/it land(s).

Adventure Idea

Tuonila & Mannala

THE PCs WASH ASHORE on one of the two islands. As they wander about they are surrounded by undead and herded toward a large but haphazardly built fortress. Once inside, they are lead to the audience chamber of the Wizard-King (choose either **Tuoni** or **Manna**).

It seems that lately the zombies have been lacking leadership and losing large numbers in their "war to end all wars." The Wizard-King, a "reasonable" man, proposes that the PCs lead a squad of his "men" on the next attack. If they win the day, he'll give them water and a way off the island; if they lose he'll ensure they join his zombie army forever. He then explains the way the battles are conducted….

STAGING: Use legends and travel brochures to raise Characters' expectations of the wonders of Ode. When they arrive, ruin their expectations by having the natives affected by a spell that has stolen their voices. Perhaps the Characters could be given the task of finding a way to lift the curse. The natives suspect a foreigner who lives in a rented chateau in the nearby hills. When he was ridiculed because he couldn't rhyme to save his life, he exacted his revenge by invoking a curse that robbed them of their voices. However, it might be that the scholar is in fact a prisoner too, and that the real fiend is one of the Odeians themselves, who has been driven mad because he's lost the ability to make a rhyme. If the Characters can help him overcome his problem, all will be harmonious again.

Tuonila & Mannala: The Isles of the Dead

These two northeastern dark and mist-shrouded islands are commonly referred to by sailors as the Isles of the Dead. They are located inland from the northern coast of **Finngarra,** and rest in the middle of the wide and slow flowing **Black River.** The islands are ruled by two Wizard-Kings, Tuoni and Manna, who are locked in a heated eternal battle over the water rights of the Black River.

For centuries, the sorcerers killed all who ventured to their islands and transformed them into hideous zombie warriors, to continue their fight. Early battles were fought on water, in large oar powered galleys and barges made of the bleached bones of the fallen undead. Recently, the zombies built a massive bridge between the two islands to improve the effectiveness of their charges (the river slows them down too much). Whether or not one wizard eventually defeats the other is a subject of concern for sailors and coastal inhabitants alike; for once command of the islands has been secured, could a continent of the dead be far off?

STAGING: The battles between the two armies of undead is conducted a bit like a football game. Local folk from the surrounding region, seeing that the zombies never venture across to the mainland, come down with packed lunches to watch. In recent years conflict has extended into something of a family feud, since many of the locals now have relations in one army or the other. Putting on a good show tends to matter as much, if not more, than martial achievement. Some enthusiastic mums have knitted team jerseys for ex-family members to wear.

In fact, the main concern of the local council is that one side might someday defeat the other, since that would end the tourist boom and begin an extended period of sheer panic. Additionally, the status quo offers the chance for the sick and elderly to achieve a sort of warped immortality in the ranks of the dead forces and a continued cult status among their clans.

There is a good chance that the fight will continue, however, since neither wizard is very powerful beyond simple necromancy, and doesn't have the funds to send for real help or to take a correspondence course. Should one of the wizards happen to die, all of the undead forces under his direct control would immediately become inanimate and collapse in a dusty heap; the locals would be quite aghast at seeing all their dead relations simultaneously expire a second time.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

How Green is Your Valley?

Each plant description includes the heading 'Location', describing where it is likely to occur, and 'Staging' which provides hints as to how you might integrate it into a campaign or adventure. When designing plants of your own, to make them interesting, assign them a personality which is somehow engaging and interested in chatting with others. The plant need not be helpful; it can be a pessimist, an optimist, a liar, paranoid, curious, or just plain stupid.

Argument Bush

It is commonly believed that the Argument Bush originated in the laboratory of some half mad and desperately lonely alchemist or sorcerer. This experimenter was trying to design a plant that would not only grow better if you spoke to it, but would also talk back, affording intelligent conversation. Obviously, the work went awry and the result somehow got out of the lab and into the natural environment, where it spread wildly out of control.

Location: Argument Bushes prefer to grow in manicured gardens or parks over wild forests. They like the care they get, and enjoy arguing with gardeners over their fertilizing and trimming.

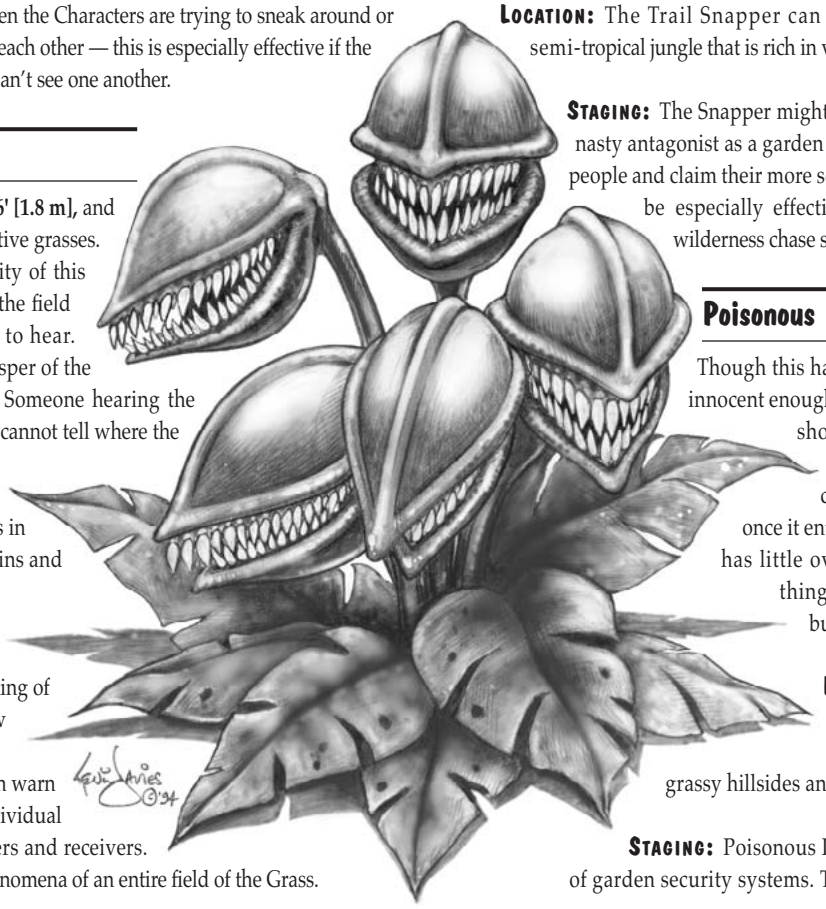
Staging: Characters who hear their passing remarks answered by a voice with no apparent source should suspect an Argument Bush. Characters will be required to make a **Willpower Roll,** failure will require them to stay for an hour (after which another WIL Roll…) debating the number of hairs on a fly, the time of day that sparrows wake, or the benefits of a market-driven economy. An Argument Bush always has an answer, and it will never permit its opponents to win the debate — even if that means contradicting itself. Introduce an Argument Bush at a time when the Characters are trying to sneak around or hide, but are still whispering to each other — this is especially effective if the Characters are spread out, and can't see one another.

Gossip Grass

This plant can grow as high as **6' [1.8 m],** and looks similar to other, less talkative grasses. Anything spoken in this vicinity of this grass echoes to other areas of the field loud enough for anyone else to hear. It sounds like the rustling whisper of the wind through the grass field. Someone hearing the voices transmitted by the grass cannot tell where the sounds are coming from.

Location: Gossip Grass grows in patches on any of the great plains and semi-arid areas of Faerie.

Staging: The Grass can be used to give a Character a warning of someone else nearby, or allow them to hear a distant conversation. Alternately, the Grass can warn others of a person's arrival. Individual blades do not act as transmitters and receivers. The voice transfer effect is a phenomena of an entire field of the Grass.



Lord Elron's Trail Snapper

This carnivorous plant is named after the famed Elvish naturalist who simultaneously found immortality in history and a rather gruesome demise by accidentally stepping into the open maw of one of the Snappers. Having been seized in the plant's jaws, his Lordship bravely continued to dictate his observations to his assistant until the plant finished feasting. Thus, knowledge of this terrible tropical danger was brought back to civilization.

The plant can grow to **18' [5.5 m]** and consists of a central stalk, from which shoot frond-like branches. Some branches occurring near the top form buds which flower into a beautiful crown of white. Others droop down to the forest floor, ending in large (up to **12' [3.7 m] wide**) leafy pouches which open on the forest floor, awaiting the passage of any creature. When an animal walks near the center of a pouch, it snaps shut with extreme force, and secretes a digestive acid. The wall of the pouch is strong, yet flexible enough to withstand the struggling of most animals until the acid kills them. Once the creature has been completely digested, the pouch reopens, awaiting its next meal.

All that was found in the pouch which devoured Lord Elron was his monocle, gold fillings and the buckles of his shoes.

Location: The Trail Snapper can be found in any tropical or semi-tropical jungle that is rich in vines and dense undergrowth.

Staging: The Snapper might be employed by an especially nasty antagonist as a garden security system, or used to kill people and claim their more solid possessions. The plant can be especially effective when incorporated into a wilderness chase scene.

Poisonous Petunias

Though this handsome crimson flower looks innocent enough, only the most highly-trained should approach it. The needle-like thorns on the stem contain a poison so deadly, that once it enters the bloodstream the victim has little over an hour to live. The darn thing is that they look so nice in a bunch on a breakfast table.

Location: This wildflower can be found alongside other herbs (and dead animals) on grassy hillsides and in forest glades.

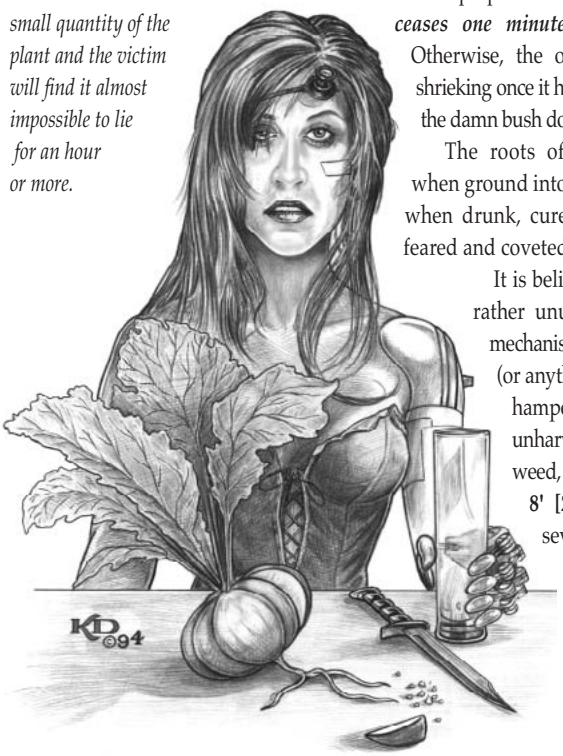
Staging: Poisonous Petunias are cultivated as part of garden security systems. The poison is highly prized by



ABOVE: Don't let their sweet smiles fool you. Though they make lovely corsages, the toxin made from the flower of the Poisonous Petunia is deadly. When you really want to express your contempt for someone there's no better way. Say it with flowers.

BELOW: Another victim of turnip abuse. Obtained illegally through the underground economy this innocent-looking vegetable has turned many people into Turnip-Heads.

Typically the turnip is used by inquisitors and security forces to force the truth from unwilling victims. All it takes is to 'lace' a meal with a small quantity of the plant and the victim will find it almost impossible to lie for an hour or more.



assassins, and fetches a good price. Because of the deadliness of the plant, many nice folk try to destroy Poisonous Petunias on sight. **Forest Giants** of the **Tagara** are ***immune*** to the poison and even consume the plant as part of a balanced diet. You should take heed if touring and are offered a traditional Giant's breakfast in a Tagara B&B.

Razor Grass

This is just what its name implies — the blades of each shoot of grass are so sharp and firm (they're ridged) that they can cut cloth and flesh like a razor blade. Not the best place for a picnic luncheon or a barefoot shortcut.

LOCATION: This is the kind of thing that can be found in a semi-arid or Mediterranean scrub type of environment. Razor Grass is sure to be found in the arid regions east of the Modest Lands and the Dusky Mountains.

STAGING: Encountering Razor grass should come as a surprise. A rather painful one. Its introduction might be most effective during a chase. Perhaps a smart Character might even lead an enemy into a natural 'minefield' of the stuff.

Shrieking Shrubbery

Should you hear the deafening wail of this bush while travelling along a lonely path, turn and run… if you still can. Shrieking Shrubbery is a pleasant looking green-leaved bush and is normally silent, until triggered by a the touch of a moving object or a loud sound in the vicinity. When triggered, it will utter a wail so loud that anyone exposed for more than a ***minute*** has a chance of going ***mad,*** and begin to *yell along with it;* this of course only causes it to perpetuate its awful racket. The ***shrieking ceases one minute after the stimulus halts.*** Otherwise, the only action which halts the shrieking once it has begun (other than chopping the damn bush down) is rainfall (water).

The roots of the Shrieking Shrubbery, when ground into pulp, produce a fluid which when drunk, cures madness. Thus it is both feared and coveted.

It is believed that the bush owes this rather unusual behavior to a defense mechanism designed to prevent animals (or anything else for that matter) from hampering its growth. Uneaten and unharvested, the shrub spreads like a weed, growing to a average height of **8' [2.4 m]** and stretches up to several *miles* wide. Occasionally when such forests of the deadly shrub come within earshot of a settlement, volunteer woodcutters go off to reclaim the land — their ears padded with wool. Some return, only to live out their lives as babbling idiots, tragic victims of this terrible shrub.

LOCATION: Any temperate or semi-arid wooded area.

STAGING: Since the existence of this plant poses a threat to humanoid habitation, it may serve as the basis of an adventure in itself. Perhaps the PCs can be conned into chopping down a stand of the Shrubbery, or to go on a quest for a quantity of its roots.

Tickle Weed

This ubiquitous and pleasant looking wildflower has lead to the ruin of many a picnic or romp in the hay. It finds its way into everything. Most people, once they come into contact with the yellow flowering plant, can't help but buckle over in incapacitating spasms of laughter as the little weed does its thing. It can't be blamed really, for the pollen which causes the unexpected reaction in most intelligent creatures has absolutely no effect on animals or insects, who act as agents of reproduction for the weed. Unfortunately, most people happen to be madly allergic to the stuff. And once they have it on them, the only way to get it off is to wash: skin, clothes, everything. Poughvidds especially avoid the weed.

LOCATION: The Tickle Weed can be found in forest glades or in semi-arid regions after a heavy rainfall.

STAGING: Introduce Tickle Weed into a situation where it would be disastrous for a Character to be incapacitated by hysterical laughter: sneaking around a compound at night, in the middle of a battlefield, or during a romantic moment. Additionally, if Characters obtain some of the pollen, they would have a powerful powder to sprinkle on an enemy.

The Turnip of Truth

This is one of the rarest wild vegetables on Faerie. When consumed, even a small portion of this root causes a Character to ***speak nothing but the truth*** for a period equal to ***one minute per ounce*** eaten. What's worse, the vegetable acts as a ***hallucinogenic.*** The person eating one is left with only vague memories of what transpired while under its influence.

LOCATION: It grows only in mountainous regions and moorland, usually in gullies or valleys. For some reason it can't be cultivated — only wild Turnips reach blood-red maturity. Young Turnips, discernible by their yellow tinge, are a mild poison, causing **1d10÷2 HP Damage** ***per ounce consumed.***

STAGING: Turnips of Truth are rare and expensive. They are a powerful drug (or poison). Most likely a Character will learn of the root through an interrogation ordeal, or by overhearing a campfire tale. The Turnips are guarded by an odd people who consume the plant as a hallucinogenic, but are immune to its truth-telling effects (this should *not* be immediately plain to anyone else).

CHAPTER TWELVE

All Creatures Great & Small...

Each creature includes the heading 'Location' describing where it is likely to be found, and 'Staging' which provides hints as to how you might integrate it into an adventure. Consider that animals might live in societies just as, if not more, bureaucratic as Humans (a device often found in animated movies).

Babbling Brook

This stretch of sentient water is an annoyance to anyone who leaves the bustle of city life for a jaunt in the tranquillity of the countryside. For no known reason, this brook does nothing but chatter nonsensically and ceaselessly to passers-by, locals, strangers, or even itself. It is enough to drive all but the desperately lonely completely bonkers.

Location: Often found crossing fields and mountain glades in the most quiet and peaceful of environments.

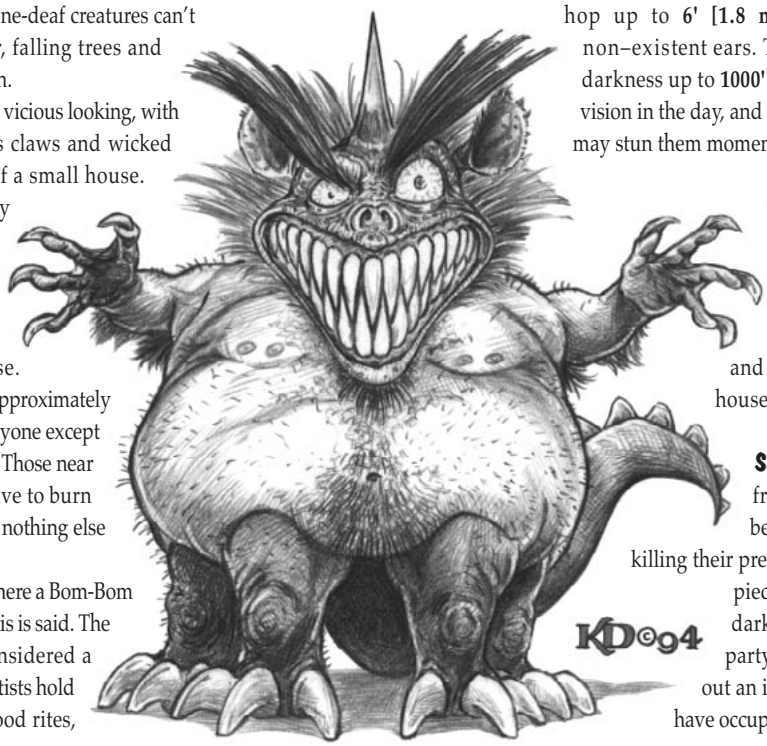
Staging: A Babbling Brook starts babbling upon hearing a nearby voice. It is insatiably curious and very lonely, and demands to know all the latest gossip in the manner of an old busy-body. The only way to stop the racket is to wander away. Due to its desire for friendship, Babbling Brooks can be excellent alarms, spies, and time wasters. They may assist travellers by informing them of something resting at the bottom of the riverbed, or offering advice as to the safest way to cross. If offended by a rude traveller, the Brook might offer misinformation, or in rare instances, refuse to speak at all.

The Bom-Bom Beast

The Bom-Bom Beast is a truly a creature to be reckoned with. Its name derives from the sound it makes as it stalks its prey: Bom, BOM… Bom, BOM…. Indeed, the noise is so loud, the ground shakes. This makes the Bom-Bom Beast very poor at catching prey, since even stone-deaf creatures can't help but notice the rippling water, falling trees and landslides which betrays its approach.

The Bom-Bom beast is extremely vicious looking, with thick, dank, dark fur; huge vicious claws and wicked needle-sharp teeth. It is the size of a small house. No-one has yet discovered exactly what the Bom-Bom Beast does with all this fearsome weaponry; at the first sign of aggression towards it, the Bom-Bom Beast rolls over, dies, and begins to rapidly decompose. The resulting stench has a radius of approximately **5 miles [8 km]**, and drives away everyone except those with no sense of smell or taste. Those near the Bom-Bom Beast when it dies have to burn their clothes and scatter the ashes as nothing else seems to get the stench out.

It is said that no fig trees grow where a Bom-Bom Beast has died. No one knows why this is said. The eyes of the Bom-Bom Beast are considered a delicacy by Ogres. Some Elvish scientists hold that this is a part of Ogreish manhood rites, other Elvish scientists hold that this is because Ogres are exceedingly dim, and wouldn't know a tasty dish if it bit them on the tongue.



Location: Bom-Bom Beasts live far away from cities and settlements, and avoid sentient beings as much as possible. They can stand extremes of both hot and cold, which is especially useful given the variability of Murphy's World's climate. They prefer to live in large forests, for they particularly enjoy gambolling amongst the trees, turning the proud woodland giants into kindling underfoot.

Staging: If you need an encounter to frighten or intimidate a group of players, the Bom-Bom Beast is it. With its fearsome appearance and awesome approach, only very brave or extremely foolhardy people hang around when it is on its way. Should a party dare to face down a Bom-Bom Beast, they will succeed, of course, but they will learn the true danger of this awful creature only on its demise.

Dust Bunnies

These grey-furred hairballs collect in crevices and dark places, awaiting a chance to swarm an unsuspecting passer by. Dust Bunnies are carnivores, and their small mouths contain hundreds of tiny razor sharp teeth. They attack in packs, gnawing their victims — an experience somewhat like being rubbed with 100 grit sandpaper. Dust Bunnies dislike water intensely, and always seek a dry place if it rains. They have soft fur which permits them to bounce off solid objects with limited damage, and powerful hind legs that enable them to hop up to **6' [1.8 m]**. They have small, almost non–existent ears. Their eyes are attuned to see in darkness up to **1000' [305 m]**. They have very limited vision in the day, and must squint in bright light, which may stun them momentarily.

Location: Dust Bunnies are nocturnal creatures. They lurk in the darkest depths of forests, underground warrens and tunnels, in abandoned ruins and buildings, and any place where housekeeping is substandard.

Staging: They watch their prey from a safe and sheltered spot before lunging en masse. After killing their prey, they dissect it into manageable pieces and carry these off into their dark warrens. One adventure for a party of Characters might be to clear out an infestation of dust bunnies which have occupied a valuable temple or mine.

Adventure Idea

Moog

PRINCESS FIDGETY has suffered a catastrophe: her pet moog Rondo is missing. He's never gone missing before… well at least never this long — it's been over three days!

King Brunt will hire the PCs to search for the missing moog in an effort to quench his daughter's suffering (and insufferable whining). As part of the deal, the PCs must take the Princess along "to identify Rondo when found."

It turns out the moog has been adopted by an Brownie bar band. Once the PCs track down the band through the underground club scene, the Princess will be offered a chance to join the group. However, if the Princess doesn't return, they'll be in *deep* trouble….

BELOW: You won't find it written down in any lawbooks, but in some regions poor housekeeping is punishable by death — and Dust Bunnies serve as the executioners! Think of it as nature's little contribution to civilized behavior, or as evolution in action.

Killer Canaries

Once thought of as only a myth, these cute but ferocious yellow birds have been known to strip the flesh off a cow in less than three minutes. A region may be free from Killer Canaries for a period of 40 years or more, but when the conditions are right (usually a long period of rainfall after a cold dry summer), the normal, everyday, friendly canaries lay eggs which contain the terrible seed of death. Within weeks, the plague is on the wing. Yellow swarms have been known to stretch across the entire horizon, blotting out the sun, and laying whole regions to waste. During this dark time there is nothing to do but bring in the animals and stay indoors till the danger passes, usually in a few days.

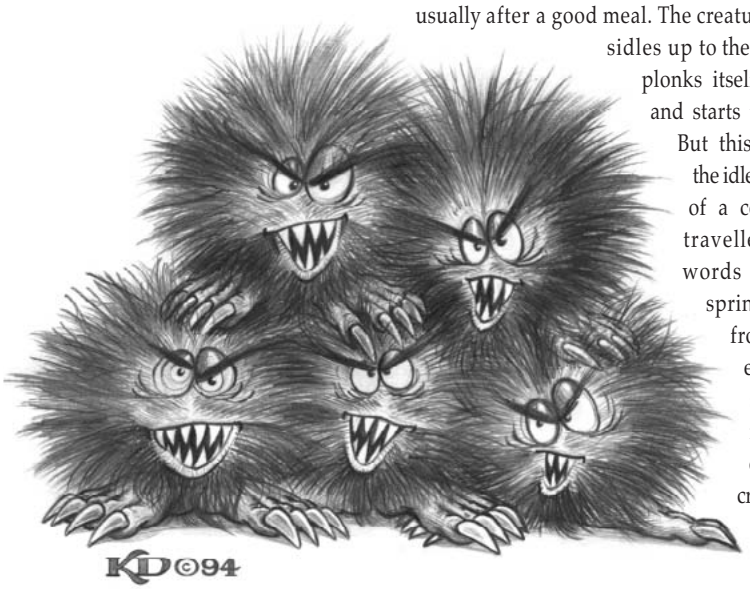
Luckily the frenzy is usually short lived and within a few weeks, the birds revert back to their normally docile nature. Reformed bird are said to make great pets.

LOCATION: The regions of Faerie most likely to be plagued by Killer Canaries are **The Great Wet Desert, The Badlands of Baldicoot,** and **The Eastern Aridlands.** Other areas may be affected as the birds migrate from one place to another, usually across land.

STAGING: The use of a short lived plague like this, with devastating effects to those trapped out of doors, should be rare and not without a warning to Characters. In fact, if handled correctly, Characters may even be able to use such an occurrence to their advantage in defeating an enemy. Perhaps you can introduce campfire stories and legends about past plagues. Maybe there exists a strange desert people who worship the Canaries and have great temples and artworks produced in their honor. The Canary Folk of the desert might even be breeding the birds, and are the source of the trouble: originally they were breeding them for a nicer plumage.

The Misery Guts

This pathetic little creature is a ruthless killer. It stalks its prey with great care, watching them settle in to rest, usually after a good meal. The creature then sidles up to the victim, plonks itself down and starts talking. But this is not the idle chatter of a common traveller. The words which spring forth from the expansive mouth of this creature tell of admirable folk involved in terrible disasters and tragedies, thus transforming the listener into an emotional bowl of jello.



Rendered helpless on tales of 'Old Yeller', and other stories with sad endings, the victim is unable to resist the comforting hug offered by the creature. This is a fatal mistake. The creature squeezes the life out of its victims, and eats them, usually with a good vintage wine it has previously stolen.

The creature stands about **4' [1.2 m]** tall and about **2' [0.6 m]** wide. It doesn't walk as much as it hops, frog-like. It has smooth but warty green-brown skin, yellow eyes, a wide mouth and small ears. It usually wears the clothes of a traveller (acquired from previous victims), and has a taste for gold jewelry.

LOCATION: It stalks the lonely moors of **Nawadden Downs** in **Western Akimbo,** seeking out lonely travellers tired after a good day's hiking.

STAGING: Apart from the scenario described above, a group of adventurers might choose to rid a area of a Misery Guts. They live underground, with an entrance concealed in the rocky outcrops of the moorland. Inside the den of the creature are all the possessions of every traveller the beast has ever consumed. The creatures produce handmade violins and musical pipes of various shapes, sizes and pitch, upon which they play an assortment of *depressing tunes* which have the odd but supernatural effect of making the listener ***feel relaxed*** and ***open to suggestions.***

Moogs

Moogs are fascinating little creatures. Their bodies are round and squat, surmounted by neckless heads. Their eyes are wide, round, and water constantly. They are six legged, covered in pink day-glo fur, and are about the size of a beaver. They stand on their four rear legs, and use the remaining pair to make music.

Their 'musical' arms are exceptionally versatile. By rubbing the arms against each other, waving them about, or tapping its body, a moog can emulate almost any kind of musical instrument — flutes, violins, guitars, left-handed chain-driven vibraphones, you name it. The only instrument a moog has never been heard to copy is a set of bagpipes. In fact, moogs hate bagpipes, and run away whenever they hear them played.

Moogs love to make music, and are excellent mimics. Rock-and-roll, show tunes, classical music — they can play it all. Different groups of moogs seem to prefer different types of music. Moogs east of the Great White Desert are partial to Country and Western, while those west of Lesser Blorting are partial to Easy Listening. One small group of moogs play nothing but Muzak. They are hunted down and eliminated whenever heard. (Except by the Drow, who don't seem to mind them at all.)

Moogs also seem to have ***psychic abilities,*** for they don't play random music. If events nearby are going well, and the other beings in the area are happy, moogs play pleasant tunes. If things are dreary and depressed, they play annoying, atonal music (usually depressing everyone even more.) During battles and violence, they play stirring, martial music (from a suitable

hiding place — moogs are not adventurous or brave, and run and hid from the slightest danger.)

Moogs seem to know when something is about to go wrong; thus they play foreshadowing music. The day could be sunny and warm, a light breeze blowing across a sapphire sea, when suddenly a moog nearby will stop playing a happy "la la la" tune, and launch into an eerie "dah… DUM, dah… DUM, dah… DUM, dah… DUM…" rhythm. This is typically a sign that 'something bad' is about to occur.

Moogs are neither aggressive nor friendly. They follow people around, but keep a safe distance. When a moog is *killed*, it gives out a powerful *sonic boom*. This boom can be heard for **10 miles [16 km]**, and will badly stun or injure anyone within **1500' [457 m]**.

LOCATION: Moogs can be found anywhere on Murphy's World. They adapt easily to extremes of climate.

STAGING: Have a moog start following a party around. At first, it simply follows and observes the party. As it gets to 'know' the party, it will play music suited to the party's mood, and the circumstances they find themselves in. If the party is about to get in trouble, the moog will play its foreshadowing music: a great warning to any members of the party paying attention.

The moog will eat any food the party leaves behind. It will follow the party anywhere it goes unless physically prevented. At the first sign of danger, it will hide somewhere safe, but still near the party. If driven away or attacked it will leave, never to return.

(Keep a tape recorder or CD player handy with a selection of suitable music to play whenever a moog is nearby. This is sure to catch your players' attention.)

Wascally Wabbits

This 'plague of the settler' is very difficult to get rid of once discovered on one's property. The creature looks like a cross between a baboon and a jackrabbit with long floppy ears, big feet, and small dexterous hands. It has a keen wit and the curiosity of a child. Wabbits eat vegetables, and prefer cultivated ones of the largest size and best quality. Young, male Wabbits usually leave the family warren at adulthood and wander about until they found a suitable location to set up a home of their own. The females wander about until they found a handsome male with a decent pad to settle down in.

LOCATION: Wascally Wabbits live in grasslands, cultivated lands, and woodland glades. Once they've found a location which satisfies their dining needs, they construct an underground warren and furnish it with whatever 'interesting' objects they can obtain (e.g., farm tools, porch furniture, clotheslines — with the clothes still clipped on). The Wabbit and the farmer are natural enemies, and the discovery of a Wabbit on the premises begins a conflict which usually ends in either the Wabbit's demise, or madness on the part of the farmer. A Wabbit is stubborn, and never voluntarily leaves a warren once established.

STAGING: A single Wabbit constitutes a plague, and any farmer beset by such a critter will seek aid in getting rid of it. A Wabbit is likely to have quite a few interesting objects in its burrow, including items stolen from travellers — which might be why the Characters are willing to help the farmer out with his problem. (Especially if the items taken were of significance to the Characters and their quest.) Also, it might be that a Wabbit's burrow has stumbled upon the nest of another creature: giant ants, or moles. Regardless, the Wabbit might now be in conflict with these new creatures, and the Characters must choose among aiding the Wabbit, the farmer, or devising a compromise.



*ABOVE: Feared by party hosts everywhere, the **Jaded Beast** projects a 'aura of boredom' (radius 10' [3 m]), which is sure to kill any decent gathering by causing all but the most willful to nod off to sleep within 5 minutes. The creature can't be blamed, since it's actually quite social and starved for company. Nature in its infinite wisdom provided a survival mechanism which kicks in whenever the it gets excited (such as when it's being hunted …or when it crashes a party), which causes it's enemies to simply lose interest …in everything.*

Worry Worms

Long a symbol of the **Slinky** religion, these smooth red worms are kept by the faithful in small brass lockets with a bit of moist soil. It is the custom of the Slinkies to permit the Worms to squirm between their fingers while reciting the Slinky Pledge. This custom is performed whenever an initiate is in a state of stress, or needs to focus his or her mind to achieve solace. The Worms themselves can grow to a length of **12" [0.3 m]**.

Worry Worms are a rare find, and originally came only from the soil of the infamous Yukkie Peninsula. With the spread of the Slinky cult, and their occasionally misplaced Worms, the range of the creature has increased. They require little to eat, but when they do, they demand red meat. In their natural habitat they feed only once a fortnight, but have been known to swarm out of the ground and devour an entire Bramble Beast in one evening. The flesh stripped carcasses of sleeping travellers are sometimes attributed to attacks of Worry Worms. Since they are difficult to find and hazardous to obtain, Worry Worms are quite valuable, and Slinkies who lose theirs suffer a spell of bad luck, a loss in status, and occasionally a bite in an uncomfortable place.

LOCATION: Worry Worms can be found throughout the southern reaches of the Living Lands, in woodland areas and settlement trash heaps.

STAGING: Plots such as "Who is stealing the Worry Worms of the Slinkys of Tithlandia," can be introduced. The Worms might also prove such a nuisance that the Characters are called upon to clean out an infested area — a gigantic Worry Worm queen might require destroying before her swollen body gives birth to thousands of the little critters. Finally, a Worm can provide a clue in a who-dunnit where a Slinky priest is one of the suspects.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Creating a Murphy's World Adventure

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES SOME IDEAS which you can build upon when developing and playing adventures on Murphy's World. The main thing to keep in mind is that Murphy's World is a *silly* setting, where *anything* can happen. At the same time, your setting must seem just as real as any other to your players. This is not a contradiction. There must be an *internal logic* to the setting and the Characters who occupy it — even if that logic seems a bit skewed from the perspective of an otherworldly visitor. Your task as GM is to make silly events seem *plausible* to the PCs. Whimsical GMCs and creatures still require *motivations* which seem perfectly sensible to themselves within their context.

We hope by the time you finish reading this section of the book you will have developed some ideas for humorous roleplaying situations and adventures. This book is by no means intended to be a complete thesis on the subject of humour, just a brief resource from which you may pick and choose what to use as you wish. Each of the sample Characters, Places, Artifacts, Plants and Animals described include 'Staging' suggestions which can be developed into adventure scenarios.

Some of the resources provided in this book are not necessarily humorous. In fact, a fair number of the suggestions for campaigns and adventures can be applied toward *any* RPG campaign. Even in a silly campaign, a solid and consistent foundation is necessary to convince PCs that they are in a real place where people live and die, and *events matter.*

For both silly and serious adventures, you need good guys and bad guys. Often their motives are similar — conquest, gain of power or wealth, etc. The humor should appear via your descriptions of the ***appearance*** and ***behavior*** of the GMCs, including silly Traits (e.g., fear of fish), the *way they speak*, and ultimately in the *way they respond to each other and the events around them.* Twists of fate should be silly, but still make sense in the context of the beings who populate the world and the inexplicable forces of Ludo.

Always keep in mind that ***fun should supersede any attempt to create 'reality'.***

Something Funny is Going On...

Running a humorous adventure requires that you have some idea about what makes certain situations funny. The following is a sampling of things which people tend to find funny. Try to incorporate as many into your Murphy's World adventures as possible. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

A. Embarrassment & Misfortune

People, especially those who take themselves *very seriously*, are vulnerable to embarrassment or humorous misfortune. (e.g., A king gets out of his coach, trips, and falls face first into a mud puddle — almost every time).

B. Unexpected Occurrences

Events or things said that take everyone completely by surprise should be completely *opposite to that which might be expected* (e.g., in the middle of the wilderness, a customs official suddenly appears and asks for your papers). This is a very useful device for plot development.

C. Unexpected Behavior

People can act in ways which are not characteristic or seem opposite to their positions in society or their jobs. Peoples' interests, what they do, and how they go about doing it are not as expected, based upon their appearance. Children and backwoods individuals may in fact be quite knowledgeable, responsible and refined, while urbanized folk may turn out to be ignorant hicks.

D. Incompetent Authorities

People in positions of authority or those with tremendous responsibility are obviously and disastrously incompetent, and yet *nobody notices*, or if they do, fail to do anything about it. Likewise, competence can be found in the least expected place.

E. Problem Solving Methods

The methods individuals use to solve their problems and get their own way can be contradictory. We expect people who look a certain way to act a certain way. It is usually funny when they act in a manner that we would least expect, based on their appearance. (E.g., nasty and tough individuals and creatures may 'lose their cool' when things fail to go as planned or desired; they may throw tantrums, cry, hold their breath, etc.)

F. Exaggeration

Take things to their extremes. This can include styling of architecture and monuments, tools and utensils, or even language and cultural activities or rituals. Those who produced these apparently exaggerated artifacts treat them with deadly seriousness — only outsiders should see them as silly. Authority figures, traditional rituals, ceremonies and other 'sacred cows' of our own culture are especially good targets to exaggerate, parody and make fun of.

G. Silly Culture

People express and maintain certain attitudes and beliefs which seem ridiculous, unmanageable and impractical to anyone not part of their culture. Yet everyone who is a member of the culture lives by these habitual practices and maintains that there is no better or more logical way of living.

H. Silly Words

Puns, plays-on-words, or silly names can add humour to an adventure. (Warning: The Surgeon-General of Avalon has determined that using too many puns can be hazardous to your health).



How Much Should the Players Know About Murphy's World?

When players first find their Characters on Murphy's World, they may have already read portions of this book. It doesn't make too much difference whether they have or not, but things are usually more interesting if the players are *totally ignorant* about what to expect.

Unlike other worlds which Characters may have experienced, the way people and nature behave on Færie should clash with their expectations. Throwing them mentally off-guard gives you, the GM, a huge advantage in generating adventures and interesting situations to drop (perhaps literally) the Characters into.

Managing Players & Their Characters

Some players whose Characters find themselves on Murphy's World will have almost as much trouble adjusting to their new environment as did Murphy. This should be expected. If you start an adventure and everything unfolds exactly as on any other RPG world, you'll need to re-read this book. However, if players feel like all the rules have been thrown out the window, and that you're making things up entirely as you go (which may or may not be so), then things are moving along just fine.

The main trick to managing a Murphy's World campaign is to encourage the players to accept strange situations as real, and do their best to make sense of the circumstances. Get them working with the silliness, not acting as though you are trying to frustrate their desires for achievement. Achievement *is* possible on Murphy's World — players must discover the 'rules' and how to exploit them, just as on any other RPG world. The only difference here is that the rules may not make sense initially.

When playing in their first Murphy's World campaign, many Characters embark on a mad spree, attempting magic spells to produce all sorts of effects — almost all should result in quite humorous disasters as you interpret their literal wording as far from the intended meaning as possible. Eventually most would-be sorcerers will let sorcery well enough alone, and return to seeking more conventional solutions to their problems. And of course, you should make conventional solutions possible.

Sorcerers with patience and a willingness to discover the Ludo's laws of magic should be rewarded with spellcasting success — in this system you control the ultimate effect of the spell, and keep it within the bounds of what is appropriate for the circumstances at hand. You control the 'surprises', instead of the players.

Never permit a player to question your understanding of Murphy's World. Always tell them that you are totally in control (even if you have no idea what you're going to do next), that there are in fact no contradictions in your judgement (even if they point them out to you), and that the player's Characters are ultimately in control of their own destinies (even when you've manipulated the circumstances to lead them into an adventure).

Allow the Characters to feel that they are gradually discovering the truth, and the rules about how and why Murphy's World functions — just before you pull the logical rug out from under their feet once again.

If players begin to despair that they are being totally manipulated by you, and that nothing their Characters do matters, you've gone too far. Slow things down a bit, and let the Characters accomplish a few important things which actually affect the world and/or its inhabitants, and perhaps further their goals. Then, once they become comfortable again and think that Færie is just like any other RPG world, that's when you can have them all arrested as foreign spies, and forced to become guineapig astronauts on a local baron's new spaceship en route to one of Færie's moons, Harpo.

Designing an Adventure Scenario

The first and most pressing question of any adventure is ***what should the adventure be about?*** There are two ways you can approach this problem: the first is through *plot*, and the second, *theme.*

Plot

This is the most direct method of adventure design. It is based on *action* and *events.* Something happens, other things follow, until the events are of a significance large enough to interest or draw in curious or blundering outsiders, like the Characters. Your task is to capture the players' interest, and once seized, keep things happening so fast and furious, or so rich in depth and detail, that they have no opportunity to get bored.

Theme

This is a more difficult route. It involves creating something not unlike a medieval morality play — where there is either a lesson to be learned, or one idea predominates. The theme should ***illuminate an aspect of the human condition.*** Examples include: pride; honor; dealing with personal problems; fear; doubt; age; poor health; poverty; wealth; etc. If you select a theme to structure your adventure, stick to it and have it be one of the causes of encounters, the placement of objects, and the behavior of GMCs.

Developing an Adventure Plot of Your Own

Unless you have an idea already in mind, the best method of developing a basic plot is to employ a system of structured potential situations and responses. The theme or basic plot of a single adventure should usually be centered around *one relatively straightforward task or mystery*.

A single scenario can be incorporated into a much larger campaign. Occasionally, more than one adventure plot or theme may be interwoven together to produce a more complex adventure plot.

GAMEMASTER TIP

Adventure Design

WHEN CREATING an adventure there is a tendency to fall back on the clichés and stereotypes of the stories encountered previously. This is only natural. However, to freshen up these plots, try turning a typical Character type or event on its head: let the princess (or prince for that matter) be a supportive friend of the monster who 'kidnapped' them; let age and appearances have exactly the opposite impact on competence as expected; the most competent person is the one who *looks* the least competent; make the bad guys sensitive and likeable; the more hideous the person, the more benevolent and useful to know; have people motivated by personal convictions and bizarre philosophies rather than greed or money; let the bad guys have amazing equipment and facilities that are poorly constructed and maintained; give every person (especially the most powerful) a minor annoying problem that they are constantly worrying about while attempting to carry on normal business; the more serious the Character, the sillier their fashion sense; sickness symptoms cause weird behavior.

GAMEMASTER TIP

Adventure Plots

THE OVERALL PLOT of your adventure need not be humorous (indeed, it may be a classic quest). The humor may come from the reason(s) why the events are taking place, or from the specific events which make up the story. Let coincidence and unexpected GMC personal motivation be your friend.

One of the most interesting opportunities for amusement in a Murphy's World plot occurs when a PC is faced with the challenge of deciphering what 'reality' is, compared to what GMCs are saying and how they are reacting. It's not that the GMCs are hiding anything — of course. Like anyone familiar with their own surroundings and current events, they are just leaving out the obvious. Unfortunately for a foreign PC, these are often the most important bits (e.g., the prince, whom the PCs have been employed to rescue, has been turned into a goat).

The **Basic Adventure Plots Table** (below) offers ideas which you may choose from or roll randomly to determine the primary dilemma behind your adventure. It is this dilemma or task which Characters must deal with.

An adventure plot or theme works best if Characters become *emotionally involved*: they care for a person in trouble; their reputation or financial situation is at stake; they have a strong urge to explore the unknown….

Basic Adventure Plots Table (Choose, or Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Plot Idea (note: all single subjects can be made plural)
1 – 5	Your Character needs money (for some reason), and seeks a way to get a lot of it, quickly.
6 – 10	Unexplored terrain or site needs to be mapped (and made 'safe' for settlers).
11 – 15	An interesting site is discovered and the Character is curious about what is there.
16 – 20	Something unusual is taking place; discover what it is and report back.
21 – 25	Something unusual is taking place and/or harming people; find and destroy it.
26 – 28	Your Character is given the task of spying/informing on another person or group.
29 – 30	Your Character is given the task of sabotaging an important enemy site/resource.
31 – 32	Your Character is given the task of discovering (and eliminating) an enemy spy or assassin.
33 – 34	Someone must be tracked down and brought to justice.
35 – 36	Someone/something must be tracked down and killed/destroyed.
37 – 38	Your Character joins an army or partisan group to fight against a hostile enemy force.
39 – 40	Your Character has uncovered a terrible plan which threatens the lives of many people.
41 – 43	Someone important (in imminent danger) must be guarded until a specific time.
44 – 45	Something important (and highly valued) must be guarded until a specific time.
46 – 50	Someone important (in imminent danger) must be guarded and escorted to a specific place.
51 – 55	Something important (and highly valued) must be guarded and escorted to a specific place.
56 – 58	Something important must be searched for (it was stolen, lost, etc.) and retrieved.
59 – 60	Someone important must be searched for (they are kidnapped, lost etc.) and retrieved.
61 – 62	Someone important must be rescued; their location is known.
63 – 64	Someone seeks to accomplish a task (they can't or won't do alone) with your help.
65 – 66	Your Character seeks to clear their name of any wrongdoing they've been accused of, and find out who is really responsible.
67 – 68	Your Character seeks to clear the name of someone they care about who has been accused of wrongdoing, and find out who is really responsible
69 – 70	Your Character seeks to avenge a wrong inflicted upon them by another.
71 – 72	Your Character seeks to avenge a wrong inflicted upon someone they care about.
73 – 74	Your Character is being stalked by someone who feels they inflicted some harm upon them.
75 – 76	Your Character is being stalked by someone who feels they inflicted some harm upon someone they care for.
77 – 78	Something important must be fought for in an duel; your Character has been chosen.
79 – 80	Someone important must be fought for in an duel; your Character has been chosen.
81 – 82	Someone must be sacrificed to appease a god(s); your Character has been chosen/captured — they must escape, or talk their way out of it.
83 – 87	Someone must be a scapegoat to appease a disgruntled superior; your Character has been chosen/captured — they must escape, or talk their way out of it.
88 – 90	Your Character seeks to win the affections of another.
91 – 92	Someone seeks to win the affections of another with your Character's help.
93 – 94	Someone seeks to win the friendship/trust of another with your Character's help.
95 – 96	Your Character seeks to win the friendship/trust of another.
97 – 98	Someone seeks to gain access to a specific place with your Character's help.
99	Your Character seeks to gain access to a specific place for personal reasons.
100	Roll twice more on this table.

Player Motivation

It is of crucial importance to your adventures that every Character is *motivated* to take part in exploring your world. Try to determine what activities about the game each player finds most enjoyable and make sure your adventures offer adequate 'carrots' for each to risk their Character's life and limb for future gain — whether it is fame, fortune, true love, lust, knowledge or power. As in a good novel, people do things for reasons of self interest — if you offer a player's Character no enticing reason(s) for leaving home, or the bar, you may find them unwilling to cooperate.

The primary motivators which get Characters to participate in an adventure are ***curiosity*** and ***fear*** (of punishment, loss of privilege or status, or what might happen if they don't act), along with secondary motivators of ***greed***, and ***self-image***. When it is not immediately apparent why Characters would launch themselves into an adventure, you may need to employ an Adventure Motivator. Your choice of motivator depends upon the makeup, background and circumstances of the Characters your are trying to motivate. The following table offers ideas which can help you structure the opening of your adventure to appeal to and capture the attention of each Character.

Once the Character has determined the situation is either interesting or important enough to get involved in, things get complicated. Give the Character a wide assortment of obstacles and complications to overcome. The situations where the Character confronts these obstacles constitute the events which transform a simple plot into an interesting adventure.

Obstacles and complications should be geared toward the genre you are playing — in this case humorous heroic-adventure, with occasional espionage.

Introducing the Characters into Your Adventure

Unlike some other RPG worlds, it is perfectly acceptable in Murphy's World to plonk a party of Characters down just about anywhere and let them deal with the situation as best they can (battlefields are a favorite spot to begin an adventure). As you may recall, this is because Teleportation Gates exist in the most unexpected places, and are invisible until activated.

Once landed, what then? Will you let the Characters just wander about on their own, until they stumble across some local folk? How do locals react to strangers: friendly, indifferent, or hostile? Will the Characters be approached by an official (e.g., border guard), who demands their travelling papers, and escorts them to the nearest immigration office for processing? Remember, the main thing during the first few encounters is to get the players interacting with the environment and the GMCs who make up the world — the overall flavor is more important that the specific events.

For your own piece of mind, you should answer the following questions: why are the Characters on Murphy's

World? Exactly how did they get here? Do the Characters have a specific goal to fulfill (other than perhaps going back where they came from?)

In addition to answering the questions above from the perspective of the Characters, you need to determine the kind of adventures your players want to play. Do they prefer hack-and-slash encounter-based adventures, where the goals are ridding the world of menacing monsters and pocketing their loot? Or are they keen on intrigue and the conversation and roleplay intensive scenarios? Many adventures and campaigns offer a mix of both. Just make sure that you and your players understand the combination of action and character portrayal you intend to offer, so that everyone knows what they are getting into, and there are no disappointments later.

Encouraging Characters to Work Together & Participate in Adventures

There are many ways to get players' Characters to participate in an adventure. Unfortunately, many of these ways fail to provide a sufficient reason for the Characters to *continue* working together as a team, and not to split up once their original goal has been achieved. The opportunity to gain individual wealth or power are two of the motives least likely to encourage teamwork. The list below provides a number of possible ways in which you might encourage a party of Characters to cooperate in a campaign. Characters can be encouraged to become a part of such a group or organization by the opportunity for gaining privileged information and status within the society they now find themselves a part of.

1. 'Special Forces' Hirelings of a State or Wealthy Patron

The PCs are freelance hirelings, employed by a state, warlord, landowner, or noble. The Characters can be veterans of previous cooperative assignments, or rabid individualists brought together by their employer and forced to reluctantly work together. The degree of familiarity they have with the personality and skills of one another can vary with the size of their employer's normal staff. They are asked to undertake one or more of the following types of tasks:

A. Investigative Scholars
The Characters are indulging their patron's desire to 'see' or learn about the world, and obtain various artifacts and arcane knowledge. Their employer's motivation may be curiosity and collecting, or there could be a deeper purpose not initially apparent to the Characters.

B. Secret Agents
The Characters are serving as spies, secret agents, special anti-terrorist forces, hostage rescue team, thieves, assassins, anti-drug agents, etc.

C. Detectives
The PCs are observing or trailing an individual who is suspected of engaging in activities which are of a treacherous or illegal nature.

D. Diplomats
The PCs are long time trusted employees. They are entrusted with the negotiation of a peace treaty or trade deal with a foreign power that was previously a bitter enemy or could be a potential enemy in the future, should the treaty fall through.

2. Business Entrepreneurs, Merchants or Traders, Seeking New Markets & Suppliers

Sean Murphy is an entrepreneur. Murphy views Færie as a planet with vast untapped market potential. A party of Characters who choose this type of background might do the same. Handicrafts and raw resources can be bought or traded from one group, finished by another, and sold to a market elsewhere. Thus the party might meet many peoples, while taking an active roll in promoting themselves and ensuring that their stock does not get stolen or destroyed by hostile forces. If they become very wealthy, their political influence will greatly increase, and their trade caravans might become a source of information about the activities of foreign nations.

Gamemaster Tip

Injecting Humor

One of the key features of humor is an element of the unexpected. If you notice that the adventure appears to be getting a bit too serious, think about how you might warp the next encounter to add a touch of zany surprise. Consider what the PCs are likely to expect from the situation and then have the events or GMCs behave in an opposite and silly way.

Character/Team Cooperation Ideas Table
(Choose or Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Type of Character Group
1 – 5	Hirelings: Investigative Scholars
6 – 10	Hirelings: Secret Agents
11 – 15	Hirelings: Detectives
16 – 20	Hirelings: Diplomats
21 – 35	Business Entrepreneurs
36 – 40	Merchants/Traders
41 – 50	Fulfilling an Obligation
51 – 60	Saving a Mutual Acquaintance
61 – 65	Fugitives Fleeing Oppression
66 – 75	Political Outlaws
76 – 85	Hunters/Trackers
86 – 95	Prisoners/Slaves Given a Dirty Job
96 – 100	Chosen By the Gods/Fate

Character Adventure Motivation Table (Choose, or Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Adventure Motivator: Why a Character Gets Involved
1. Where the Character's *curiosity* is piqued, action is encouraged by:	
1 – 5	A. The chance of personal knowledge gain.
6 – 15	B. The chance of personal financial or property gain.
16 – 22	C. The chance of personal status or image gain.
23 – 28	D. The chance of personal romance or friendship gain.
29 – 30	E The chance of knowledge gain for someone they care about.
31 – 35	F. The chance of financial or property gain for someone they care about.
36 – 38	G The chance of status or image gain for someone they care about.
39 – 40	H. The chance of romance or friendship gain for someone they care about.
2. Where *fear* is the main motivator, action is encouraged by:	
41 – 60	A. The chance of personal (mental or physical) discomfort or health (life) loss.
61 – 75	B. The chance of personal financial or property loss.
76 – 80	C. The chance of personal status or image loss.
81 – 85	D. The chance of personal romance or friendship (family) loss.
86 – 90	E The chance of (mental or physical) discomfort or health (life) loss to someone they care about.
91 – 93	F. The chance of financial or property loss to someone they care about.
94 – 95	G. The chance of status or image loss to someone they care about.
96 – 99	H. The chance of romance or friendship/family loss to someone they care about.
100	I. Roll twice again.

GAMEMASTER TIP

Campaign Design

IDEALLY, the secret motivation of the villain in your campaign should prove silly or trivial to the PCs once it is finally revealed to them; though of course it should be considered a deadly serious matter to the GMC (e.g., perhaps they've been kidnapping and sucking the lifeforce out of people in a vain attempt to reincarnate their pet ferret Clement).



3. Fulfilling an Obligation, Promise, Duty or Oath

One, several, or all the members of an adventure party are compelled to take on an adventurous task in order to fulfil a religious, customary or personal obligation toward a peer, friend, family, tribe, or authority.

4. Saving a Mutual Acquaintance

Someone known and cared for by the group is in deep trouble (the party may not be clear on why), and all agree that they must do everything they can to save their friend. This will draw them into an intrigue of much greater significance than that which is currently producing trouble for their friend.

5. Fugitives Fleeing Oppression

The Characters are people of varied backgrounds, brought together by mutual persecution. They meet on the road and are all wanted for one reason or another by 'the authorities'. Some might be slaves, others criminals, military deserters, or political prisoners. Each needs someone to trust and cover their back when they rest. It is an association based on mutual desperation and a common desire for freedom.

6. Political Outlaws: Rebels, Agitators, or Partisans

The Characters are members of a 'cell' or small group held together by shared political and/or religious beliefs which are not those of the state, but are those of the people oppressed by its rule. Their group acts both independently and in conjunction with other cells with whom they have very limited contact (it's safer that way — they're always afraid of detection by the state's spies). They conduct missions which attempt to undermine the public belief that the state is all powerful. Their goal: to prompt a revolution which will overthrow the oppressors and put into power people who want to do things the right way: their way. Of course, different cells may have different definitions of the 'right way'.

7. Hunters, Trackers, or Destroyers

The Characters are 'experts' called in by locals with a problem, or assigned by an employer to accomplish a specific task — usually the tracking down and the bringing to justice (or eradication) of an individual(s) who is a threat to the peace. This can include anything from a criminal, to a gang of highwaymen, to a more supernatural offender such as a wizard, a werewolf, or vampire. The options are endless, and the skill and mutual trust and respect gained from each mission should help bond the Characters together.

8. Prisoners or Slaves Given a Dirty Job in Exchange For Freedom

The Characters have just one thing in common: their desire to obtain their freedom. By doing a particularly nasty job, (any of the previously mentioned tasks can apply to this group), they will be granted their freedom. There may or may not be a representative of the authorities along with the group to keep an eye on them or even lead them as an 'officer'. Various conditions, such as the safe return of the officer, or a good report by the same, can be a condition of the agreement.

9. Chosen By the Gods/Fate

Through a device such as a recurring dream, the instruction of a Deity, or the prophecy of an oracle, the Characters are assembled and encouraged to work together toward a specific goal. The understanding is that each member of the group is an integral part of the team, which due to some unapparent fortuitous combination of talents and personalities is entrusted with saving the day. Should the group split up, they will seal the world's fate.

Creating a Campaign

This book is not large enough to provide a detailed description of every square mile of Murphy's World. As GM you should take the broad geographic and cultural descriptions provided and add whatever details are necessary to accommodate the specific adventures you plan. The following passages offer some advice as to how to go about this.

When creating your campaign setting, always design from the general to the specific. Develop the 'big picture' first (usually geography, climate, and politics), then fill in the colorful details. Each additional layer of detail gives a richer feel to your setting for both you and your players.

Prepare some notes on the most prominent species and races you want the Characters to encounter. Set your adventures in a location undergoing a time of turmoil. This could be the result of natural disaster, technological change, decay, politics, economics, war, sorcery, etc. Nice, quiet, scenic, and politically stable places are great for taking holidays, but they make for boring adventure settings. On Murphy's World, places may look pleasant and serene, but all is never quite what it seems to be. As Characters spend more time in a specific area, you can flesh out more details for it.

Develop a sense of how far and in which direction Characters are likely to travel in any given gaming session. This will give you a rough idea of how much of your world you need to create for that day. For easy reference you may want to make maps of the areas you've created in various scales and detail. Should the Characters travel beyond the areas you've detailed,

MAKE IT UP! Don't worry if it isn't perfect; use your common sense, past experience, and random generation tables. The players will probably never notice that they've run out of world.

Should you find yourself with time to devote to extra world building, establish some areas of political and supernatural importance. Develop the major trade and shipping routes between large towns and city-states; climate and its implications for your chosen setting; political tensions; and local history. Each culture has its own characteristics, traditions, and views events in its own way. Base your themes and situations on events from history, books, and films.

Once your campaign setting is detailed adequately enough to try an adventure, find some people to play it. Choose people that you get along with, and if you plan a long campaign, make sure they understand the commitment and are willing to attend most play sessions.

The most successful roleplay adventures are better than reading a book or watching a film. Occasionally you may hear gamers recount their favorite adventures as if they were exchanging tales of real events that actually took place. If you run your campaigns imaginatively, it will be *yours* they talk about!

Deciding Between an Open-Ended or Limited Campaign

There are two types of adventure campaigns: open-ended and limited.

An **open-ended** campaign can carry on for years, with players joining and leaving the game as time goes on. This permits you to establish a very detailed and distinct campaign world, with an actual history of events. Typically the events precipitated by Characters in an open-ended campaign have a limited impact on the eco-political scene of your gameworld.

A **limited** campaign consists of a series of adventures that build to an overall climax. Although a limited campaign can last a long time, you will have determined in advance a specific sequence of events which culminates in a grand finish — like that of an epic novel. Such a campaign runs the risk of seeming a bit predetermined to the players, but usually makes up for it with a sense of impending destiny. In a limited campaign, Characters are normally an integral part of the eco-political action and their participation is necessary to the eventual outcome of events.

Choosing a 'Grand Scheme' for Your Murphy's World Campaign

Every roleplay campaign can benefit from a ***grand scheme.*** It subtly links certain events and adventures in a manner that may not initially be apparent to the PCs. It is an understanding by you of the main political forces in competition which may have some effect (large or small) on the Characters of the gameworld.

Imagine the grand scheme to be a network of interlocking people, plans, obligations and interests. The outcome of one event can make very little difference, or it can have repercussions that spread throughout the world, affecting the lives of people everywhere, and bringing the Characters to the notice of forces and factions better left undisturbed.

The following is a brief selection of possible grand schemes upon which you can base a Murphy's World campaign:

1. The Menace of Madness

The plague of the **Lunies,** a distant and limited problem at the moment, gradually develops into a major concern, eventually involving armies of the contagious insane lead by megalomaniacs. How will various cultures (and Characters) cope with the threat of being trampled under the foot of a misshapen and mindless army? How will this threat affect existing international politics and intrigue? Are the Characters immune to the disease? Is this the terrible conflict Ragnarok which the Norns of the Aesir have been harping about for so long?

2. The Danger of the Drow

The Dark Elves of **Drowcathia** have plans to conquer all Elvish lands and intend to make the Light Elves of Whitethorn, who have mocked them for so long, their slaves. For years sailors have told of the fierce warriors from the west, and their hatred for eastern Elvish civilization. Such concerns were not taken seriously in the past, since the spies of the Light Elves reported that their dark cousins were a disorganized lot. They were more intent on fighting each other and conducting petty pirate raids than on organized conquest. Thus, they were a a nuisance, but hardly worth increasing defense spending over. However, recent reports indicate that the Drow are a very serious threat, and something needs to be done soon, or Light Elvish civilization may drown in a dark tide.

3. The Technological Trow

Just who are the Trow? This race of 'Dark Dwarves' as they are called, are known more through legend and conjecture than fact. It is said that they have spies everywhere. Supposedly these dark cousins of the Dwarves are their equal in engineering and manufacturing, and yet almost nothing is seen of their work. Do they trade goods with other races? The few individuals who claim to have seen a Trow consistently mention the vast number of interesting tools and devices, of incomprehensible purpose, which they characteristically wear, usually hung from a belt.

Are the Trow actually operatives from another planet? Or just Dwarves with a liking for gizmos and gadgets? Would they be willing to trade or sell their goods and knowledge to others?

GAMEMASTER TIP

The Antagonist

WHILE THE BIG BADDIE, may on the surface be a powerful GMC, with extensive financial, military, and /or supernatural resources, these should be offset by several failings. These might include: incompetent assistants; faulty technology; a personal problem which he/she is embarrassed about and tries to keep hidden; poor coordination; complete insanity.



GAMEMASTER TIP

PC Obstacles

IMPEDIMENTS to the progress and objectives of the PCs should look as nasty and impressive as possible; this applies to inanimate objects, structures, and GMCs. However, for friendly, thinking, or simply oblivious PCs, there should be a non-aggressive way around, over, or into the obstacle. Though it may mean lying, suffering a wound, or behaving in a silly or uncharacteristic way.



4. The Dæmon Directive

Duke Isambard the Inquisitive, brother of King Roderick of Whitethorn, has discovered a Dimension Gate in the library of his summer chateau. Unfortunately for all concerned, on the other side of the portal is an army of Dæmons, desperate to evacuate the trade fair and cocktail party they've been trapped for two thousand years, since the portal broke down. The Dæmons come through the Gate and proceed to wreak havoc.

Their new business plan is to set themselves up as rulers of Murphy's World. They begin by organizing the labor underclass of Whitethorn and encouraging the workers to toss out their foppish masters and seize hold of the reins of government — under the guiding hand of the Dæmon leader, of course. Meanwhile, King Roderick has charged his son, the Prince, and a group of Dwarvish court jesters (who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time), with the task of seeking out a prophesied saviour described in an ancient tome. They leave the besieged castle via a secret Gate in the cellar. The saviour they find, a PC, may not be the one actually prophesied, but they'll have to do.

The Dæmons are loud, uncouth, insensitive, hot-headed schmoozers, with a fondness for making deals via personal relationships and strong-arm tactics. They are not strong on details, and either forget important issues, or leave things to chance. They *can* be tricked and out-maneuvered, but you have to be a fast talker.

5. Clandestine Rebels in a Climate of Political Oppression

The Characters find themselves embroiled in the plans of people dissatisfied with the totalitarian rule under which they live. These individuals meet secretly in subversive groups and attempt to organize a rebellion. But the eyes and ears of the tyrant can be anywhere and everywhere. The Characters may find themselves involved with such groups by intent or by accident. Either way, they will be forced to choose sides and become part of the intrigue, if for no other reason than to preserve their personal freedom, and perhaps even their lives.

Determining the Prime Antagonistic Force in the Adventure or Campaign

The Characters' sense of importance can be increased if they are occasionally given an ultimate evil to oppose. This is especially appropriate for *epic campaigns*, which build toward a *climactic finish.* The prime antagonistic force might be a powerful despot, a malicious deity, a megalomaniac sorcerer, a wealthy but insane relation, or a plague of crop devouring insects. Essentially, the antagonist should be someone or something who can have a vast negative impact upon the PCs, and many others as well. Hopefully, this chance to save the world will prove a strong motivation for adventure.

Sample prime antagonistic forces can include:

1. A Natural or Supernatural Phenomenon

This can include a natural disaster, a plague, a Dimension Door that allows nasty beings into this universe, or an artifact which must be destroyed lest it fall into the wrong hands and permit someone to become 'all powerful'.

2. A Despot Planing on Expansion & Conquest

Any powerful individual with access to an army and the resources to supply it can fit this description. For a pre-industrial society, *food* is the most important concern. Since land is the only sure way to increase food supply, it is extremely valuable. Control of natural resources, and established trade and manufacturing areas (for the taxes and tariffs which can be collected) are also likely targets of an ambitious lord. Money is needed to buy mercenaries (who are more reliable than conscripts) and land to feed them. If a despot could find soldiers who don't need eat or be paid, they'd have it all….

3. A Flawed or Suicidal, Pre-planned Event Which Must Be Stopped

In this type of campaign, the opponent is time and ignorance. Something terrible will result if everything continues as planned, and somehow the Characters are among the few who know the disastrous truth. Their task is to convince others of this, and gain their aid in halting events already in motion, lest everyone meet with a terrible fate.

Beginning the Campaign

Start with a manageable yet challenging adventure. Action-packed scenarios with a linear plot usually make the best first adventures, demanding that Characters perform a specific deed or quest in order to obtain political favor, wealth, or the directions home. Like the best heroic adventure stories, action-oriented scenarios tend to result in a lively all-or-nothing climax.

Provide an explanation, acceptable to the players, and related to the the situation at hand, of how each of the Characters came to be in the place where the campaign begins. Present a reason (usually in the form of a mutual dilemma) as to why they must all cooperate or work together to complete the task at hand. This is the most difficult aspect of Gamemastering: coming up with plausible carrots which encourage (not force) the players to choose for themselves the direction which you actually want them to proceed in.

If you can master this, and produce an environment where, regardless of what otherwise transpires, the Characters recognize the benefit of their mutual cooperation, they will volunteer to remain together for additional adventures. This will make your campaign a smashing success.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Tools & Tricks of the Trade

THE FORCES OF LUDO permit any landscape or weather pattern not being intensely thought about or 'believed in' by a self-aware creature to alter at random, or *toward the expectations and imaginings* of the nearest being with the *strongest will*. This should make for some interesting opportunities for you to stir things up as the Characters stroll complacently across the verdant hills and dales.

Provided below is a quick means of randomly generating some alternatives.

The Ever-Changing Wilderness

Some Silly Geography Ideas

There is a wide variety of geographic features you can inflict upon Characters. Some examples follow:

Localized zones where the laws of physics operate in an unfamiliar and unexpected manner:

- A gully with little or no gravity.
- Rivers, streams, or waterfalls with backwards, up-hill water flow.
- A canyon where sound does not carry in a straight line, but in unpredictable paths. Or a zone of silence.
- A canyon of odd or prophetic echoes, where the echoes return differently from what might be expected, and/or with alternate information, or responses to a question asked.
- Places where it requires less effort to accomplish something (e.g., a fire always starts on the first attempt).
- Places where it is impossible to accomplish something (e.g., a fire just can't be started).
- Forest glades which impose certain emotional changes upon those who venture there (e.g., wild mood swings, bliss, paranoia, fear, etc.).
- Food is always a great thing to base geographic features on (e.g., liquid chocolate pools and rivers, fudge lava running from cake mountains, icing, iced or whipped cream glaciers, a pasta forest, candy castles, gingerbread houses, etc.).
- Chaos zones. Places where no matter what a Character attempts, the result always turns out the opposite of what they intend or desire.
- Time zones. Places where time stands still, or moves faster or slower than the world around it (e.g., an east coast whose time is ½ hour ahead).
- Dead zones. Places where things don't grow, and living things gradually die.

Natural objects or creatures, which function in an unfamiliar and unexpected manner:

- A boulder which answer questions and supplies useful (or not) information on just about anything, as long as the being asking is polite, nice, and not pushy.
- Pools, ponds, springs, and tree-sap with supernatural (but not necessarily desirable) properties.
- Sentient trees which reveal their moods by the color and condition of their bark, sap, leaves (e.g., a sad tree might shed its leaves and let its branches hang).
- Animals which are just as sentient and capable of talking as Humans (e.g., singing fish).

'Over the Horizon' Wilderness Terrain Generation Tables

Three Random Wilderness Terrain Tables are provided: one for each main climactic belt of the planet (see page 126). Choose the table appropriate for the area the adventure takes place in, and roll **1d100**. (Don't worry about mixing terrain — this is Murphy's World, after all!) Settlements, once established, are permanent (unless everyone decides the scenery is awful and moves away).

Random Weather Generation

In most populated places the weather is sunny and clear — this is primarily due to the *desire* of the residents. Only the really *strange* hope for otherwise; still, it takes all kinds….

Consider rolling **1d10** ***each day*** and if a **'1'** is rolled, assault the Characters with a humorous weather condition lasting **1d100 minutes.** The table on page 126 produces *instant weather changes* with supernatural and silly significance by filling in the blanks of the title format:

"(The) [(a) Weather Condition] of [(b) State of Being/Thing]."

Due to random rolling, not every result will be humorous, but they should provide evocative titles you can build upon. If you wish, choose your own words for one or both of the blanks — the best combinations come from rhyme and alliteration. Word endings such as 's', 'y', and 'ness', can be altered to suit the circumstances. Roll again if you don't like what you get.

Once you've determined the name of the weather condition, consider letting it affect Characters' Attribute(s) while it lasts. For example: the Snow of Stupidity could lower the Intelligence by **1d10** points (GM discretion) of all the Characters within its area of effect for as long as it lasts.

Random Generation of Plants

The table on page 126 produces instant plants with supernatural and silly significance by filling in the blanks of the name format:

"(The) [(A) Type of Condition] (of) [(B) Type of Plant]."

You can roll on the table for a random result, or choose your own words for one or both of the blanks. If you choose to roll, not every name will be humorous. Based upon the name, define in detail the properties and background of the plant in question. If the name implies

*RIGHT: A **Gnobby-Gobbit.** A deadly carnivore, a scavenger, or a genius at quantum mechanics? Appearances can be deceiving.*

Random Wilderness Terrain Tables
(Roll 1d100 on the Appropriate Table)

No. Rolled	Climactic Region/Terrain Type
A) HIGH LATITUDES: POLAR CLIMES	
1 – 30	Tundra/lichen plain
31 – 40	Mountains and/or glacier flowing ice
41 – 50	Sea with frozen pack-ice/Ice plain
51 – 60	Sea with broken ice-islands
61 – 75	Snow and/or ice covered land
76 – 90	Settlement
91 – 95	Roll on Table B
96 – 100	Roll on Table C
B) MID-LATITUDES: SEASONAL CLIMES	
1 – 5	Old coniferous forest
6 – 10	Dense mixed forest
11 – 20	Thin Woods
21 – 25	Bog/swamp
26 – 35	Moor
36 – 45	Grass plain
46 – 50	Badlands
51 – 55	Rolling hills
56 – 60	Valley
61 – 65	Mountains
66 – 75	Water feature (river, lake, sea)
76 – 90	Settlement
91 – 95	Roll on Table A
96 – 100	Roll on Table C
C) LOW LATITUDES: TROPICAL CLIMES	
1 – 15	Dense tropical jungle
16 – 30	Thin tropical jungle
31 – 35	Scrub forest
36 – 40	Swamp
41 – 45	Mountains
46 – 55	Desert
56 – 69	Water feature (river, lake, sea)
70 – 90	Settlement
91 – 95	Roll on Table A
96 –100	Roll on Table B

some supernatural function, grant it to the plant, no matter how absurd it might sound. Use alliteration to provide a snappy sounding title (e.g., the Galloping Grapefruit). Where necessary, alter word endings to suit the circumstances. Feel free to roll again if you don't like what you get.



Random Weather Generation Table
(Roll 1d100 Twice, Once for Column A, Then for B)

No. Rolled	(A) Weather Condition	(B) State of Being/Thing
1 – 5	Blizzard	Cats
6 – 10	Clouds	Chaos
11 – 15	Cyclone	Damnation
16 – 20	Drizzle	Darkness
21 – 25	Flood	Dogs
26 – 30	Fog	Foolishness
31 – 35	Gale	Forgetfulness
36 – 38	Hail	Frogs
39 – 40	Hurricane	Gumdrops
41 – 45	Mist	Happiness
46 – 50	Monsoon	Itching
51 – 55	Rain	Misery
56 – 60	Sleet	Pain
61 – 65	Snow	Recklessness
66 – 70	Squall	Sneezing
71 – 75	Storm	Stupidity
76 – 80	Sunlight	Swiftness
81 – 85	Sunshower	Tapdancing
86 – 90	Tornado	Trickery
91 – 95	Typhoon	Weariness
96 – 100	Wind	Wishes

Random Plants Table
(Roll 1d100 Twice: Once for Column A, Then for B)

No Rolled	(A) Type of Condition	(B) Type of Plant
1 –5	Agreement	Berries
6 – 10	Anxiety	Bush
11 – 15	Boisterous	Creeper
16 – 20	Burning	Evergreen
21 – 25	Concealment	Flowers
26 – 30	Disgusting	Fruit
31 – 35	Dogma	Fungus
36 – 40	Eavesdropper	Grain
41 – 45	Ebullient	Grass
46 – 50	Ecstasy	Herbs
51 – 55	Fellowship	Moss
56 – 60	Golden	Nuts
61 – 65	Insult	Pods
66 – 70	Jello	Root
71 – 75	Money	Seeds
76 – 80	Reasonable	Shrubbery
81 – 85	Sensational	Tree
86 – 90	Tolerance	Vegetable
91 – 95	Quarrelsome	Vine
96 – 100	Vanishing	Weed

Random Generation of Creatures: Animals & Monsters

At this point, a word in favor of the much-maligned 'Creature' is in order. By land or sea, in steaming jungles or the filthy alleys of the metropolis, despite all discouragement, the Creature does its duty. Whenever you determine that Characters are getting too cocky and need to get beat up a bit, a well placed Creature can be your best friend. The climate, geography, and circumstances have some bearing on the type of Creature found, but the final decisions and details are up to you, the GM.

There are several ways you can go about creating your own Creature. Modifying or combining known animals (real or mythical) is one popular method practiced by the ancient Greeks. Take for example the Centaur — a man with a horse's a… er, you get the picture. Research material on historical and legendary beasts is available through a good library, or you may simply invent anything that comes to mind — perhaps… a sentient chocolate soda?! Consider that creatures might live in societies just as, if not more, sophisticated than Humans (this is a trick often found in animated movies).

Some Creatures are referred to as 'monsters', especially if they possess supernatural powers and abilities. It is not uncommon for monsters to possess superior intelligence (occasionally above that of an average Human) than most animal-like Creatures.

The table on page **128** produces ***instant animals or monsters*** with supernatural and silly significance by filling in the blanks of the name format:

"(The) [(A) type of Thing or Activity] (of, the, or to) [(B) type of Creature or (C) Monster]."

Due to the randomness of the situation, not every name will be humorous; this is not necessarily a bad thing. If you wish, choose your own words for one or both of the blanks. Based upon the name, flesh out the qualities and background of the Creature in question for the Characters. If the Creature has some supernatural function, make it interesting and potentially useful to the Creature's lifestyle, no matter how ridiculous it may sound. Use alliteration to provide a snappy sounding title (e.g., the Debating Dolphin). Feel free to roll again if you don't like what you get.

Creatures in Combat

Adventure parties and the Creatures they meet along the way will not always greet one another on friendly terms. The combat strategies of the Creatures involved should make the best use possible of their strengths and avoid

their weaknesses. Not every Creature is going to do a full-frontal assault, screaming all the while. Varying Creatures' tactics will make things much more interesting for the Characters battling them. (Perhaps the Creature does battle with insulting remarks, or by covering the Characters' clothes with hard-to-get-out stains — not every 'combat' encounter need be potentially deadly.)

It is up to you as GM to determine how effective a fighter your Creature is. Creatures can fight at any skill level you deem appropriate; those similar in stature to Humans, or using fabricated weapons, should strike only once per round. Beast-like Creatures, with tusks, claws, horns, stingers, income-tax forms, and so forth should have one chance to hit with each deadly appendage (in range) per round.

A Creature should not exist solely to be hacked up by or to ingest unpleasant Characters; it should have a life and motives of its own. In fact, most legendary monsters are simply misunderstood. Before a Troll could ask for his first toll, he had to put in a lot of hard work to construct the bridge the Characters wish to cross! It can be interesting at times to show the monster from the monster's own viewpoint — just why did Grendel keep raiding Heorot Hall? Surely not just so that Beowulf would have an excuse to rip his arm off.

Random Generation of Places & Landmarks

Ideally, Murphy's World consists of marvellous places boasting strange phenomena, bizarre cultures, and mind-boggling architecture. **The Random Places & Landmarks Table** produces instant places and landmarks with supernatural and silly significance by filling in the blanks of the name format:

"(The) [(a) Type of Place] (of, of the, or to) [(b) State of Being or Name of a Being]."

or

"[(b) Name or State of a Being] [(a) Type of Place]."

Due to random rolling, not every result will be humorous, so feel free to choose your own words for one or both of the blanks. Based upon the name, define in detail the properties and history of the place or landmark in question. If the place has some supernatural aspect to its name, make it interesting and potentially useful, no matter how ridiculous it might sound. Word endings can be altered to suit the circumstances. Feel free to roll again if you don't like what you get on the first or any subsequent try.

Developing Amusing Place Names

There are certain patterns which can be used to create humorous or adventurous place names. Once you've determined the name of a place, consider letting it affect the Characters' Attribute(s) or behavior while in the area. For example: while in the Sewer of Sympathy any Creatures the Characters encounter feel sympathetic to the PCs' cause. Likewise, the same can be true for the PCs.



The suggestions on the following page may be used as a springboard for naming places in you campaign world:

Random Places & Landmarks Table
(Roll 1d100 Twice: Once for Column A, Then for B)

No. Rolled	(A) Type of Place	(B) State or Condition, or Name of a Thing/Being	No. Rolled	(A) Type of Place	(B) State or Condition, or Name of a Thing/Being
1	Abyss	Abandonment	51	Marsh	Meatloaf
2	Badlands	Alertness	52	Marshland	Meditation
3	Battlefield	Alternatives	53	Menhir	Misery
4	Bay	Barbarians	54	Mine	Mist
5	Beach	Beans	55	Moorland	Monsters
6	Bluffs	Blindness	56	Mound	Motionless
7	Bog	Bumbling	57	Mountain	Mound
8	Butte	Bunnies	58	Ocean	Mumbling
9	Camp	Capabilities	59	Orchard	Nervous
10	Canyon	Changes	60	Palace	Night
11	Castle	Challenges	61	Pass	Nimbleness
12	Cave	Clumsiness	62	Passage	Noon
13	Cavern	Contemplation	63	Path	Numbskulls
14	Church	Contortions	64	Peak	Panic
15	City	Corpses	65	Place	Pansies
16	Cliffs	Creatures	66	Plain	Purgatory
17	Cottage	Cute Animals	67	Plateau	Platinum
18	Crater	Damsels	68	Pond	Revenge
19	Creek	Danger	69	Realm	Sandwich Spread
20	Crossroads	Darkness	70	River	Sewage
21	Desert	Dawns	71	Road	Shroud
22	Dock	Death	72	Ruins	Sickness
23	Domain	Demons	73	Sea	Silence
24	Dunes	Desertion	74	Sewer	Silver
25	Fords	Devils	75	Shelter	Slime
26	Fields	Disaster	76	Shrine	Slim Pickings
27	Foothills	Dogs	77	Slopes	Sorrow
28	Forest	Doom	78	Spring	Stars
29	Fort	Dragons	79	Stairs	Stillness
30	Gardens	Dreams	80	Stone	Suspicions
31	Geyser	Eternal	81	Stone Circle	Squalor
32	Glacier	Exceptions	82	Swamp	Sympathy
33	Glade	Fish	83	Tavern	Teleportation
34	Grassland	Flowers	84	Temple	Turmoil
35	Graveyard	Fog	85	Tomb	Toffee
36	Hamlet	Forbidden	86	Tor	Tomorrow
37	Highway	Fruit	87	Tower	Toys
38	Hills	Fuzzy Things	88	Town	Traps
39	Hole	Gold	89	Trail	Treachery
40	Holt	Goodness	90	Tundra	Triumphs
41	Hotspring	Griping	91	Tunnel	Trivia
42	Iceflow	Happiness	92	Valley	Uncanny
43	Inn	Idiots	93	Village	Undesirables
44	Island	Incompetence	94	Volcano	Unobserved
45	Isles	Insects	95	Wasteland	Unwanted Guests
46	Jungle	Inventions	96	Watchtower	Vales
47	Lake	Jelly	97	Waterfall	Whimsy
48	Land	Knowledge	98	Well	Wildmen
49	Lighthouse	Loneliness	99	Wilderness	Wishes
50	Manor	Madmen	100	Wildlands	Wit

GAMEMASTER TIP

Player Ideas

OFTEN A PC'S ACTION will unknowingly provide an idea for a plot twist that you may not have considered. Run with it.

Some Suggestions for Achieving Amusing Place Names:

- Have the name relate in some way to the activities of the place it describes and vice-versa (e.g., N'y Touche: The Land of Hypocrisy).
- Use words and phrases which conjure up a picture in the minds eye (eg: Lonesome Trail, Misty Isles, Desperate Glen, Limited Prospects; Dry Gulch, Milky Way, Teardrop Lake).
- Use alliteration or rhyme (e.g., Sam's Swamp, Pete's Pond, Nimini-Pimini, Mamby-Pamby, Dungeons of Doom, Sea of Sorrows).
- Use popular phrases (e.g., Death's Doorstep, Devil's Armpit, Road to… Ruin, Success, etc., Blood Falls, Twilight Falls, Free Falls, Buck Pass, Narrow Margins, Campaign Trail).
- Use names for common (or not) items, animals, mythological creatures (or parts there of) household things,

Random Creature, Animal, & Monster Table

(Roll 1d100 Twice: Once for Column A, Then for Column B or Column C)

Number Rolled	(a) Type of Thing/ Activity	(b) Type of Animal	(c) Type of Monster	Number Rolled	(a) Type of Thing/Activity	(b) Type of Animal	(c) Type of Monster
1	Acid-blood	Aardvark	Abiku	51	Knowledgeable	Koala	Kraken
2	Aggressive	Adder (snake)	Acheri	52	Lewd	Lama	Lamia
3	Argumentative	Albatross	Adaro	53	Listening	Leopard	Leshy
4	Armored	Alligator	Adlet	54	Lumpy	Lion	Lycanthrope
5	Artistic	Anteater	Ahuizotl	55	Manic	Lynx	Manticore
6	Assassinating	Antelope	Aigamuchab	56	Meddling	Mole	Menahune
7	Atrocious	Ape	Ankou	57	Mellow	Mongoose	Merrow
8	Audacious	Armadillo	Areop-Enap	58	Melodramatic	Monkey	Minch
9	Authoritative	Baboon	Arwe	59	Mimic	Moose	Minotaur
10	Babbling	Bat	Azeman	60	Muddy	Mouse	Mokele-mbembe
11	Barking	Bear	Baba Yaga	61	Multicolored	Orangutan	Naga
12	Bashful	Beastie	Banshee	62	Nagging	Ostrich	Nightmare
13	Boastful	Beaver	Basilisk	63	Namby–pamby	Otter	Nisse
14	Brilliant	Bison	Baykok	64	Narcissistic	Owl	Nixie
15	Bumpy	Boar	Bodach	65	Night–black	Ox	Nocnitsa
16	Camoflaged	Bobcat	Bogy	66	Nubbly	Panda	Nuckelavee
17	Carrier	Buffalo	Boggart	67	Paranoid	Penguin	Nzangamuyo
18	Challenging	Buzzard	Bugaboo	68	Polka–dotted	Pigeon	Ogopogo
19	Chaotic	Camel	Bugbear	69	Poisonous	Platypus	Oni
20	Charming	Chameleon	Bunyip	70	Questioning	Porcupine	Peisthas
21	Cheerful	Cheetah	Cacodemon	71	Red	Puma	Phouka
22	Collapsible	Chicken	Centaur	72	Regenerating	Rabbit	Pisgie
23	Comedic	Cow	Chimera	73	Repulsive	Raccoon	Rakshasa
24	Crafty	Crab	Cluricaune	74	Riddling	Rat	Roc
25	Critical	Crocodile	Cockatrice	75	Scaly	Rattlesnake	Rusalka
26	Dangerous	Deer	Cyclops	76	Sensitive	Rhinoceros	Sasabonsam
27	Debating	Dolphin	Demon	77	Sentient	Rodent	Satyr
28	Deceitful	Eagle	Dogai	78	Sniveling	Salamander	Scarecrow
29	Destructive	Elk	Domovoi	79	Shaggy	Seal	Screamer
30	Embracing	Emu	Dragon	80	Silver	Shark	Spectre
31	Electric	Falcon	Fenris	81	Slippery	Sheep	Sphinx
32	Fire	Flamingo	Fiend	82	Skulking	Skunk	Su
33	Friendly	Fox	Ghoul	83	Sky-Blue	Sloth	Succubus
34	Gallant	Frog	Gigantes	84	Snickering	Squid	Sukuyan
35	Gas-guzzling	Gazelle	Golem	85	Snooping	Squirrel	Tapio
36	Golden	Gibbon	Goo-Teekhl	86	Stone-burrowing	Tiger	Tarasque
37	Gossiping	Giraffe	Gorgon	87	Stooping	Tortoise	Tengu
38	Grass-green	Gnu	Gremlin	88	Striped	Toucan	Unicorn
39	Gregarious	Gopher	Griffin	89	Sulking	Turkey	Vampire
40	Griping	Gorilla	Grogach	90	Sunset-orange	Turtle	Vetala
41	Groaning	Hippopotamus	Gurrangatch	91	Talented	Vampire Bat	Vodyanoi
42	Grotesque	Horse	Harpy	92	Thieving	Warthog	Wakonyingo
43	Groveling	Hummingbird	Hulder	93	Troublemaking	Weasel	Wendingo
44	Helpful	Hyena	Hydra	94	Turquoise	Whale	Werewolf
45	Hypersensitive	Iguana	Hobgoblin	95	Ugly	Wild Cat	Whowie
46	Hysterical	Impala	Imp	96	Whining	Wolf	Ya-o-gah
47	Ice	Jackal	Incubus	97	Whimpering	Wolverine	Yatu
48	Idealistic	Jaguar	Kappa	98	Whispering	Wombat	Yech
49	Inquisitive	Kangaroo	Kelpie	99	Wine-making	Yak	Yeti
50	Killer	Kiwi	Khumbaba	100	Yucky-yellow	Zebra	Zombie



foodstuffs or terms (e.g., Saganaki, Kakavias, Skordalia, Spatula, Cleaver, Gazump, Gauntlet, Filigree, Fetter, Dragon's Tooth Hill, Ghoul's Gulch, Vampire Valley).

- ☞ Use animals or creatures as visual metaphors (e.g., Snake River, Bearclaw Trail, Eagle's Perch).
- ☞ Use possessive phrases and people's names, etc (e.g., Winslow's Bluff, Dead Man's Creek).
- ☞ Use a format which gives a type of place, followed by 'of', then, a state of being or the name of a thing; combined with a colorful descriptive word (e.g., Plain of Ultimate Peril, Desert of Deception, Tunnels of Terrible Trickery, Wilderness of Weird, Field of Dreams, The Depths of Despair, Land of the Awful Nasty Thing, Tor of the Slime Beast).
- ☞ Use descriptive color (e.g., Blue Mountain, The Golden Desert, Green River, Black Sea, Umber Hill, Blue Moon).
- ☞ Use a format which gives a state of being, followed by a type of place: (Happy Hills, Danger Bay, Menacing Mountains, Calamity Pass, Dire Straits).

Settlements & Government Types

Governments on Murphy's World are not so much nations, but rather baronies or city-states. They're usually isolated (due to geography and climate) except for 'high roads' (in varying degree of repair depending upon the attentions of the local community) which may connect them to each other, and to sea, lake, and river ports. Different types of government can be adopted by a single race

Architecture & Design Style Table

Race	General Architectural Style Taste in Decor
Elf	Baroque, art nouveau, palaces.
Drow	Art Deco, high tech complexes.
Dwarf	Rustic wood, viking-victorian style.
Trow	Exotic, sinister art nouveau.
Brownie	1950's/60's biker and beatnik, artsie, leather.
Giant	Tacky pseudo viking-baroque, castles.
Troll	Hippy and folksie, sophisticated designs.
Ogre	Early Primitive; caves, lean-tos.
Pixie	Light and mobile, Ghenghiz Khan style.
Technocrat	High tech, brushed metal, chrome, plastic.
Celestial	Gaudy ornamentation, gold, brass, marble.
Rakshasa	Late Primitive; rude huts, log cabins.
Naga	Smooth, rounded, twisted.
Poughvidd	Basic, natural materials, nothing amusing.
Reagombie	1950's/60's/80's idealistic conservative suburbs.
Human	Varies with settlement — reflects original time and place before arrival on Murphy's World.

Random Settlement Type, Size, & Population Table (Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Settlement Type & Size	Average Population of Settlement
1 – 10	(IH) **Individual Homestead** (one family farm, self-sufficient)	1 – 10
11 – 20	(NC) **Nomadic Camp** (hunter/gatherers, self-sufficient; temp.)	5 – 30 (max. 300)
21 – 30	(HM) **Hamlet** (pioneer settlement) (a few [related] families, self-sufficient)	5 – 30
31 – 45	(PV) **Primitive Village** (small, self–sufficient,)	30 – 300
46 – 60	(CV) **Civilized Village** (manor and tenants) (medium, serves as a local trading post)	300 – 600
61 – 75	(LV) **Large Village** (manor and tenants) (large, serves as a trading post/market)	600 – 2,000
76 – 85	(TN) **Town** (small specialized public market)	2,000 – 6,000
86 – 90	(SC) **Small City** (trading centre/variety of services)	6,000 – 10,000
91 – 95	(LC) **Large City** (most goods/services available)	10,000 – 100,000
96 – 100	(CS) **City State** (anything but the rarest goods/services)	100,000 – 500,000+

Random Government & Race Type Table (Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Race	Suggested Government Types*						
1 – 10	Elf	—	MON	—	OLG	—	DEM	ODM
11 – 15	Drow	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	—	—
16 – 25	Dwarf	—	MON	MIL	OLG	—	DEM	ODM
26 – 30	Trow	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	—	—
31 – 40	Brownie	—	—	—	—	—	DEM	ODM
41 – 50	Giant	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	DEM	—
51 – 60	Troll	—	MON	—	OLG	—	DEM	—
61 – 70	Ogre	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	—	—
71 – 75	Pixie	DIV	MON	MIL	—	—	DEM	—
76 – 80	Celestial	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	DEM	—
81 – 85	Rakshasa	—	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	—	—
86 – 90	Naga	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	DEM	—
91 – 95	Poughvidd	—	—	—	OLG	—	DEM	ODM
96 – 100	Human	DIV	MON	MIL	OLG	DIO	DEM	ODM

*Once you've resolved which government types are appropriate for a given race, to determine the government type for the specific settlement encountered, use the **Random Government Type Table.**

Random Government Type (Roll 1d10)

No. Rolled — Government System

1 **Divine Dictatorship (DIV)**
A religious leader is supreme commander of the army and controls domestic, social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Usually they are removed from office only by death or assassination.

2 – 3 **Monarchy Dictatorship (MON)**
A 'royal' person (from an aristocratic landowning and/or conquering family) is supreme commander of the army and controls the domestic social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Usually they are removed from office only by death or assassination.

4 – 6 **Military Dictatorship (MIL)**
A local military commander assumes control (usually via a coup) of the army, and controls the domestic social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Usually they are removed from office only by death or assassination. Occasionally a military dictator will retire and leave his domain to a close friend (military commander) or his son/daughter, thus transforming the government into a Monarchy Dictatorship.

7 **Oligarchic Dictatorship (OLG)**
A group of powerful individuals (each with land, wealth, status, and military backing) join forces and agree to collectively rule the army and control the domestic social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Usually they are removed from office only if killed, or if the group splits and destroys itself over differences of opinion. This occasionally leads to a Military Dictatorship by the sole surviving member of the Oligarchy.

8 **Divine Oligarchic Dictatorship (DIO)**
A group of powerful religious leaders (often with land, wealth, status, and military backing) join forces and agree to collectively rule the army and control the domestic social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Usually they are removed from office only if killed, or if the group splits and destroys itself over differences of opinion. This occasionally leads to either a Military Dictatorship or a Divine DIctatorship by the sole surviving member of the Oligarchy.

9 **Democratic Dictatorship (DEM)**
An individual (usually with wealth, status, and the agreement of impartiality on behalf of the army) is elected by popular vote to rule as supreme commander of the army and control the domestic, social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Their stay in office is usually for a fixed, limited period, between 1 – 10 years, at the end of which a new election must be called. (Democracy is a system which permits the people to change their leaders without bloodshed… hopefully.)

10 **Oligarchic Democracy (ODM)**
A group of individuals (each with wealth, status, and the agreement of impartiality on behalf of the army) are elected by popular vote to form a governing body to rule collectively (usually with one Prime Representative) the army, and control the domestic, social, economic, and foreign policy of the state. Their stay in office is usually for a fixed, limited period, between 1 – 10 years, at the end of which a new election must be called.

BELOW RIGHT: If you're planning to venture into the wilderness, Ludo can make life tough. So be prepared. Always remember to wear ManaBlok Ludo Lotion. It could mean the difference between getting what you wish for and getting burned.

(e.g., Humans), however, certain races are 'weighted' toward certain government types.

The **Random Government & Race Type Table** can be used to determine the race of a settlement, and the types of government that race is likely to have. Of course, you may choose any government type you want should you dislike our suggestions.

Architecture & Design Style

Buildings on Murphy's World should reflect not only the personality of the individual and the culture from which they sprang, but also the quirkiness of Murphy's World. The overall style can be based on an exaggeration of existing styles or combinations from history, film, or novels — explain this mixture as being due in part to the number of people who have dropped onto Murphy's World over the years, bringing their cultural taste with them. Or, base the styles on natural forms such as shells, cliffs, and plants. Different cultural and geographic areas should reflect different eras of pop-culture, legend, and myth, through their style (e.g., 50's/60's beatnik, Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Greco-Roman Classical, Victorian, Post-Modern, etc.).

The silliness can be expressed through the ornamentation, functional devices, and overall shape of the structures (e.g., a temple in the shape of a pig, or clothing which is too impractical or ridiculous to function properly in). Just take a look at any European fashion magazine for ideas here. Devices may be so ornate, it is difficult to discover what they do, or how they function (e.g., a switch or lever disguised as part of the ornamentation that is near impossible to find).

Random Artifacts & Treasure Table

(roll 1d100 twice: once for column A, then for column B or column C)

No Rolled	(A) Object	(B) Condition or	(C) Name	No Rolled	(A) Object	(B) Condition or	(C) Name
1	Adhesive	Abstention	Abner	51	Longsword	Loathing	Oswald
2	Altar	Accessibility	Archibald	52	Lute	Madness	Otto
3	Armchair	Acceptability	Arnold	53	Manacles	Morals	Penelope
4	Armor	Accomplishment	Bartholomew	54	Marbles	Mortification	Phoebe
5	Asparagus	Accuracy	Bob	55	Mead	Nastiness	Primo
6	Backscratcher	Acrobatics	Bridget	56	Medallion	Optimism	Prudence
7	Banana	Admiration	Brunhilda	57	Mirror	Pain	Ralph
8	Battleaxe	Affluence	Cosmo	58	Necklace	Paranoia	Reginald
9	Bedpan	Agreement	Cyril	59	Nose-ring	Passion	Roderick
10	Bell	Amplification	Dwayne	60	Pearls	Peace	Rodney
11	Bellows	Assertiveness	Edsel	61	Porridge	Perfection	Ronald
12	Belt	Attractiveness	Egbert	62	Pot	Pitifulness	Roxanne
13	Boots	Awkwardness	Electra	63	Potato	Power	Rupert
14	Bowl	Bashfulness	Elroy	64	Pudding	Probability	Seth
15	Bracers	Bliss	Elvira	65	Ring	Prophecy	Seymour
16	Bread	Bravery	Elvis	66	Rucksack	Prosperity	Sheila
17	Bucket	Charisma	Elwood	67	Rope	Purification	Sidney
18	Candlestick	Cleverness	Ernie	68	Runestones	Rage	Sigmund
19	Cauldron	Companionship	Eugene	69	Saddle	Regret	Sophie
20	Chalice	Comprehension	Fabian	70	Sandals	Reprieve	Thaddeus
21	Chest	Confusion	Faith	71	Sarcophagus	Rhyme	Thelma
22	Cloak	Conquest	Gertrude	72	Sceptre	Riddles	Tiffany
23	Coffin	Cunning	Gilbert	73	Scroll	Romance	Trudy
24	Coins	Despair	Griselda	74	Scythe	Sadness	Tyrone
25	Coughdrops	Destitution	Grover	75	Seal	Sanity	Ula
26	Crossbow	Doubtfulness	Gwendolyn	76	Shield	Sedation	Ulric
27	Crown	Embarrassment	Heidi	77	Sickle	Skulking	Una
28	Cup	Fatigue	Hubert	78	Socks	Silence	Veda
29	Dagger	Fear	Humphrey	79	Spear	Sleep	Vito
30	Dais	Forgetfulness	Inglebert	80	Spoon	Stamina	Wanda
31	Dirk	Glee	Joy	81	Sponge	Statistics	Wendell
32	Dray (cart)	Greed	Kermit	82	Spring	Suffering	Wendy
33	Drum	Grief	Lamont	83	Staff	Tactlessness	Wilbur
34	Earring	Grumpiness	Lloyd	84	Statue	Teleportation	Winifred
35	Egg	Healing	Lolita	85	Stool	Temptation	Winslow
36	Fleece	Humiliation	Mabel	86	Strongbox	Terror	Winthrop
37	Gauntlet	Hysteria	Manfred	87	Sword	Time	Wolfgang
38	Gem	Immortality	Marvin	88	Tablet	Toil	Wyatt
39	Gown	Indecision	Mathilda	89	Talisman	Trailing	Xenia
40	Hammer	Indiscretion	Modesty	90	Tankard	Transformation	Yahudi
41	Hankie	Infatuation	Mortimer	91	Tapestry	Trickery	Yedda
42	Harp	Insanity	Murphy	92	Throne	Truthfulness	Yolanda
43	Helmet	Invisibility	Narda	93	Toadstools	Ugliness	Zada
44	Hide	Intelligence	Norman	94	Tome	Urgency	Zara
45	Horn	Inventiveness	Norton	95	Tunic	Villainy	Zebulon
46	Hose	Irritability	Olaf	96	Turnip	Warning	Zenobia
47	Jug	Lies	Olga	97	Underwear	Weirdness	Zippora
48	Lance	Love	Ophelia	98	Vessel	Wickedness	Zoe
49	Lantern (light)	Loyalty	Orville	99	Wand	Wisdom	Zona
50	Longbow	Lust	Oscar	100	Whip	Wonder	Zora

Random Generation of Artifacts

The following table produces instant artifacts and treasures with supernatural and silly significance by filling in the blanks of the name format:

"(The) [(A) Object] (of) [(B) Condition or (C) Name]."

You can roll on the table for a random result, or choose your own words for one or both of the blanks. If you choose to roll, not every name may be humorous. Based upon the name, define in detail the properties and background of the artifact in question. If the name implies some supernatural function, grant it to the artifact, no matter how absurd it might sound. Use alliteration to provide a snappy sounding title (e.g., the Asparagus of Accuracy). Give the artifact powers that suit its name. (Perhaps when eaten, the Asparagus gives a bonus on throwing things.) Where necessary, alter word endings to suit the circumstances. Feel free to roll again if you don't like what you get.



A Murphy's World Adventure

Robyn's Summer Romance in Asgard
(or Robyn & Her Merry Sven)

Robyn's Summer Romance in Asgard is a light-hearted adventure for 3 to 8 Characters of varying skills and experience. As with most Murphy's World adventures, it is not designed to be deadly… for the Characters. Only those PCs *extremely* careless or stupid risk an untimely demise.

The following text describes a series of events and alternatives which together make up a complete adventure. Don't feel constrained by the plot. Invent your own situations and embellishments; tailor the adventure to the players' Characters. Some of the Characters' actions will force you to improvise. Go with the flow. Don't try to force Characters to do things the players don't want them to do. After all, the whole point of the adventure is to have fun and exercise your creativity. Reward quick thinking and good judgment with good luck and favorable encounters. Punish stupidity and stubbornness with bad luck and nasty encounters. This is Murphy's World after all. Anything can go wrong!



Complete floor plans of Castle Icepeak (the setting of the climax) are provided on page **149**. You may photocopy these for reference during gameplay. You may want to have some paper on hand to map out the Characters' randomly determined route through the Cave of Confusion — though this is not necessary if you prefer to wing it.

The Main Characters

The Avalonians (from the Elvish Kingdom of Whitethorn):

Robyn Whitethorn, *Princess of Lyonesse*

Quote: "I thought you were here to rescue *me.* Do I have to do *everything!*"

Role: Subject of kidnapping plot by Loki; to become the 'mail order' bride of a Drow Prince in exchange for his military support to Loki for a coup attack on Asgard. She's in love with Sven Avenheld, an Asgardian.

Intelligence:	16	Bright	**Strength:**	8	Slight
Willpower:	13	Vacillating	**Dexterity:**	17	Nimble
Charisma:	23	Enchanting	**Fitness:**	13	Hale
Mystic:	14	Sensitive	**Appearance:**	25	Sensational
Height:	5'1"	**Weight:** 98 lbs	**Age:**	421	**HP:** 12

Elvish Ability: ***Attracting Undivided Attention*** (as desired: voice or eye contact).

Skills (80%): Persuasion, Flirting, Fashion Sense, Animal Riding, Sailing, Croquet.

Personality & Traits: Intelligent, knowledgeable, curious, creative, resourceful, practical, proud, not used to hardship, friendly until annoyed, interested in boys.

Description: Long strawberry blonde hair, green eyes, pale, lightly freckled, long nails, white teeth. Kidnapped while sneaking off to take a swim with Sven. Wears a green **bikini** under a green gauze **mini-dress,** under a short purple **silken kimono.** She wears a **bracelets, armlets,** an **anklet,** and gold **rings** inlayed with gems. **20 gold coins** in a purse hanging from tie-belt.

Olga Botchbungle, *Dwarvish Counselor to Queen Gwendolyn, Escort*

Quote: "Stop! You're not going into that dark dingy cavern without a sweater."

Role: Initially Robyn's Official Escort in Asgard. One of the rescue party.

Intelligence:	12	Rational	**Strength:**	17	Brawny
Willpower:	19	Determined	**Dexterity:**	12	Deft
Charisma:	9	Annoying	**Fitness:**	16	Sturdy
Mystic:	8	Undiscerning	**Appearance:**	9	Homely
Height:	4'6"	**Weight:** 155 lbs	**Age:**	256	**HP:** 16

Skills (80%): Arguing, Commanding, Memory, Estimate Depth, Protocol Expert.

Personality & Traits: No nonsense; hidden longing for romance. Normally responsible, but got distracted by Asgard's entertainments. Terrified that something serious has happened to Robyn. Tough, duty-minded. Constantly prods the PCs forward.

Description: Graying brown hair pulled back in elaborate design. Thick bones, dry wrinkled skin. Wears a respectable blue **waistcoat** over a white **cotton shirt** over brown **breeches** tied with laces. Shoes: **leather brogues** with brass buckles. **Pouches** on a **belt** hold useful items.

She has a **dagger** and knows how to use a sword, basically….

The Asgard Management & Staff

Frigga, *Queen of the Aesir, Manager of Asgard Casino Complex*

Quote: "Look, you're not my first choice for this mission. In fact, you're not in the top 50, but since you're all I've got… you had better not come up snake-eyes."

Role: Left in charge of Asgard while Odin is off fishing. *Desperate* to get Robyn back before he returns. The PCs are an answer to her prayers; upon seeing them she assumes the Fates have screwed up… again; but she's resolved to work with whoever she's got.

Intelligence:	18	Savvy	**Strength:**	22	Powerful
Willpower:	20	Determined	**Dexterity:**	15	Dexterous
Charisma:	17	Charming	**Fitness:**	28	Robust
Mystic:	5	Incognizant	**Appearance:**	17	Handsome
Height:	6'8"	**Weight:** 260 lbs	**Age:**	1345	**HP:** 29

Skills (80%): Persuading, Command, Accounting, Math, Card Dealing, Lying.

Personality & Traits: Stubborn, confident, determined, proud, motherly, doesn't like to admit mistakes. Initially kind and laid back, but can turn nasty in a crisis.

Description: Stylized graying blonde hair: most pulled back in elaborate bun; some hanging. A coronet rests on top. Soft smooth skin. Light blue eyes can look warm and caring or cold and calculating. Dressed in **layered robes of white and blue trimmed with gold.** A bit like a rich, jaded hippie with lots of **clunky jewelry** and accessories: gold rings, earrings, bracelets.

Savvy Revelgerr, *Dwarvish Servant of Frigga, Steward of Asgard*

Quote: "Tho, are you free tonight, thexie?"

Role: Savvy makes it his business to know what goes on in Asgard. He runs a profitable smuggling operation — among other things. He usually can get something if needed… for a price. He knows of a 'ancient' secret smuggling tunnel out of Asgard and a row-boat to permit escape. He'll befriend those kind to him and carry out 'favors' and little extra tasks, gratis.

Intelligence:	19	Cunning	**Strength:**	12	Stalwart
Willpower:	17	Confident	**Dexterity:**	15	Dexterous

THE MAIN CHARACTERS

CHARISMA:	11	Likable	**FITNESS:**	16	Sturdy
MYSTIC:	10	Aware	**APPEARANCE:**	11	Plain
HEIGHT:	3'10"	**WEIGHT:** 130 lbs	**AGE:**	1345	**HP:** 16

Skills (80%): Character Judgement, Deal Making, Estimating, Barter, Command.

Personality & Traits: Talks with a lisp (pronounces 's' as 'th'). Quick witted, has an eye for the ladies. Tries to appear classy, sophisticated, and formal to strangers.

Description: Mostly bald, strong cheekbones, piercing grey eyes, long hooked nose, and thick bottom lip. Long in limb, dry leather-like skin, old but surprisingly strong physically and mentally. Wears stylish **green long shirt, yellow leggings, soft green leather boots, belt, knife, pouch** with **keys** and lots of other stuff, silver bracelets, ear and finger **rings.**

LOKI, *Oath-Brother of Odin, Prince of the Aesir, Head of Asgard Marketing*

Quote: "Damn, but I do look great in black, don't I?"

Role: Kidnapper of Robyn. Plots to overthrow Odin's rule of Asgard in a hostile takeover. Arranged with the Frosties to kidnap Robyn, so he could trade her as a bride to a Drow Warlord in exchange for an army to conquer Asgard.

INTELLIGENCE:	23	Sage	**STRENGTH:**	30	Powerful
WILLPOWER:	20	Determined	**DEXTERITY:**	19	Lithe
CHARISMA:	17	Charming	**FITNESS:**	45	Dynamic
MYSTIC:	13	Sensitive	**APPEARANCE:**	14	Attractive
HEIGHT:	10'8"	**WEIGHT:** 745 lbs	**AGE:**	2784	**HP:** 48

Magic Power: ***Sorcery:*** Illusion, Physical Manipulation, Transformation.

Skills (80%): Command, Negotiation, Persuasion, Marketing, Design Sense, Sorcery.

Personality & Traits: Smooth, stylish, crafty, savvy. Vain, schemer, malicious trickster, coward. Fashion and design conscious. Illusionist, matter transformer,

Description: Pale skin, black hair, piercing green eyes, square jaw, pointed chin, upturned nose. Long strong limbs. Manicured nails. Clothed in **16th century court outfit;** green and blue with gold trim. **High black boots**.

ODIN, *King of the Aesir, Entrepreneur, Accountant & President of Asgard*

Quote: "Can't a fella be left alone to fish in peace for vunce!"

Role: Unexpected ace-in-the-hole savior for the rescuers (if required).

Personality: Wise, loud, jovial, self-confident, conceited. Responsible and fatherly.

ATTRIBUTES: Very high — consider anything possible.

HEIGHT:	12'8"	**WEIGHT:** 986 lbs	**AGE:**	3627	**HP:** 50

Magic Power: ***Sorcery:*** Clairvoyance, Physical Manipulation, Transformation.

THE AESIR WARRIOR 'HUNKS'

SVEN AVENHELD, *Casino Croupier, Suitor of Robyn (Romantic Interest)*

Quote: "Ve can't delay any longer, I must save my sweetheart Robyn… now!"

Role: Bouncer and son of the Head Croupier at The Runes casino. Hot on the trail to rescue Robyn. He carries an assortment of card decks; adept at card tricks. Combat 'calling card' is the **Jack of Hearts.**

INTELLIGENCE:	10	Sensible	**STRENGTH:**	29	Powerful
WILLPOWER:	19	Determined	**DEXTERITY:**	21	Agile
CHARISMA:	17	Charming	**FITNESS:**	40	Vigorous
MYSTIC:	11	Aware	**APPEARANCE:**	18	Handsome
HEIGHT:	9'6"	**WEIGHT:** 670 lbs	**AGE:**	24	**HP:** 43

Skills (80%): Card Dealing, Witty Conversation, Posing, Flirting, Sword Fighting, Sailing.

Personality & Traits: Noble, generous, courageous, loyal, and smarter than the average Aesir. Tries to appear sophisticated and mature; always confident and optimistic. Other than his fanatic concern for Robyn, and single-minded pursuit of her rescue, he really isn't that much different from his Aesir buddies.

Description: Large, blonde, light skinned, blue-green eyes, with perfect white teeth. Classic 'heroic' garb. **Flowing shirt, tight leggings, high boots, wide belt, red cape,** lots of cool embroidered designs in gold. Belt pouches and weapons galore. **Two-handed sword** slung over back.

OLAF, SIGURD, SVEIN, SVER, & SVEN, *Casino Bouncers (Cannon Fodder)*

Quotes: "Ve kill them all to death!" "Duh… vat vas it you vanted us to do?"

Role: Assigned by Frigga to the PC's rescue party (to keep an eye on them and ensure their compliance with the mission); these Bouncers from **The Runes** casino serve as enthusiastic cannon fodder. As close friends of Sven Avenheld, they want to ensure the PCs don't harm him — they can't believe he would do anything bad; after all, he's a buddy.

Skills (80%): Intimidating Appearance, Brawling, Sword Fighting, Flirting, Posing.

Personality & Traits: Enthusiastic, loyal, brave, inexperienced, easily confused, and very, very stupid. Typical young Aesir: cocky, fun-loving, and optimistic, never assessing the odds, and desperate to get a taste of battle and die gloriously — which they believe is the *only* way for *anyone* to go; they're a tad suicidal. Whenever a comrade is killed they'll stop to **sing an atonal death chant**. It's fortunate that they're great fighters; each is worth at least two Frost Giants.

They'll volunteer for just about anything and follow any firm command. They'll assume the PCs know what they are doing, but if ever the PCs look like they need to take action they'll suggest an immediate, loud, frontal assault (their standard attack mode unless told otherwise); the PCs better voice alternatives, fast. The Aesir will become surly and suspicious if the PCs act cowardly or try to leave them behind. They are easily tricked, but resentful if they figure it out.

They're all studying to become card dealers: "It's a great vay to meet vich babes." Each carries several packs of cards and is constantly demonstrating their shuffling, dealing, and card trick talents — at inappropriate times and often with potentially disastrous results (e.g., stooping to pick up dropped cards just as all hell breaks loose).

Each will leave a unique playing card (they carry extras) on the bodies of their vanquished foes: **Svein (Joker), Sver (King of Clubs), Sigurd (Queen of Diamonds), Sven (Ace of Spades),** and **Olaf (Duce of Spades).**

Description: Large, blonde, light skinned, blue-green eyes, with perfect white teeth. All speak with cliché Sweedish accents sprinkled with gangster lingo. In addition to standard 'adventure gear', each wears a purple and gold tunic with 'The Runes Casino' patches on the shoulders and breast pocket. Use the same stats as Sven Avenheld for the rest of the Aesir.

OLAF

Role: One of the Aesir rescue party. Dies going downstream (in the row-boat).

Personality: Curious, happy-go-lucky, determined to die for a good cause.

SIGURD

Role: One of the Aesir rescue party. Consort/sacrifice to the Valkyries.

Personality: Eager, 'manly' in words and deeds, lover of women (when possible).

SVEIN

Role: One of the Aesir rescue party. Cannon fodder.

Personality: A pessimist; constant worrier, cynical, grim, always pointing out the bad side of things with anecdotal stories and 'words to the wise'.

SVER

Role: One of the Aesir rescue party. More cannon fodder.

Personality: A happy soul; just glad to be included. Looking for fame, a glorious death, etc.

SVEN

Role: One of the Aesir rescue party. (This is *not* Robyn's boyfriend. The fact that there are two Svens is fertile ground for humorous confusion.)

Personality: Quiet, grumpy. Hates being continually mistaken for Robyn's Sven.

THE FROST GIANTS (FROSTIES)

SNED, BRU-HA-HAR, FERD, ISSAM, & ULAM, *Loki's Agents*

Quote: "We outnumber dem four to one, lets attack!"

Role: Besiegers of Asgard and kidnappers of Robyn; secretly employed by Loki. Foes of the PCs; someone to bash. Brave only until they no longer outnumber their opponents and are threatened with a serious thumping.

INTELLIGENCE:	8	Dense	**STRENGTH:**	19	Mighty
WILLPOWER:	5	Susceptible	**DEXTERITY:**	9	Awkward
CHARISMA:	6	Obnoxious	**FITNESS:**	26	Robust
MYSTIC:	2	Oblivious	**APPEARANCE:**	7	Ugly
HEIGHT (AVG.):	11'6"	**WEIGHT:** 830 lbs	**AGE:**	18	**HP:** 30

Appearance: Warrior caste: **swords, belts** and **buckles. Ring mail shirts** worn over **tunics** and **leggings** of white and blue. **Bracers, boots, headbands, rings.**

SNED

Role: One of the Frosties fighting Sven when the PCs show up.

Personality: A whiner, and a pessimist. Someone who never gets enough.

BRU-HA-HAR

Role: One of the Frosties fighting Sven when the PCs show up.

Personality: Jovial, enthusiastic, smart, afraid of nothing… but monsters.

FERD

Role: Running toward Sven and the other Frosties when the PCs arrive.

Personality: Smaller than the others, wants to be one of the gang. Eager but dumb.

ISSAM

Role: Seeking Robyn in the tunnels of the Cliff of Darkness. Ulam's brother.

Personality: Smart, brave, short (for a Frost Giant), and a fair tracker.

ULAM

Role: Seeking Robyn in the tunnels of the Cliff of Darkness. Issam's brother.

Personality: Large, dumb, and afraid of being alone — calls out Issam's name.

The Main Characters

The Inhabitants of the Cliff of Darkness

Herman, *a Hermit & Retired Monster Hunter, Human*

Quotes: "If you see something suspicious, don't try to reason with it — KILL IT!"
"Son, this is the voice of experience talking…."
"Did anyone hear something, just then [pause] — ah, it's gone now."
"If you see it — yell as loud as you can, and run for all you're worth!"

Role: A half-mad retired monster hunter. He might scare the PCs, offer some magical artifacts, and possibly act as a guide through the tunnles.

Height: 6'2" **Weight:** 178 lbs **Age:** 46 **HP:** 12

Skills (80%): Tracking, Monster Killing, Stealth, Hiding, Locating Herbs & Mushrooms.

Personality & Traits: Paranoid, unstable, full of fear, but generous to those who'll listen. He maintains a continuous one-sided conversation with a pet vole, **Mr Quaalude,** which spends most of its time peering out of his waist-length beard — when he is not humming 60's psychedelic pop tunes.

Description: Herman resembles a disheveled wide-eyed hippie. He wears a **tie-dye tunic, love beads, sandals, bandanna,** and **dried flowers** in his long matted white hair and beard. His face, though wrinkled, dirty, and haggard, is one of noble countenance, with high cheek bones, a square jaw, and long aquiline nose. His fingernails are long and filthy.

Berni, *a Cultured Giant Slug with a Toothache*

Quote: "Ooooooowaaaaaaaarrrrggggghhhh!… this bloomin' tooth is killing me."

Role: A smart monster with a bad tooth; he'll befriend and guide anyone who helps. Should a PC attempt conversation, he'll explain his problem — a huge cavity in his bottom-right incisor. A half-decent attempt at dental or brick-laying skills will fix the tooth. The limestone and sand of the tunnel can be used to create a cement filling. The 'dentist' will have to stand inside Berni's 10' [3 m] slimy maw. Berni will not eat a PC who is helping him.

If asked, Berni knows little about Robyn. He did see a young Elf maiden run through the tunnels; she was too slight even for a snack. The Frost Giants encountered were cold and fatty, but they hit the spot.

Berni does not know about Herman the Hermit… yet.

Intelligence:	16	Bright	**Strength:**	27	Powerful
Willpower:	9	Receptive	**Dexterity:**	7	Clumsy
Charisma:	10	Likable	**Fitness:**	20	Husky
Mystic:	1	Oblivious	**Appearance:**	4	Repulsive
Length:	31'8"	**Weight:** 3790 lbs	**Age:**	324	**HP:** 39

Personality & Traits: Berni talks with a deep voice and is quite cultured; liking classical music, discussing philosophy, and… eating. He has a voracious appetite, but having recently eaten (several Frosties), he's not hungry. He likes cool dark places. He is squeamish about pain.

Description: Berni is a large, blotchy-pink, slimy, slug — with rows of sharp, pointy teeth. He has yellow eyes on stalks, slits for nostrils, and a large maw which can swallow a Frostie (or anyone else he dislikes) in one gulp.

The Valkyries

Quote: "Hey there big boy, we're waiting for you!"

Role: The Valkyries will provide Sven, the Aesir and the PCs with the means to continue the pursuit of Robyn… for a price. When the Valkyries ask for a consort, they will not under any circumstances accept a PC; if one steps forward, they will find a reason to reject him as either too scrawny, short, pimply, etc. (females need not apply). They will accept only one *Aesir.*

They're immune to any attacks from the party; missiles will pass through them without inflicting Damage. The Aesir will not attack. If attacked, they'll ride off in a huff, leaving behind a terrible storm.

Description: **Aerial, Gail** and **Windy** wear **golden form-fitting breastplates with chainmail skirts, thigh high boots and horned helmets.** Each clutches a **spear** and trails a **long white cloak.** They're tall, beautiful, full figured, with long blonde hair, and with a fresh-scrubbed natural look. Aerial's hair is straight and flows in the wind. Gail and Windy have pigtails.

As they appear, play (or hum) Wagner's 'Ride of the Valkyries'.

Aerial

Role: Leader and main talker; speaks in a bad Swedish accent.

Personality: Sophisticated, imperious, cold, and callous. Holds nose in the air.

Gail

Role: One of the Valkyrie who appear to aid Sven. Stands left of Aerial.

Personality: Dark, knowing eyes and smile. Acts like a playful, spoiled schoolgirl.

Windy

Role: One of the Valkyrie who appear to aid Sven. Stands right of Aerial.

Personality: Giggles constantly, holding hand over mouth. An flirtatious trickster.

The Dwarves of Castle Icepeak

Role: The original owners of Castle Icepeak, now oppressed as slaves to Drow overlords. Some are resistance members of UGLI; they'll assist the PCs.

Intelligence:	12	Rational	**Strength:**	13	Stalwart
Willpower:	13	Vacillating	**Dexterity:**	14	Deft
Charisma:	10	Likable	**Fitness:**	16	Sturdy
Mystic:	5	Incognizant	**Appearance:**	11	Plain
Height (avg.):	4'2"	**Weight:** 76 lbs	**Age:**	46	**HP:** 14

Skills (80%): Brawling, Fighting (most weapons), Drinking, Smithing, Carpentry.

Description: Serious. Long beards, wrinkled, pale dry skin, blue eyes, round blobby noses, thick lips, large ears, balding heads. **Black cloth tunics** over **black breeches** and **purple stockings. Black shoes**, silver buckles.

Gump Lancet

Role: Leader of the Dwarf Resistance, **trapped inside Prince Shojini's magical crystal sceptre.**

Personality: Stalwart, loyal, gruff, and serious. Prepared to die for the cause.

Gregg

Role: Servant of Castle Icepeak, member of the Dwarf Resistance.

Personality: A soft heart, a dreamy romantic. Wants to record all events in song.

Gandar

Role: Servant of Castle Icepeak, member of the Dwarf Resistance.

Personality: Brave and strong, taller than the others. Handy with a sword.

Gordar

Role: Servant of Castle Icepeak, member of the Dwarf Resistance.

Personality: Lovable but incompetent. Younger brother of Gandar. An embarrassment.

Ted

Role: Servant of Castle Icepeak, member of the Dwarf Resistance.

Personality: Quiet, sneaky. A **double-agent;** Mannak pays him for information.

The Dark Elves (Drow) of Castle Icepeak

Thenton Akira Shojini, *Prince of the Dark Elves, Lord of Castle Icepeak*

Quote: "I do so hate being interrupted by riff-raff. Take them to the dungeons."

Role: Person to whom Loki is delivering Robyn; he intends to marry her for political reasons. In return, he'll provide mercenaries to help conquer Asgard.

Intelligence:	14	Rational	**Strength:**	12	Stalwart
Willpower:	11	Indecisive	**Dexterity:**	16	Dexterous
Charisma:	8	Annoying	**Fitness:**	15	Sturdy
Mystic:	10	Aware	**Appearance:**	13	Attractive
Height:	5'0"	**Weight:** 115 lbs	**Age:**	3004	**HP:** 14

Personality: A nasty fop, dedicated to fine art treasures (valued more than people).

Description: Tall, elegant; always dressed in the finest long black and purple **robes** trimmed in silver. Purple **tunic** with black **hose.** Hands carefully manicured, just a touch of makeup on his pale skin to compliment his black hair and eyes eyes and hide his weak chin. Usual expression: disdain, with a raised eyebrow. **Daggers** in belt and boots. Silver jewelry; **magic obsidian sceptre.**

Mannak, *Lord Marshal, Head of Drow Security for Castle Icepeak*

Role: If the PCs are captured, he will handle the interrogation.

Intelligence:	18	Savvy	**Strength:**	11	Adequate
Willpower:	17	Confident	**Dexterity:**	14	Deft
Charisma:	8	Annoying	**Fitness:**	16	Sturdy
Mystic:	15	Perceptive	**Appearance:**	15	Comely
Height (avg.):	4'8"	**Weight:** 120 lbs	**Age:**	2276	**HP:** 15

Description: **Black tunic** and **hose;** no fancy designs. Lots of hidden weapons.

Personality: Very nasty piece of business. Dedicated, serious, and loves his work… torture. He's the actual controlling force of Castle Icepeak.

The Typical Drow Guard, *of Castle Icepeak*

Role: Insure the security of the Castle. Obstacles for the PCs to deal with.

Intelligence:	8	Dense	**Strength:**	15	Burly
Willpower:	9	Receptive	**Dexterity:**	14	Deft
Charisma:	6	Obnoxious	**Fitness:**	12	Hale
Mystic:	3	Oblivious	**Appearance:**	11	Plain
Height:	4'10"	**Weight:** 120 lbs	**Age:**	1800	**HP:** 11

Description: **Purple tunics** and **hose.** Laminated black **armor** held together with red and purple lacing (laces will easily cut and cause the armor to fall apart).

Personality: Mostly decent chaps, with a family at home and a thankless job to do.

PART 1
GM BACKGROUND
THE PREMISE & DILEMMA

1.1 Background: The Embarrassment of Elvish Aristocracy

Elvish **King Roderick Whitethorn 'the Amiable'** of Lyonesse has a problem. His daughter Robyn is forever getting into trouble. She has an insufferable obsession — she wants to do *productive things.* In a Dwarf this is an admirable if unexpected trait; in a common Elf, it is an *embarrassment;* in the daughter of the King, it is a *disaster.*

While Robyn's playmates mastered skills such as 'conversational complexity', 'moonbeam dancing', and the Elvish national sport, croquet, Robyn spent her time in the company of artisans and sages. In her brief span of 421 years she has gathered more practical knowledge and skills than any Elf in generations. As if all this wasn't enough — Robyn has discovered *boys…*

Her mother, **Queen Gwendolyn 'the Aesthetic',** thought it best if Robyn spent the summer away from the Avalon Isles, with her great aunt **Frigga, Queen of the Aesir.** Robyn, ever curious about the world around her and fond of traveling to unfamiliar places, was overjoyed by the opportunity. Wisely, however, she refrained from expressing her glee about the prospect of meeting some Nordic 'hunks'.

The arrangements finally made, Robyn was taken by royal sloop down the great River Concord to the Avalon Channel. The Queen, not wanting her daughter to be taken advantage of by common sailors, arranged for the entire crew to be made up of female Dwarves. (This made for an uncomfortable journey; Dwarves are not the best sailors.) Robyn was miffed. When she learned that her mother had also assigned **Olga,** one of her Dwarvish counselors, to watch over her, she was furious.

1.2 Background: In Asgard Plans Form, Where Intrigue is the Norm

Odin was not looking forward to the arrival of his great niece from the Land of Lyonesse. Summer was a time that he liked for himself, and he did not want to spend it entertaining and watching over somebody else's kid. He'd had enough problems raising his own. His wife, Frigga, was insistent, and the last thing he needed was for her to get into a tizwall over the issue. Thus, he approved the girl's visit, but only under the condition that Frigga took complete responsibility for Princess Robyn.

Odin thought that most Elves were a pain in the butt, and expected an Elvish Princess to be unbearable. He decided to spend the next few days on a fishing trip to the hills northeast of the forests of Ironwold; most of the Greater Aesir (Thor, Balder, etc.) choose to go with him.

Meanwhile, others were making plans of their own….

Loki, Odin's oath-brother, desperately wants to seize the crown of Asgard away from Odin. He has the smarts, all he needed was the manpower, and the right opportunity. Suddenly, it had presented itself.

The **Frost Giants,** being both greedy and broke, are looking for a way to make a quick buck. Also they are upset because they were banned from Asgard by the Aesir for being the 'wrong kind of client', i.e., broke.

Prince Shojini, a Drow lord, wants a royal Light Elf maiden as a bride. Such a queen would boost his status, and status is very important to Shojini. Also, it would help protect the lands he's seized from Elvish influence, and promote contact with the Avalonian Elves.

Upon hearing of Robyn's visit, Loki decided that she would be the perfect bride for Prince Shojini. Loki knew that Robyn was beautiful, curious, and headstrong. It seemed likely that she would try to shake off her escort while in Asgard and venture off on her own. When she did, Loki and his accomplices would strike. He arranged with the Frost Giants to kidnap the Elvish Princess and bring her to him.

Shortly after Robyn's arrival, Loki sends word for the Frost Giants to begin their siege of Asgard and to seize Robyn. Though the Frosties wouldn't be cheap, Loki knew he would win most of his payment back from them once he controlled the night clubs, gaming tables, and slot machines of Asgard. Once Robyn was in his clutches, he would turn her over to the Prince Shojini, thus killing two birds with one stone. First, Shojini would give him a mercenary army. Second, the infuriated Elves of Lyonesse would break their alliance with the Aesir Giants, thus undermining Odin's authority.

Surrounded by an army of angry Frost Giants and Drow warriors, and without the help of the Light Elves, Asgard would be sure to fall. Loki would become the new owner of the hottest entertainment center on the planet. And the Frost Giants could begin spending their earnings.

Only the Drow and Frost Giant leaders know that Loki is behind the plot. The rank and file know only that a Dark and Terrible Lord dressed in black is their leader and master. (Loki loves to play dress-up).

1.3 Event: The Royal Princess Finds Herself in a Mess

Robyn arrived to a welcome of much pomp and ceremony — as befitting the royal representative of a loyal ally of the Aesir. All was not arranged to her liking — Olga, her Dwarvish chaperon ensures that likely young men are kept far away from Robyn. However, the many public events and feasts she is required to attend provides her with some small opportunities to see the Northmen of whom she has heard so much. She steals many of their hearts with merely a glance.

Eventually **Sven Avenheld,** a bouncer at the Runes casino and son of the Head Croupier, finds a way to see her on the sly. Taken by his boldness and ingenuity, Robyn wants to spend more time with him. Soon the two are stealing away together for daily swims, etc. Romance blooms.

One day, Robyn and Sven run off on a picnic outing down the river Ifing. This was the moment Loki was waiting for. His Frost Giant stooges catch the young lovers by surprise and bash poor Sven senseless — Robyn is seized and carried away. Eventually Sven awakes and takes up the chase to find the kidnappers and win back his lady-love.

That night the young lovers do not return to Asgard. Quietly, Frigga sends a guard out to find the pair. Instead, he runs into the advancing army of Frost Giants intent on besieging the city. Upon his hasty return, all able-bodied persons are sent to defend the battlements.

Frigga begins to seek a small party of competent looking strangers to find the lovers and bring them back before the scandal breaks. She is determined that nobody know she has screwed up — thus she doesn't send word to Odin and the other senior Aesir.

1.4 Encounter: The Characters Drop in, Their Fortune to Win

As GM, you'll need some rationale for having the PCs join the adventure. Use whatever combination of persuasion or browbeating you think is necessary. Any Character who will not participate should simply be left at home, and the player concerned should be encouraged to use a more pliable Character. ("If you don't *play*, you don't play.") Here are some suggestions for bringing a group of Characters together:

1.4.a Plot Option: It's Your Lucky Day

Despite being besieged by Frost Giants, life goes on as normal inside Asgard's casinos. Why should a little thing like a battle interrupt the important business of making money?



Each of the PCs comes to Asgard (just before the siege starts) to gamble, guzzle free drinks, and see the glitzy entertainment. Allow the PCs to wander freely through Asgard, get drunk, play the slots, blackjack, roulette, and toss-the-dwarf. Huge security guards throughout 'encourage' visitors to play; after all, free drinks are only for people who spend money at the tables. (On top of that, the large chain-mailed women singing opera inside every bar discourage people from hanging around there too long).

Soon you should make it clear that the PCs are lucky. Very lucky. They do well at the slots and tables. Money flows into their pockets; they get a *lot* of attention. After a while, each PC will be respectfully asked by the management (represented by a pair of hulking Aesir security guards) to come and have a chat. All the lucky PCs will be brought before Frigga.

Luck is *important* to the Aesir. Someone who is lucky (as the PCs obviously are) is obviously favored by the Gods. And who better to help Frigga out with her problem than a group of strangers favored of the Gods? With subtle threats and promises of great rewards, Frigga must convince the PCs to search for Robyn. PCs who don't want to help should be shown the exit, and the Frost Giants waiting without. (If any PC is still unmotivated to join the adventure, find an alternate who is).

1.4.b Plot Option: Do Drop In

Murphy's World is rather arbitrary at times. A Character can be just strolling along the street, minding their own business, when they are overwhelmed by a whirling kaleidoscope of color and whisked away by a rogue Dimension Gate. An instant later the Gate opens and drops the Character, bruised and disoriented, onto a gigantic whirling roulette wheel, ruining a perfectly good round of betting. (In this way the PCs can arrive in a group, or be deposited separately throughout the casino).

The Characters' unexpected arrival interrupts the large chain-mailed women singing opera on the stage (much to everyone's relief). Dozens of hulking Aesir bouncers will gather in wonderment. Obviously, only messengers of the Gods can simply appear in mid-air and drop onto betting tables like that! The typical Aesir hunk will be in awe of the Characters, and Frigga will see this as her chance to send some expendable unknowns on the mission to rescue Robyn.

Inviting the PCs to her private offices, Frigga will do her best to entice them to rescue Robyn with promises of cash and goods. After all, the PCs' only alternative is to get booted outside and take their chances with the battle-crazed Frost Giants.

1.4.c Plot Option: You Bet Your Life

As in option 1.4.a, each of the PCs comes to Asgard (just before the siege starts) to gamble, guzzle, and gawk at the scenery. While in this City That Never Snoozes, they each become involved in some game that causes them to eventually lose many or all of their possessions. Depending on the PC, they may end up in debt. Start by letting them win big and get their hopes up. Then, allow them to place a bet where they *misunderstand the odds, and lose big-time.* Should PCs try to cash in their chips while ahead, the 'security guards' will 'encourage' them to try one last game before quitting.

Once the Characters lose heavily, they will be invited to speak with Frigga. Frigga will brush aside all their complaints, and offer them a chance to recover their losses by rescuing the princess. Their only other option are to take their chances with the Frost Giants or Asgard's debtor prison.

1.4.d Plot Option: Betting on Adventure

If the Characters are already part of a coherent group looking for adventure, in the towns and villages near Asgard they will hear rumors that certain highly-placed people in Asgard are looking for mercenaries to do a job for them. There will be vague promises of huge rewards. Hopefully the Characters will take the hint and head for Asgard.

As it turns out, the rumors are *lies.* The Aesir pay agents to wander the land spreading these rumors to entice people to Asgard. Once they get there, they will find there is no work, but there is lots of gambling to be done. The Aesir will do almost anything to bring in customers.

As luck would have it, the PCs will arrive at Asgard exactly *one hour* before the Frost Giants surround the place. After an initial disappointment (and a round of free drinks to cheer them up), they will find that there really is work after all. Frigga wants to hire them to retrieve Robyn. She will make it clear that they are to come back with Robyn, or not come back at all.

1.5 Event: Be Prepared

The goal of the Characters is to return Robyn to Asgard within ***two weeks*** — before Odin returns from his fishing trip. Doing so will make the Characters heroes among the Aesir — at least to those few who are in on what will have transpired.

Olga will demand to go on the rescue mission with the Characters, since Robyn was her charge; she feels guilty for what has happened.

Five Aesir, close friends of Sven and casino bouncers by profession, will volunteer to join the Characters' party. They are **Sven, Svein, Sver, Sigurd** and **Olaf.** (See their descriptions in the Main Characters section.)

Frigga will feed, clothe, and outfit the Characters, giving them anything they politely ask for — within reason. Thus they should be well equipped to face the dangers ahead. They will be wined and dined at 'Baldur's Buffet', the plush revolving restaurant atop the highest tower in Asgard, given the chance to take in an opera (if any of them want to sit and listen while large chain-mailed women scream at the top of their lungs), and be handed a bag full of tokens for playing the slots and tables.

Characters who choose to get a good nights sleep will be in a much better shape for the task they must undertake the next day.

Part 2
The Adventure Begins

2.1 Event: The Characters Make a Narrow Escape

There seems to be only one way out of Asgard, and that is through the Frost Giant horde encircling the walled island-city.

After the Characters are gathered together at the crack of noon the morning after meeting with Frigga, they will be given a ***tour of the city battlements.*** From there they have an excellent view of the massive forces of the enemy camped in the plains beyond the river. The Frost Giants are an especially nasty bunch. They stand on the far bank of the river and yell rude taunting expressions at the walls of Asgard. It won't take a brain surgeon to figure out that engaging the Frost Giants directly offers little more than a quick trip to the morgue. However, it will take a great amount of convincing to get the young, eager, and not terribly bright Aesir to see it that way.

As the party looks on, a small company of eight Aesir — armed to the teeth — in response to jeers by the Frosties, will lower themselves down the wall on ropes, swim the river, and proceed to lose their lives shortly thereafter upon engaging the enemy. Describe this in detail so that at first the event lifts the spirits of the PCs, and then as the Aesir are dispatched — with lots of loud death-wails, and moans of sympathy from the crowd assembled on the walls — the PCs become convinced that there must be another, safer way out of the walled city.

There is hope. During the deliberations a Dwarvish servant, **Savvy,** has been watching the PCs. He has heard of the Characters and their

quest, but his real concern is for **Olga.** He knows she is determined to go along, and for her sake, he will tell the PCs about a secret alternate exit from Asgard. Savvy will introduce himself (as **'Thavy'** — he has an incurable lisp and pronounces the letter 's' as a 'th') to the PCs, and arrange to talk to them when their Aesir companions aren't around.

Savvy will tell of an 'ancient' Dwarvish smugglers' tunnel built into the main kitchen. Its entrance is hidden behind a stack of large crates. Savvy will ask the PCs not reveal the source of their information, or the existence of the tunnel to anyone. Most of the kitchen staff are Dwarves, and will busily go about their work, ignoring the party. When they think no-one is looking, they spit into the food they're preparing.

The PCs will have to figure out some way to get their Aesir companions through the tunnel without letting them know what it is normally used for. This should not be too difficult, since the Aesir are far more enthusiastic than intelligent and will accept practically any explanation.

The tunnel is built for Dwarves, and anyone taller than a Dwarf will have to crawl. The passage leads down and under the walls of Asgard, and emerges a short distance downstream, just past the besieging Frost Giants. At the exit is a small sheltered dock that has a large row-boat tied up to it.

If the PCs are especially nice, or if there is an attractive female Dwarf in the party, Savvy will lead the party through the passage. As Savvy leaves the Characters he will pull from under his tunic and hand over a **sack** containing a **dozen** large **oatmeal cookies** and **sandwiches** from the kitchen. The cookies ***heal magically*** when consumed (1 Health Point per bite; maximum **1d10 HP per cookie**).

The tunnel is the best way for the Characters to leave Asgard. The only alternative is to jump off the castle battlements into the river and float downstream under a hail of arrows from the Frost Giants on the bank. If, for some reason, the PCs choose this option, they will be unable to take any heavy equipment, including armor, and almost all of them are likely to be wounded (and some of the Aesir killed) during the trip.

2.2 Event: The Trip Downstream

Regardless of whether the PCs swim or row down the river Ifing, eventually they'll be rushing southward in a fast-flowing current. The river flows through a gorge, giving the Characters no chance to stop and/or leave the boat. Make this as long and as seemingly dangerous as you like.

Shortly after leaving the walls of Asgard behind, the PCs will have to pass under a high bridge across the gorge. A sign on the bridge says '**Max. Weight: 48 Frost Giants**'. A large number of Frost Giants (more than 48) have gathered on the bridge, and will try to drop boulders on the party as they float underneath. They will also yell taunts and fire ice-arrows at the party from atop the gorge cliffs. Have one of the Aesir, **Olaf,** ***killed*** by rocks or arrows just so the PCs know that the Frost Giants mean business.

Just as the Characters pass beneath the bridge, it will collapse and plunge all the Frosties (as the Aesir call them) into the drink a short distance behind their boat. When the Frosties hit the water, it will bubble and steam; a hissing sound will mingle with their screams as they *melt.*

The boat will become swamped, and the PCs will have to bail to avoid sinking. The Aesir, overcome with grief, will want to sing **Olaf's death-chant** "**Oo-laaffff, Oooo-laaffff**," etc. The PCs will have to convince them that now is the time for bailing — death chants can wait for later.

Shortly thereafter the boat will encounter *rapids.* Have the boat avoid a few large rocks and plunge over a few cascades — then scare the wits out of the Characters by having the boat wack a gigantic boulder. The impact will be strong enough for the boat to develop a *leak.* The boat cannot be bailed fast enough and will *sink* in an area so shallow that even those who can't swim can wade ashore against the current.

This is the only area along the gorge that the PCs can go ashore. It's a flat shelf of rock on the west bank of the river, with a narrow trail leading to the top of the cliff. A small skiff with its sail down is tied up at the ledge.

If the party fails to make for the shore here, the current will eventually carry them over a **60' [18 m] waterfall.** They will be battered and lose their equipment along with another Aesir. The remaining Aesir will become suspicious of the PCs, since even to their intellects going over a large waterfall is not a good idea. At the base of the falls on the west bank is another long and narrow path leading to the top of the gorge.

PART 3
HOT ON THE TRAIL

3.1 Event: A Tisket, a Tasket, a Green & Yellow Basket...

By coincidence, the small skiff happens to be the craft appropriated by Sven to transport he and Robyn to their picnic site. An Aesir will recognize the boat as belonging to **Aegir's Boat Rental,** located in Asgard. A path winds up through the gorge and footprints in the dirt will indicate that recently two people (Robyn and Sven) walked along it.

At the top of the cliff, all paths lead to a beautiful meadow abloom with huge flowers of many colors. **Sver** will immediately begin to suffer from hayfever: ***sniffling, watery eyes, sneezing.*** He will not complain, but his condition will progressively worsen. If he remains in the area for more than ***half-an-hour*** he will be incapacitated by loud, uncontrollable sneezing.

In a small clearing there are the accoutrements of a picnic strewn about: a red-and-white checkered blanket, a large green and yellow wicker basket, assorted cold cuts, bread, wine, salt, cheese, and a jar of Gray Poupon. The Aesir will immediately comment on the high quality of the remaining food and begin to make themselves lunch, oblivious to the evidence of a disruption to the lovers' outing and an ensuing scuffle.

Svein will note a *residue of cold in the air,* a clear sign that Frost Giants ruined the picnic. The other Aesir will comment and agree on how vile Frost Giants are, and settle in for a lunch break, so as not to waste the food.

If the party looks for a trail they will find that not far from the clearing the ***outline of an Aesir-size body impressed in the tall grass*** of the glade. In the grass around the impression can be found an assortment of ***playing cards*** (the backs of these cards will identify them as those used at The Runes casino, and likely to be carried by Sven). **Sigurd** will comment: "**Ah, it looks like Sven is now playing vithout a full deck!**"

A bit more scouting about will turn up the wet *footprints* of at least *three large humanoids* and the imprints of the feet of a *smaller person* as they were dragged off along a trail to the southwest.

Regardless of whether or not the PCs request that the party press on, they will presently hear an approaching sound, not unlike that of a hundred cats having their necks wrung. The Aesir will become alert and suggest the party move on immediately. If the party hesitates, they will hear the sound of drumming, the tooting of horns, and the crashing of many feet through the grass from the south. There, a long thin trail of huge red tartan bodies bearing colorful pennants on pikes can be seen marching through the tall grass.

"**Army Ants! Vat is ve going to doo?**" **Svein** will yell. The Aesir will await the PCs' instructions. If asked about the ants, they will say that if they remain they'll be stomped as the ants march through, stripping everything, including the clothing of anyone in their way.

If the party hasn't established a firm course, **Sigurd** will suggest taking the *path to the west,* where he suspects the Frost Giants have taken Robyn. If the party attempts to return east, they will quickly find that the ants have blocked their trail. Thus, their only route is the westward path.



3.2 Event: Remains of the Day

As the party winds westward they will enter a ***wooded area.*** Shortly they will discover a ***massive arm*** laying across the path. Then, they will discover a leg, a foot, a hand, and assorted other parts, all belonging to an ex-Frost Giant. There will be lots of ***gooey white blood*** about, once frozen and now melting into a gelatinous ooze.

Sver will touch the wrist of the arm as though checking for a pulse and announce "**The body's cold**." **Sven** will tersely reply: "**Of course its cold, it belonged to a Frost Giant you idiot**." Further insults and exchanges between the Aesir may follow.

The *head* of the Frost Giant will be found nearby with an annoyed expression on its face. A card will be found stuck in its mouth: the *Jack of Hearts.* "**Look, Sven's left his calling card**," **Sigurd** will announce. The Aesir will make comments of regret that they weren't there to make the kill.

Thus the party will be assured that they are on the right trail and that Sven is making progress. The Aesir will become more enthusiastic about the mission. After all, one of their friends has killed a Frostie.

3.3 Encounter: A Sticky Situation

The journey will eventually lead the party through a ***hilly country.*** They will travel several miles northwest, occasionally noticing signs of the passage of Sven and/or the Frost Giants. Then they will hear the ***battle roar*** of a Frost Giant and the distant clashing of steel coming from over the hill before them. If they venture to the top of the hill they will see in the valley below a ***ring of brightly colored standing stones.*** Moving among the day-glow stones is **Sven,** locked in mortal combat with the two Frost Giants, **Sned** and **Bru-ha-har.** Robyn is nowhere to be seen. Another attack roar is heard and a third Frost Giant, **Ferd,** emerges from the scrubby woods to the north at full run. In seconds he will be able to join in the fray.

At the sight of Sven's plight the faces of the Aesir will turn red, their eyes bulge, and their mouths will foam in berserker fury. No words uttered will be able to calm this madness as they plunge down the hill toward the Frost Giants. As soon as the Frosties see that they no longer have superior numbers, they will turn and *run away*. The Aesir can catch them — but only if the PCs are actively helping — Frost Giants have never won any medals as sprinters. If caught, the Frost Giants will beg nauseatingly for mercy, and then try to escape the first chance they get.

To save the life of any captured Frostie, a PC will have to act fast; otherwise the Aesir will kill all three. If the Aesir can be persuaded to let one or more live, they'll be someone to question. Regardless, **Sven** (Robyn's boyfriend) will survive the combat with only a few flesh wounds.

3.3.a Area: The Gummy Stones

The Gummy Stones, large translucent rainbow-colored megaliths set in a ring (much like Stonehenge), will serve as an combat obstacle. The ring is no longer complete: several Stones have been partially or totally destroyed over the centuries.

The Gummy Stones are *soft* and very *sticky.* Anything or anyone that comes into contact with a Gummy Stone will become ***stuck.*** To get free, a Character will have to make a **Strength Roll.** If the Character fails they will be held fast by the gooey substance. A Character may attempt a Strength Roll ***once each round.*** A **Critical Failure** will result in the person or item becoming so stuck that they will not be able to get free without assistance. Treat the stuck Character like an inanimate object. The person trying to free them must make a **Strength Roll.**

Brute strength is not the only way out of this dilemma. A curious or quick-witted Character may discover that the Gummy Stones are ***edible!*** Each fluorescent color represents a unique flavor experience: feel free to improvise here. Thus, they can ***eat their way free.*** Such heroic devouring will take **1d10 minutes per limb, body area or item stuck.** Of course, once freed the Character will likely develop a heroic tummy ache to match, and possibly severe dental problems — especially if they fail to floss.

3.3.b Plot Option: A Frost Giant Spills the Beans

If the PCs have the opportunity to question one or more Frost Giants, the Giants will talk with very little persuasion, and tell the following story:

"We was told to grab da Elvish brat and bring her here. Dere's dis cave over dere. We wuz supposed to bring her to da other end, to dis ledge. Dis Dark and Terrible Lord is waitin' dere. We'd know who he wuz, cuz he'd be… well, dark and terrible… and dressed in black. Oh yeah, and he's got a rose in his lapel.

"Anyways, we wuz going through da cave, we heard dis loud groaning noise dat got louder all da time. I weren't ascared, but everyone else was. So like da trooper I is, I tells 'em I wuz goin' back for reinforcements, like. But dose dummies all wanted to come back wid me. But as we was discussin' the issue dis ting comes out of da darkness and takes a bite outta Snorf, in fact so much, dat dere wuzn't much o' Snorf left.

"Da ting was big, and real ugly. So, I decides to circle around da ting and attack it from behind. And all dis time dat Elvish brat was scratching me with her fingernails. Plus, dose other guys keeps bumpin' inta me. In all da confusion, da dame gets away from me.

"Somehow I ends up out here. I see lover boy dere tracking us all alone out here, so I waits till one of the other guys shows up, and we decides to get him. And we woulda too, if only youse guys hadn't come along!

"Dere's more guys in da cave. Dey'll get da Elvish kid to the Dark and Terrible Lord guy, of dat youse can be sure."

If the party pushes the captive(s) for any additional information, invent and embellish any wild tales you choose.

The party will now know the *last known location of Robyn,* and of the involvement of some *Dark and Terrible Lord* in the plot. None of the captured Frost Giants know who the Dark and Terrible Lord is, but the Aesir, if asked, will speculate and argue about his identity, naming some infamous and shadowy figures, like "**Bob, Lord of Evil**," or "**Mort the Nasty Necromancer**," or "**Cronak the Vile**," or "**Aural Popoff the Bogus**," even "**that guy, you know, the tall one with the thingy, sort of?**"

No Aesir will mention Loki. If any of the players who are up on their Nordic mythology ask about Loki (Odin's oath-brother), the Aesir will reply "**No, I don't tink so. Lord Loki is an OK guy vith us because he always stops to talk vith us bouncers and buys us drinks**."

If after talking the party *kills* the Frost Giant instead of setting him free, have them suffer some sort of 'bad luck' in their next encounter.

3.3.c Plot Option: A Tragic Waste of Life

If the party kills all three Frost Giants, they could rely on **Sven,** Robyn's boyfriend. He is an excellent tracker, and will be able to lead the party to the place where he saw the Frost Giants take Robyn: a large cave in an ebony cliff about half a mile to the north. Throughout the rest of the adventure, he will constantly urge the PCs to hurry. He is not in awe of the Characters as are the rest of the Aesir; he was not in Asgard when they arrived, and he is extremely worried about Robyn's safety.

If any of the Characters have Tracking Skills, they will be able to easily track the Frosties and Robyn to the cave entrance.

3.4 Area: The Cave of Confusion

One way or another, the Characters will eventually find themselves facing the **Cliff of Darkness** and in its center, looking like the open maw of some vile screaming beast, a large cave**.** The Cave of Confusion is a natural cave, full of many branching tunnels with ceilings of varying heights. Outside is a weathered sign, **'THIS WAY TO LOVERS' LEAP',** indicating that somewhere through the tunnel is a popular lookout point called Lovers' Leap. Many a tortured romance is rumored to have ended here.

The cave consists of winding and branching tunnels which vary in altitude and contain several distinct 'areas'. They're inhabited by a strange old coot named **Herman the Hermit,** and a monstrous slug with a toothache named **Berni.** Once in the cave, the party will hear the echoes of Berni's moaning and notice his smelly, slimy, slippery trail everywhere.

Provided below is the Random Tunnel Segment & Encounter Table. It can be used to determine the layout of the cave and the PCs' Encounters; otherwise, simply make up passages as you go along. So that you can reroll or invent tunnel stuff as you go along, try to stay a few seconds ahead of what you've described to your players. Don't let the PCs have the same encounter more than once. If they want, your players can draw a rough map as they travel.

Random Tunnel Segment & Encounter Table (Roll 1d100)

No. Rolled	Tunnel Directions & Encounters in the Cave of Confusion
1 – 10	Tunnel continues straight and remains level.
11 – 12	Tunnel continues straight and angles (roll 1d10: 1–5 up, 6–10 down).
13 – 23	Tunnel turns right and remains level.
24 – 25	Tunnel turns right and angles (roll 1d10: 1–5 up, 6–10 down).
26 – 36	Tunnel turns left and remains level.
37 – 38	Tunnel turns left and angles (roll 1d10: 1–5 up, 6–10 down).
39 – 43	Tunnel forks (Y: right & left) and remains level.
44 – 48	Tunnel crosses another (+: 90˚) and remains level.
49 – 54	Area: The Garden of Magic Mushrooms.
55 – 62	Area: The Waters of Well-Being.
63 – 65	Area: The Waiting Room of Doom.
66 – 70	Area: The dead-end tunnel leading to the Hideout of Herman the Hermit.
71 – 75	Encounter: A Hermit Named Herman; steps out from around corner.
76 – 78	Encounter: Issam the Frost Giant; steps out from around corner.
79 – 80	Encounter: Ulam the Frost Giant; steps out from around corner.
81 – 95	Encounter: Berni the Slug; PCs stumble around a corner into his area.
96 – 100	Area: the passage winds up and out on to the ledge of Lovers' Leap.

For each tunnel segment: **length** is **1d100' [30.5 m]** and **width** is **1d10' [3 m]** wide (or choose whatever length and width you want before rolling again). Don't permit an Encounter for the ***first* 3** tunnel sections. If you roll a result that is *impossible* or *undesirable,* roll again or choose another route. Whenever they encounter a **Y** or **+** tunnel segment, let them hear distant voices from different directions (e.g., Berni moaning; **Herman** saying "**Oh dear**…"; Issam saying "**Ulam… is dat you?**")

If the PCs travel **5 to 10** tunnel segments ***without seeing anything,*** let them discover an **Area** (choose one). A tunnel will pass by or through any Area encountered. The players need not see every Area or Encounter; if things begin to drag, simply let them notice the daylight shining down the slimy passage winding up to Lovers Leap.

Some descriptive cave features you can throw in: a) **Ceiling:** stalactites; b) **Floor:** stalagmites, pit, pothole, pool, columns; c) **Walls:** ledges, flowstone; d) **Any Surface:** slimy, slippery, wet, irregular, rough, rocky, natural phosphorescent illumination, sticky film; e) **Habitation Signs:** bones, waste, remains, eggs, pods, larvae, nest, cobwebs, bodily fluid, moss, plants, markings/signs, smell of creature, bats, lizards, insects.

3.4.a Plot Option: Tracking Skill Results

As they enter the cave, a PC with Tracking Skill might be able to pick out an assortment of trails on the floor. A successful **Tracking Skill Roll** is required. (If no PC is capable of Tracking, let **Sven** have the skill.) Once having successfully made a Tracking Roll, they must then roll **1d100** to determine *which set of tracks* they have found and where they lead:

☞ If **1 to 40** is rolled: The easiest to detect are the damp footprints of the **Frost Giants** who entered the cave with Robyn. If the PCs follow these, they wind about **2000' [610 m]** before they end at the pitiful *melting remains* of 4 Frosties. If they search again from here, they have a chance of seeing the tracks of either **Issam (60%)** or **Ulam (40%).**

☞ If **41 to 70** is rolled: A more difficult set of tracks are **Robyn's.** Following these will lead the party through the winding tunnels and eventually up towards **Lovers' Leap.**

☞ If **71 to 100** is rolled: The last set of tracks are *faint* and look like they are made by someone trying to avoid detection. They belong to **Herman the Hermit** (someone the PCs do not yet know about), who has been caught out of his hidden domicile collecting magic mushrooms and is currently trying to sneak back home unseen.

If they follow these roll **1d100: 1 to 20:** the tracks lead to the **Garden of Magic Mushrooms**; **21 to 40:** the tracks lead to the **Waters of Well-Being**; **41 to 50:** the tracks lead to the **Waiting Room of Doom**; **51 to 100:** the tracks lead to the dead-end entrance to Herman's hideout.

Once the PCs choose to follow a set of tracks, they may search for and switch to another set at any time. To do so, a PC must first make a new Tracking Skill Roll to detect those tracks. Make them roll again if they encounter Berni, or any area where the tracks are obscured.

3.4.b Area: The Garden of Magic Mushrooms

These **3" [8 cm]** to **6" [15 cm]** wide fungi are Herman's favorite snack. Biting into one of these babies will send a PC into metaphysical orbit for **1d10 minutes.** They will not be able to do anything other than to mumble phrases like "**Wow, man, look at those crazy sounds**…."

3.4.c Area: The Waters of Well-Being

This **10' [3 m]** wide pool of cool black liquid is the home of a colony of ***blind albino salamanders.*** When entering the area each Character will have to make a **Dexterity Roll** to avoid *slipping* on the slimy rocks and plunging down the incline into the freezing spring. Anyone *drinking* of the waters will be ***healed of all wounds and ailments.*** Any item submerged will come out sparkling ***clean.***

3.4.d Area: The Waiting Room of Doom

This **15' x 15' [4.6 x 4.6 m]** area looks like a typical doctor's waiting room. Included are an assortment of chrome and vinyl couches, low tables, out-of-date magazines (*Elvish Country Home*, *Færie Geographica*, *Playtroll*), and potted plastic plants. Muzak permeates the air. Sitting are **6 Dark and Terrible Lords,** each of whom is dressed in his or her own unique black outfit (most have capes and hats). Each is reading a magazine. Each Dark and Terrible Lord has a flower in his lapel, but *none* of them are *roses.* There are *three empty chairs* (not together). If someone enters the room and tries to engage any of the Dark Lords in conversation they all will turn to the speaker and will offer one of two replies: "**We're only here to read the magazines**," or "**These articles are really quite good**."



If any hostile actions are attempted toward a Dark Lord, all will rise, *raise their arms*, and *blackness will fill the room* ***blinding*** the Characters and *insane laughter* will be heard receding into the distance.

After **1d10 seconds** the darkness will dissipate and the Characters will be able to see the room, the magazines, but no Dark Lords (they will not return). If a PC looks through the magazines, let them find a travel article which profiles The Cliff of Darkness. If they read it, tell them whatever they want to know (your discretion) about Magic Mushrooms, Blind Salamanders, The Waters of Well-Being, and Lovers' Leap.

3.4.e Area: The Hideout of Herman the Hermit

The *secret entrance* is located in a dead-end passage. However, anyone walking down this tunnel will realize that there must be an doorway of some kind due to the ***welcome mat*** in front of the stone wall.

If the Characters try to employ any **Detection** skills, they will determine that there is in fact a door here. The noise they make will get Herman's attention. They will hear from the other side of the door: "**Shoo, go away! There's no-one home**."

If a PC knocks on the wall, **Herman** will answer by shifting a rock at eye level and asking "**Who is it? Are you monsters come to kill me?**" If the PCs reply in the negative, Herman will warm up and invite them in.

Herman's Apartments

Herman's home is divided into three areas: a sunken living room, a small kitchenette, and a bedroom. It is full of all sorts of odd objects reflecting the culture of the 1960's.

The **living room** contains a bean bag couch, a fish chair, macrame hangings, a huge lava lamp, a Beatle wig on a bust of Timothy Leary, and a surfboard (autographed by Brian Wilson). The walls are lined with the mounted heads of the various monsters that Herman has slain during his many years as a monster hunter. There are over 30 heads, and they range from the forlorn to the grotesque. They all have one thing in common, however. Their ***eyes follow Herman*** as he moves about the room. Herman will take no notice of this, and if asked, will deny that it happens. He won't go into detail about just how he conquered the monsters and took their heads, feigning modesty and a desire leave the past behind. His monster hunting equipment is piled haphazardly in a corner (see Herman's Possessions).

The **kitchenette** has a small fireplace, a couple of cookpots, and a number of other utensils. There is a bowl of blind salamanders in one corner, and a bowl of mushrooms in the other. The cupboards are full of herbs, tea, and mushrooms (see **3.4.b** The Garden of Magic Mushrooms).

A beaded curtain separates Herman's bedroom from the living room. The **bedroom** contains a dirty futon, a Nehru jacket hung on a hook, a black light, and tattered Che Guevarra and 'Keep on Trucking' posters.

If asked where he got all these things, Herman will say that he simply picked them up on his travels; they fit his sense of decor.

Herman's Possessions

In a corner of the living room are the tarnished tokens of his former profession: a chainmail byrnie, a metal helmet, greaves, and bracers. He also has a **magical sword** which not only can ***speak,*** but has an ***enthusiastic personality!*** (see below). Herman uses none of these things now — he will gladly give them away to anyone who politely requests them.

Herman's Magical Sword: Runefeld

If a PC picks up the magic sword, they will find that it is dying for a good fight. In a loud, squeaky voice, **Runefeld** exhorts its owner with praise and to "**Carve 'em into bits!**," "**Stick 'em in the spleen!**," or "**Drench me in blood!**," making it difficult for the sword's user to sneak up on anyone. Putting the sword back in its scabbard will muffle the voice, not drown it out. The sword will only shut up if ordered; occasionally it must be *threatened* (with being melted down, banged against a rock, etc.). The sword has no other magical capabilities whatsoever.

Herman's Helmet: The Helm of Blatant Obviousness

This was a favorite of Herman's. He rather enjoyed the attention when he was a dashing young monster slayer. (See description, page **106**.)

3.4.f Encounter Option: A Hermit Named Herman

Herman is a retired monster exterminator. Monsters are not as dumb as is commonly thought. They don't take kindly to being hunted and killed; they hold grudges. The monsters began hunting Herman. This proved too much; he lost his edge. No longer could he lead parties into monster infested swamps, crypts of living corpses, or haunted keeps. Paranoia consumed him. He adopted a quieter life as a Hermit. He's been hiding out in his cavern abode for years — safe, until recently, when a monster (Berni) shambled into the tunnels. Now he's certain the monster is hunting him and lives in constant fear of discovery.

Use Herman as a device to strike fear into the hearts of the PCs, waste their time, and draw the attentions of Berni to them — though Herman will begin talking at a whisper, his terrified ravings about the monster(s) of the caverns will rise until he is screaming in panic.

If the PCs are nice to Herman, he will show them to his home, where he'll offer a snack of tea and blind salamanders. This will give the PCs the opportunity to claim some of Herman's belongings if they so desire. This will make the Aesir, especially Sven (Robyn's boyfriend) antsy, because with every second, Robyn may be getting further away. (This doesn't really matter of course; time it so that Robyn always gets to the outer ledge just before the party, no matter how long they take).

If the PCs take Herman's worries seriously, he will *guide* them through his secret passages — the shortest route to Lovers' Leap. At the first sign of trouble he will panic and flee, leaving the party behind.

If the PCs don't acknowledge Herman's fears (certainly the Aesir will laugh at his paranoia about death), he'll *run off in a blind panic* into the darkness screaming warnings such as "**It waits in dark corners**…."

3.4.g Encounter Option: The Frostie Flakes

Two Frost Giants, **Issam** and **Ulam,** wander the tunnels separately searching for each other and calling out the other's name. They're more terrified of becoming Berni's dessert than concerned about finding the Princess. Either may be encountered. Clearly outnumbered, the Frost Giant will run away unless backed into a corner. If he runs, the Frostie will flee down tunnels at random (GM choice; but never toward the exit). If cornered and given no alternative but to fight for his life, the other Frostie will appear to the rear of the party in the round immediately following the first blow struck, and attack the party to save his brother.

If either Issam or Ulam are captured, they will try to barter for their lives by offering to lead the party to the cave exit. If while leading the party they run into Berni, the Frosties will run away in fear.

If asked, they will have the same basic tale to tell as the Frost Giant's in Plot Option **3.3.a.** The only difference is that they stayed in the cave to search for Robyn rather than exit and attack Sven. The Aesir, of course, will want to chop them into steak tartare.

3.4.h Encounter Option: Berni the Giant Slug

Berni moans and groans continually due to his toothache; as the party approaches his moans will seem louder and more menacing.

Unless quickly restrained, the Aesir will attack Berni on sight. Berni will devour at least one of his attackers within a few seconds of being struck (but never Sven, Robyn's boyfriend). Eventually Berni will retreat, leaving extra slime behind that will force anyone giving chase to make a **Dexterity Roll** each round or *slip* and fall.

If the PCs insist on pursuit they can eventually kill Berni, but only at the cost of being wounded and thoroughly slimed. (Until they have an opportunity to have a long hot shower with plenty of industrial strength soap, or fall into the **Waters of Well-Being**, the Characters will stink noticeably for the rest of the adventure).

If instead the PCs try talking to Berni, and help him with his dental problem, he'll happily *lead* them to Lovers' Leap. If the Characters are friendly, but unable to help Berni with his tooth, Berni will *tell* them what direction to go to find the exit, but will not lead them there.

3.4.i Area: Lovers' Leap

Other than the entrance, there is only one other exit from the cave, at the far end of the complex, through several slowly rising passages. It opens onto a **40' [12 m]** ledge in the side of the mountain, surrounded by a **1000' [305 m]** drop. A small sign indicates that this is **LOVERS' LEAP.** Robyn will find her way there *alone,* and encounter **Loki;** all this while the adventurers are searching the caverns below.

3.5 Event: Loki Seizes the Moment... & Robyn Too!

Regardless of what happens in the tunnels, Robyn will reach the cave exit, Lovers' Leap, a few minutes before the first of the rescue party members. There she will meet Loki in his dark and terrible Lord aspect. He will be dressed all in black, and have a red rose in his lapel.

By this time, the party will have gotten past all the other barriers, and be ***within earshot of the cave exit.*** The final stretch of the tunnel will include a steep grade upward, with a cool breeze and light cascading down from outside. There, they will ***hear Robyn cry out*** in distress "**Let go of me you cad. What do you think you're you doing? Help! Someone help!**" A deep male voice will then utter the following chant:

> *"Body change und grow in size — grant me vings and dark-sight eyes, claws to grasp with razor talon — let mine form become a dragon."*

Sven (the boyfriend) will push forward toward the voices. If the PCs choose to rush to the rescue, they will be slowed by the incline of the tunnel leading to the cave exit, which is narrow and *slimy* (require **Dexterity Rolls** by all to avoid slipping). The footing is treacherous enough so that even the most dextrous Character will not be able to reach the outside until Loki's transformation spell has taken effect.

Once the Characters can see the ledge they will witness the following: a giant-sized humanoid figure is in the process of transforming into a **60' [18 m] neon pink dragon** with yellow eyes. The arm clutching the Elvish Princess about her waist changes into a massive claw as she screams and writhes. The dragon will look down at itself in disgust for a moment and exclaim: "**Damn, I forgot the color again. I hate pink!**"

The dragon, now fully formed, will flap its massive wings and propel itself and Robyn into the air. The Characters have but seconds to act. There is not enough time to run the distance to the figures; only missile weapons have a chance of striking the dragon. It will be possible for any PC to fire off *one shot* with a chance of striking the dragon. If a PC prepares to fire a missile at the dragon **Sven** will yell, "**Vait, idiot, you'll hit Robyn!**" None of the Aesir will shoot. They listen to Sven.

If any PC is foolish enough to fire a missile, and *misses* the dragon, the first missed shot will hit **Robyn** with a glancing blow. (Robyn will remember this offense, and when finally rescued, will slap the Character and scold them for their stupidity. Sven might punch them immediately).

If the missile *hits* the dragon, **Loki** will say "**Ouch... that hurt!**" and releases Robyn, who will scream as she plunges into the abyss below the ledge, but Loki will dive and catch her, then fly off mumbling in pain.

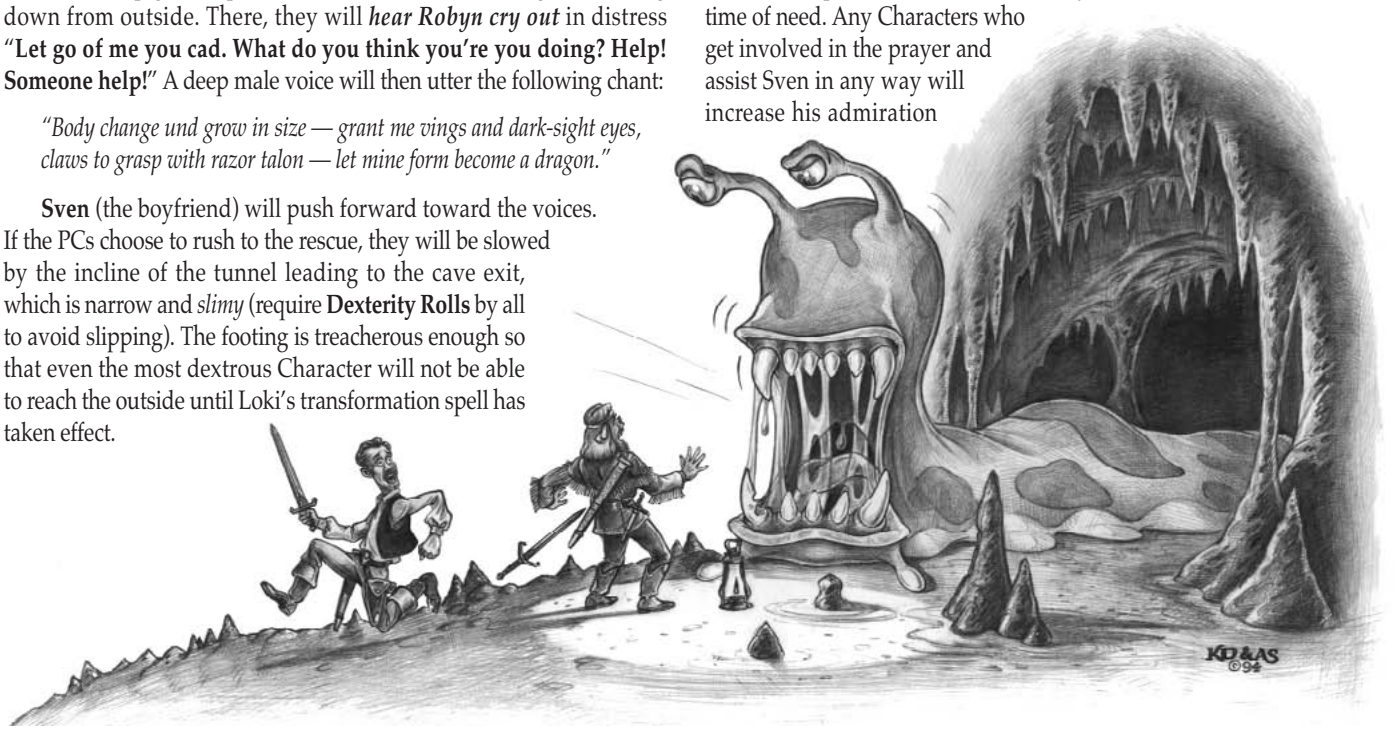
At this point, the Characters will be stranded on a high mountain ledge, with the object of their quest dwindling in the distance. The dragon will make one circle above them out of missile range and with a deep laugh say: "**So long suckers... looks like you crapped out! Ha, ha, ha**...."

The PCs are covered with smelly slug slime from their desperate scramble to the exit, and if any of them ate blind salamanders, they have severe *stomach aches.* If they didn't make friends with, or kill Berni, they will hear the moans and howls of the monster behind them. Is all lost?

3.6 Event: Sven Requests Aid, & a Price Must Be Paid

No, all is not lost. Though things seem pretty desperate, there is a solution at hand. **Sven**, Robyn's boyfriend, shouts, "**Ve must pursue that dragon! I vill call upon the Gods for assistance!**"

Sven will draw his sword, get down on his knees, and gazing up to the heavens plead to the elements of sky and wind to assist him in his time of need. Any Characters who get involved in the prayer and assist Sven in any way will increase his admiration



for them. Sven's Prayer will go something like this:

"O sky und vind, prey hear my plight;
mine own true love hast taken flight.
To her aid I vould go, if a vay could be found,
To deliver our party, avay from this ground.
Grant me a blessing, and don't take too long,
If help don't come soon, mine love vill be gone!"

Sven, who is noble in deed and true in heart, will have his prayer answered. Clouds will quickly gather, and take the form of a vast rocky terrain with a palace in the distance. In the sky above will appear the words, 'BUY VICTORY BONDS'. Suddenly, riding across this æthereal landscape mounted on white pegasi, will appear the three Valkyries (see description under Main Characters). They will stop just beyond the edge of the cliff, supported by cloud. The middle Valkyrie, **Aerial,** will speak:

"**Oh Brave Sven**…" (At this point the *other* Sven, not Robyn's boyfriend, will step forward, beaming). "**Not you, ze other Sven**." (Sulking, this Sven will step back).

"**Oh Brave Sven, ve haf heard your prayer. Ve are here to grant your vish. But, zere iz a price to be paid. Vun [1] of you must stay behind az our consort**" — the other two Valkyrie giggle and bat their eyes at the males in the party — "**ze rest vill fly on to your destination**."

Sven will immediately state that he couldn't possibly ask a comrade give up their freedom for any quest of his — it is too much to ask.

Sven will be cut off by the enthusiastic cries from his fellow Aesir: "**I'll go!**" and "**No, choose me**," etc. Just before the Aesir begin fighting over who gets to stay behind, the Aerial will say that they will choose who will stay. After a bit of discussion with her companions (and some giggling), they will settle on Sigurd. The others will look dejected and mutter things like "**Why him?**" and "**Sigurd always had a vay vith the vomen**" etc.

Imperiously, **Aerial** will request Sigurd "**Come**" to them. A cloud-stuff bridge will extend from where the Valkyrie are standing to the cliff ledge. With a broad smile, and a thumbs-up sign to the rest of the Aesir, he will confidently walk out on to the cloud. However, Aesir can't walk on clouds, and Sigurd will immediately plunge to his death, screaming as he falls. (There will be a very long scream, cut off abruptly).

Aerial will smile slightly and shrug; the other two will giggle, **Windy** will look down and say "**Oops**." The other Aesir will grow very quiet and then mumble "**Boy, glad they chose him**…" "**I *knew* it vas a trick**…"etc.

Aerial will speak: "**You haf paid ze price ve demanded. Behold, your sky steeds!**" Pointing with her spear into the distance, the party will see a flock of large, **silver-white winged fish** approach; *one for each party member.* Rather sheepishly, Aerial will say "**Sorry, but most of our Pegasi haf comm down vith ze flu.**" She will then reveal the name of each mount and inform the Characters that ***the name must be spoken with each command*** (choose as many as you need for the party): **Flipper, Shamu, Willy, Floppsy, Mopsy, Cottontail, Trigger, Silver, Squibbly, Moby, Charlie, Limpet, Wart,** and **Dick.**

With that, the Valkyries will smile seductively, and giggling, ride away into the mist. The clouds will disperse. The flying fish will land on the ledge, gasping wildly, and wait for the party to mount up.

After the entire party mounts up, with a mighty grunt the fish will take to the sky, and flop off in the direction that the pink dragon took. Occasionally the Characters will catch brief glimpses of the dragon far ahead of them through the clouds. Then they will lose sight of the great dragon and will have to rely on their mounts to find the way.

PART 4
THE CLIMAX — CASTLE ICEPEAK

4.1 Encounter: The Castle of the Drow Prince

The ride on the flying fish will take a couple of hours. It's not an uncomfortable ride by any means, but the Characters will have to hold on tight — fish tend to be a bit slippery. Occasionally they will fly over small hamlets whose citizens will immediately run into their homes and emerge with giant nets propelled by catapults and kites with fishing hooks. Though there are some near misses, the fish are moving too fast to be caught.

As they fly northeast, the land will become more mountainous and inhospitable. The air will grow cold and the wind will howl and bite into exposed flesh. In the distance, beyond a range of impassable sharp-cragged mountains, the PCs will spy a tall spire of bare rock rising out of the frozen wasteland. Perched atop this forbidding peak is a massive keep, the color of hot coals. Down one of its walls spews a cascade of water, which flows down the mountain to a small lake in the valley below.

The flying fish will dive straight for the lake plunging beneath the waters at full speed (with the Aesir screaming in protest). Once submerged, the flying fish dissipate into nothingness. The Characters are left to emerge unhurt, but dripping, from the shallows. They will immediately notice sailboats of various sizes and designs docked at a nearby pier and a gravel road leading up to the blood-red castle.

The Aesir will recognize the fortress as **Castle Icepeak,** home of a clan of Dwarves (they are soon to be surprised). However, something about it looks unwelcoming, much like the land it overlooks. Definitely a low-rent district. The Aesir wonder why the Dwarves would kidnap Robyn.

Now the party must decide how to get into Castle Icepeak and rescue Princess Robyn. The Aesir, needless to say, are all for a frontal assault, storming the castle and slaying everyone, or dying bravely in the attempt. (Which is just what will happen if the party follows their plan).

4.2 Event: Entering Castle Icepeak

From the front, Castle Icepeak appears virtually impregnable. A wide gravel path leads up to a set of massive reinforced double doors, set in a gatehouse with a **100' [30 m]** high wall topped with battlements. The towers are of various sizes and rise up to the clouds. There are windows, but none are less than **50' [15 m]** from the ground, and all visible are mere arrow slits. A narrow footpath winds around either side of the fortress to the back; the party will have to travel in single file along it.

Left of the front gate is a bell-pull labeled "**Ring Please**." A sign beside it says: "**Tradesmen to the Rear. No Soliciting. Bill Stickers Will be Prosecuted.**" Just below, someone has scrawled the words: "**Bill Stickers is innocent!**"

4.2.a Plot Option: The Frontal Approach

If the party ***rings the bell*** by pulling on the cord, they will immediately hear a blood curdling scream from the other side of the door; once for each pull on the cord. A moment later a thin slit will slide open in the door above them, and two green eyes set in a pale face will peer down. A raspy voice will query, "**Are you… the caterers?**"

This is a critical moment. If a quick wit in the party replies "**Yes**," the guard will say in a much friendlier and chatty voice "**You're here early**," and open the massive door. He has mistaken the party for the caterers who are to prepare the wedding feast and entertainment for the upcoming wedding of Prince Shojini and Princess Robyn. (The guard will tell the party these things only if asked). The guard will lead the party through the castle, into the **Kitchen** (Ground Floor: Room 18).

The Aesir will express surprise and concern at the appearance of the Drow in the castle. If asked about the Drow, the Aesir will claim that they are underwhelmed by their talents and claims to 'civilization'. They consider them to be just another type of wimpy Elf, only more militant.

4.2.b Plot Option: The Back Way

If the Characters choose to circle around to the *rear* of the castle, they will find a unassuming ***metal screen door*** with windows and a torn screen. A single guard stands behind it, looking out at the dramatic view, drinking a beer. When the guard hears the party's approach (and he will, the Aesir are not noted for being silent), he will step outside to investigate. He will pause, then ask in a gravely voice, "**Are you the caterers?**"

If a PC in the party answers "**Yes**," the result will be the same as in Option 4.2.a. If the ***guard is attacked*** before he can ask the question, he can be dislodged from the path, and pushed, much to his surprise, screaming into the beautiful view, and to his death (**30%** chance of alerting castle).

4.2.c Plot Option: Damn the Torpedoes, Full Speed Ahead!

If the party ***attacks the front door,*** they will soon find that nothing they carry with them will be powerful enough to dent it, let alone knock it down. (Siege engines are too large to fit in a backpack, and explosives are rather unpredictable on Murphy's World). In any case, this attack will arouse the castle against the party, and an overwhelming force of guards and attack walruses will assault the party. The Aesir will fight bravely, and take many Drow with them, but in the end, after one or two have been skewered (excluding Sven, Robyn's boyfriend — though you might find it convenient to kill the other Sven at this time), the rest will be ***captured.***

Anyone who tries to flee will be captured by lasso-wielding Drow on flying walruses. Once captured, the Characters will be escorted none-too-gently to Prison Cells (Dungeon: Room 7), and locked up. While it's all right to let a Character get a bit beat-up, damaged, or suffer embarrassment, there's no need to kill them — unless they *really* deserve it.

4.4 Seeking Princess Robyn

Once inside Castle Icepeak, the search for the Princess can begin.

4.4.a Encounter: Help From UGLI, the Dwarvish Underground

Once inside, the Characters will receive assistance from an unexpected source. Some of the Dwarves who work in the castle as slaves are members of the Dwarvish Resistance, a secret organization committed to overthrowing the Drow and reclaiming Castle Icepeak. (The castle was originally built by the ancestors of this local clan of Dwarves.)

These Dwarves belong to **UGLI,** the **Underground Guild for Labor Independence.** The Underground is desperate for allies, since they themselves lack the confidence and organizational skills to launch the Great Revolution and drive out the Drow. To the Dwarves, anyone who is an enemy of the Drow is a friend of theirs. When the Dwarves reveal their secret to the Characters, they will start by whispering: "**I'm UGLI**."

UGLI has eyes and ears throughout the castle. They know *everything*… well almost everything, that is going on. If the PCs ask a Dwarvish conspirator what is going on, the Dwarf will reply as follows:

"This Elvish Princess you're looking for was kidnapped by Frost Giants in the pay of Loki of Asgard. He brought her here to become the bride of Prince Shojini, the Drow usurper of this castle. In return, Shojini will send an army to help the Frost Giants take over Asgard. Loki will become the new ruler of Asgard, and distribute free drinks and chips to the Frost Giants and Drow! No betting shop, card game, slot machine, or Dwarf toss will be safe from his schemes. No one in the Great White North will be able to gamble without Loki taking his cut. Not being a gambler myself, I couldn't care less, but anything that hurts the Drow gives me a nice warm feeling inside.

"The Princess is supposed to be ***married*** *to Prince Shojini at* ***midnight, 9 hours from now,*** *in the* ***Pretty Good Hall.*** *The Great Hall is currently being renovated, or they'd use it for the wedding. Most of the guards are off changing into their best black armor, and there aren't too many outside her door. So if you're gonna get her, you'd better hurry!*

"When you've got her, come down to the kitchen. We've got this secret tunnel behind some crates. It will take you to the dock on the river, where you can steal a boat and get outta here. We'll help you as much as we can, but considering that the Drow are bigger than us, and better armed, and enjoy inflicting pain…ur… we can't offer too much.

"Follow me. I'll show you where they're holding Princess Robyn."

If the party is being led through Castle Icepeak by a Dwarf, there is a **10%** chance of running into **1 to 3 guards** with every *new corridor or room* entered. Just before they enter the Northwest Tower where the Princess's room is, the Dwarvish guide will wish the PCs luck and leave.

4.3.b Plot Option: Determining Who is UGLI

Whenever the Characters encounter a **new Dwarf** in the castle **roll 1d10**.

- If **1 to 3** is rolled, the Dwarf is a **member of UGLI.** It will be up to the Characters to determine this and gain their trust and assistance.
- If **4 to 9** is rolled, the Dwarf **knows nothing** of the organization and will try to get away from the Characters as quickly as possible. The Dwarf won't, however, reveal the Characters to the Drow.
- If **10** is rolled the Dwarf is a **Drow spy,** and will pretend to cooperate with the PCs. But as soon as they are alone, they'll sound the alarm.

4.3.c Plot Option: Alienating UGLI

If at any point the party kills or threatens a Dwarf with death or exposure to the Drow, they will get no help from that Dwarf or any others within earshot (unless that Dwarf is a known Drow collaborator).

Even though the Dwarves are helpful, if at any time the Drow see the Dwarves in the company of the Characters, the Dwarves will swear to their Drow masters that they were forced to help, and that they were going to warn the Drow just as soon as they had the chance, and that they are still loyal servants of the Drow, and so on ad nauseam. The Dwarves definitely believe in looking out for Number One.

Depending on how they get into the castle, the party will encounter UGLI under various circumstances, as detailed with room descriptions.

4.4.d Encounter Option: Unfriendly Advice

If the party alienates or ignores UGLI, they will have to capture and question a guard, or search the castle by themselves. Not all guards know the whereabouts of the Princess. Those that do won't reveal such information without a severe thrashing — even then they'll likely lie. A captured guard will direct Characters to the **Guards' Quarters** (Ground Floor: Room 21). If the Characters are wise to this ploy, the guard will try directing them to a smaller **Guard Room** (Roof: Room 54 or 55).

Unless the intruders are very subtle about their queries, their activities will attract the attention of the rest of the castle, and within a few minutes the entire party will be surrounded by a large number of guards. The Aesir will fight boldly, take some wounds and a few losses



(but not Robyn's lover Sven), then finally be captured along with the rest of the party. The survivors will be thrown in the Dungeon, where they will have the opportunity to try again with Dwarvish assistance.

4.4.e Plot Option: Searching Alone

If the party is searching for Robyn without any help, use the map of the castle provided to trace their route. Each time they enter a corridor or room, apply a **20%** chance that they encounter **1d10 guards.** If they fail to hide or run away, the majority of the guards will immediately attack and try to capture the Characters while one runs for assistance.

4.4.f Plot Option: Sounding the Alarm

A general alert may be sounded by tugging on one of the many woven cords descending from a hole in the false ceiling in any major room or at any intersection of corridors throughout the castle. A tug on the cord will result in an alarm which sounds like an *agonized scream.* The harder the tug, the longer and louder the scream. (The cords are attached to Dwarves imprisoned in the false ceiling in such a way as to cause them great pain when the cords are pulled. The Drow have a rather sick sense of humor.)

4.5 Event Option: Freedom and Revolution

Once Castle Icepeak belonged to the Dwarves. They built the castle out of the unique mountain stone which emitted a mild heat, providing inexpensive climate control for the structure. They resided at Castle Icepeak for generations and extended the structure as their numbers grew. The PCs may notice that the proportions of many things in the castle are better suited to a Dwarf than either a Human or Drow Elf.

A little over a year ago, the Dwarves were struck by a terrible flu; many of the old and weak succumbed and died. The deceased included the King and his young heir. Some speculated that the illness was supernatural in origin. Once the infection had nearly everyone in its grip, the Drow attacked. Few were able to offer any resistance; the Drow won an easy victory.

The leader of the Dwarvish resistance was a master smith named **Gump Lancet,** who was eventually captured by Prince Shojini. The Prince decided that Master Lancet was too dangerous to be made a martyr, so he hired a sorcerer to imprison him in a crystal. The oblong **4" x 3" [10 x 8 cm] golden crystal** was set into the tip of an **obsidian and gold 4' [1.2 m] tall scepter** which Prince Shojini has carried with him at all times ever since. It is his symbol of authority. The handle of the scepter is wound with duct tape so that the gold plating won't flake off. At the base is a small tarnished silver plaque labeled 'Women's Slo-Pitch Tournament Champions'. Shojini will never let the scepter out of his sight, and will fight *hard* before giving it up, no matter what the odds.

Though trapped inside the crystal, Master Lancet can *hear* and *witness* everything the Prince and his cronies do. Gump knows for certain that the illness which assaulted the Dwarves was magical in origin, and set upon them by the Drow.

By now most Dwarves have recovered — an occasional Dwarf may still be found with the sniffles and a stuffed up nose. However, they're demoralized and embarrassed by the loss of their home.

The crystal in the obsidian scepter is strongly ***resistant to magic.*** Only hours of laborious, intensive incantations and magical energy will release the Dwarven leader from his crystal prison. Either that, or dropping the sceptre. The crystal is very ***fragile*** and will *break* if the sceptre is smashed against something hard. If the crystal is smashed, in a puff of emerald smoke, Gump Lancet will be freed. Gump is very much on top of what has been going on in the castle. He will also be understandably upset at being trapped for so long. Thus, his first act will be to attempt to turn Prince Shojini into hamburger, if he can get at him. His second will be to raise the Dwarves of the castle into full rebellion against the Drow.

Gump's return will *inspire* the Dwarves (especially those of UGLI), and his assurance that their illness was caused by Drow magic will renew their confidence. With their health and self-confidence restored, the Dwarves will prove a match for the Drow and should have little trouble ousting them from their home. (The Drow are not really keen on fighting when the odds aren't seriously tilted in their favor).

If any of the PCs made nasty comments about Dwarves near the scepter, the imprisoned leader will hear those comments, and not think too highly of that particular Character once released.

In the confusion and battle caused by the Dwarvish leader's release, the PCs can choose to escape or help out the Dwarves. In either case, the Drow will be very busy attempting to put down the Dwarves, and will leave Robyn relatively unguarded. It is up to you as GM to decide just how successful the rebellion is. If the PCs get involved in a positive way, it may tip the balance towards the Dwarves. If the Characters think only of rescuing Robyn and saving their own skins, this is their chance. They will be able to leave the castle through any of the various ways mentioned in the adventure (or any others you choose to permit).

If the PCs assist in the release of Master Lancet, or in the successful uprising that follows, they will be proclaimed heroes by the Dwarves and 'Lifelong Friends of the Dwarvish People'. Though Gump will be grateful to the PCs for releasing him, initially he will not have any time to spend helping them — he will be too busy encouraging the Dwarves to make mince-meat out of their masters.

Once the Drow have been dealt with, if the PCs are have helped the Dwarves, and are still looking for Robyn, they will be offered any assistance necessary, plus, rewards of wealth, and the means to transport it.

4.6 Inside the Fortress: Room Descriptions

Unless otherwise stated, ***all doors are locked.*** However, many ***guards and Dwarves have keys*** to various rooms due to their jobs.

4.6.a Area: The Dungeon

Room 1: Freshwater Spring & Machine Room

This deep, cold spring supplies water for the castle, and the waterfall that cascades off of the roof. It is, for all intents and purposes, bottomless. There are two large pipes rising out of it that deliver water to the top of the Main Tower.

This room also contains machinery that provides heat, water, and air-conditioning to the castle. It was unreliable when built, and continues to be so, especially since the Dwarves enjoy making the Drow uncomfortable. **2 Dwarvish engineers** work here, watched over by **2 Drow guards.** This doesn't help much, because the guards have absolutely no idea how the machinery works, and wouldn't know sabotage if it kicked them in the head. Thus, they beat up the Dwarves daily, just on principle. The passage leading to the Spring Room contains a workshop and cupboards and containers full of parts and raw materials.

Room 3: Wine Cellar

Whatever else might be said, the Drow have good taste in wine and spirits. Only Shojini, his chamberlain, and the wine steward (a member of UGLI) have keys to this room in which is collected some of the best booze on the planet. A secret door in the north wall which reveals a small room where UGLI stores stolen goods.

Room 4: Cold Storage

A heavy locked door seals this room. The Dwarvish creators of Castle Icepeak harnessed the power of the waterfall to drive a machine that keeps this room at **–40° F [–40°C].** It contains racks of animal carcasses waiting their turn in the kitchen. Anyone left here will freeze solid within **3d10 minutes.**

AREA 5: Hallway Guard Post
An armed guard is always posted here. Typically he'll be found sitting in a chair, chin propped up by one arm and his spear leaning against the wall.

ROOM 6: Torturer's Apartment
Head Torturer is a position of great status among the Drow. This small but comfortable apartment reflects that status. Decorated in a country-plaid style the room sports wood paneling on the walls, wooden duck decoys on the mantle, and a bookcase full of wildlife books. A big cosy bed with a down quilt and a small writing desk completes this oasis of comfort. The door is locked.

ROOM 7: Torture Area & Cells
This is the nastiest part of the castle. The walls are damp and slimy. The floors are permanently bloodstained. The room is usually cold (unless the fireplace and brazier are heating iron brands). The Head Torturer is proud of his domain and thus provides each new captive with a complete tour and explanation of the workings of his many 'toys'. These devices include a modest pit and pendulum, a rack, a pillory, Iron Maidens (and other heavy metal discs), water tortures, sets of thumbscrews, and a wide range of other less notable, but obviously nasty, devices. The Drow have developed the infliction of pain into an art form.

The cells in this area have thick wooden doors with barred windows, so the occupants can easily see the activities of the main area. Each cell is very strongly built; even a Giant could not break out by brute strength.

UGLI: If the PCs are imprisoned, it will be clear to the Dwarves who serve in the area that the newcomers are not fond of the Drow. One of the Dwarves who brings their food will reveal herself to be a member of UGLI, and will tell the PCs where Robyn can be found and inform them of the secret door in each Cell and where it leads. The PCs will still have to avoid detection once free, but it will be a start.

ROOM 8: Armorsmith's Room
This unlocked room is one of the warmest and loudest rooms in the castle: it is where the main forge is located. The craftsdwarves working here provide the castle with all of its tools, utensils, arms, and armor. A small but deep well is sunk here. In the north wall a secret door leads to the Torture Area and the Cells.

4.6.b Area: The Ground Floor
AREA 9: Main Entry
The entry is secure by two massive exterior doors which then lead into a corridor with arrow slits on either side and an iron gate (operated from the second floor of the gatehouse). Beyond, on either side, are the doors to the Gatehouse Apartments followed by a set of double doors leading into the Castle proper beyond.

AREA 10: The Castle Corridors
The stones which form the thick main walls of the castle will glow an eerie deep red, and radiate a warmth pleasant to the touch. Ornate tapestries depicting the exploits of famous Drow warriors, political figures, and small furry animals, line the walls. The secondary corridors of the castle have wooden walls and are carpeted with plush purple and gold carpeting. Magical globes of light mounted in Art-Deco sconces at intervals along the walls provide clear, smokeless illumination.

AREAS 11 & 12: Officer's Quarters
These locked rooms are large and comfortable apartments in the Gatehouse and are occupied by the Captain of the Guards (11) and the Colonel in charge of the Walrus Cavalry (12). The main bedroom contains a bed, a desk, bookshelves, rugs and tapestries, arrowslit windows, and a fireplace. The rectangular secondary room is serves as a relaxation room and bedroom for an young officer serving as a personal aide. The Captain's passion is his collection of odd weaponry, gleaned from 200 years of campaigning over three continents. The Colonel has a secret passion: a collection of stuffed furry animals. Nothing, not even the security of Castle Icepeak, is more important to the Colonel than his animals — they are his *only* friends. A large and impressive warrior, he will turn to jelly if his animals are threatened, and submit to whatever demands the 'kidnappers' make. There is a **30%** chance that any one of these rooms will be occupied.

ROOMS 13 & 14: Guest Room(s)
These are small Guest Rooms, each with a single bed, velvet pictures of Drow heroes on the walls, and tiny containers of soap and shampoo for the guest's use.

Each Guest Room has a **10%** chance of being occupied. A Guest is a rich, overweight Drow, desperate to make friends with Prince Shojini now that he is due to be part-owner of Asgard. Each Guest is armed with a ceremonial dagger, which they will drop in surrender at the first sign of trouble. They will offer money to any attackers, but never more that half of what they have, the rest being hidden in secret pockets in their clothes (typically about **1d10 x 100 silver** total). At the first opportunity they will *sound the alarm* and *run screaming for help.*

Secret Passage/Room 13
A fake panel in the wall leads through a short passage to a secret door exiting into the hall of the Gatehouse.

ROOM 15: Gift Room
The wedding gifts are stored in this series of locked, wood-paneled rooms. There is a large pile of gifts wrapped in black tissue paper occupying most of the floor, and more on shelves. With two exceptions, all of the gifts in this room are toasters (two slice, four slice and extra wide). Some toasters are battery powered, some are hamster-in-a-cage powered, others are powered by magic; none are capable of making a really decent piece of toast.

With each gift opened, there is a **5%** chance that it will be one of the two *exceptional* gifts. The first unique gift is a box of **12 Amnesia Grenades** (see description, page **103**). The other unique gift is a box with six globes of **Wrath Gas.** These two gifts, if properly used, will give the Characters another way to escape the castle without being chased. However, it is easy for the party to become affected by these gifts if they are careless. The room has a guard inside.

Wrath Gas
There are 6 fragile spherical glass containers of **Wrath Gas**, clearly labeled as delicate, and easily broken. Whenever one of these spheres is broken **1000 cubic feet [28 m^3]** of Wrath Gas will pour out. Breathing in the gas requires a **Fitness Roll.** If failed, the victim becomes ***violently angry*** at the slightest provocation, and ***attacks*** whoever or whatever annoys them. The effect lasts **1d6 hours.**

ROOM 16 & 17: Guards' & Officers' Mess
These unlocked rooms serve the same function: where the staff eat and take breaks. The **Guards' Mess** (16) has the barest minimum of comfort: hard benches, 2 long wooden tables engraved by disgruntled warriors, and paintings of battle scenes on the walls. There will always be at least **1d6 guards** here. The food is filling, if not particularly tasty. The **Officers' Mess** (17) is also used by guests and has wood paneled walls with fancy tapestries, large comfy chairs, poker tables, and a private bar. There is a **10%** chance of **1d6** officers in room 17.

ROOM 18: The Kitchen
This large room serves food for the entire castle. It has running water from the small well on the southwest wall. It has huge oven 4 large fireplaces; an ox is turning on a spit in one, cooking in preparation for the wedding feast. Along the north wall are piled all the supplies for the kitchen, in clearly marked boxes. There are usually at least **8 Dwarf cooks** in here. A **Drow guard** drops by every **1d10 minutes** on his walk patrol to see what new surprises are being produced.

UGLI: If the PCs enter the Kitchen, they'll see that it is full of Dwarves preparing a wedding banquet; the Dwarves will spit into the food when they think no-one is looking. At first the Dwarves will be suspicious of the Characters, mistaking them for the caterers. However, it will soon become obvious that the party, especially the Aesir, are something else. The Dwarves will cautiously sound out the party to see whose side they are on. They will not reveal their membership in UGLI until they determine that the PCs are there to rescue Robyn. Once they are sure that the PCs are enemies of the Drow, they will reveal their connection to UGLI, and tell the Characters where Robyn can be found.

The Secret Stair/Kitchen to Outside the Castle
Behind the large pile of boxes and crates on the north wall, is a secret door which

opens to a stairway carved out of the wall of the main keep. Used by UGLI smugglers, it progresses down and out of the castle to the base of the cliff. The tunnel was built for Dwarves and anyone taller than a Dwarf will have to crawl. At the point where the tunnel emerges a trail, hidden by prickly bushes, leads to the dock on the lake at the base of Castle Icepeak's precipice.

Room 19: Kitchen Staff Quarters

In between the 12 bunks in this unlocked, round, tower room are bookshelves full of cookbooks and bundled recipes. The in spite of the sweat mingled with grease spell which pervades the air, the atmosphere is quite homey. Dried flowers decorate the windows and rest in a vase on a central table. Pictures of pastoral scenes rest above the fireplace. Outside and to the left is a passage leading to a Lavatory. To the right are stairs going down to the Cellar.

Secret Passages/Southwest Tower to Northwest Tower & Guards' Mess

The north wall of the Lavatory is fake, and opens with a push on a central 'brick'. The passage leads behind the waterfall to a similar door in the Lavatory off the northwest tower near the **Guards' Quarters** (21).

The east wall of the stairwell has a fake wall which opens when you kick a 'brick' on the bottom right. This passage leads to a secret door in the Lavatory south of the **Guards' Mess** (16).

Room 20: Pantry

This is where dry ingredients and spices are stored for the Kitchen. Being Dwarvish, however, the only spices present are salt and pepper. The Pantry is well stocked with potatoes, dried spaghetti noodles, plain white flour, and little else. A well is located in the northwest corner; a fireplace along the west wall.

Room 21: Guards' Quarters

There is room here for 20 guards to sleep on cots. There are **1d6 guards** from the night shift here during the day, and **18 at night**. The smaller rooms carved out of the wall of this northwest tower include arrow slits, and are used for defense and storage. A Washroom and Lavatory are located through doors to the south.

Secret Passage/Northwest Tower to Southwest Tower

A secret door leads from the Lavatory off the **Officers' Quarters** (21) to another further south off the **Kitchen Staff Quarters** (19).

Room 22: Great Hall

This large, impressive hall has fireplaces lining one wall, a skylight covering much of the ceiling, and a wooden wall creating a passage for staff along the north wall. Stone columns at the main entry to the east, support a balcony **30' [9 m]** above. A Lavatory is located in the north wall, right of the east, unlocked entrance.

Due to an recent accident involving flying walrus acrobatics, the skylight is broken in a number of places. There are **6 Brownie workmen** using scaffolding to repair the skylight and make minor renovations to the rest of the Hall. They will pay no attention to anyone except Prince Shojini, their employer. They are being paid to fix the place up, and won't concern themselves with anything else. If threatened, they'll pack up, file a grievance, submit their bill, and leave.

Rooms 23 & 24: Guest Rooms

These two rooms are nicely attired — if you like Drow decor. They contain a fireplace, a large bed, a night table, a writing desk, a chair, black towels, and soap samplers. Each room has a set of double doors which open into a common work area illuminated by arrowslit windows. For details about Guests, see Rooms 13 & 14.

Secret Passage/Guest Room to Lavatory

A secret door, right of the fireplace in **Guest Room** (23) opens to a passage which leads to a Lavatory next door on the north wall.

Room 25: Armory

This is the main storage room for Drow weapons. It is locked and has a guard posted outside — usually asleep in a chair. There is a wide range of deadly devices stored here and assorted pieces of armor. Given **1d10 x10 minutes,** a PC could outfit himself quite nicely, with a complete suit of black laminated armor. There are also grinding stones and tools for repairing arms and armor. There are no supernatural or special weapons.

Room 26: Guards' Recreation Room

This is a bedroom/sitting room which guards use when they are allowed to meet with wives or intimate friends for private purposes. It contains a king-sized bed, a vat of jelly, and a locked cabinet full of booze, PlayDrow, and sex toys. Since all the guards are busy getting ready for the wedding, it is unlocked and unoccupied.

Room 27: Guard Room

This room contains 2 tables, 4 benches, a coffee machine, and a small cabinet bulging with reports. A pet ploog sits in the corner. **5 guards** sit *playing cards*. They will fight if attacked, but are easily surprised and defeated because they are concentrating on the game and their weapons are leaning against the south wall. If the Characters speak to them rather than attacking, the guards will accept any even vaguely reasonable excuse that doesn't affect them directly, and go back to their game, e.g., "We're plumbers come to fix the sink," or "Health inspector on a surprise visit," etc.; are all acceptable to the guards.

Area 28: Rear Entry to Castle

The northeast wall contains a postern gate, or in this case, a simple domestic **Screen Door.** Like most doors of its type the automatic shutting mechanism doesn't work properly and it is prone to slamming. Exiting through this door leads to a narrow path which runs along the edge of the cliff around the castle.

UGLI: If the party successfully breaks into the castle through the Screen Door, they will run into a female Dwarvish servant in the hall shortly after neutralizing (or bypassing) the guards in the **Guard Room** (27). The Dwarf is unarmed, and if she is not assaulted, she will ask the Characters why they are here. If the PCs reveal their mission, the Dwarf will expose her membership in UGLI, and offer them directions to where Robyn is being held. She will be reluctant to go herself.

Room 29: Female Dwarves' Quarters

A crowded sleeping/eating area for the Dwarvish women of Castle Icepeak. It contains 20 beds arranged around the walls, and a large central table. At the foot of each bed is a trunk which contains personal items; little of marketable value. During the day, this room is empty. During the night each bed is occupied.

Room 30: Senior Female Dwarves' Quarters

The Senior Female Dwarvish Staff all reside in this southeast tower. 6 cots line the walls, each with a personal trunk at their foot. A table and chairs occupies the center of the room. Old throwrugs and tapestries complete the shabby decor.

Room 31: Storage Room

This room contains a wide variety of useless junk. Cast off clothing, old crockery, back issues of *DrowWorld* magazine, broken furniture: if a Character insists on looking for something weird and probably useless, let them find it here.

Room 32: Stables

These stables are for the benefit of visitors. The stables are currently occupied by **4 horses** and a harmless, sleeping stable boy, er… young Dwarf.

Secret Passage/Stables to Gatehouse Hallway

A secret door can be found in the **3rd pen** on the south wall. It leads through the Gatehouse wall into the hallway on the east side of the Gatehouse.

4.6.c Area: The Upper Floor

Room 33: Winch Room

This room contains the large winch used to raise and lower the gate to the floor below. The floor contains 'murder holes' for dropping things on trespassers.

Rooms 34, 35, 36 & 37: Guest Rooms

Some of the nicest rooms in the castle. For more details see the descriptions of the other Guest Rooms: 13, 14, 23 & 24.

Secret Passage/Guest Room to Lavatory

A secret door right of the fireplace in **Guest Room** (34) leads to a panel in the wall of the nearby Lavatory on the wall west of the Gatehouse.

Room 38: Bowling Alley

Bowling is a popular Drow pastime. The guards have a competitive league. There are no pins at the far end because the Drow use Dwarves as their targets.

There are banners on the walls that say things like: "**Perfect Game — Hord the Horrid**," "**Arctic Champions 5 Years Running**," and "**10 Split Dwarves in a Row Award — Bifkil**." A number of trophies of winged figures holding bowling balls up to the sky line the walls. There are 20 multi-colored balls in a rack near the door, as well as a box containing 30 pairs of rather mal-odorous flat-soled shoes. There is a **90%** chance the room is unlocked and *unoccupied.*

ROOM 39: Pretty Good Hall
This is the hall where the wedding will take place. Drow and Dwarves are constantly going in and out its wooden double doors. It is gaily decorated in black and purple crepe paper, with black wall hangings and black-light posters. Barrels of black and silver confetti sit by the door.

Room 40: Chapel
Rows of ebony benches occupy the space between the unlocked door and a blood-drenched altar; they are extremely uncomfortable. Above a window behind the altar is a large horned skull of some unrecognizable animal. The Drow chaplain is preparing for the wedding ceremony in an antechamber left of the entrance. The room to the right contains vestment robes and a small caged pig.

ROOM 41: Officers' Meeting Room
This locked room is paneled in dark wood and contains 6 comfy lizard-skin covered executive chairs around a long glass-topped executive table. Along the walls are flip-charts, and file cabinets, used by the Drow for their military planning and brainstorming sessions. A thick sheaf of papers labeled "**World Conquest**" lies on the table. Anyone perusing it will see pages with headings like: "**Step 1: Kill Everyone Else**," or "**Inferior Races: Slaves or Fertilizer?**" The Drow are too busy preparing for the wedding to be meeting at this time.

ROOM 42: Lord Mannak's Apartments
Lord Mannak is a paranoid. This room locked and trapped with several triplines and pressure plates. Typically they will release a small dart with just enough poison to cause unconsciousness for a **1d10 hours** — death is undesirable since it removes the possibililty of an inquisition. Furnished with tasteful black furniture with clean lines and ample cushions and throw rugs. Weapons from many lands line the walls. The smaller rooms off the main area are used for the storage of clothing, personal items, and extensive security files on everyone.

ROOM 43: Loki's Guest Room
This is where Loki stays while at Castle Icepeak. It is the second nicest room in the castle, with a large canopied bed, rich wall hangings, and its very own lavatory (which flushes outside the castle wall). There is a **20%** chance of **Loki** being in this room at any time. It has one of the only windows large enough to travel through, so that Loki may fly in and out. The most interesting piece of furniture is a working pinball machine — Loki is an enthusiastic player.

ROOM 44: Musical Instrument Storage
The Balcony of the Great Hall is often used for concerts. The instruments are stored here. The Drow are especially fond of loud marching music, thus the shelves are full of percussion and brass instruments: tubas, drums, and left-handed chain-driven saxophones. Not one of the instruments is in tune.

ROOMS 45 & 46: Guest Room
Similar to Guest Rooms 23 & 24, one floor below.

Secret Passage/ Guest Room to Lavatory
A secret door, right of the fireplace in Guest Room (45) opens to a passage which leads to a Lavatory next door on the north wall.

ROOM 47: Doctor's Office
A sign on the door says "**The Doctor is Not In.**" This is where the Drow doctor practices medicine. Inside, beyond the waiting room, there is a blood-stained white coat on the back of the door, and blood stains on the walls. An examination table rests against the east wall. A cabinet on the west wall contains the doctor's tools including: a large hammer, a **3' [1 m]** pair of bolt cutters, a very wicked looking saw, and a **¾" [2 cm]** drill bit and handle. Another cabinet is full of hard liquor. In the wastebasket beside the examination table is a arm.

ROOM 48: Meditation Room
All Drow meditate. Small and intimate, this unlocked room is painted in quiet, soothing pastels; mats and cushions cover the floor. At any given time there are **1d6 Drow** here, meditating in various painful looking positions and emitting various chants and tones. They'll be oblivious to anyone else… unless touched.

ROOM 49: Storage Room
Currently used for storing little but dust and cobwebs. There are **1d10 Dust Bunnies** lurking in the shadows in this room (see description, page **115**.)

Secret Passage/ Storage Room to Male Dwarves' Quarters
A secret panel from inside the closet slides into the exterior wall and permits entry to the **Male Dwarves' Quarters** (50).

ROOM 50: Male Dwarves' Quarters
The dingy walls above the 12 bunks are covered with centerfolds from *PlayDwarf*. Each Dwarf has a trunk of worthless personal possessions. A central table and two benches, throwrugs, and a fireplace completes the sparse decor. This unlocked and unkempt room smells strongly of Dwarf sweat.

Secret Passage/ Male Dwarves' Quarters to Stairwell
A secret panel from inside the entryway slides into the exterior wall reveals a short passage to where another panel permits access to the southeast tower stairwell.

ROOM 51: Senior Male Dwarves' Quarters
The Senior Male Dwarvish Staff all reside in this southeast tower; they are all members of **UGLI.** Trunks at the foot of the 6 beds contain false bottoms where plans for secret operations are stored. Old tapestries on the wall conceal loose bricks where other sensitive material is stashed. A round table with 6 chairs occupies the center of the room. The door is locked.

ROOM 52: Storage Room
Rolls of black cloth, black paint, black ink, black shoe polish, and ebony wood are stored here. (Black is the Drows' favorite color). The door is unlocked.

4.6.d Area: The Roof
ROOM 53: Recreation/Workout Room
A place where all Drow are welcome to come and relax on their off hours. The ping pong table is battered from years of abuse. Nearby is a rack with half-a-dozen ruined paddles and eight balls, none of which bounce properly. A unique billiards table occupies the center of the room; it is round, covered with walrus hide, and has a single hole in the center. Only Drow have ever been able to figure out the rules for this game. Dart boards line the north wall.

This unlocked room doubles as an exercise room. It is full of dumbbells, benches, gravity-boots, rowing machines, etc. None of the equipment works very well. On weekends there are aerobics classes. Chance the room is *empty:* **70%.**

ROOMS 54, 55 & 66: Guard Rooms
These locked rooms are for sergeants and favored corporals (room 66 is for 2 captains). Each room contains 3 cots, personal trunks, a card table, a bookshelf, 3 chairs, and throwrugs.

In the area surrounding the rooms there will always be at least 1 guard on duty, watching for strangers approaching, etc.

AREA 56: Roof
The roof is a pretty place. Water, brought up through pipes from the Spring Room in the Dungeon, flows down from the top of the northwest tower to a pond on the roof. From there it spills over the side and into the valley below. The pond provides water for the walruses and the extensive rooftop gardens.

A gravel path winds through the rock and herb gardens, and the miniature bonsai forest. The fish vats contain food for both the Drow and their walruses.

Shojini's **Sky Yacht** is docked at the edge of the roof. Once untied, it will slip away from the wall with a nudge. **1d6 Drow 'skylers'** watch over it at all times.

ROOM 57: Tea Ceremony Room
There are always **1d6 Drow** in this unlocked room conducting a Tea Ceremony — a long, involved ritual, impossible to explain to a non-Drow. Drow sit on



cushions and mats on the floor. Floral prints hang on the walls. Cabinets contain delicate tea cups, saucers, and Mr Tea automatic tea brewing machines. Once begun, a ritual must be completed before anything else may be initiated or it is considered a 'bad thing'. If interrupted, those involved will become violent, attacking the interrupter(s) with whatever is at hand (typically pillows and tea cups). A Tea Ceremony takes an hour to complete; inevitably, the tea gets cold.

Room 58: Chaplain's Apartment
A small but lavishly decorated room. With a taste for the baroque, the Chaplain has a 4-poster bed with matching end tables, a dresser, and bookshelves. All are black with gold trim. On the wall are paintings of famous sacrifices through the ages.

In the area surrounding the rooms there will always be at least 1 guard on duty, watching for strangers approaching, etc.

Room 59: Prince Thenton Akira Shojini's Apartment
This is the finest room in the castle. The view is breath-taking. The walls are covered with rich embroidered wall hangings. There are mirrors on the ceiling, and green champagne on ice. The bed is a huge four-poster with room for 6 large beings. There is a pair of handcuffs attached to one of the posts. Paintings of chubby nudes surrounded by flying cherubs line the walls. A bookshelf along the wall contains such titles as "**The Lighter Side of Death and Destruction**," "**Assassination For Dummies**," "**Murder and Mayhem Made Easy**," and "**I'm OK, You're Dead Meat**." There is a **20%** chance that Prince Shojini will be here, nervously preparing for the wedding, trying on numerous outfits. The smaller rooms contain clothing, hoards of treasure, clothing, hoards of magic artifacts, clothing, hoards of unique weapons, clothing, and shoes.

Room 60: Prince Shojini's Hot Tub
The centerpiece of this room is a beautiful, steaming hot tub. On racks around the room are huge, fluffy black towels marked "**Mine**."

Room 61: Prince Shojini's Lavatory
Everything is gold-plated. 'Nuff said.

Room 62: Guard Room
Shojini has ensured that there are always **2 guards** here. They have strict orders not to let anyone into the Princess's room except Prince Shojini, and will die defending the door (at least that's what they've said). Unless they're caught by surprise, at the first sign of trouble they'll sound the alarm. They're not, however, the brightest of souls and thus can be taken unawares, if the PCs can convincingly pretend that they are supposed to be there for some reason.

Room 63: Princess Robyn's 'Guest Room'
Princess Robyn is held prisoner in this locked room. It is well equipped with all the things an Elvish princess would need: a huge assortment of makeup and fragrances, a well lit vanity table and mirror, and a clothes closet that takes up roughly half the room. The bed is large and comfortable, the basin is constantly kept full of water, and the view through the large windows would be spectacular were it not for the thick iron bars that barely let in the sun.

If Sven and Robyn are reunited, they will hug, kiss, and make affectionate cooing noises until everyone else becomes disgusted and tells them to get a move on. The other Aesir will be especially willing to lay down their lives to ensure the escape of the young lovers, shouting such things as: "**You lot carry on, I'll hold this corridor!**" or "**Kill them all… let the janitor sort it out!**" Sven will not leave Robyn's side unless the party is defeated in battle and he is captured.

If the PCs don't have an escape plan worked out, Robyn has one: she'll suggest taking the **Sky Yacht** (she'll mention to Sven that it would be the *romantic* way to leave). Regardless, once rescued, if the PCs don't take control, she *will.*

Secret Passage/Robyn's Guest Room to Stairwell
Unknown to Robyn and everyone in UGLI except their magically imprisoned leader Gump Lancet, a secret panel from inside the closet slides into the exterior wall and reveals a passage which leads to another secret panel in the stairwell.

Rooms 64 & 65: Guest Rooms/Workmen's Quarters
This is where the Brownie workers renovating the Great Hall sleep; they're in the **Great Hall** (22) during the day. Each room contains 3 beds. In the common area are 6 chairs and a large work table, upon which lie a number of letters addressed to the workers' placement service, complaining about the pay, the food and the non-stop 'short' jokes. There are two large stacks of beer cases in the corner; the larger one contains empties, the other full bottles. Various tool boxes, loose tools, and other equipment are strewn about the rooms. On the walls are pictures of naked females of various races; all have staple holes in their midsections.

Room 67: Walrus Keeper's Room
This is where the kindly but senile old walrus keeper, **Wynflopp,** hangs out. He is very fond of his wards. If he isn't killed or disabled, he will ramble on about his wonderful 'walrii', and how sweet they are, and how well he gets along with them, and how they make wonderful house pets, and so on. If asked, he will happily reveal that to get them to fly, the Characters must attach a fish to the end of a long pole and dangle it in front of the walrus' nose. Wynflopp will happily help the party saddle-up and wave bye-bye as the party flies away.

Part 5
Getting Out Alive

5.1 Event: Exit… Stage Left — Escaping Castle Icepeak

There are four ways to exit Castle Icepeak (not counting 'in a pine box'): a) swiping Prince Shojini's Sky Yacht, b) swiping a flying walrus, c) swiping a boat from the dock and sailing down river, and d) traveling overland.

5.1.a Plot Option: Fly United

If asked about ways to leave Castle Icepeak, one of the Dwarves may mention the **Sky Yacht,** one of Prince Shojini's most prized possessions. The Sky Yacht is a magical flying sailboat, and is docked on the roof of the castle and watched at all times by **1d6 Drow 'skylers'.** Unless taken by surprise and quickly overcome, they will sound the alarm.

The Sky Yacht can carry the entire party easily, and is well stocked with food and drink; the Prince intended to use it for his honeymoon. It hovers over the edge of the wall tied to a wooden dock. To launch it, all one need do is untie it and then nudge it away from the wall. To steer the craft, someone must hold the tiller at the stern, and 'concentrate' (a successful **Willpower Roll** is required for each ***change in direction*** or ***height***) on the direction they desire to travel. A sail provides speed.

If the party successfully seizes and pilots the Sky Yacht, they will have no problem outdistancing their pursuers and reaching Asgard. The boat is sleek and can fly faster than anything the Drow can send against it. It is capable of flying to Asgard in only *two hours.* Even Loki will not chase them, for despite his impressive appearance, he has no stomach for combat without backup. The boat will fly for *six hours* before settling down to the ground. Only Prince Shojini knows how to 'recharge' it.

5.1.b Plot Option: Fly Apart

The Drow keep a stable of magical flying walruses on the roof of the castle. The Characters can learn about them by quizzing the Dwarves or meeting up with their keeper Wynflopp on the Roof.

If the Characters mount themselves on a walrus, they will soon find that the animals are foul-smelling, bad tempered and stubborn beasts. Each walrus will carry only one rider. They are fast enough to take the party to Asgard within ***4 hours***.

Unfortunately, each walrus must be ***fed a fish once an hour.*** If not fed, the walrus will begin a dive toward the nearest body of water in search of fish. The rider, unable to control the beast will be dumped or drenched. If fish are not forthcoming, the walrus will simply sulk and

refuse to fly until fed. If the rider annoys the walrus, it will attempt to attack and kill its rider, and will only stop when the rider is killed, the walrus is killed, or the walrus is fed. Thus, if the party doesn't fill their pockets with enough fish, they will have to walk most of the way to Asgard.

They will not be followed by the Drow, however, since it will be ***2 days*** before the walruses return to their pens at the top of Castle Icepeak. As well, neither Prince Shojini nor Loki will follow alone. By the time the party reaches Asgard, the Frost Giants will have packed up and left.

5.1.c Plot Option: Old Man River

The party can also leave by way of the Secret Stair located in the Kitchen (Ground Floor, Room 12). Tied up at the dock are three small boats, each of which will, with a bit of crowding, transport the entire party.

Also at the dock is a larger craft owned by the *real* caterers, who have finally arrived. Only one Poughvidd guard is left on the boat, and he will flee if the party attempts to take over the ship. Not all of the provisions have been unloaded from the boat, so the Characters may get loaded if they choose. The Aesir will certainly do so if not prevented.

The escape route requires that the PCs sail down river, across a small lake, and then southwest again down river. The river is fairly wide and the current swift and flowing downstream, so they'll make good time.

Twelve miles downstream just happens to be the place where **Odin** and the other Aesir are taking their fishing trip. Thor has spent days trying to catch one of the legendary giant Raptorfish found in this river. All previous efforts have resulted in broken lines and frayed tempers. Finally, however, he believes he has just the thing; he hired a passing Dwarf to weave a gigantic net of magical golden fiber. Nothing would escape this day.

Unfortunately, the catch of the day is not to be a fish, but the sailboat in which the Characters have chosen to make their escape. The net, stretched across the river just below the waterline, will entangle the craft and smash it into the rocks, breaching the hull.

At the sight of this disaster Thor and the other Aesir, all decked out in fishing garb (including wading boots and hats festooned with hooks), will utter a cry of bewildered anger and dismay.

Once inquiries have been made, and especially if Robyn is present, Odin will take command of the situation. At this moment a glance at the sky will reveal a **large, menacing green and yellow polka-dot dragon,** accompanied by a **squadron of Drow mounted on flying walruses** and **Prince Shojini piloting his Sky Yacht.**

As the Drow close on their prey, Odin will command everyone to get into their flying fishing boat, and with Baldur and Heimdall clutching the golden net, the craft will take to the sky.

Thor will seize his hammer Miölnir and throw it at the dragon, taking it squarely in the forehead. The dragon will stop in mid air, cross its eyes, flail its wings about, and plunge downward — directly onto the Sky Yacht. The flying ship will collapse under the mass of the dragon, and in the chaos, the squadron of walruses will scatter. Thor's hammer will return to his hand.

While the Sky Yacht and dragon plunge into the river, Baldur and Heimdall will release the gigantic net over the nearest flight of walruses, plunging them down as well. The rest, now leaderless, will flee home.

As the fishing boat pulls away and back to Asgard, the sound of **Prince Shojini** will be heard in the distance yelling at a very defensive and reconstituted Loki: "**You'll hear from my lawyers!**"

"**I'm supposed to be on holiday, dammit!**" **Odin** will exclaim.

"**Vell, Thor, your net proved to be useful for something after all**," **Heimdall** will offer.

The PCs will now have the opportunity to explain the situation.

In his basso-profundo voice, **Odin** renders judgment. "**So, Loki vas behind all this, eh? No surprise there. And Frigga thought she pull the vool over my eye. I'll have a chat vith that voman vhen I get home.**

"As for you lot, yer all for the dungeon. Except for you my darling Robyn." Odin's voice drips insincerity.

"**But sir, Sven saved me, and I love him**!" gushes **Robyn**.

Odin fixes his one good eye on her. "**Yer not pregnant, are you?**"

"**Certainly not!**" **Robyn** is scandalized.

Odin sighs. "**Ve'll talk about all this vhen ve get back to Idavol. I suppose the rest of you are expecting a revard for this**…."

Odin will distribute **100 silver pieces, 6 wooden nickels,** and an **Aesir Gold Card good for six months of free credit** to each of the party. If any PC complains that they were promised more by Frigga, Odin will point out that his offer is a far better thing than having your head bashed in and rotting in the Asgard dungeons.

If any PC brings up the plight of the Dwarves of Castle Icepeak, **Odin** will dismiss it, stating "**Foreign politics. I don't get involved in that**."

The Characters will be offered a lift back to Asgard, or anywhere else they would like to go — as long as it is on Odin's way home: **southwest**.

5.1.d Plot Option: Cross Country

This choice will likely end in tears. Castle Icepeak rests on a mountain surrounded by a snowy wasteland. There are no trails beyond the one that leads to the dock. Footprints can be seen in the snow. The party's progress across the cold, harsh, mountainous terrain will be slow, and Princess Robyn will whine constantly. (Sven will defend her to the death, of course).

The Drow will send out a search party and conduct aerial reconnaissance; they have a **20%** chance *per hour* of locating the PCs. An attack will soon follow with the goal of returning the Princess to Castle Icepeak. If captured, they're all thrown in the dungeon. Start again.

If the party manages to hike about **20 miles [32 km]** (one long day) they will eventually make it to a forest which will afford some cover. From this point the chance of the Drow finding them will drop to **10%** *per day*, but they will still have a couple hundred miles to cover. However, an aerial search party will be sent from Asgard after *one week*.

PART 6
THE FINALE — HOME AGAIN

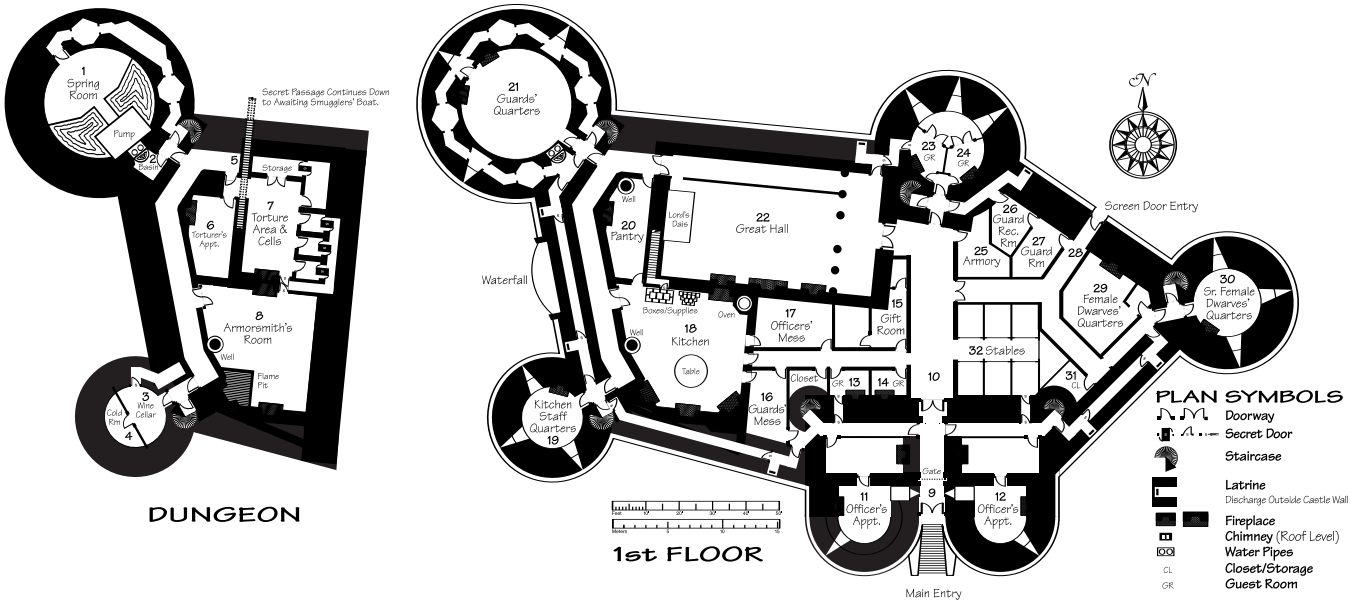
If the Characters return to Asgard with Robyn, but without Odin, Frigga will be sincerely grateful (and a bit surprised), and will reward them with whatever riches, etc. (e.g., Gate directions), they can carry — within reason. (Particularly greedy PCs will get a single bag of gold, and an 'honor' guard of the biggest, meanest Aesir in Asgard to escort them out the main gate). Frigga is in a visible hurry to see the PCs claim their reward and leave Asgard as quickly as possible; before Odin returns home. She will thank the Characters profusely, and tell them not to return.

If the PCs return with Robyn and Odin (see **5.1.c** Plot Option: Old Man River), Frigga will avoid them completely, and they'll have to be happy with the reward granted by Odin. If they express displeasure, their complaints will be noted, then they'll be escorted to the main gate under guard.

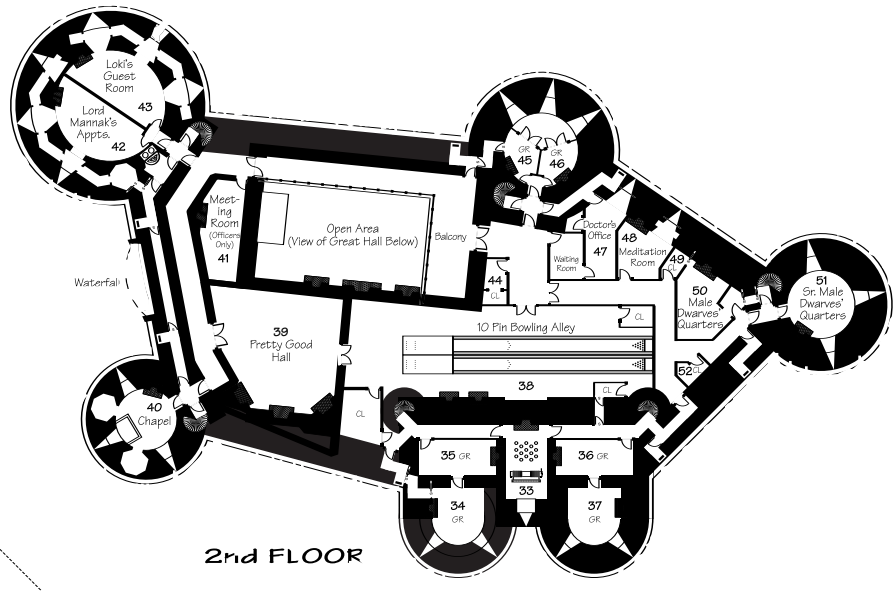
If the PCs return to Asgard without Robyn, Frigga will have them executed… if she can catch and detain them.

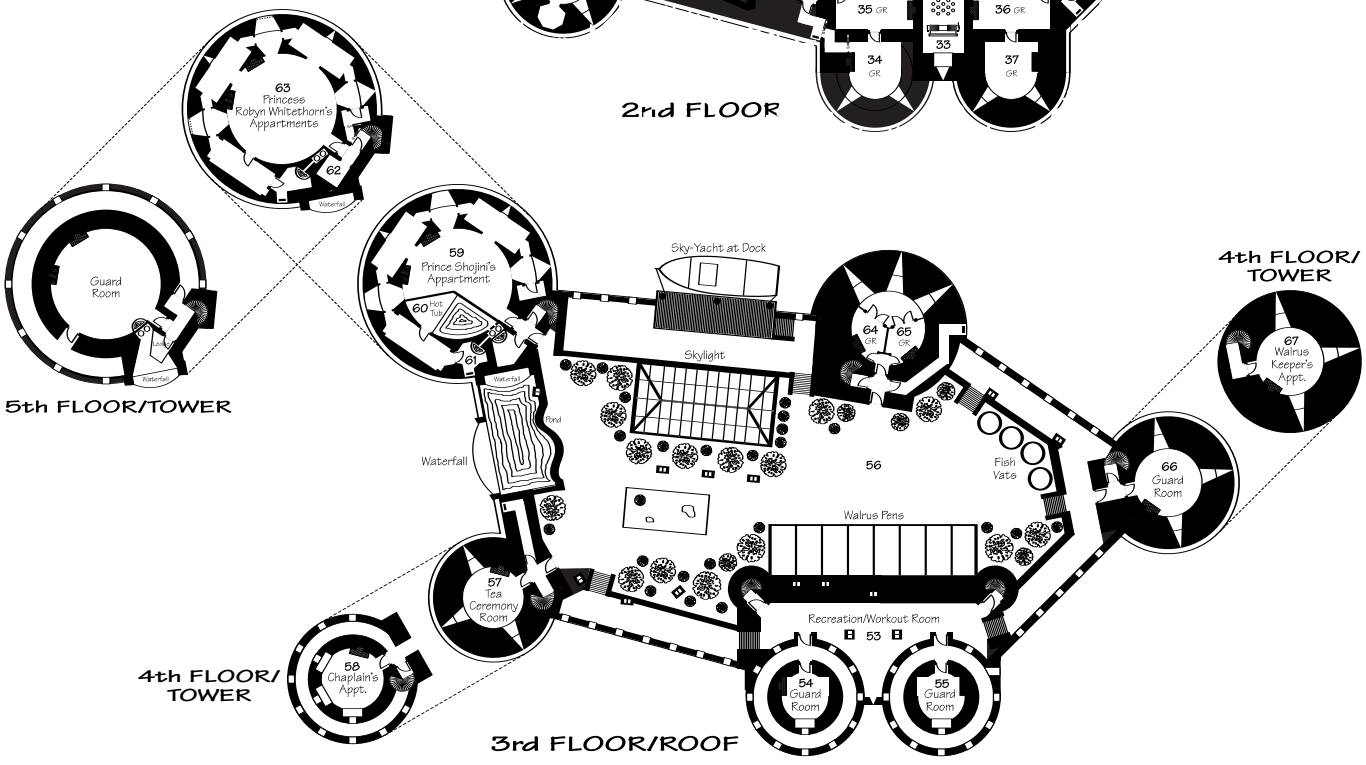
If the PCs do not rescue Robyn, and do not return to Asgard, the Frigga will assume they were killed on their quest, and forget them.

The day after the PCs return with Robyn or the day Odin is to return from his holiday — whichever comes first — the disappointed Frost Giants will disperse, and all will be well in Asgard again.



Floorplans for Castle Icepeak





The reliability of any device is inversely proportional to the number of people watching it operate.

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DESIGNER'S NOTES & SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

DESIGNER'S NOTES

I BEGAN THIS BOOK AS A BIT OF A REBELLION against all the 'serious' roleplay campaigns I've run and participated in since I got into the hobby in 1980. While I am as guilty as the next fellow of a passion for realism and the embracing of complicated rules systems, in my conversations with other gamers over the years I concluded that it would be worthwhile to create a setting where you wouldn't have to be so hung up on how things are accomplished. A place where a cyborg from one game could interact with an elf-maiden from another in a hassle-free setting. A place where rule-lawyers could be told like-it-or-lump-it (and the Gamemaster could provide the lumps…).

During early testplay sessions I found that this style of play could be quite liberating for many participants, including the Gamemaster. Players who found themselves put off by the details of spell creation in my 'realistic' game, would suddenly erupt with enthusiasm for the simple wish-based sorcery of Murphy's World. Roleplaying began to dominate combat, as Characters began to discover that the 'monsters' could talk — and often had something worthwhile or witty to say! People began to be less concerned with power and more willing to just relax and enjoy the progress of the adventure.

A number of the races listed in this text were drawn from my research into actual mythology. When it came right down to it, many of the myths researched were rich in humor. You will find that some mythic characters and places are presented intact, with only a slightly altered or exaggerated perspective. Some myths have been shamelessly altered, added to, or twisted to suit my convenience. Other material is totally original.

Eventually I happened to make the acquaintance of David Brown. David shares my sick sense of humor, love of history, and enjoyment of roleplaying. We became friends and business partners. With his assistance the project was given a final going-over and dragged kicking and screaming to completion.

I hope you enjoy using it as much as we did making it.

Kevin Davies, January 1995.

MYTHOLOGICAL READING

Faeries, Brian Froud & Alan Lee, Peacock Press/Bantam Books, 1978
Mythology, An Illustrated Encyclopedia, Richard Cavendish, Orbis, 1980
Encyclopedia of Legendary Creatures, Tom McGowen, Rand McNally, 1981
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Myths & Legends: The British, M.I. Ebbutt, Bracken Books, 1985
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Myths & Legends: China & Japan; India; Donald A. Mackenzie, Bracken Books, 1985
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The Colour of Magic, Terry Pratchett, 1983
Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency, Douglas Adams, 1987
The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams, 1979
Life, the universe and everything, Douglas Adams, 1982
The Light Fantastic, Terry Pratchett, 1983
The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, Douglas Adams, 1980
So long, and thanks for all the fish, Douglas Adams, 1984
The Mouse that Roared, Leonard Wibberley, 1954

INSPIRATIONAL VIEWING

The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai, Director: W. D. Richter, 1984
Army of Darkness, Director: Sam Raimi, 1992
Big Trouble in Little China, Director: John Carpenter, 1986
The Court Jester, Director: Norman Panama, 1956
Erik the Viking, Director: Terry Jones, 1989
Ghostbusters, Director: Ivan Reitman, 1984
The Inspector General, Director: Henry Koster, 1949
It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World, Director: Stanley Kramer, 1963
Jabberwocky, Director: Terry Gilliam, 1977
Labyrinth, Director: Jim Henson, 1986
Monty Python and the Holy Grail, Directors: Terry Gilliam & Terry Jones, 1975
Monty Python's Life of Brian, Director: Terry Jones, 1979
The Nightmare Before Christmas, Director: Tim Burton, 1993
Plan Nine From Outer Space, Director: Ed Wood, 1959
A Shot in the Dark, Director: Blake Edwards, 1964
Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines, Director: Ken Annakin, 1965
Time Bandits, Director: Terry Gilliam, 1981
Tom Jones, Director: Tony Richardson, 1963
Young Frankenstein, Director: Mel Brooks, 1974
You're spending too much time reading this! *Play the game!*

Player Name:

Character Name:

Race (or Species) & Gender (as applicable):

Height: **Weight:** **Age:**



Character Sheet

Character Portrait

Peregrine
40 Seymour Avenue, Toronto
Ontario M4J 3Y4 Canada
Email: peregrine@peregrine-net.com
Check Out Our Web Site!
www.peregrine-net.com

Action Initiative (AI): (Willpower [WIL] + Dexterity [DEX])	**Action Points (AP) Stored:**	Current Total	Earned Today	Spent Today

Health Points (HP) Totals:	Normal Total	Current (Temp. Reduced) Total	Current (Temp. Enhanced) Total

Character Attributes (Stats)

Character Attribute Name	Stat Value	(Temporarily Reduced)	BAV (%)	(Temporarily Reduced)	Attribute Notes
Intelligence: (INT)					
Willpower: (WIL)					
Charisma: (CHA)					
Mystic: (MYS)					
Strength: (STR)					
Dexterity: (DEX)					
Fitness: (FIT)					
Appearance: (APP)					

Character Traits:

Positive Traits & Abilities (Including Supernatural Powers):

Negative Traits & Disabilities (Including Neuroses):

Wound & Damage Notes:

Temporary Wound Effects (Including Location):

Permanent Wound Effects (Including Location):

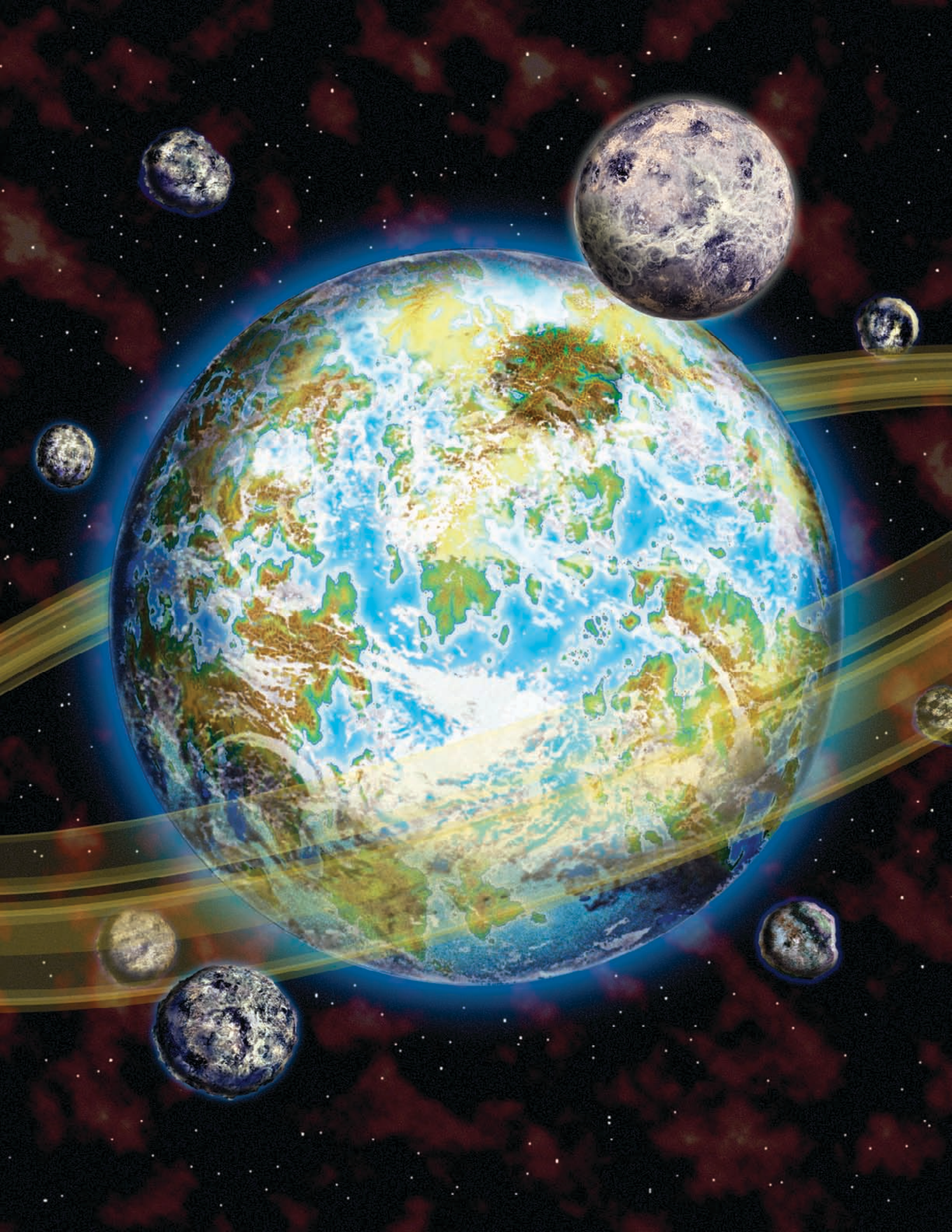
Possessions & Other Notes

Attribute/BAV Table

Attribute (Stat) Value	Base Action Value (BAV)
1	5 %
2	10 %
3	15 %
4	18 %
5	20 %
6	22 %
7	24 %
8	26 %
9	28 %
10	30 %
11	32 %
12	34 %
13	36 %
14	38 %
15	40 %
16	42 %
17	44 %
18	46 %
19	48 %
20	50 %
21 – 22	52 %
23 – 24	54 %
25 – 26	56 %
27 – 28	58 %
29 – 30	60 %
31 – 32	62 %
33 – 34	64 %
35 – 36	66 %
37 – 38	68 %
39 – 40	70 %
41 – 42	72 %
43 – 44	74 %
45 – 46	76 %
47 – 48	78 %
49 – 50	80 %
51 – 54	82 %
55 – 59	84 %
60 – 64	86 %
65 – 69	88 %
70 – 74	90 %
75 – 79	92 %
80 – 84	94 %
85 – 89	96 %
90 – 94	98 %
≥ 95	100 %

Skills (Non-Combat)

Skill Name	BAV (%)	Temp. Penalty	Temp. Bonus	Skill Notes



Reality is for People Who Can't Handle Murphy's World.

Murphy's World™

Where Things Can Always Get Worse...™

It seemed like the perfect place to launch a financial empire. So thought **Sean Murphy**, intergalactic trader, property developer, and opportunist — just before his spaceship crashed into the Sea of Tranquility. Now an involuntary exile, Murphy wanders this most unusual planet where no matter how careful his plans or prudent his preparations, something always seems to go wrong. And this happens to everyone — all the time!

Murphy's World is actually the **Realm of Færie**, the **Land of Myths and Legends, the place** of popular folklore and dreams (with a dash of pop culture) — comically *twisted*, yet maintaining an internal sense of 'logic'. It operates according to ***Murphy's Laws.*** The real culprit is the planet's sun, ***Ludo.*** The strange distorting energies with which this amber orb assaults the little planet effectively toss any sense of predictability of natural laws or supernatural forces right out the metaphysical window. Murphy's World also happens to be in possession of an extensive but rather faulty network of ***Interdimensional Teleportation Gates*** (through which many of the inhabitants have unwillingly arrived), connecting Murphy's World to just about *everywhere*. Thus, many residents of the planet are like Murphy — *reluctant alien immigrants.* New arrivals can pop up (in, down, or sideways) anywhere; confused, embarrassed, and wondering how to get home. Unfortunately, spaceships usually crash upon entering the atmosphere, and return gateways are often invisible, faulty, or out of order.

Murphy's World is a silly place where you can roleplay light-hearted adventures. It can be used with *any* existing system of rules — you don't have to generate a *new* Character to use this book! ***Characters from other campaigns can be brought to*** Murphy's World for adventures, and ***Characters from*** Murphy's World ***can be transported to other campaign worlds.*** Murphy's World is designed for anyone who has ever wanted to take a break from serious business of forging empires and amassing personal fortunes. For Gamemasters who are tired of Characters that breeze through scenarios which have taken hours to prepare, it's just the thing. ***Murphy's World has been created to let the Gamemaster have as much fun as the players!***

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- Descriptions of the planet, its sun Ludo, and the strange effects on the forces of nature, the geography of the civilized lands, and the Teleportation Gates. Magic and technology function in a rather unique way on Murphy's World, which translates into more opportunities for fun during your adventures!
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- A Complete Adventure: Robyn's Summer Romance In Asgard (or Robyn & Her Merry Sven).

* Well actually, you may want two 10-sided dice and two 6-sided dice. If you don't already have them, you can get them from most game and comic stores.

For 2 or more players (up to whatever the Gamemaster can handle and maintain his or her sanity), age 10 to adult.

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