

THE GUILD

GUILD COMPANION PUBLICATIONS

ADVENTURER

PUTTING ADVENTURES BACK INTO ROLEPLAYING

ISSUE 3



WELCOME

To the third issue of *The Guild Adventurer*. As always, our aim is to give GMs the very best in adventures and adventure-related material for Rolemaster, Spacemaster, Shadow World and HARP. In this issue, we add a new feature, “*Sweating the Small Stuff*”, which provides guidance and plot ideas relating to the detail of a fantasy campaign, and begin with a look at the role of money. Like “*Rose Petals and Snow Lions*” in our second issue, “*The Keeper of the Thorn*” is set in northwestern Jaiman and is a supplemental adventure for use with the recently released “*Shadow World: The Land of Xa-ar*” region module. We hope that you will enjoy all of the material in this issue – please send us your feedback so that we can continually improve this series of products. If you would like to submit an adventure or an adventure location for a future issue of *The Guild Adventurer*, please contact me at editor@guildcompanion.com

The Guild Adventurer #3 was produced using the “ransom” or “distributed patronage” model. A small army of Patrons stepped forward and pledged their financial support to buy one or more copies of this issue. Although we did not succeed in attaining the pledge target this time, Patronal support plus the extra sales of both *TGA#1* and *TGA#2* that have occurred since their publications meant that this issue was financially viable. All of us who have worked on this project are sincerely grateful to all of our Patrons. Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,
Nicholas HM Caldwell

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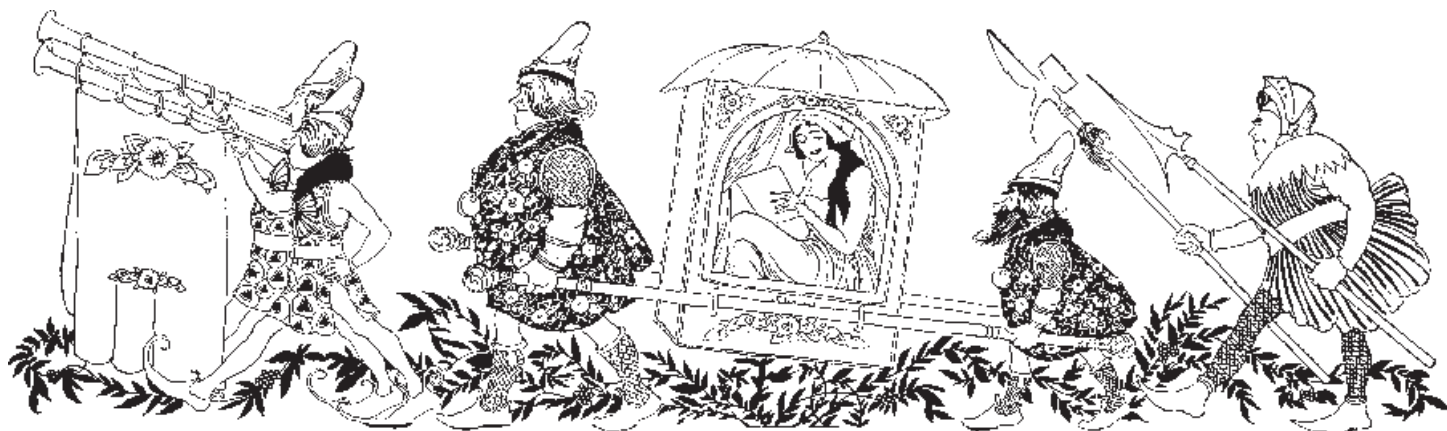
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THE QUIET TIME

By Robert J Defendi

This adventure was written for *The Echoes of Heaven Campaign Setting*, but it can easily fit into any setting with a sufficient degree of magic. In this adventure, the characters will investigate a set of ruins in the wilderness. There, they will have to unravel truth from fiction and find the true evil that lurks in the bones of an ancient keep. But will they find the answer before it's too late, or will they become the keep's latest victims?

This adventure involves ancient ruins, lies, red herrings, and a hidden threat. Parties should find an interesting mix of exploring and fighting. The adventure is aimed at 16th level *Rolemaster* or *HARP* characters.

For more on *The Echoes of Heaven Campaign Setting*, visit www.finalredoubt.com



Using this Adventure in *The Echoes of Heaven*

This adventure is set in the Mortal Realm in the no-man's land between Dientor and Marnele. The adventure as a whole fits neatly between episodes five and six of *The Moving Shadow*. It takes place shortly after the events of *The Last Hallowed Place*. At this point, the characters should still be located in Sulvican City, recovering from their struggles against the army of Demons.

Using this Adventure in Another Campaign

This adventure fits very neatly into *The Echoes of Heaven*. Still, there's nothing about the adventure that excludes it from play in other worlds. In this adventure, we use Ulcers as the mechanism for creating the adventure site, but the cause isn't actually important to the execution of the adventure. This could just as easily be caused by a magical effect (say the collapse of a great magical defense). It could also be explained by a savage haunting, although you'd need an explanation of why it hasn't caused problems until now (then again, maybe it has).

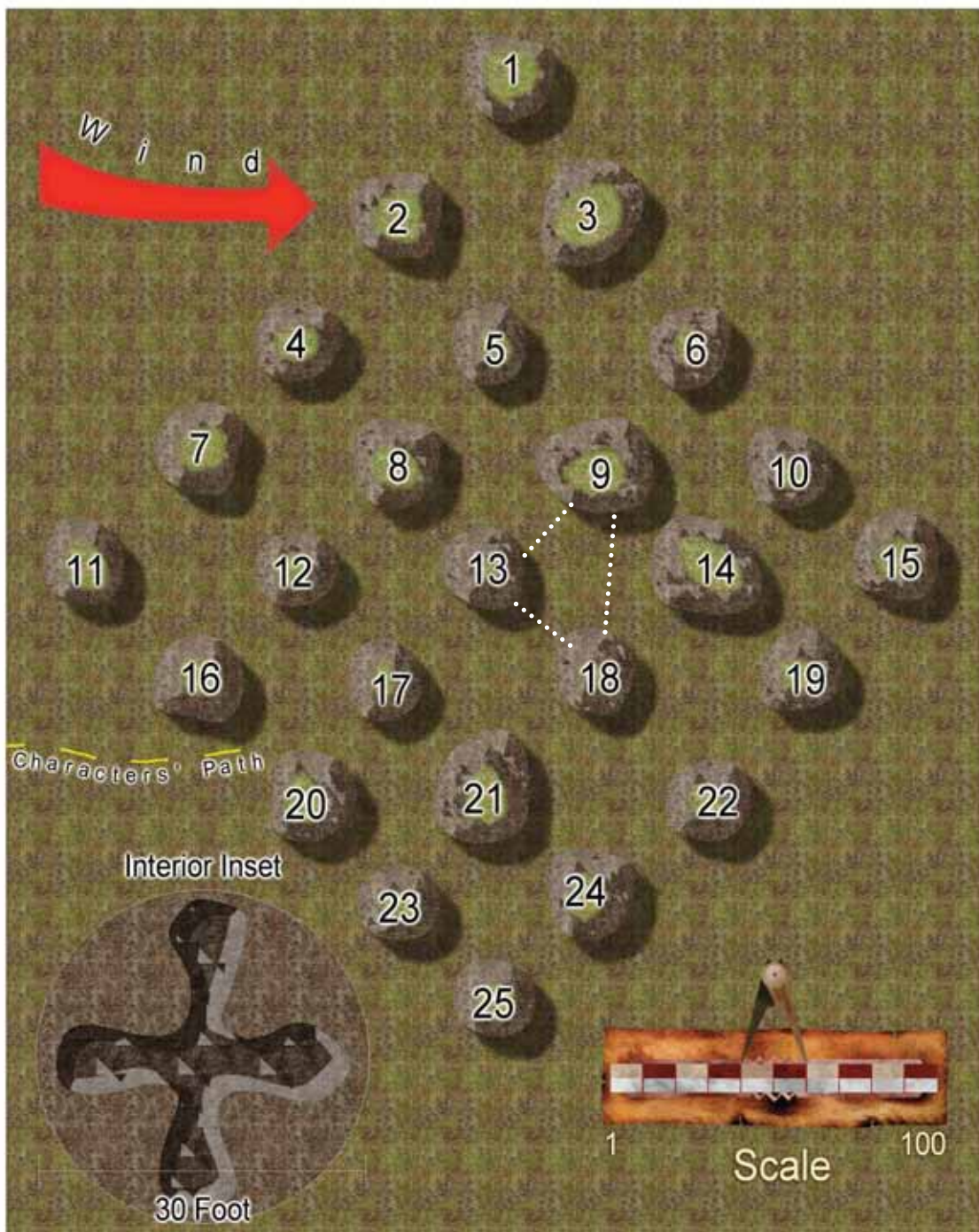
Ulcers

There will be much talk of Ulcers in this adventure. For those who don't own *The Echoes of Heaven Campaign Setting*, an Ulcer is an infection in the fabric of reality, a place where Hell has become a part of the Mortal Realm. In an Ulcer anything is possible and reality breaks down. Ulcers allow for any kind of adventure as you can see in this scenario. There is one way to destroy an Ulcer. The characters must kill every bit of true evil inside. Only when there's no evil to anchor it will the Ulcer finally dissolve (often spectacularly).

Adventure Background

Almost one thousand years ago, the nation of Dientor fell as the Demon Queen opened gates to Hell throughout the country. The nation flooded with Demons. The entire world might have fallen if it wasn't for the actions of Saint Kûlan, the Guardian.

Lost in all the stories of Kûlan's wars against the Great Fiends is the story of the paladin Aksledion. Aksledion was stationed at a



exposed flame lit, enclosed lanterns will require a medium maneuver every 5 rounds.

(In a rain variation, the characters should be cold and wet rather than wind burned and dusty, and there is an additional –30 to any climbing maneuver attempted.)

The Mounds: Each mound is roughly 40' across and 30' high, with steeply sloped sides and domed, almost flat tops. It takes a single climbing maneuver (Medium difficulty) to climb up the side of a mound.

The mounds offer no real shelter from the storm outside, as the wind is channeled around them in random gusts.

The mounds are most easily broken into from above, where flat stones were laid to seal the openings used to inter the dead. It takes about 10 man hours using shovels and picks to dig off the top cover (1 hour for 10 men, 2 hours for 5, etc.) it takes 10x as long to dig off the top cover by hand. It's a Very Hard (RM) / Hard (HARP) strength maneuver to move the heavy stone sealing the entrance, and then roughly a 10' drop down into the tombs within.

Inside the tombs, the walls, ceilings and floors are rough stone, about 8' high. Each mound has four chambers North-South-East-West branching out from the central area with the entry hatch. Inside the mounds there is shelter from the storm in the chambers away from the central area (or in the central area if the entrance is closed or otherwise blocked.)

Nightvision and Darkvision just as much as normal vision. It should be difficult for anyone to distinguish people at 50', and even the mounds will vanish into the dust at around 100'.

The howl of the wind makes it hard to hear anything clearly, normal speaking voices can only be heard if two people put their heads together, and even shouting will be unintelligible from more than 30' away.

All missile and elemental attacks are at –1 per foot of distance to the target in addition to normal range penalties.

It will require a hard maneuver each round to keep a torch or similar

Antagonists

The Karra brothers are camped in Mound #13. **Sandor** is asleep, **Kelwan** is eating lunch while looking over the loot, and **Lothos** is operating the magical circle to control the undead. Most of the undead are busy digging their way into mound #19. There are four **Class III's** "on watch" on mounds #4, #6, #20 and #22, and four **Class II's** and one **Class III** acting as guards at mound #13.

MONEY IN FANTASY ROLE PLAYING CAMPAIGNS

BY LAURA TRAUTH AND TERENCE WYNNE



This is, we hope, the first of a series of articles on how to add depth to (primarily fantasy) role playing campaigns by “sweating the small stuff” – those details that can add depth to your world not found in the generic dungeon crawl. Why start with money? Let’s face it: Money is probably an important part of any campaign. In fact, along with experience, money is one of the two primary measures of success and/or failure for players. Their characters can count money, too, even when they can’t quantify experience (beyond interesting scars). Even in the real world, words have power, and just by giving name to coins, a GMs can increase the immersion of the shared stories they create with their players. Groats, Angels, ducats, *pfennige*, and Thalers just *sound* more impressive than copper, silver, and gold pieces.

So, then, what is money? Money is simply a medium of exchange. In the best case, money should be easily transportable, durable, divisible, and have some intrinsic worth. Transportability is fairly obvious; better for a stonemason to carry a pocketful of coins to the market in the next town than to drag his wares with him to buy eggs. Durability makes sense, too. What good is money that rots or evaporates? It should *last*; it should be hard to destroy. Salt works; if it gets dissolved in water, it will be intact after the water is evaporated away. Salt doesn’t rot; it doesn’t spoil. Gold, and to lesser extents, silver and copper don’t rust or tarnish, and mixed metals can be separated again. Divisibility means you can make change

without losing value; a large gem that gets broken down into many smaller stones was much more valuable than the sum of its (smaller) parts. Paper money is inherently worthless; it has value only because people choose to believe it has value. This works in times of stability, organization, and trust. In times of disorder or uncertainty, people still flock to specie metal, because it is somewhat rare and useful for itself. It has inherent value. How many game campaigns are going to be set in entirely peaceful, orderly, law-abiding settings? On the other hand, the medium can’t be too valuable either. Money would be painfully dysfunctional if the smallest coin was a piece of gold worth ten times what the average shopkeeper earned in a year. This is exactly what happened in Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire – even the smallest coin became too valuable to spend and ended up in hoards.

But I want to use giant clamshells as a medium of exchange. Okay. Why would people use them? Have they not discovered metalworking? Is there some overpowering religious significance to giant clamshells? If you, as GM, decide to go this route, think through the implications for other aspects of the culture. Will the clamshell users be willing to “sell” the sacred clamshells to outsiders? Are the people from the next tribe/island/kingdom heretics for using the *wrong* clamshells? Will a good clam season mean inflation? Are sacred clamshells used for ceremonial purposes? (“I think he really likes you; he and your father just sat down

THE KEEPER OF THE THORN

BY TERRY AMTHOR



INTRODUCTION

This adventure is set in northwestern Jaiman. It begins in northern Saralis, but the main action happens on what was once the border between the old realms of Saralis and U-Lyshaak. It can serve as an isolated adventure, or the launching-point for a greater quest. It concerns the Order of the Thorn, one of the 'Four Orders' of northwestern Jaiman; it is an ancient Elven group that has fallen from its original ideals. In this adventure, the group discovers an Orders artifact, which leads them to a secret Thorn ritual site. There they witness a gathering of Order members, and possibly uncover the secret plot of the Thorn.

I.◊ ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The characters encounter seeing thrones, which lead them to a holy place of the Order of the Thorn, and an encounter there with some members of that cult, including one of the four Keepers of the Thorn. The adventure consists of finding this secluded location, discovering its secrets, defeating or avoiding the members of the Order there, and possibly uncovering the larger plans of the Order. The Thorn's plans are rather long-range, so the characters could continue to pursue this, or return to it later (which might be preferable if they are not high enough level to face off with the head of the order of the Thorn). However, once introduced to this faction, the characters could continue to have encounters with its minions and receive clues while engaging in other activities. This interweaving of several different plotlines can make for a richer campaign environment.



- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Town | 🏰 Tower/Castle/House | — Paved (old kingdom) road |
| ⊙ City | ⛪ Temple | - - - Dirt road |
| ★ Capital | ⛶ Tomb | - . - . Partly Overgrown road |
| ⋯ Ruin | ⚔ Ancient Battlefield | - - - Heavily Overgrown road |



G.C.P.

Guild Companion Publications

The Guild Companion is a free and independent gaming magazine, published monthly at <http://www.guildcompanion.com>, focusing on *Rolemaster*, *Spacemaster*, *HARP*, *Shadow World* and other ICE games and worlds, past and present.

Established in December 1998, *The Guild Companion* has more than a hundred issues in its archives, including articles on new rules, new professions, new spells and spell lists, monsters, treasures, complete scenarios and whole ready-to-run campaigns, reviews, fiction, gaming advice, and lots more. The Editor is always happy to receive new submissions - email editor@guildcompanion.com

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