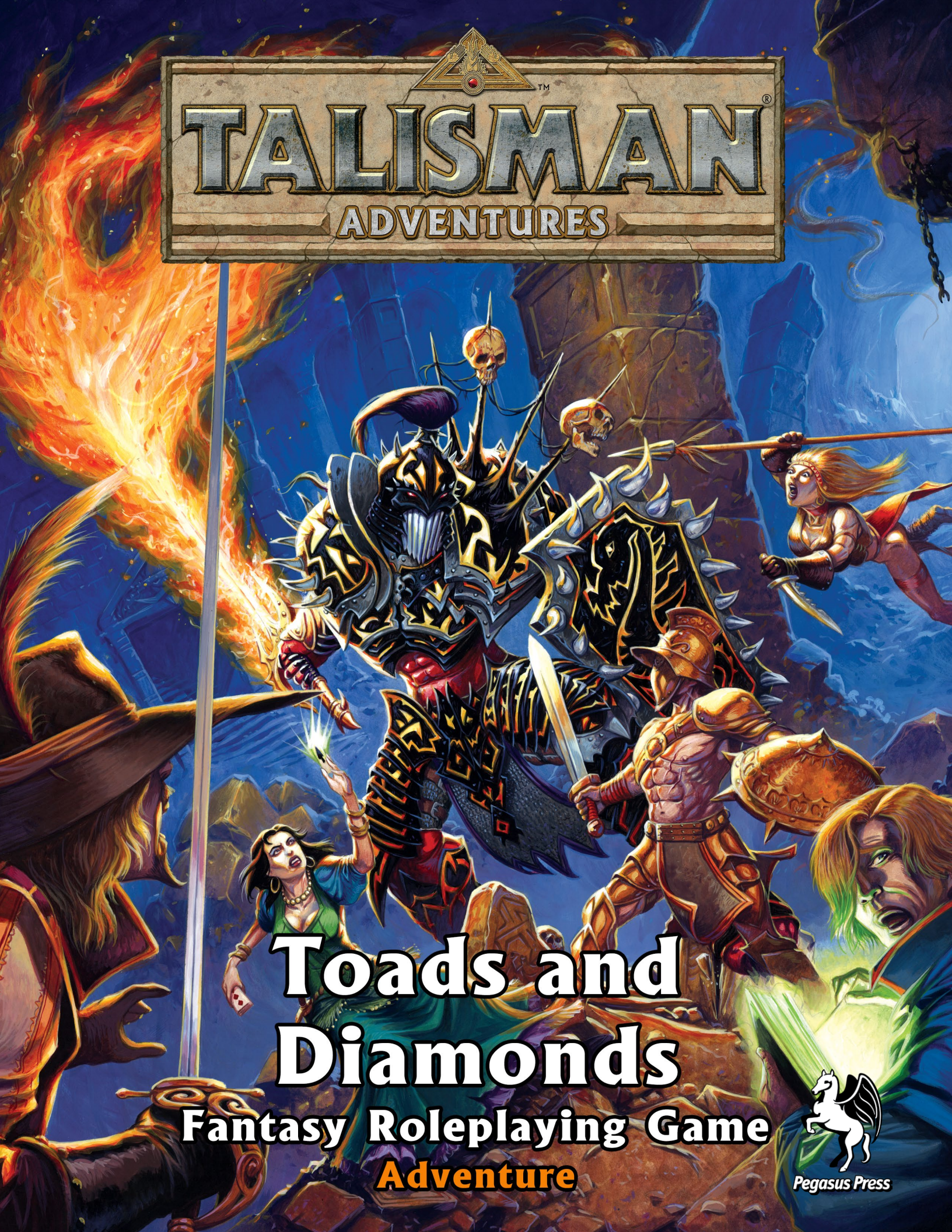
TALISMAN
ADVENTURES
Toads and Diamonds
Fantasy Roleplaying Game
Adventure
Pegasus Press

TALISMAN ADVENTURES

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TOADS AND DIAMONDS

Within these pages, you'll find a new adventure written for the *Playtest Guide* of the *Talisman Adventures—Fantasy Roleplaying Game*. It's suitable for 2nd or 3rd level characters, and it features some new monsters and challenges. The appendix has new advanced rules, many of which focus on dungeon exploration, along with a few new spells.

The adventure begins with the heroes arriving in the town of Dewberry. They quickly learn that many of the villagers have been turned into toads! All of the transformed townsfolk were miners, so after a short investigation, the characters set out to explore the mines and discover how the miners were transformed. At the bottom of the mines, our heroes discover a vast cavern filled with diamonds. Soon thereafter, they encounter giant toads and hold an audience with the tyrannical Toad King.

The Toad King declares that all the diamonds in the cavern belong to him. The miners invaded his kingdom and attempted to steal his diamonds, so he protected his realm by cursing them all. He offers to restore and release the miners, but only if the heroes agree to hunt down some thieving kobolds who were also trying to steal from him. Once the party agrees, the Toad King directs the PCs to a small tunnel in the back of the chamber.

The tunnel emerges into an underground network of tunnels. Subterranean monsters inhabit this labyrinth of ancient ruins and natural tunnels, including an army of kobolds, who decided the diamonds would make for tasty snacks. To put an end to this menace, the adventurers must explore the caverns and defeat Gorbosh, the loathsome Kobold Lord. Once the kobold problem has been eradicated, the heroes can return to the Toad King, who fulfills his promise, restores the villagers to their proper forms, and releases them back to the village.

The Beginning

Our heroes arrive in the village of Dewberry, where they're greeted with a scene of chaos in the town square. A couple dozen villagers are clustered around an old well in the centre of the square. They're shouting, crying, and frantically pointing at a large group of toads. A few toads sit on the ledge of the well; the rest hop about on the ground. Some villagers are pursuing the toads; others are down on their hands and knees, as they try to talk to them, feed them, or even sing to them. One weeping young woman sits with her back against a wall, holding a large toad in her lap. She rocks back and forth, repeatedly muttering, *"Ben… oh, Ben… I just know it's you…."*

Inquiring Minds

Presumably, the heroes want to know what's going on. As they ask the local villagers questions, allow them to make an **Investigate (Insight)** test against **Difficulty 11**.

Failure: Everyone is caught up with what they're doing, and they're too suspicious to speak to strangers. A follow-up **Persuade (Insight)** test might uncover one villager's reasons for mistrust and lead to a helpful conversation. Despite this initial failure, it's obvious that the toads are the source of the disturbance.

Success: After listening in and talking to a few of the villagers, our heroes learn that the miners who usually sleep in the village didn't come home last night. Several people from Dewberry who went up to the mines early this morning found 20 toads hopping around the entrance—that's precisely the number of miners who were working there yesterday! The toads they couldn't scoop up followed them back to town. Allegedly, someone or some*thing* is responsible for transforming them. Anyone with further inquiries is directed to speak to Mayor Aldwin.

Great Success: In addition to the information above, the party learns what happened earlier that week: The miners had broken into a cavern that appeared to be filled with diamonds. Despite possible fears about claim jumpers, the few miners who talked about this discovery in town were very excited about the promise of potential riches.

Mayor Aldwin

The mayor is an elderly man named Aldwin. He stands away from the fray under the eaves of the village tavern, where he's in the midst of a deep discussion with several village elders. As distraught villagers approach him, he does his best to comfort them before returning to his conversation. He can tell the PCs everything he knows (i.e., most of the details in **Inquiring Minds**). He then asks the PCs to search the mines to see if they can discover how the miners were transformed into toads. Mayor Aldwin can also give them a hand drawn map with directions to the mines. It shows the location where the miners discovered diamonds, but nothing beyond that point. If he's pressed further, a successful **Persuade (Insight)** test against **Difficulty 11** gets him to reveal an old legend: Most villagers have heard myths and rumors of the fabled Cavern of Diamonds somewhere beneath the tor. He suspects the miners' discovery is the legendary cave. He offers a reward of 3 gold to each adventurer if the party can discover a way to restore the miners to their original forms. Greedy or ambitious PCs can make a **Bargain (Resolve)** test against **Difficulty 14** to increase the reward.

Bargain for a Better Reward
Failure: Aldwin refuses to budge.
Success: Increase the reward to 5 gold each.
Great Success: The mayor offers a choice. The heroes can get 7 gold each or 5 gold each and 1 Healing Potion (which heals 2d6 Life or 1 Wound).
Extraordinary Success: Increase the reward to 10 gold each and 1 Healing Potion.

Dewberry

Dewberry is a small mining village that's home to about twenty families. It's found at the foot of Moonbreak Tor, south of the crags and just north of the Great Forest. The town is nestled at the base of the southern side of the tor. A track winds from the village up the side of the tor. About halfway to the top, a winding series of switchbacks ends at the entrance to a mine.

The village gets its name from the large number of dewberries growing in the region. These small plants bloom throughout the spring and summer months on dewy mornings. The flowers are white with tiny red spots. They produce small, translucent berries known for their alleged healing properties and usefulness as a sleep aid. Dewberries are sweet and have a slightly minty flavor.

Most of the villagers work in the mines, but the village also offers a variety of stores and businesses around the village square. Some cater to visitors; others are reliable suppliers for the locals. The general store carries a wide array of durable gear, a small tavern sells rooms to travellers, and three local blacksmiths are hard at work throughout the day. The oldest blacksmith specializes in weapons and armour.

Entering the Mine

To get to the mine entrance, the PCs must follow the path that climbs up the side of Moonbreak Tor. After about an hour of hiking, our heroes reach a large platform built into the side of the tor about halfway up. Miners use the platform as a place to store their equipment, along with any ore mules carry to the village later.

The main shaft slopes downward into the tor. Tracks show where wagons hauled ore up from the mine shafts. Miners have attached the wagons to a winch and pulley system, which they used to pull the wagons up out of the mines. To lower the wagons safely, someone must operate the winch, but it's currently locked. If someone chooses to break the locking mechanism (a feat that requires a combined **Strength** of **10**), they can slowly lower the wagon down on a rope. Cutting the ropes allows the wagons to roll rapidly down into the mine shaft instead. A primitive brake and a crude steering system make it easier to ride the wagon to the bottom of the shaft at a reasonable speed. Of course, once the wagon is at the bottom, there's no way to retrieve it without reattaching a rope. If the ropes are cut, successfully steering the wagon requires a **Ride** or **Tinker (Agility or Brawn)** test against **Difficulty 14**.

Riding the Wagon
Failure: The wagon gains too much speed and crashes. Everyone who was riding the wagon takes 2d6 damage (which ignores armour).
Success: The wagon is successfully steered, but it goes a little too fast, and the ride gets a little bumpy. Each rider must make a successful **Athletics (Agility)** test against **Difficulty 14** or fall off the wagon and take 2d6 damage (which ignores armour).
Great Success or better: The ride is perfectly safe.

Forks off the main shaft lead to different sections of the mine. To get to the chamber where miners discovered the diamonds, the PCs must travel to the very bottom of the main shaft. Walking requires three hours, but using the wagons takes a little less than 30 minutes. The mine shaft passes through open cavern areas and bridges that span deep chasms. The tracks end about 10 metres from an area where miners were recently digging. Through a narrow opening, our heroes can see into the legendary Cavern of Diamonds.

Cavern of Diamonds

The area beyond the mine shaft opens into a large cavern. Water drips into a deep pool of water from an unseen source high above. Numerous columns are scattered throughout the chamber, and towering stalagmites rise from the floor. Equally massive stalactites hang from the ceiling far above. The room is illuminated by a phosphorescence that emanates from moss covering many of the formations. This illumination is considered Dim Light (see **Darkness** in the first appendix). Throughout the chamber, crystals (possibly diamonds) are embedded in the walls throughout the chamber. If these really are diamonds, they're worth an emperor's ransom.

Characters can make a **Notice (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 11** or an **Investigation (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 9** test to notice that the pickaxes and other mining equipment lying around look as though they've been casually abandoned. An Extraordinary Success allows a character to notice that the room isn't empty, and the PCs aren't alone. Wedged into the corners of the room, hidden in locations almost impossible to see, a dozen giant toads lurk in the darkness.

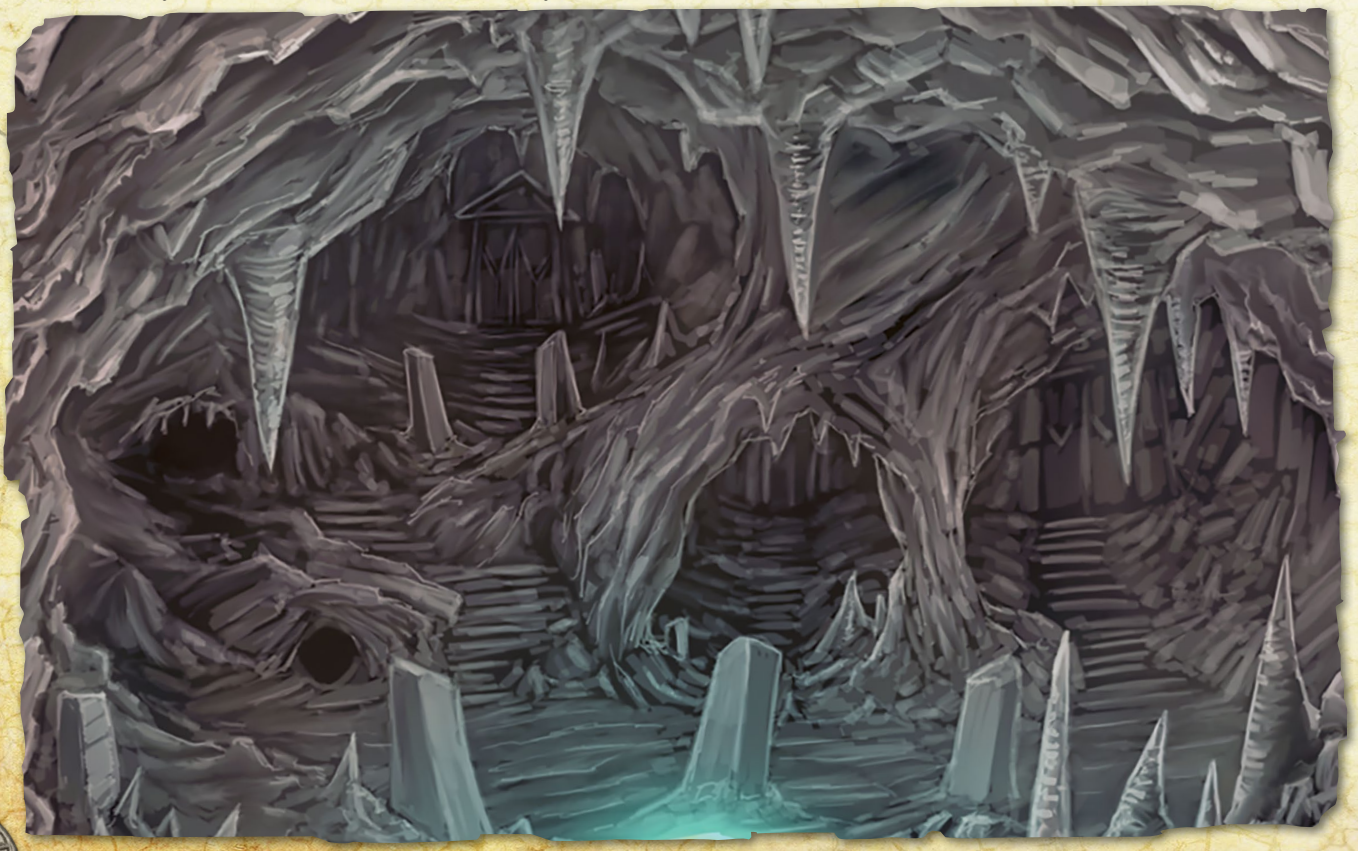
The Crystals

The rocks around the crystals appear chipped. A successful **Evaluate (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 14** reveals that yes, they are diamonds, and they would generally be worth 10 to 50 gold each. If they were cut for clarity and shape, they would be worth significantly more! This would prove problematic, however, since anyone who touches any of them is instantly transformed into a toad.

Toads!

While the characters are exploring the cavern, or right after one of them touches a diamond, the hidden giant toads wriggle from their hiding places and surround them. The toads do not attack; instead, they croak at the PCs. After a moment, our heroes hear a loud splashing as the Toad King emerges from the pool of water.

If someone in the party kills one of the toads, that character is instantly transformed into a toad. The toads do not attack unless they are attacked first, and even then, they prefer to use their Sticky Spittle special ability to immobilize enemies. If the entire party is turned into toads, the Toad King transforms one of them back to their original form and begins negotiations.



GIANT TOAD

Giant toads are found in natural places throughout the Realm, especially in and around the Great Forest. The giant toads in this adventure are part of the Court of the Toad King. They are quite intelligent (although they lack the ability to speak), and they're fiercely loyal to the Toad King.

GIANT TOAD

Neutral
Threat: 15
Armour: 3
Life: 15
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6+4 (bite)
Speed: 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sticky Spittle: A giant toad can spit a glob of goo that immobilizes a character, making it impossible for that character to move, fight, cast spells, or take any action. The target can avoid being hit by succeeding at an **Athletics (Agility)** test against **Difficulty 15**. Once per round as an action, an immobilized character can attempt to break free by successfully making an **Athletics (Brawn)** test against **Difficulty 15**.

TRAITS

Magic Resistance: These toads are under the protection of the Toad King; thus, they are immune to all magical effects.

Meeting the Toad King

The Toad King greets the heroes with a deafening croak and then proceeds to speak.

"Welcome to my realm!" the batrachian overlord grimly intones.

The Toad King treats the PCs as welcome guests, offering them food and refreshments, although the characters are unlikely to appreciate any of the "food" the toads have to offer. If the Toad King thinks a character is being impolite, or if any of the toads are killed, he turns one of the PCs into a toad.

The Toad King goes on to explain that the Cavern of Diamonds and the wealth found within it are all part of his kingdom. They have belonged to the Toad Kings "for all time," so any mortal who tries to steal diamonds is cursed to become a toad. That's what happened to the mortal miners who discovered the cave. However, the Toad King is willing to reverse the curse if the PCs help him with a problem.

Small, lizard-like creatures have been tunneling into the chamber to steal his diamonds. Somehow, they're resistant to his magic, so he can't turn them into toads. So far, his toad guardians have been able to drive them off, but several guards have been killed, and that simply isn't acceptable. Every time the toads collapse one of their tunnels, the kobolds dig another. If the PCs are willing to eradicate these pests, or at least drive them off for good, the Toad King agrees to return all the transformed villagers to their normal state. Also, if they agree, the king offers to remove his curse from any PCs who have been "toadified." If anyone asks for diamonds as well, the answer is a hard "no." The Toad King is not open to negotiation. The PCs can take his offer or leave it.

Assuming the PCs accept his offer, the toads then lead the party to a small tunnel entrance that's been obscured. Uncovering it again only takes a little digging. The tunnel is quite small, so any normal-sized character must crawl, and any troll must squeeze. A character who makes a successful **Artisan** or **Investigation (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 11** can tell that small-sized creatures (probably about one metre tall) recently dug this tunnel using mining tools. If the PCs don't accept the king's offer, they can still notice the tunnel by succeeding at the same **Artisan** or **Investigation (Wits)** check.

The small tunnel opens into a much larger oblong cavern where kobolds have recently excavated half a dozen tunnels. Numerous crudely made digging tools lie near each entrance. All the tunnels have caved in, but most of them lead back to the **Cavern of Diamonds.** The oldest passage leads to the south. It twists and turns for about 3 metres before opening into the **Chamber of Bats**. Beyond the bats, an elaborate labyrinth awaits.

1) Chamber of Bats

Ancient stalagmites, stalactites, and columns of crystal silicate fill this chamber. Shallow pools of water, no more than a few inches deep, dot the floor. Small beetles and other insects crawl around the pools. The desiccated bodies of small forest and farm animals lie decomposing on the floor.

The ceiling is vaulted. At its highest point, it's 10 to 15 metres above the floor. A group of vampire bats hide among the stalactites on the ceiling. The chamber conceals a number of Vampire Bats equal to twice the number of characters, plus an additional two. (For example, if there are 4 PCs, there are 10 Vampire Bats.) Add +2 to the Difficulty on the **Surprise Chart** (listed under **Surprise Attacks** in the core rules) unless a player specifically states that their character is keeping an eye on the stalactites or watching the ceiling. A narrow chimney hidden between two stalactites allows the vampire bats to exit the cavern and feed. Kobolds bring the vampire bats small animals in exchange for safe passage.

Two tunnels split off from the main chamber: one leads to the east (1A), and one leads to the south (1B). Both paths lead to the **Temple Chamber** (listed below).

1A) The eastern tunnel quickly narrows until it's too small for a normal-sized character to navigate. Only a sprite can make their way through this passage. A **Difficulty 14 Notice (Wits)** test allows a character to see that this passage is regularly used by small bipedal creatures (or more precisely, the kobolds).

1B) The southern passage is easily navigated. A **Difficulty 14 Notice (Wits)** test allows a character to realize that this passage is rarely or never used. This passage has a **Pit Trap** (see below).

Vampire Bat

Vampire bats are bloodsucking menaces that plague the Realm. While many different animals have their own outrageous folklore, the stories villagers tell about these winged terrors is often true. Bats of the Realm feed on anything with blood. Though they're usually content to feast on livestock, sometimes a swarm of vampire bats prefers to seek out humanoid prey.

Vampire Bat

Evil
Threat: 11
Armour: 0
Life: 6
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d3+2 (bite)
Speed: 13 (fly)

Special Abilities

Drain Blood: When this ability triggers, the creature latches onto a character and begins draining blood. Before each subsequent action that character attempts, the creature automatically causes bite damage (which

ignores armour) until the creature (or the character) is killed. Pulling a vampire bat free while it's still alive causes max damage (5 points of damage, which ignores armour).

TRAITS

Swarm: Creatures with this trait are skilled at working together to take down larger opponents. When a creature in the swarm attacks (or inflicts damage), it causes +1 damage for each additional swarm creature within range. For a Standard Success in combat, add this bonus after reducing the damage by half.

Uncharmable: The creature cannot be charmed by a minstrel's Charming Words; instead, it does not attack that minstrel unless that character attacks the creature.

Experience: 1

PIT TRAP

Concealment: +2 Difficulty

Avoidance: Moderate

Threat: 14

Damage: 2d6+3

Notes: The pit is 5 metres across and 5 metres deep. Stone spikes protrude from the floor.

2) Temple Chamber

This chamber holds a temple to an ancient and long-forgotten evil god. Valuable gemstones once studded the walls and floor, but the kobolds who live in these caverns have removed (and eaten) all of them. On the eastern side of the chamber, a crumbling statue watches over the room. Four to nine kobolds (1d6+3) are in the room when the PCs arrive.

The runes of an ancient language line the walls, but many of the letters and words have faded away (or been chewed away by kobolds). Fully deciphering the runes is nearly impossible. After taking an hour to study these words and letters, a character gains a +2 bonus to read the runes here and elsewhere; otherwise, only a few words look familiar. A successful **Decipher (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 16** allows the character to pick out enough details to realize the inscriptions were once a prayer to an ancient and evil deity. For each hour the PCs spend in this chamber, roll 1d6; on a roll of 1 or 2, 1d6 kobolds enter from the direction of the **Lizard Pit**.

The chamber has three exits. The first one is an open hallway to the east that leads to the **Lizard Pit.**

The second exit is in the southwest wall; it leads to **The Serpent's Lair**. A solid oak door blocks the exit. The door is damp and cold to the touch, but a cool breeze can be felt coming from the crack near the floor. The door is slightly swollen. It's stuck, but a good pull from a character with Strength 3 or greater can open it; anyone else must make a **Strength** test against **Difficulty 10.**

The third exit is in the southeast wall; it leads to the **Burial Chamber**. It's sealed by a massive stone door. The frame of the door is engraved with the same ancient language that appears elsewhere in the **Temple Chamber**. A character making a successful **Decipher (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 16** can interpret the warning written here: *"Only the dead walk beyond these doors."* The door has a stone lock, which requires a successful **Tinker (Agility)** test against **Difficulty 14** to open. As an alternative, it can be forced open with a combined **Strength** of **15**.

TREASURE

There is no coin or treasure in this room, since the kobolds have eaten any gems or minerals of value. However, the rubble near the statue partially conceals an ancient tome. One of the Kobolds also has an elixir (see below).

SPELL BOOK

An ancient book rests in the rubble near the statue. The unholy tome contains elaborate lore about the evil god whose ancient influence once profaned this temple. Most of the book is now illegible, but careful study allows a character to decipher one Mystic Spell.

ELIXIR OF VITALITY

After a PC drinks this potion, the first time that character's Life is reduced to 0, it is restored to full; however, the character still takes a Wound.

STATUE OF AN EVIL GOD

The statue is made of crumbling (and chewed) marble. It roughly resembles a humanoid with scaly skin and four arms, but otherwise, it is unidentifiable. A successful **Lore (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 15** allows a character to know that this was a statue of an ancient, evil, long-forgotten god from before the time of the Great Wizard.

Any character who approaches within 5 metres can sense an aura of Evil radiating from the statue. Evil or Neutral characters hear a faint whispering in their mind, *"Offer me your prayers, and I shall grant you a gift… a great gift!"* If a character kneels and offers prayers or an offering to the entity, they must roll on the following chart. Good characters suffer a −2 penalty to all tests while within 5 metres of the statue. If a Good character touches the statue (even with an object or weapon),

they must succeed at a **Fortitude (Mettle)** test against **Difficulty 17** or become poisoned, taking 1d6 damage each round for the next 1d6 rounds. If a character uses a Shatter spell on the statue, or if the statue takes 20 Life of damage, the statue is destroyed and no longer has any magical effects.

Effects of Evil Character Praying

Roll 1d6
1: Poison Touch—The character can emit poison through their hands, which causes 1d6 damage per round for 1d6 rounds. They can use this effect 1d6 times.
2: Abyssal Fire—The character can hurl magical fire at one target within 30 metres. Use **Craft** for the attack test; a successful roll inflicts 3d6+Craft damage.
3: Extra Life—Gain 1d6 additional temporary Life. (Once it's gone, that Life cannot be regained.)
4: Fury—The character gains +2 damage on all attacks (physical and magical) until the next sunset.
5: Wealth—The character gains 1d6 gold worth of gemstones.
6: Follower—The character gains an Imp or Spirit Follower.

Effects of Neutral Character Praying

Roll 1d6
1: Cursed—The character grows horns that last until the next full moon. When the character encounters Good or Neutral NPCs, those NPCs are at least Suspicious; alternatively, any random rolls to determine an NPC's Attitude have a −2 penalty. (See **Attitude** in the core rules.)
2: Evil Fortitude—For one month, any time the character inflicts damage to a creature with a Good alignment, they heal 1d6 Life.
3: Extra Life—Gain 1d6 additional temporary Life. (Once it's gone, that Life cannot be regained.)
4: **Smite**—The character gains +2 damage on all attacks against any creature with a Good alignment. This effect lasts one month.
5: Follower—The character gains an Imp or Spirit Follower. The entity constantly whispers to the character and tries to get them to commit evil actions. Each time the character performs a "Good" action (as determined by the GM), the Follower loses 1 Loyalty.
6: The character's alignment changes to Evil.

KOBOLD

These small, dragon-like creatures are often found lurking in mines or dwelling in barren, rocky areas. They feast on the remnants of rare ores, which they try to unearth with crude picks and chisels. Intelligent and cautious creatures, they can provide formidable complications for any adventurers who try to steal their edible wealth. Kobolds are fiercely territorial. While clever characters can reason with them, kobolds have thoroughly inhuman desires. Why negotiate and bargain when there are gems and gold to be consumed? Bribery might get you through kobold-protected areas, but what hero is prepared to give up their hard-won loot? Kobolds pick their battles (and their gemstones) carefully.

KOBOLD

Neutral
Threat: 11
Armour: 3 (scaly hide)
Life: 10
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6+1 (sharpened stick)
Speed: 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Metal Diet: Subsisting entirely on a diet of metal and ore, kobolds are frequently aghast by adventurers' scandalous waste of good food. They often see heroes carrying around "movable feasts" attached to their belts. On a Failure or Standard Success on an attack against a kobold, the GM may choose to negate all damage; the Kobold eats the character's weapon instead. That means the victim of this feast is effectively disarmed until they acquire a new weapon.

TRAITS

Swarm: Creatures with this trait are skilled at working together to take down larger opponents. When a creature in the swarm attacks (or inflicts damage), it inflicts +1 damage for each additional swarm creature within range. For a Standard Success in combat, add this bonus after reducing the damage by half.
Experience: 1

3) The Serpent's Lair

The passage leading to this chamber slopes down at a steep angle. It's well-worn and extremely slick. Unless precautions are taken (such climbing with a rope and pitons), each character must make a successful **Difficulty 14 Athletics (Agility)** test to safely descend. Any PC who fails slides down the passage into the water below. The slide causes 1d3 damage (which ignores armour), and the character lands in about a metre of water. The first character to take the plunge is also automatically surprised by the serpents that live here.

A vast subterranean lake dominates the chamber. Its pellucid waters continue far into the distance. Along the shore, there's a short shallow area, but beyond that, the water quickly gets deeper. A few metres out, the lakebed drops to 1 metre of depth. Five metres out, the water is 3 metres deep. Ten metres out, characters are unlikely to plumb its depths.

The skeletons of kobolds and other creatures lie scattered along the shore. Glittering gold and gemstones tempt explorers to swim out into the shallows. One alleged gemstone is actually a Luck Stone (see **Treasure**

below). As soon as the surface of the water is disturbed, two serpents in the water attack. Because they're waiting beneath the water, the serpents make their Surprise test with a −2 penalty.

If a character is affected by a serpent's **Strangle** special ability while in the water, that character risks drowning. Each round (before taking any other action), the character must make a **Fortitude (Mettle)** test against **Difficulty 11**. This Difficulty increases by 3 each round. If a character fails this test, their Life is reduced to 0, they are dying, and they must make a Death Test each subsequent round.

TREASURE

Gold & Gems: The shallows contain 2d6+3 gold worth of gold and gems.

LUCK STONE

When you gain Light Fate, you can store it in your Luck Stone. Up to three Light Fate can be stored this way. When all three Light Fate have been used, the stone crumbles. Anyone can use Light Fate after it's stored, but the person using the Light Fate must be carrying the Luck Stone.

SERPENT

These limbless reptiles are found throughout the Realm in all but the coldest environments, appearing in many shapes, colours, and sizes. Despite the plethora of species, serpents come in two basic varieties: constricting and venomous. Constricting serpents wrap tightly around their prey, suffocating and squeezing them to death, while venomous serpents subdue their prey with a deadly bite. Both varieties of serpents swallow their food whole.

SERPENT

Neutral
Threat: 16
Armour: 9
Life: 15
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6+4 (bite) or 1d6+2 (constriction, which ignores armour)
Speed: 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Strangle: When this ability is triggered, the serpent attempts to strangle its prey. The target must make a **Melee** or **Athletics (Brawn)** test against **Difficulty 16**.
Failure: The target is immobilized. Each round, they take 1d6+2 constriction damage (which ignores armour) until they can free themselves by successfully making the same **Athletics** or **Melee** test. The victim is also subject to bite attacks.
Success: The target does not take damage, but they're immobilized. Each round, they can attempt to break free with another **Athletics** or **Melee** test.
Great Success or better: No effect.

TRAITS

Slither: A serpent can move at full speed through water and over rough terrain, even while it's climbing.
Experience: 3

4) Burial Chamber

This chamber is an ancient crypt. One wall has sepulchers arranged in rows four across and three high (for a total of twelve). Each one is covered with a carved stone end cap, complete with an engravement of the (presumed) name of its occupant. Anyone removing an end cap finds the remains of an ancient skeleton holding a sword. When the remains are disturbed, the skeleton animates and attacks.

An ornately carved sarcophagus rests on a raised dais at the far end of the chamber. More ancient writing lines the lid and body of the sarcophagus. A successful **Decipher (Wits)** test against **Difficulty 16** reveals the translation: *"Let the dead rest in peace. My warriors protect me, even in death."*

One of the sepulchers is empty, save for a secret door, which opens into a narrow tunnel. A troll could fit into this passageway, but they'd have to wriggle a bit. This tunnel opens into **Gorbosh's Lair**. Only one character can pass through at a time.

Skeleton

Doomed creatures stripped down to the very bone, skeletons are animated by the dark forces that brought them back from the dead. These necromantic puppets can follow simple commands and perform basic tasks, but they have no true intelligence of their own; thus, they are unable to think or adapt. A single skeleton is hardly a threat to most adventurers, but a mob of unyielding bone warriors is a grim and dangerous hazard.

Skeleton

Evil
Threat: 14
Armour: 0
Life: 12
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d3+2 (unarmed), 1d6+2 (sword or bow)
Speed: 10

Special Abilities

Undead Fortitude: If a skeleton does not receive enough physical damage in a single attack to completely destroy its body, all damage from the attack is negated. Psychic damage cannot be negated this way.

Traits

Resistant to Blades: Skeletons take half damage from bladed weapons or arrows, due to their lack of flesh or vital organs.
Experience: 2

Sarcophagus

The sarcophagus slides open easily, but opening it requires a total of **Strength** of **10**. Opening it also triggers a dart trap (see below). Additionally, as soon as the lid is moved, four skeletons break through their stone end caps and attack. After at least one skeleton is destroyed, the GM can spend 1 Dark Fate each round to animate an additional skeleton. Since there's one skeleton in each sepulcher, up to 11 skeletons can attack.

Inside the sarcophagus, a decayed and desiccated skeleton clutches a gleaming sword; its corpse cannot be animated. The sword's hilt is crafted from gold and encrusted with rubies. The skeleton also wears a ruby necklace and a jewelled ring.

Dart Trap

Concealment: +2 Difficulty

Avoidance: Moderate

Threat: 14

Damage: (1d3 darts) 1d3

Notes: Anyone within 5 metres is within range of the darts.

Treasure

Spell Ring

Holds 1 spell. Any spellcaster can choose to place a spell inside the ring simply by casting the spell while wearing the ring. Once the ring contains the spell, the wearer can cast it once per day without spending Spell Points.

Flaming Sword

This blade is always hot to the touch. When its power hasn't been activated, it inflicts normal sword damage plus 1 point of damage from heat. Once per day, it can be ignited into flame that causes an additional 1d6 damage; the effect lasts for 10 minutes or until the end of combat.

Ruby Necklace

This non-magical ornament is worth 5 gold.

5) Lizard Pit

A ledge two to three metres wide skirts the edge of this cavern. An earthen ramp leads down into a pit where a dozen giant lizards are protecting a clutch of eggs. Four harnesses and saddles (kobold size) hang on the wall at the top of the ramp. Lizard tracks lead to a tunnel in the eastern wall, which leads to the **Kobold Lair**.

The lizards in the pit are currently sleeping. Characters can avoid them by making a successful **Stealth (Agility)** test against **Difficulty 11.** If the test fails, 1d3 of the lizards awaken each round and begin scrambling up the ramp.

GIANT LIZARD

Neutral
Threat: 14
Armour: 6
Life: 10
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6+2 (bite)
Speed: 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Powerful Bite: The lizard clamps down on its target; it will not release its grip until it's killed. Until that happens, the character continues to take 1d6+2 damage (which ignores armour) each round.

Experience: 2

TREASURE

Coins worth 1d6+4 gold lie scattered among the pile of debris and bones in the pit. The small hoard also contains a suit of chainmail, a shield, a helm, a long sword, a dagger, and an axe. They're all battered and beaten, but they're serviceable.

6) Kobold Lair

This large cavern is home to many of the kobolds who serve the Kobold Lord, Gorbosh. A cold stream runs through the northwest side of the room, flowing towards a waterfall. Its turbulent waters cascade down into a passage in the southwest wall that leads to the **Lizard Pit**. A ladder alongside the waterfall grants access to the Kobold Lair. The water is shallow enough for wading.

On the southeast side of the room, a drop-off and an opening lead to **Gorbosh's Lair**. Another ladder here provides an easy way for kobolds to climb up and down.

A single kobold usually keeps watch at the top of the waterfall. As with all kobolds, he has Tunnel Sight, so he can see down the passageway; however, the kobold on watch is often bored and distracted. Any **Stealth** test to sneak up on this location is made at +2.

The rest of the kobolds are clustered toward the back of the room, where they've got a few cooking fires going. They're roasting toads, gambling, drinking, and sleeping.

The number of kobolds here is equal to 8 plus the number of player characters.

TREASURE

Kobolds tend to eat any minerals and gems they come across, so they don't have any coin. However, searching the kobolds' living area reveals a magical staff, an elixir, and a captured Follower.

STAFF OF LIGHT

This staff can emit illumination equivalent to torchlight from its tip. Its wielder can illuminate or extinguish this light at will as a free action.

ELIXIR OF WISDOM

Drinking this potion gives a character +1 to all Craft tests and Craft-Aspect-related tests (i.e., Wits, Insight, and Resolve tests) for 1 hour.

PHYSICIAN (FOLLOWER)

The kobolds have a Physician as a prisoner. If rescued, the Physician can become a Follower. For the duration of the adventure, the rescued Follower offers his services for free, but afterwards, normal rules (and rates) apply. After any battle, the Physician Follower can treat each character by removing 1 Wound or healing 1d6 Life.

7) GORBOSH'S LAIR

The passage leading from the **Kobold Lair** to this location has a magical trap inscribed on the floor.

EXPLOSIVE TRAP (MAGICAL)

Concealment: 0

Threat: 16 (circumvented with **Lore** or **Spellcraft**; see below)

Avoidance: Moderate

Damage: 3d6

Special: Destroys one flammable object that the character is carrying or wearing.

Notes: When non-kobolds pass through the area, the trap triggers a fiery explosion with a range of 3 metres that causes 3d6 damage.

Anyone caught in the blast makes an **Agility (Athletics)** test against **Difficulty 16**; the character who triggers the trap has a –2 to this test. Roll 3d6 damage. Anyone in the area of effect who fails the test takes that amount of damage; a successful test reduces that damage by half.

The trap consists of many invisible runes inscribed on the passageway. If someone notices the trap, a character can make a **Lore (Wits)** test to figure out a path that avoids the runes; anyone with **Spellcraft** may attempt to disarm it. Either way, the **Difficulty** is **16**.

If this trap is triggered, Gorbosh and the Kobold Mage are alerted to the presence of intruders. Gorbosh immediately responds by using his **Discipline in the Ranks** special ability.

Beyond the trapped passageway lies the lair of Gorbosh the Kobold Lord. This tyrant has enlisted the aid of a Kobold Mage named Izika. She's assisting him by protecting kobolds from the Toad King's curse. The centre of the room features a cooking fire, scattered cookery implements, a mound of refuse from various subterranean creatures, and a few well-fed rats. One comfortable corner of the chamber contains bedding and private living space for Gorbosh and the Kobold Mage, as well as a large, locked chest. The opposite corner shelters a small workshop for the mage; her accoutrements include a spellbook with Arcane spells and several potions (see **Treasure** below).

A passage leads from the eastern wall of the room. Its corridors wind for several kilometres before exiting near the eaves of the Great Forest. If Gorbosh uses his **Discipline in the Ranks** special ability, more kobolds can "appear" from this passage.

GORBOSH (KOBOLD LORD)

Gorbosh is enormous. He's easily 50% bigger than the average kobold. He rules his tribe with an iron fist, and none dare disobey his orders. He brought his tribe to these caverns several months ago in search of the fabled Cavern of Diamonds. After digging several tunnels, they eventually found diamonds, but they soon discovered that touching them passed on a curse that turned them into toads. He immediately sought out Izika, a legendary kobold wizard, and enlisted her aid.

Gorbosh is a brute, but he is no fool. If he appears to be outnumbered, or if he's losing a battle, he's willing to negotiate and could be convinced to leave the caverns.

GORBOSH

Evil
Threat: 16
Armour: 9
Life: 18
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6+6 (Spiked Club)
Speed: 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Discipline in the Ranks: The Kobold Lord can intimidate other kobolds into obeying his orders and following him. When Gorbosh is present, the GM may spend one Dark Fate to have the Kobold Lord summon 1d6 kobolds to aid in his fight.

Acid Spit: Gorbosh spits acid, destroying his target's armour or shield.

TRAITS

Unstoppable Fury: When Gorbosh has been reduced to a third of his original Life, he becomes enraged, desperate to kill his enemies before he succumbs. Until he is killed, the Kobold Lord make 2 attacks per round instead of one.

Experience: 5

IZIKA (KOBOLD WIZARD)

Izika is highly intelligent for a kobold, and she was fortunate enough to find a wizard who was willing to teach her the arcane arts. A rarity amongst her kind, her services are in high demand. When Gorbosh contacted her and informed her that he had discovered the fabled Cavern of Diamonds, she jumped at the chance to assist him, since diamonds are often sought as magical components. Of course, they're also a kobold delicacy.

She immediately set about devising a defense against "toadification." After a few short weeks, she successfully created a potion that could protect an imbiber from the curse.

Izika is a coward. If a fight against attacking adventurers starts to go poorly, she flees. She also has the option of using her Blink spell to move as far away as possible from intruders; she can then attack a PC she can see with her Lighting Bolt.

IZIKA

Evil
Threat: 15
Armour: 3
Life: 12
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d3+1 (dagger)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Lighting Spell:** The Kobold Mage can cast a Lighting spell that causes 1d6+4 damage to a chosen character it can see. That character must make a **Fortitude (Mettle)** test against the Kobold Mage's Threat Rating; on a failed roll, the character is stunned for 1 round.
- **Blink Spell:** The Kobold Mage can teleport to any location it can see within 100 metres.

Experience: 4

TREASURE

IRONBOUND CHEST

The chest is made of stout iron and firmly locked shut. Picking the lock requires a successful **Tinkering (Agility)** test againt **Difficulty 14**. The chest contains 2d6+6 gold worth of coins and gemstones (saved for later snacking) and an Everfull Purse (see below).

SPELL BOOK

This weathered tome contains 2 Arcane spells.

RESIST TOADIFY POTION (6)

The treasure horde also includes 6 draughts of a Resist Toadify Potion. Drinking a potion allows you to completely resist being transformed into a toad. A character who has already been transformed into a toad immediately reverts to their normal state; otherwise, the resistance lasts for one hour.

EVERFULL PURSE

Once per week, the owner of this purse can draw 1d6 gold from it. The purse can only have one owner each week.

Appendix I: Advanced Rules

Darkness

Darkness is a pervasive hazard for many adventurers. At night, forests can become pitch black, and caves and dungeons are often inhabited by enemies that do not require light to see. Many underground dwellers, spirits, undead, and most goblinoids are not hindered by darkness. A character's Ancestry might include Tunnel Sight, which allows them to see normally in darkness underground, or Night Sight, or which helps them to see normally above ground at night.

Not all dungeons are dark. Some inhabited areas may be lit, either because their residents cannot see in the dark or because other sources of illumination are present, such as cooking fires. A few dungeons are illuminated by more exotic sources, such as glowing fungus or ancient magics.

For purposes of the game, Darkness is divided into three categories: Brightly Lit, Dimly Lit, and Pitch Dark. Each has its own effects and modifiers.

Brightly Lit

An area with torches, lanterns, magical light, or broad daylight is Brightly Lit. The area has no adverse effects.

Dimly Lit

An outdoor area at evening twilight or an area that's at the edge of torchlight, lantern light, or magical light is Dimly Lit. During the day, a dense forest might also be Dimly Lit.

The area has the following effects:

- No effect on melee combat tests.
- Characters have −2 to all ranged combat tests.
- Characters have −2 to all **Notice** tests that involve sight.
- Characters have +2 to **Stealth** tests.

Pitch Dark

If an area has no light at all, it is Pitch Dark.

The area has the following effects:

- Characters automatically fail any Notice test that involves sight.
- A character cannot target a spell that affects anyone other than themself or an object they are touching.
- Ranged attacks automatically miss.
- Melee attacks have a −6 penalty.
- If a character's melee attack fails, the GM can spend ● to cause that character to hit an ally within range for full damage.
- A character can move, but every third metre, the GM gets to determine the direction of movement. Facing matters: the GM can choose left, right, forward, or either forward diagonal.

Traps

Traps are a common feature in many dungeons, and they take many forms. A chest might conceal a needle trap or gas trap. A hallway or room might contain a pit trap or magical runes.

Noticing a Trap

Observant characters can usually spot a trap if they're sufficiently vigilant. They might notice magical runes that activate a magical trap, tripwires that trigger a deadfall, small holes in a wall or chest concealing darts, cracks in the floor outlining a pit trap, or any number of other clues.

The chances of noticing a trap vary depending upon the nature of the trap. The base Difficulty is determined by how observant the characters want to be; this also affects the rate at which character travel. Each trap then

has a modifier for how well hidden or obscured it is. Searching an object (such as a chest) for a trap has a base Difficulty of 14.

Noticing a Trap

Character Status	Difficulty
Alert and carefully searching (1/4 move)	11
"Keeping an eye out" (1/2 move)	14
Not searching (full move)	17
Distracted (by combat or another activity)	20

Trap Concealment

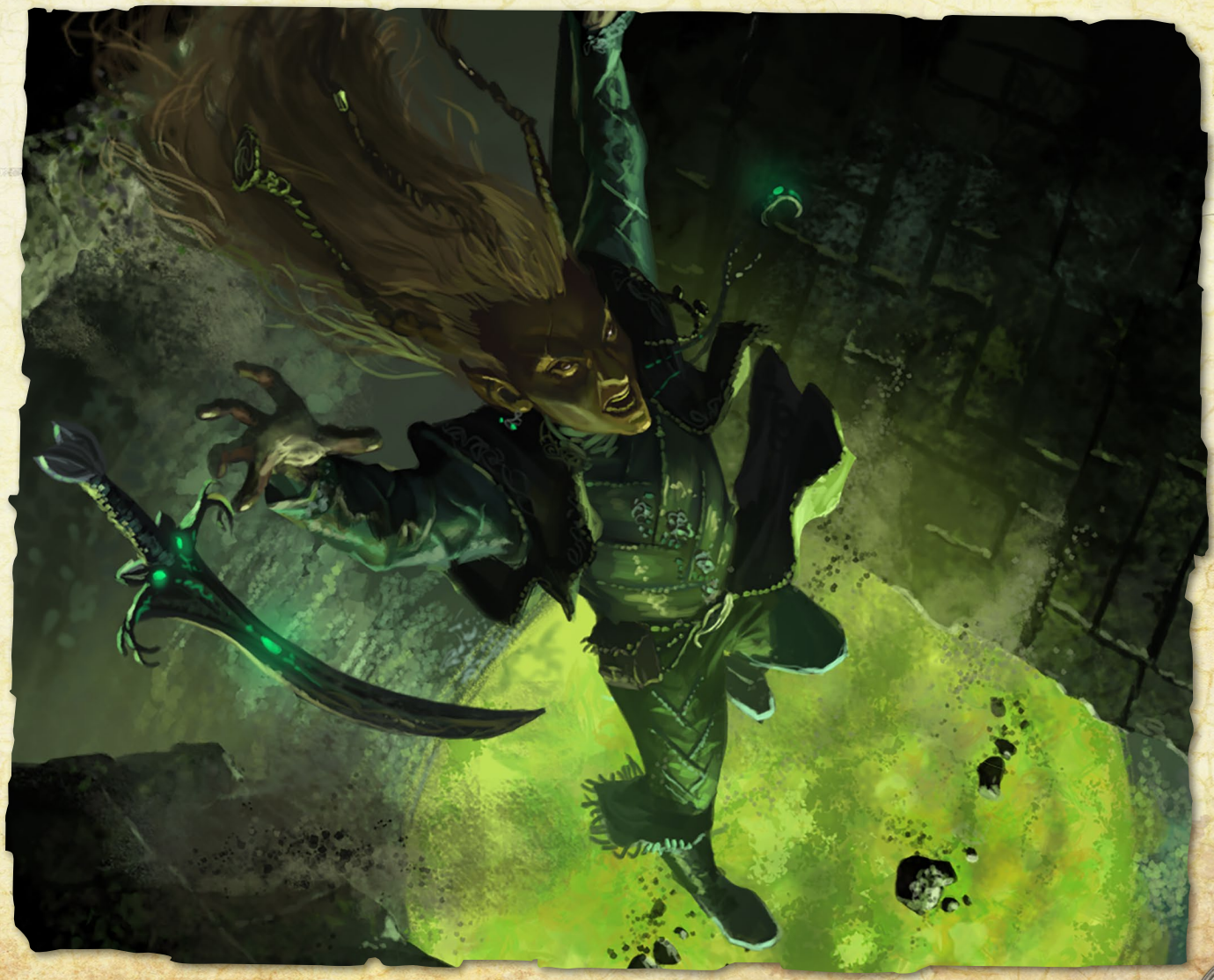
Concealment	Difficulty Modifier
Obvious	–2
Standard	0
Well-Concealed	+2
Nearly Invisible	+4
Nearly Impossible	+6

Trap Detection Results

Failure: The character does not notice and triggers the trap.
Standard Success: A character notices the trap but may need to make an additional **Athletics** or **Sleight of Hand (Agility)** test to avoid triggering it.
Great Success: The PC notices the trap before triggering it and can attempt to avoid or deactivate it.
Extraordinary Success: The PC notices the trap and gets a bonus to avoid or deactivate it.

Avoiding or Disabling a Trap

Once the characters discover a trap, they must decide if they want to avoid or disable it. Some traps can be skirted completely: you can step around a pressure plate, avoid a trip wire, or jump over a pit (or just walk around it, if it's in the middle of a room). Avoiding a trap often involves a test, although in many cases, this might be quite easy. Each trap has an Avoidance



Magical Traps

Magical traps work a little differently. A character must have **Lore** or **Spellcasting** to be able to detect and disarm a magical trap. If the character has either skill, they can attempt a **Notice (Wits)** test to detect the trap (as described previously).

Once a magical trap is detected, the character can attempt to disarm or avoid it. A character with Lore can try to devise a means to avoid the trap, but Spellcasting is necessary to permanently disarm it.

Difficulty, although the GM decides the final test and Difficulty based on what the players decide to do. **Agility (Athletics)** is a common test for avoiding a trap, although there are other possibilities.

Disarming a trap is trickier process. Generally, one wrong move triggers the trap. Each trap has a Threat Rating (just like an enemy) that determines how difficult it is to disarm. Generally, **Tinker (Agility)** is used to disarm a (non-magical) trap.

Disarming Trap Chart
Failure: The attempt to disarm the trap fails and triggers the trap.
Standard Success: The trap is disarmed, but only partially or temporarily; alternatively, the mechanism might be broken, making it impossible to reset.
Great Success or better: The trap is completely disarmed; it can be reset.

Triggering a Trap

If a character unwittingly triggers a trap, they (and anyone in the affected area) suffer the full effects of the trap. Sometimes, characters may choose to deliberately trigger a trap they have found, especially if they don't have the means to disarm it. In this case, the trap still takes effect but does not harm the characters unless they are within its area of effect. Some traps automatically reset after being triggered, but many are one use, making the area safe to pass once triggered.

Environmental Effects

Drowning

Assuming they catch their breath beforehand, a character can hold their breath underwater for a number of minutes equal to their Strength divided by 2 (round up). At the end of this time, they must make a **Fortitude (Mettle)** test with a **Difficulty** of **11**. This Difficulty increases by 3 each round. If the character fails this test, their Life is reduced to 0, and they are dying.

If a character is suddenly submerged (other otherwise deprived of air), they must attempt this test on their next action (and each subsequent turn until they breathe or die).

Falling

Falling is a risk that every adventure takes. They might fall while scaling a cliff or become the victim of a cleverly hidden pit trap. A character that falls takes 1d6 damage for every 2 metres fallen. If the character is aware that they're at risk of falling (as when an explorer tries to climb a castle wall), they can attempt an **Athletics (Agility)** test against **Difficulty 14** to reduce the damage by half. A character who is unaware that they might fall (such as an intruder who falls into a pit trap) cannot attempt this test.

Player vs. Player

PvP combat is resolved in much the same way as regular combat, but with a few modifications. The GM determines whether the game includes PvP and when it occurs.

Indicate Target: Each player indicates their target and type of attack simultaneously. If more than one character is involved, have each player write down their target and type of attack on a slip of paper.

Roll Tests: Have each player make their rolls simultaneously. The Difficulty (or Threat) for a target is equal to their Strength or Craft (whichever is appropriate) + 10. Any Fate spent should be spent at this time.

Determine Outcome: Determine the outcome of each test. In most cases, the order of determination doesn't matter. At the GM's discretion, multiple effects may resolve simultaneously. This could result in more than one character being rendered unconscious.

Appendix II: Spells

ACQUISITION

Arcane, Basic, Common, Costs 1 Spell Point

Fledgling casters seeking wealth often use this spell. You can channel arcane energy to reach through space and lift valuables from a target. Choose an object of value you can see that's small enough to fit in the palm of your hand. As a Major Action, attempt a **Difficulty 11 Spellcasting** test. On a success, the targeted object teleports into your possession. At the Game Master's discretion, the caster may need to make a separate **Sleight of Hand (Wits)** test (with a Difficulty based on how obvious the object is) to determine if anyone notices the spell effect.

AUGURY

Mystic, Basic, Common, Costs 1 Spell Point

You can receive impressions of the future and use them to sense approaching danger. As a Major Action, attempt a **Difficulty 11 Spellcasting** test. On a success, you and your allies cannot be surprised for a number of hours equal to your Craft (although partial surprise may still affect you).

BLACK ICE

Nature, Basic, Common, Costs 1 Spell Point

You can cover a patch of ground in nearly invisible black ice. The area affected is 3 metres by 3 metres. Anyone entering this area who does not see the ice immediately falls prone and slides to the far edge of the affected area; they also take 1d3 damage (which ignores armour). Casting the spell is a Major Action, and it requires a **Difficulty 11 Spellcasting** test. If the number rolled exceeds an enemy's Threat Rating, they do not see the ice. PCs can make a **Notice (Wits)** test with a Difficulty equal to the number rolled on the casting test. Anyone who is aware of the ice can move over it, but only at half Speed. Running across the affect area forces them to immediately fall.

MISFORTUNE

Arcane or Mystic, Basic, Common, Costs 1 Spell Point

You can manipulate the laws of probability to turn someone else's luck against them. Choose a creature you can see. As a Major Action, attempt a **Spellcasting** test with a Difficulty equal to the target's Threat Rating. If the result meets or exceeds the target's Threat Rating, the target suffers misfortune. The next character to act against the target increases the success of their result by a single step. Thus, a failure becomes a Standard Success, a standard success becomes a Great Success, and so on.

SPEED

Nature, Basic, Uncommon, Costs 1 Spell Point

You can cast aside the weight of time. This allows you or one target you can see to move at increased speed. As a Minor Action, attempt a **Difficulty 11 Spellcasting** test. If successful, the target's movement speed is doubled for a number of rounds equal to your Craft.

TWIST OF FATE

Arcane or Mystic, Basic, Common, Costs 1 Spell Point

You can manipulate probability to benefit yourself or an ally. Cast this spell on yourself or an ally that's within reach. As a Major Action, attempt a **Difficulty 11 Spellcasting** test. On a success, fate intervenes to help the target on its next test: the next time the target attempts a test, one of the dice automatically rolls a 6 (that is, you can change one of the dice to a 6 after the roll is made). The die affected by the spell cannot be the Kismet Die.

TALISMAN ADVENTURES

CHARACTER NAME:

PLAYER NAME:

Ancestry:

Class:

Experience Points: Level:

Background:

Alignment:

Age: Height: Weight:

Eyes: Hair:

Description:

- ☐ STRENGTH
- ☐ BRAWN
- ☐ AGILITY
- ☐ METTLE
- ☐ CRAFT
- ☐ INSIGHT
- ☐ WITS
- ☐ RESOLVE

SKILLS

EQUIPMENT

LOAD

SPELLS

SPELL POINTS:

MAGIC ITEMS

FOLLOWERS

SPECIAL ABILITIES

GOLD: MAX LOAD:

ARMOUR

TYPE: PROTECTION:

HELM: Y/N SHIELD: Y/N

COMBAT

PHYSICAL DAMAGE MODIFIER:

PSYCHIC DAMAGE MODIFIER:

SPEED: LIFE: LIGHT FATE:

WEAPONS

BONUS DAMAGE

WOUNDS

☐ -2 ☐ -4 ☐ -6 ☐ -8 ☐ -10

DEATH TESTS

☐ *DIFF. 8* ☐ *DIFF. 9* ☐ *DIFF. 10* ☐ *DIFF. 11* ☐ *DIFF. 12, ETC.*

Toads and Diamonds is an adventure for the *Talisman Adventures—Fantasy Roleplaying Game Playtest Guide*. It contains an adventure suitable for characters of 2nd to 3rd level and adds new monsters, spells, and magic items. The rules are also expanded, including details on traps, as well as environmental hazards such as darkness, falling, and drowning.

Upon arriving at the mining town of Dewberry, the heroes discover that the miners who live in the town have been transformed into toads. The heroes must delve into the mines beneath Moonbreak Tor to discover the cause of the curse and hopefully restore the miners to their proper forms.

The *Playtest Guide* for the *Talisman Adventures—Fantasy Roleplaying Game* is needed to play this adventure.

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