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THE WYRMSLAYER

Solo Adventure in Robert E. Howard's Hyborian Age

By W. G. Armintrout



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Can you conquer the SNOW DEVIL?

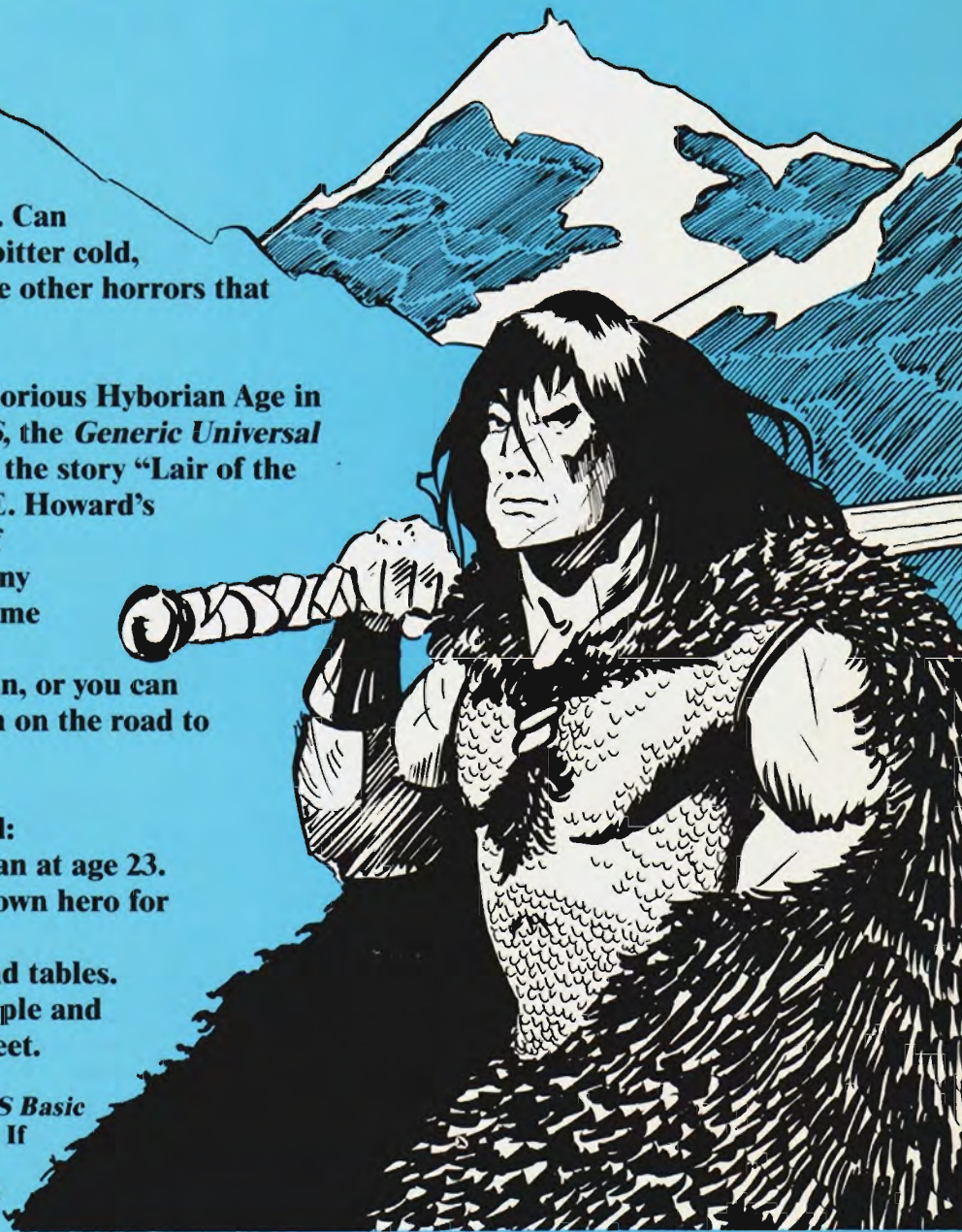
The Æsir speak of Snow Devil Pass with dread — and with good reason. Whole parties have vanished there without a trace. Can the mighty Conan master the bitter cold, the savage beastmen — and the other horrors that lie beyond?

Live the adventure of the glorious Hyborian Age in this solo adventure for *GURPS*, the *Generic Universal RolePlaying System*. Based on the story "Lair of the Ice Worm," featuring Robert E. Howard's legendary barbarian, Conan of Cimmeria, it can be played many times without repeating the same adventure. You can relive the adventures of the mighty Conan, or you can send a hero of your own design on the road to fame and glory.

Inside this book, you'll find:

- *GURPS* statistics for Conan at age 23.
- Rules for designing your own hero for this adventure.
- All the necessary maps and tables.
- Game statistics of the people and animals your character will meet.

Note: You need only the *GURPS Basic Set* in order to play this adventure. If you enjoy this adventure, look for *GURPS Conan*, the complete guide to Conan and the Hyborian Age.



Written by W. G. Armintrout

Edited by Creede Lambard

Cover art by Val Lakey Lindahn and Ron Lindahn

Illustrated by Charlie Wiedman

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By W.G. Armintrout

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Cover art by Val Lakey Lindahn and Ron Lindahn

Interior art by Charlie Wiedman

GURPS System Design by Steve Jackson

Ken Trobaugh, Managing Editor

Lloyd Blankenship, Assistant Managing Editor

Layout and Typography by Monica Stephens and Creede Lambard

Production by Charlie Wiedman and Carl Manz

Dedicated to Darby Levenhagen, who truly understands barbarians

Playtesters: Robert N. Gilson, Dana Holm, Steve Jensen,

Curtis M. Scott, William D. Seurer,

Brett Slocum and the SJG-BBS Illuminati



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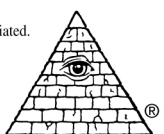
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INSTRUCTIONS

The Original Story

This adventure is based on "Lair of the Ice Worm," a story written by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter. It appears in the book *Conan of Cimmeria*. If you haven't read the story, play this adventure first — that will preserve the surprises.

The continuing adventures of Conan are detailed in several other Steve Jackson Games solo adventures, including *Conan Beyond Thunder River* and *Conan and the Queen of the Black Coast*. Complete rules for adventuring in Robert E. Howard's Hyborian Age are provided in the *GURPS Conan* worldbook.

About Robert E. Howard

Robert Ervin Howard was born in Peaster, Texas in 1906 and died in Cross Plains, Texas 30 years later. He completed high school and had a few hours of non-credit business college courses, but most of his education came through omnivorous reading.

From his late teens he supported himself principally as a freelance writer. In his brief life, he wrote stories for almost all the pulp-magazine genres, creating heroes such as Kull of Atlantis and Puritan adventurer Solomon Kane. But his greatest success came through *Weird Tales* magazine, which published his stories chronicling the Hyborian Age adventures of Conan of Cimmeria.

More than 50 years after his death, Howard's Conan stories not only remain in print, but are continued and elaborated on by a new generation of writers. Adaptations of his work have appeared as novels, short stories, comics, movies and adventure games.

About the Author

W.G. Armintrout is a native Californian who has been working professionally in the game industry for more than a decade. He now lives in Austin, Texas, where he divides his time between freelance writing assignments and Jovialis, his editing company.

His previous work for Steve Jackson Games includes a *Car Wars* adventure (*Mean Streets*), a *GURPS Space/Horror* adventure (*Flight 13*), and three *GURPS* solo adventures: *Beyond Thunder River* for *Conan*, *Up Harzburg!* for *Horseclans*, and *For Love of Mother-Not*, a Pip-and-Flinx *Humanx* adventure.

Conan the Wyrmslayer is the latest in a series of *GURPS* solo adventures. The player character you control — Conan, Heimdul, or a hero of your own design — will adventure in the fabulous Hyborian Age, a time of flashing swords, horrific monsters, and riches beyond measure. This book will serve as the Game Master.

As you move through this adventure, you will make various choices. Each choice will send you to a different numbered paragraph, which will give you more information, more instructions, and possibly call for more decisions.

Sometimes you will have to make attribute or skill rolls, to determine whether or not your character performs as you would like him to. Perform these rolls according to normal *GURPS* rules, applying any modifiers called for.

The object is, of course, to survive and complete the adventure. If you don't succeed the first time . . . try again.

Good luck — may your blade never dull and your steed never falter!

Getting Started

You will need a pencil, scratch paper, three six-sided dice, and the *GURPS Basic Set*. You will also need a character. A record sheet for Conan, the hero of the story this adventure is based on, can be found on p. 32. If you would rather play someone else, a record sheet for Heimdul — another hero from northern Hyboria — is provided on p. 31. You may also design your own character; guidelines for this are given on p. 27 in the appendix.



How To Play

The adventure is divided into numbered paragraphs. *Do not read them in order* — they will make no sense at all. Rather, read the "Introduction" first, then turn to the paragraph to which it directs you. Read that paragraph, decide your course of action from that point, and then turn to the paragraph that your current paragraph directs you to. And so on.

Most paragraphs offer you at least two choices, and sometimes several. Sometimes a roll against one of your skills or attributes, or the outcome of a battle, will determine which paragraph you will turn to next.

Plot Words

Conan the Wyrmslayer can be different every time you play. To make sure that you stay on the same storyline for an entire run through the adventure, you may be asked to write down one or more *Plot Words*. From time to time, there will be instructions for characters who have certain of these special words — if you have a *Plot Word*, be sure to follow the instructions which apply to it.

Defaults

For your convenience, when a default skill roll is given in the adventure, the penalties for the original roll are already calculated in. If the regular roll is at a -2 penalty, for instance, and the default is given as DX at -4, the -4 already includes the -2 penalty to the original roll.

Mounted Combat

A brief summary of the mounted combat rules is in order:

If your horse is hit, it may Dodge, but cannot Parry or Block.

Any time a rider is hit in combat, or if he uses a shield to Block a blow, he must succeed at a Riding roll in order to stay on his horse. There is a -1 penalty for every 4 full points of basic damage received from this blow (*before* subtracting DR due to armor), and a further -4 penalty if the rider is stunned.

Riding rolls must also be made if the horse is hit, with the penalty to the roll equaling the damage (if any) done to the mount. If the roll fails, the rider falls and the animal *spooks*. (Stunned animals do not spook, however.)

If a horse takes more than ¼ of its hit points in one blow, it must succeed on a roll vs. DX, or fall. If it takes more than half of its basic HT in one blow, the horse is stunned; it must succeed at a basic HT roll or fall. If a horse falls, it must succeed on a DX roll at +1 to avoid breaking a leg.

Healing

After any battle or encounter, the character may attempt to recover hit points lost in that action. Any conscious character, or one with a conscious partner, regains 1 HT due to bandaging. In addition, success at a First Aid roll (defaults to Physician, IQ-5, Veterinary-5, or Physiology-5) heals 1d-3 hit points (one point minimum). On a critical success, the victim regains 3 HT (no roll required); on a critical failure, the victim loses 2 additional hit points *and* bandaging has no effect on this wound.

Animal Combat

The rules for animal combat are given on p. B140-141. It is possible for an animal to All-Out Attack. Unlike humans, animals can All-Out Attack in close combat; they may choose either to make two attacks against their foe, or to make a single attack at +4 to their skill. They may not choose to feint and attack, or to make a single attack doing +2 damage.

Falling

When damage for falling is given in the adventure, it has already been adjusted for distance and the type of material fallen upon. Cloth or leather protects against a fall with its normal DR. Metal armor has half its normal DR (round down) against a fall. Shields don't help.

The effects of falling are further described on p. B131.

Repeat Games

After you've played *Wyrmslayer* several times, feel free to select your *Plot Words* or to choose your path, rather than always following the dictates of the dice. Explore all of the possibilities.

Eventually, you'll know the plot well enough to run this adventure for your friends. You can let them read the adventure (or read it to them), helping them with the game mechanics, or you can run this as a game-mastered adventure (for any number of player characters).



About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Roleplayer. This bimonthly newsletter includes new rules, new races, beasts, information on upcoming releases, scenario ideas and more. Ask your game retailer, or write for subscription information.

New supplements and adventures. We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us — but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

BBS. For those of you who have home computers, SJ Games operates a BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours per day at 512-447-4449, at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud. Give us a call!

Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition.

INTRODUCTION

The slopes of the Eiglophian Mountains stride from east to west across the world, a mighty wall of snow and ice sundering the frozen northlands — Vanaheim, Hyperborea and Asgard — from the warmer kingdoms to the south. In the depth of winter, most of the passes are blocked. With the coming of spring, however, they open, affording barbarians of the north a route by which to raid the civilized south.

The lure of adventure, and a growing boredom with the simple village life of the northlands, have led you to Snow Devil Pass. This is the shortest route south from Asgard, and the quick-

est to open in the spring thaws, but it is ill spoken of. It is named for Snow Devil Glacier, also known as the River of Death Ice, which flows alongside and across the pass on the southern side.

The Æsir speak of the pass with dread, and tell of whole parties which have vanished without a trace. You impatiently dismiss these rumors — the disappearances were likely the result of inexperienced mountaineers blundering into the depths of a crevasse. You see no reason for grown warriors to refer to this place with shudders, dark hints and sidelong glances.

If you are Conan, turn to 115. (Conan's character is described on p. 32.)

If you are Heimdul, or if you create your own player character, turn to 1. (Heimdul is a ready-to-play character who can be used instead of Conan, if you wish. His character sheet is given on p. 31.)



1 Before you left the northlands, your fellow warriors presented you with gifts to show their gratitude for your aid during the long winter. Hanging by a thong from your saddle is a new axe of fine Asgard steel, fashioned with a skill rarely seen elsewhere. Atop your head sits a horned steel helm, secured with a leather chin strap — another token of their esteem. By these two possessions, you will long remember the deep northern winter and the proud, barbaric peoples of Vanaheim and Asgard.

The weapon is an axe of fine quality (see p. B74 — swing +3 cutting damage, \$500, 4 lbs.), while the horned Asgardian helm has PD 3, DR 4, \$150, 10 lbs. If they are not already listed on your character sheet, add them now.

Turn to 271.

2 You've lost your bearings — you'll have to peek again. But first, make a basic HT roll.

If you succeed, turn to 236.

If you fail, turn to 207.

3 For now, however, more immediate problems face you. Night is falling and the wind is rising. You will have little chance of surviving through the night on the surface of the glacier. Snow Devil Pass may yet claim two more victims.

If you try to descend the mountain in the dark, turn to 149.

If you look for shelter, turn to 231.

4 It will be cold, in the depths of whatever lair the strange wyrm dwells. You pack the glowing coals from the fire into your steel Asgardian helm, resolving to carry it with you as protection against the bitter cold.

Your *Plot Word* is DEVASTATOR. Turn to 123.

5 You rest for an hour.

Erase your Fatigue points. Turn to 269.

6 Ilga rebuffs your advances. You would never force an unwilling girl, even if it's for her own good — so turn to 159.

7 You struggle to keep moving, but your grievous injuries eventually take their toll. Gasping, flailing at the ice, you collapse . . .

Turn to 194.

8 If you decide to return the way you came, turn to the paragraph matching the ID number of the chamber box you came here from.

Otherwise, you may try to climb the rock (turn to 43) or to shove it aside (turn to 155).

9 Your horse shudders and falls.

Make another Riding roll, this time at -2.

If you succeed, turn to 209.

If you fail, you are unhorsed — turn to 121.

10 At last you reach the outer air. Plumes of steam waft from a score of crevasses and caverns on either side as you, slipping and skidding, run down the slope.

With a crashing roar, the glacier quivers and explodes, hurling glassy fragments the size of wagons into the air. A crater of broken ice, rapidly filling with water, is soon hidden by a vast cloud of vapor.

Make a DX roll, at -5, to avoid losing your footing as the shock wave reaches you.

If you fail and fall, turn to 247.

If you succeed, turn to 147.

11 On the *Ice Caverns Map*, change the ID number for this chamber to 175. Do what healing you can at this time (see p. 3).

Turn to 267.

12 If your *Plot Word* is FAREWELL, turn immediately to 259.

Otherwise:

If your horse is dead, turn to 167.

If your horse has a broken leg, turn to 240.

If your horse is unconscious, turn to 186.

In any other case, turn to 250.

13 This is not according to nature. In so brief a time, a warm body does not freeze solid, let alone become encased in glittering ice!

Make an Occultism roll. The default is to IQ, at -6. Apply a +2 bonus if you have the *Plot Words* TONGUE or WARNED. If you have both, you have a +4 bonus.

If you succeed, turn to 132.

If you fail, turn to 77.

14 You plummet into the chasm and fall for a long, long time.

Your adventure is over.

15 Roll one die, to resolve whether there is an exit from the cavern at this point.

If the die roll is odd, turn to 84.

If the roll is even, turn to 34.

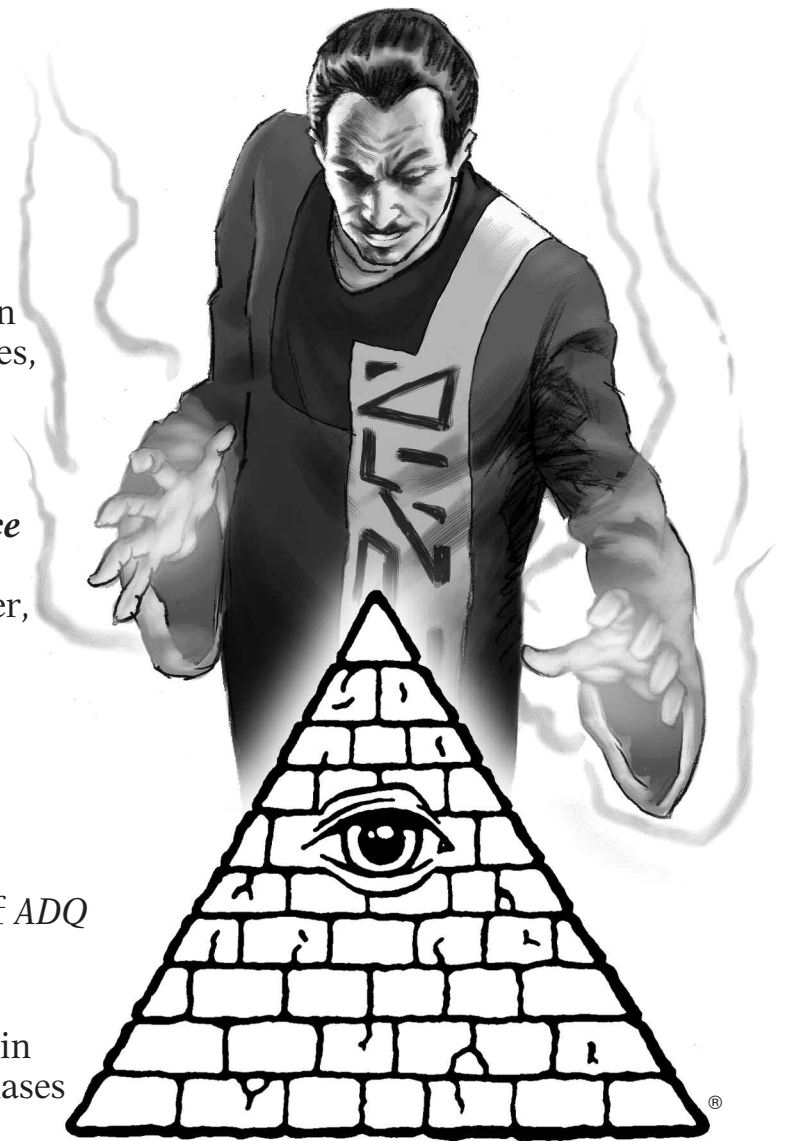
16 You stumble back into the ice crack and the comforting gloom. Turn to the paragraph matching the ID number of the chamber you entered this one from.



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