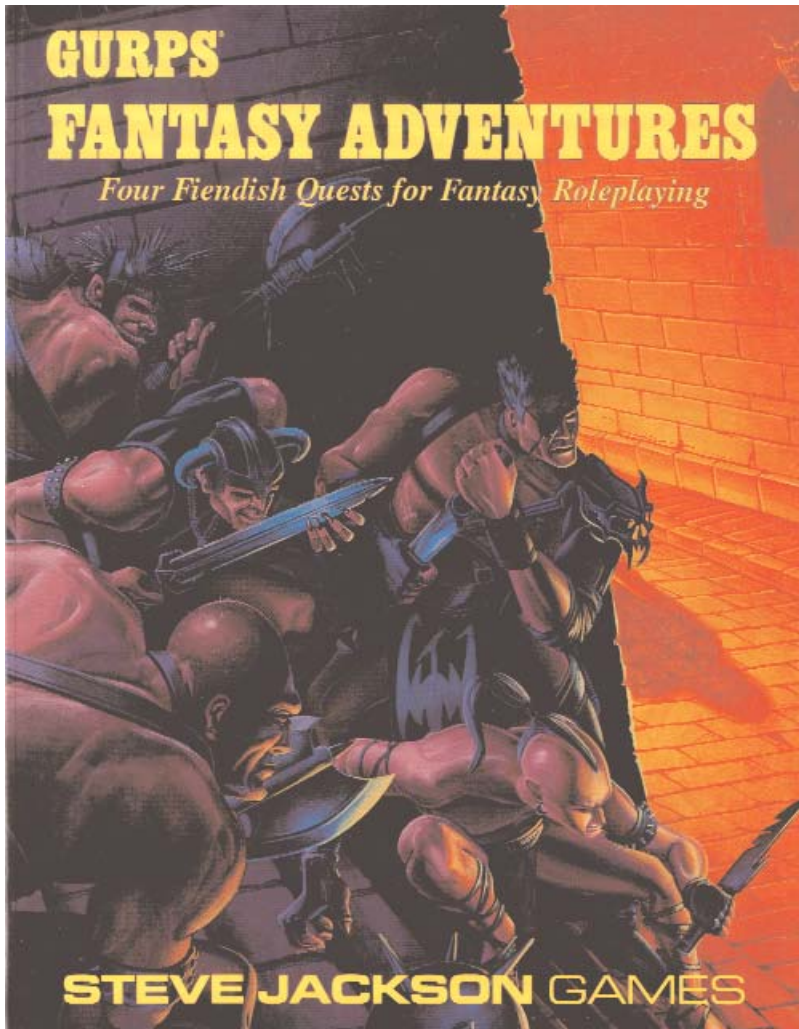


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FANTASY ADVENTURES

Four Fiendish Quests for Fantasy Roleplaying

By Chris W. McCubbin, David Dunham,
Walter Milliken and David L. Pulver

Additional material and development by Elizabeth McCoy,
Gareth McCoy, Warren Spector and Allen Varney

Edited by Jeff Koke

Cover by John Zeleznik

Illustrated by Doug Shuler, Terry Pavlet, Ruth Thompson and Topper Helmers

Additional Illustrations by Guy Burchak, Rick Harris, C. Bradford Gorby,
Kate Lebherz, Denis Loubet and Rob Prior

GURPS System Design by Steve Jackson

Loyd Blankenship, Managing Editor; Carl Anderson, Production Manager

Typography by Monica Stephens and Loyd Blankenship

Production by Carl Anderson and Monica Stephens

Playtesters: Thomas Bagwell, Andy Blum, Matt Brown, Marcellus Cadd, Keith Carter, Ben Davis, Peter Donald,
Scott Haring, Troy Leaman, Tim McGaughy, David Noel, David Polk, Tim Pulver, Kent Reuber, Paul Rubin,
Warren Spector, Todd A. Woods and Steven T. Zieger



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INTRODUCTION

Dank swamps . . . magic rings . . . faerie princesses . . . fire-breathing dragons. The fantasy adventure is a standard in roleplaying games. Many roleplayers are introduced to gaming through tracking down the terrorizing Evilwizard, finding the lost Crown of Someancientelf, or rescuing the Princess of Somefaroffland. Others may have sat in on a *GURPS Fantasy* campaign and been drawn in by the magic, strange beasts, and the ever-reliable Loot at the End of the Adventure. The premise is almost always the same — a group of adventurers looking for work hears a rumor . . .

While the four scenarios in this book hold true to the conventions of fantasy campaigns, they represent a variety of adventuring styles, ranging from the mysterious and magical to the rough and physical to the hilariously funny. Each of them is set in the mythical land of Yrth (pronounced “eerth”); each is exciting, challenging and detailed; and each involves three to seven player characters. But that is where the similarities end.

Fighters of the Purple Rage leads high-powered PCs down into the intricate sewers of Megalos, pursuing a dangerous, renegade band of gladiators. The gladiators’ skin has been magically dyed purple, so the hunters *should* be able to find them. But they only have a week before the spell wears off . . .

Lost Inheritance sends the adventurers on a routine hunt for a kindly woodcarver’s missing treasure — routine, that is, until they face a raging storm, meet the mage Mazuka and get transported into the magical blackness of the Darkland.

Sahudese Fire Drill introduces the PCs to the lighter side of multiculturalism. The players will never stop thanking the GM for sending them on this burlesque romp through Megalos. They have one simple responsibility — keep the visiting Sahudese happy and out of trouble.

Mordag’s Little Finger takes the party into the bad side of town: Northside, where gang rivalries, illegal casinos and tavern brawls at the Devil’s Eye are the order of the day. They’re tracking a renegade thief who stole a special staff, but he may not be working alone . . .



The *GURPS Basic Set* and *GURPS Magic* are all that is required to run these adventures, but *GURPS Fantasy* and *GURPS Fantasy Folk* will be helpful for reference. Though these scenarios were designed to be played in the *GURPS Fantasy* world of Yrth, they can easily be adapted to any fantasy world — even medieval Earth. In fact, with some adjustments, the basic plots of these stories can work with other backgrounds: *Space*, *Horror*, *Special Ops*, etc.

Game Masters should keep in mind that the material in these quests is designed to be modified to fit personal tastes and GMing styles. If you don’t like the stats or description of a certain NPC, change them! In fact, if a scenario does nothing more than spark an idea for your own adventure, we’ve done our job. Additionally, adventure seeds are included with each tale, in case the PCs pursue a plot line beyond the point where it ends in the book. The best adventures are those the players create themselves.

— Jeff Koke

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

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

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BBS. For those of you who have 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 a 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 a page in the *Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any reference that begins with an M is for *GURPS Magic*; a J refers to *GURPS Japan*.

Note: These adventures require *GURPS Magic*. *GURPS Fantasy* is useful for background material if the adventure is run in its standard setting. *GURPS Fantasy Folk* may help with playing the Giants in *Lost Inheritance* and *Mordag’s Little Finger*; *GURPS Japan* is referenced in *Sahudese Fire Drill* and may be useful, but is not required.

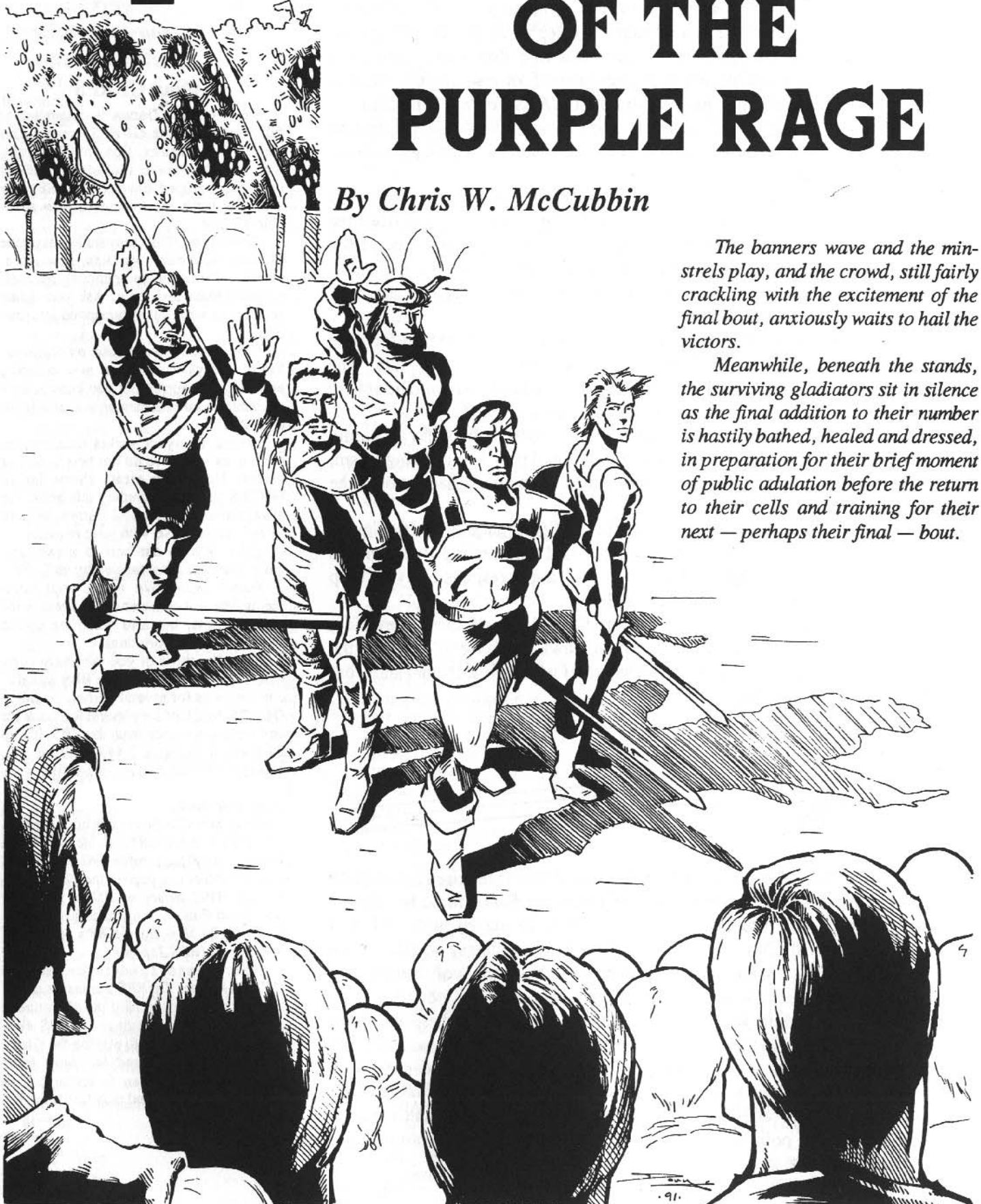
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FIGHTERS OF THE PURPLE RAGE

By Chris W. McCubbin

The banners wave and the minstrels play, and the crowd, still fairly crackling with the excitement of the final bout, anxiously waits to hail the victors.

Meanwhile, beneath the stands, the surviving gladiators sit in silence as the final addition to their number is hastily bathed, healed and dressed, in preparation for their brief moment of public adulation before the return to their cells and training for their next — perhaps their final — bout.



A grand flourish of trumpets brings the crowd to its feet, as the main portcullis is raised and the ten champions of the Grand Elimination march out in solemn double-file. In their freshly polished gear (and only the gladiators themselves remember the grime and blood that had accumulated on their equipment over the last seven days, before it was magically scoured for the final ceremonies) they purposefully cross the length of the coliseum, until they stand before the Imperial Box and make their salute to the emperor (a gesture of patriotism only somewhat dimmed by the fact that His Imperial Majesty was unable to remain for the closing ceremonies).

Then the victors begin their grand circuit of the coliseum, passing the four lesser gates, then the grand portcullis, then four more gates on the other side. The offerings of flowers and money that shower the champions are ignored — for a slave to willingly touch a coin of the realm would be a capital offense. The coins will be swept up later and duly delivered to the governor of the arena “for distribution to the needy” — the needy bureaucrats and nobility of the city.

As the circuit continues, the crowd’s enthusiasm cools slightly. The champions are just marching, eyes straight ahead, arms at their sides, as though their adoring public doesn’t even exist. As they approach the grand portcullis for the second time, the victors are met by the governor himself, who commands, “One more time ’round, and this time give them something.” A moment after the command is given, one gigantic warrior turns to the crowd and thrusts his fist into the air and bares his teeth, as though challenging the multitudes. At almost the same time a slighter, more handsome gladiator clasps his hands over his head and turns in his course — the universal gesture of victory. Responding even to this small acknowledgement, the crowd’s roar waxes again, and the flagging rain of coins picks up, brightening the governor’s day . . . briefly.

For as the small procession passes the third lesser gate, a brilliant flash of light erupts in their midst, blinding most of the crowd and the guards. For most of the witnesses, their memories of the next few seconds are of a sudden, eerie silence, and the impression of several blurred figures hurrying through the lesser gate.

The silence shatters as the crowd finds its voice, exultation replaced by confusion. Seconds later, the ponderous attention of the crowd begins to shift, focusing on a point behind the outer wall, where those in the highest seats can see the fugitives burst out of the stadium and move in a tight wedge into the streets of the city. Attentive witnesses notice an extra fugitive among the escapees — a slight figure in a full-hooded cloak. Those few archers on the coliseum wall whom the crowd allows a clear shot find dots dancing before their eyes which cloud their aim; their arrows shatter harmlessly on the pavement below, as do a handful of unfortunate citizens, pushed over the coliseum wall by the press of their fellow spectators towards the action. On the near-empty streets below, some citizens jeer the gladiators, while others cheer them on, but no one stands in their way.

Suddenly a small contingent of the city guard turns a corner, directly into the path of the oncoming fugitives, pikes ready. The crowd falls silent once more

About the Author

Chris W. McCubbin is a non-graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in English. He comes to gaming by the way of the comics industry — he was assistant editor of Fantagraphics Books’ magazine *The Comics Journal* for six months, followed by 15 months as editor of Fantagraphics’ other magazine, *Amazing Heroes*, where he still regularly reviews comics.

McCubbin is SJG’s full-time staff writer, making him one of the lucky so-and-sos who get to do this for a living. He lives in Austin, Texas, with his wife Lynette Alcorn-McCubbin and their cat, Polychrome.

He is the author of *GURPS Aliens*, *GURPS Fantasy Folk*, *GURPS Space Bestiary*, and *GURPS Magic Items*; he also edits SJG’s *Car Wars* magazine, *Autoduel Quarterly*.



Starting from Scratch

The opponents the PCs will be facing in *Fighters of the Purple Rage* are formidable fighters. In setting the recommended character-point level for this adventure at 150 to 200, it is assumed that the adventurers' primary edge over their gladiatorial opponents will be magical — specifically, the party should have at least one mage with a significant selection of personal combat spells, and each member should have a couple of useful personal magic items. In a campaign where either magic or magic items are de-emphasized, the PCs should either be 200- to 300-point characters, or the GM should significantly reduce the combat abilities or number of the gladiators.

If the GM wishes to run *Fighters of the Purple Rage* for players who have not worked their way up to the 200-point neighborhood through experience, he may allow them to generate new 200-point characters, then allow the party to distribute the following magic items amongst themselves:

Weapon, +2 Accuracy, +3 Puissance, Shatterproof (weapon type will be whatever sort the receiving character is most proficient in).

Weapon, +1 Accuracy, +1 Puissance, Flaming Weapon (type as above).

Dagger, +1 Accuracy, +1 Puissance, Loyal Sword.

Quiver of arrows or bolts, or bag of sling stones, as appropriate, enchanted with Cornucopia.

Wooden Staff, enchanted with Staff, Phantom Flame, and Blur -3 (m).

Chainmail, with Fortify 3, Deflect 1, and Lighten -25%.

Leather armor, a full suit with Fortify 2.

Shield, with Deflect 1 and Missile Shield.

Wand, with Minor Healing and a 5 point Exclusive Powerstone (grants 15 points of healing before the wand must recharge (m)).

Cloak, with Mage-Stealth (m).

Gauntlets, with Might +2.

Boots, with Slow Fall (m).

Ring, with Suggestion (m).

Bracelet, with Sense Foes, two points of Power.

Amulet, with two Lesser Wishes.

In addition, the party may be given one 10-point Powerstone, plus one additional 5-point Powerstone for each mage. Mages may take a wand or staff enchanted with the Staff spell if they wish.

(m) — Indicates that casting the spell with the item drains energy, and that magic is required to use the item at normal or lower mana levels.

until it hears the two tiny forces come together in a crash of weapons. A gladiator falls, spitted on a pike, then another; then the escapees are inside the guards' reach, and their short and deadly arena weapons cut through the opposition like scythes through ripened grain.

On the wall, one observer is not jostled by the crowd, for he wears the distinctive robes of a mage in the Emperor's service, and even a mindless mob knows better than to annoy an Imperial wizard. As the last guardsman falls below, the mage raises his hand in a peculiar gesture, and breathes a single word.

The crowd's last view of the fleeing gladiators sees each gladiator's skin suddenly change to a vivid and magical shade of rich violet. Then the runners turn into a narrow side street, and disappear from the sight of the honest citizens of the city.

Introduction

Fighters of the Purple Rage is a high-powered adventure for 5-7 experienced characters. The party with the best chance of success will have an average character value of 150 to 200 points, with a good mix of fighting, stealth and magical abilities, and some useful low-to-mid level magical items and weapons. Enough cash for city lodging and several generous bribes is also a virtual necessity.

The adventure takes place in a medieval metropolis — preferably an Imperial capital, with a huge population and access to a major body of water. GMs running adventures in the world of Yrth will find that the city of Megalos is the perfect setting.

Fighters of the Purple Rage casts the PCs as bounty hunters. Their mission is to track down and retrieve the eight surviving escaped gladiators. Each gladiator is experienced, tough and desperate (see sidebars), so once the fugitives are located, the *really* interesting part of the adventure begins.

The adventure consists of several distinct sections with multiple encounters, and will probably take more than one gaming session to complete.

After the Escape

The City

A successful escape from the arena is not to be tolerated. The ramifications go far beyond the release of a few criminals and political prisoners. If the fugitives are not soon recaptured, the story of their escape could significantly harm the state's carefully calculated illusion of omnipotence, as well as create folk heroes for the rabble to rally around, encouraging rebelliousness.

The hunters did have one stroke of luck during the escape — the Imperial mage who was able to activate the Dye enchantment on the gladiators' skins. They instantly tripled the guard at all the city gates, as well as setting up checkpoints at five-mile intervals on all roads leaving the city out to 50 miles. All travelers are being stopped for a skin inspection.

However, the city knows the spell will only last a matter of days (2d days). So, when after three days the combined efforts of the watch and militia fail to turn up anything useful, the city posts a bounty of \$1,000 for each of the gladiators returned to the arena, dead or alive, and an additional \$1,000 for anyone who can be proved to have aided the fugitives in their escape.

The Gladiators

The Gladiators were rescued by Simeon, an earnest abolitionist who chose to use his considerable fortune and magical prowess to crusade against slavery and oppression, rather than to enrich himself. The escape is Simeon's swan song — he plans to flee the country with those he's freed.

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