DESIGNER'S NOTES by Sean Punch

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SECRETS OF THE LIVING TOMB by Steven Marsh

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

POWERED BY GURPS

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FROM THE EDITOR
<b>Designer's Notes:</b>
<b>D</b> UNGEON FANTASY
<b>Roleplaying Game</b>
QUICK EQUIPMENT KITS 10 by Peter V. Dell'Orto
<b>DEATHTRAPS</b>
EIDETIC MEMORY:
<b>Demi-Human Dungeons 18</b> by David L. Pulver
SECRETS OF THE LIVING TOMB 25 by Steven Marsh
MAP OF THE SANCTUM 30

**UNDEAD, UNDEAD EVERYWHERE** .... **31** *by Sean Punch* 

THE STATE OF THE DUNGEON ..... 36

**RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE:** 

KEEPING IT SIMPLER,

About *GURPS* ..... 40

### **ARTICLE COLORS**

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Pale Blue: In This Issue Brown: In Every Issue Green: Columnist Dark Blue: **GURPS** Features Purple: Systemless Features

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# IN THIS ISSUE

The **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game** is almost here, and what could be better than that? Well, how about *more?* This issue of *Pyramid* is devoted to getting ready for the big "reveal," with new monsters, gear, traps, and more that you can use as soon as you have the full game.

Plenty of effort goes into making a deluxe gaming boxed set. Go behind the scenes with Sean Punch in *Designer's Notes: Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*. Learn about how this project came to be, discover the contents of the core set and the *Dungeon Fantasy GM Screen*, and find out about the stretch-goal products. In addition, discover how to use the *Dungeon Fantasy* material with the rest of the *GURPS* line . . . or vice versa!

The proper gear can make the difference between life and death for an adventurer . . . and shopping is even easier with an assortment of *Quick Equipment Kits*. These handpicked packages by Peter V. Dell'Orto – author of *Dungeon Fantasy Magic Items* – lets you spend your coin and climb into the crypt faster than ever. Get tips for selecting which food and ammunition to bring; choose an assortment of loadouts for such key jobs as cartography, door breaking, healing, and thieving; and even acquire a few *new* pieces of gear.

Don't let those heroes get too complacent; ramp up the challenge in your dungeons with one of eight new *Deathtraps*. Constructed by Christopher R. Rice – co-author of *Dungeon Fantasy Traps* – you'll get an assortment of challenges, including physical obstacles and mental puzzles. Can you survive the magical magnetic murder machine, or escape the soul-snuffing danger of the reanimating runes?

When delvers explore underground complexes, the default assumption is that those subterranean structures were created by humans. But the fact is, other races make their own *Demi-Human Dungeons*. In this installment of Eidetic Memory, David L. Pulver explores the warrens of dwarves, elves, gnomes, and halflings, with intriguing insight for designing your own memorable tombs.

Nine rooms of danger and opportunity are only the beginning, with *Secrets of the Living Tomb*. A desperate escape clause, an enigmatic environment, and a missing magician are all intricately linked. Although it builds off an adventure from *Pyramid* #3/104: Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game – and can be used in conjunction with that tale – this ready-to-use locale stands entirely on its own. Learn its history, unlock its potential, and unleash its map on unsuspecting heroes.

Tombs aren't the only places to find undead; before you know it, you'll find *Undead, Undead Everywhere*. Sean Punch describes six new types of frightening fiends, with details on appearance, tactics, and **Dungeon Fantasy** stats so that you can pop these baddies into adventures right away.

This issue also includes *The State of the Dungeon*, as we reveal the current news on *Dungeon Fantasy* happenings, plus a Random Thought Table that shows how less can be more when learning an exciting new system. The future is almost here, and it's fantastic. As ever, *Pyramid* is here to ensure you're ready for it!

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2

# FROM THE EDITOR

# THE PIECES ARE REVEALED, AND TOMORROW LOOMS WITH THE PROMISE OF A FUTURE FORETOLD

There's a time in many fantastic stories where things are *allllmost* ready to break into mayhem, a precipice of plot potential waiting to tumble into full-blown mayhem. "This is a piece of the Rod of the Heavens!" or "Look, on the back of the prince's amulet . . . it's not a decoration; it's a *map*!" And you know that everything is about to get *really* exciting.

That's kind of where we're at with the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game.* As I type this, the first physical copies have made their way into the hands of those fortunate enough to join a special game with Sean Punch at Gen Con. In addition, we sent out PDFs during that hallowed convention to appropriate Kickstarter backers. (See pp. 36-37 for more about Gen Con happenings.)

So, for the first time, gamers actually have the material they need to run their own **Dungeon Fantasy RPG** campaigns. While it's not quite the same thing as the big, beefy boxed set being in the hands of delighted fans, it's still an important milestone . . . and one that is ramping up the excitement here at *Pyramid* as we continue to follow the map on the back of the amulet, no doubt leading to the next part of the Rod of the Heavens.

# WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

As the glint of treasure illuminates the hallways of tomorrow, we're deeply curious as ever: How're we doing? This issue of *Pyramid* is an unusual one, since – like *Pyramid* #3/104 – it's devoted to a game that's not quite "in the wild" yet. Do you like seeing new goodies you can use in your game, along with news about what's going on in the development, behind-the-scenes notes about the product's genesis, and other elements? Or is it perhaps too much of a good thing when you don't quite have the game yet? Let us know your thoughts, privately via email at **pyramid@sjgames.com**, or publicly via our rambunctious online tavern at **forums.sjgames.com**. And if you're one of those lucky folks who've received the PDFs (or even the boxed set itself), you'll definitely want to share your thoughts with the rest of the crowd.



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3

# **DEATHTRAPS** BY CHRISTOPHER R. RICE

A well-placed deadly trap in a dank dungeon in some dangerous distant location goes back to the very roots of roleplaying. These challenges can remind the group why the thief always checks for traps – and when it isn't avoidable, the fighter takes one for the team.

This article uses the rules from *Dungeon Fantasy Exploits*, pp. 70-71, for traps to present several new ready-to-use dangers. The following are considered lethal, near-lethal, or just not *fair*. Be careful using them in adventurers too often! One nasty deathtrap goes a *long* way.

# **Devilish Devices AND Devious Dooms**

The following may use weird technology, magic or present no good choices. In short, they make the delver's life difficult.

#### False-Door Crossbow Trap

This simple trap involves the use of several crossbows hidden within a wall, opposite a false door, or angled from the ceiling. The door may also be locked and/or trapped – GM's call. When the door is opened by more than 18", the crossbows are triggered and hit everyone in front of the door.

#### Detect: Per-based Traps at -6.

Disarm: DX-based Traps at -6.

*Avoid:* Automatic (don't be standing in front of the door). *Save:* Detection or **Hearing**, or **Vision** at -6, allows any valid active defense at -3. If the crossbows are hidden within the ceiling, add an additional -1 to active defense rolls.

*Effects:* Roll against effective skill of 13 for each target; the trap hits once, plus another hit per point of success to a maximum of three. Each arrow does 1d+2 impaling damage.

Shots: One volley of 1d+5 bolts.

*Rearm:* Yes. Requires an **Armoury (Missile Weap-ons)** roll at +4.

*Steal:* Yes. Simply pick the bolts up off the ground. Getting to the crossbows is not possible – they are built into the wall!

#### Magical Magnetic Murder Machine

Three 1'-diameter, ceiling-to-floor metal poles occupy the beginning, middle, and end of this corridor. As soon as any metal object comes within five yards of any pole, the trap activates, pulling everyone wearing metal toward the poles. The trap can be shut down by pressing a special glyph inside a hollow area at the base of each pole . . . if someone can reach it.

#### Detect: Per-based Traps at -6.

*Disarm: DX*-based **Traps** at -10 with no tools or with standard (metallic) trap-disarming tools; if the disarmer somehow has a set of explicitly non-metallic tools, this drops to -5. Poles may be destroyed, but have 30 HP each and DR 6. Metal weapons do damage normally, but the wielder must make a ST roll as noted below using the weight of the weapon for the base *plus* 1 per 2 points of basic damage rolled.

Avoid: No.

*Save:* Detection, or **Vision** at -6, allows any valid active defense at -3.

Effects: Make a Quick Contest between the delver's ST vs. 12 + (total weight of metal objects or gear on person / 10).Every additional active pole adds a further +2 to the base ST. If the delver wins or ties, he stays where he is or can go back one vard per point of his margin of victory. Failure means the delver moves toward the pole one yard per point by which he failed. Anyone holding a metal weapon must roll a second Quick Contest as above; failure results in the item being stuck to one of the poles. If anything living touches any of the poles, the field reverses, flinging metallic objects away from it for 1d seconds, at which point it reverses vet again. Damage from flung weapons is equal to the base ST (e.g., 12 for one pole, 14 for two, or 16 for three), modified by the weapon's thrust damage itself. Those in metallic armor will be flung along with their armor – if they hit a wall, treat it as if they'd fallen the distance they were flung.

This continues until no living beings touch the poles for at least  $1d \times 10$  seconds, whereupon the trap shuts down and rearms itself.

*Shots:* Infinite. *Rearm:* Automatic. *Steal:* No.

I'll lead the way. That way I know we won't blunder into traps.

- Llandor the Gray, Scout

#### On an Oil-Slicked Precipice

This room is covered in combustible lantern oil, with two doors – one leading in and one leading to the next room. In the center is a single unlit lantern, which must be lit by a candle to open the door out. The candles are in a small alcove along with flint and steel to light it. *Only* these candles lit by hand with the provided flint and steel will light the lantern.

#### Defenses

Purpose-built defenses are rare. There won't be traps such as pits or hidden crossbows, but a halfling architect may, sometimes out of whimsy, have a secret door leading to a private study or vault, or a hidden trap door or two connecting to the cellar. Master bedrooms or treasure chests may have locks and keys, but otherwise these are rare. An exception to the "no traps" rule is if the warren was owned by a former halfling thief (or a halfling thieves' guild!); these may have traps in secure areas, usually of a mechanical nature and designed to confine intruders or sound alarms rather than kill.

#### Treasure

Halflings, especially prosperous ones, accumulate plenty of possessions. These items, seized by whatever monsters now occupy the hall, form the majority of the available treasure. A few halflings, especially ex-adventurers or prosperous merchants, may have chests of gold or silver. The majority of treasure is fine possessions: family portraits or landscape pictures with gilt frames, quality wood furniture, clothing (albeit halfling size) trimmed with furs, and elegant rugs and carpets.

Moreover, halflings love to entertain and one place they do spend real coin is their dinner services. Every home has at least some fine-quality servingware or eating utensils. The warren of a rich halfling has silverware and glassware, quality porcelain, and perhaps even silver or gold plates and crystal drinking goblets. If the halfling bought magic items from a wizard (or received his choice of adventuring loot), items dealing with food magic, such as a wineglass or food hamper that remains always full, are likely to be present. (Nonetheless, a few halflings have a habit of accumulating powerful artifacts without realizing exactly what they have in their possession . . .)

Some halfling cultures have an almost religious devotion to pipe smoking, inhaling a variety of substances ranging from tobacco to other weeds and herbs. Connoisseurs may have acquired stocks of rare dried smokable substances from around the world, some with unusual properties equivalent to elixirs. Providing monsters did not eat them by mistake, these may survive as interesting finds. Wealthy halflings also enjoy putting on fireworks displays for the masses, and those that do not subcontract to wandering pyromancers may retain stocks of fireworks in a back closet for these purposes. Adventurers may well find these items useful as stun grenades or smoke bombs.

Halflings often trade with dwarves and gnomes, and seem to like gadgets that improve daily life. As such, there may be mechanical devices such as a clock or dumb waiter. Religious halflings could have a shrine, typically containing well-made statuary or icons. If the house belonged to an adventurer, some weapons or armor (perhaps magical) may have been looted from him.

A prosperous halfling is likely to have considered himself a noted gourmand, so a halfling hall includes storerooms filled with small containers and large barrels full of staples such as flour, salted meat and fish, mushrooms, fruit, cheese, and vegetables, and other, high-quality foodstuffs and drink, most locally sourced but some imported from far away. Depending on how long this hall has fallen into ruin and the nature of its monsters, much may have spoiled or been eaten. But spices, salt, preserves, dried foods, salted meat and fish, or barrels of strong drink such as whiskey may still be edible for years afterward. If not to the taste of monsters, or if it was sealed tight in jars, the items may have been left unmolested.

### QUARTERLINGS

These stooped, 3'-tall, dirty, skinny, long-fingered, bigfooted, and pot-bellied humanoids dressed in rags are in fact degenerate feral halflings. Their origins are unknown, but they are sometimes found in halfling-built dungeons, Most likely, they are descendants of halfling children who were orphaned or servants who became masterless when their warren fell to monsters; these weaker halflings hid (or were hidden) in pantries, ovens, or other small spaces. When the fighting was over, they had to survive on their own. Years of inbreeding and poor diet have given them large eyes adapted for the darkness, and ears sensitive to the slightest sounds. Their voices are very disturbing, the result of years of whispering to themselves. Some recall scraps of halfling nursery rhymes, riddles, or recipe books and repeat them endlessly...

They creep through dungeons using their natural stealth, ambushing and killing smaller creatures (such as rats or baby orcs) and stealing trinkets and scraps to adorn their lairs with what dubious comforts they can find. Some are good swimmers, if the dungeon has an underground stream or lake. With tender love and care, some quarterlings may be reintegrated into halfling society, although others are too far gone.

<b>ST:</b> 7	<b>HP:</b> 9	<b>Speed:</b> 6.00
<b>DX:</b> 13	Will: 11	Move: 5
<b>IQ:</b> 8	<b>Per:</b> 13	
<b>HT:</b> 11	<b>FP:</b> 11	<b>SM:</b> -2
<b>Dodge:</b> 10	Parry: 8 (unarmed)	<b>DR:</b> 0

Large Knife (13): 1d-4 cutting, Reach C, 1, or 1d-3 impaling, Reach C.

Thrown Knife (9): 1d-3 impaling. Acc 0, Range 6/11.

**Thrown Rock (13):** 1 point of crushing. Acc 0, Range 3. Weighs 1-2 lbs. Takes one second to pick up, another to throw.

*Traits:* Cowardice (15); Disturbing Voice; Gluttony (12); Kleptomania; Night Vision 2; Silence 2.

*Skills:* Brawling-13; Climbing-14; Knife-13; Pickpocket-14; Stealth-15, Throwing-13.

Class: Mundane.

Herd horrors aren't bright, have no supernatural attacks, and fight as ordinary animals – albeit *large* ones with good HT and many HP. They're Unliving and somewhat hard to injure, but *not* Unnatural; they share the tenacity of angry bulls, however, and may have to be taken down to  $-5\times$ HP if they keep making HT rolls. Like most undead, they aren't susceptible to poison, suffocation, magical sleep, or similar mortal flaws. They *can* be sent back to the Spirit World by a Banish spell (five seconds and 10 energy).

<b>ST:</b> 27	<b>HP:</b> 32	<b>Speed:</b> 5.00
<b>DX:</b> 8	<b>Will:</b> 12	<b>Move:</b> 4/8
<b>IQ:</b> 3	<b>Per:</b> 10	
<b>HT:</b> 12	FP: N/A	<b>SM:</b> +2
Dodge: 8	Parry: N/A	<b>DR:</b> 1

- **Horns (12):** 3d+5(0.5) impaling. The initial *slam* with the horns is always at Move 8, and inflicts 3d+12(0.5) impaling. Treat as weapon, not as body part. Reach C, 1.
- Trample (12): 3d+5 crushing. Only on SM 0 or smaller foes – or SM +1 or smaller, if target is lying down. Only legal defense is a dodge. *Halve* damage roll for automatic trample after knocking down victim with initial horn slam. Reach C.
- *Traits:* Apparition (see notes); Bad Temper (9); Dependency (Loses 1 HP per minute in areas where Nature's strength is at -6 or worse); Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; DR 2 vs. attacks on skull only; Enhanced Move (Ground); High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Disease; Immunity to Magical Control; Immunity to Poison; Night Vision 9; No Blood; Quadruped; Stubbornness (9); Temperature Tolerance 5 (Cold); Temperature Tolerance 5 (Heat); Unfazeable; Unliving; Wild Animal.

*Skills:* Brawling-12; Running-12.

*Class:* Animal/Undead.

*Notes:* Apparition lets the herd horror step out of the Spirit World, fight for 10 seconds, and then vanish automatically – it cannot stay for longer, or be detected before or after. While manifested, it's unaf-

fected by Sense Life, most Necromantic spells, all Animal spells, and *any* spell intended to control its actions – but affected by Banish, Repel Spirits, and Sense Spirit. Total *skull* DR is 5. Armor divisor on horns doubles target's DR and means even DR 0 victims get DR 1 (two horns distribute the force). A herd horror slain within 10 seconds leaves behind horns weighing 2d×10 lbs. (yes, that much!); "ghost horn" is a valued crafting material for many magic items, worth \$75/lb. in town. Too stupid to negotiate. *Not* truly evil, but definitely evil-tempered!

# MUMMY

Some societies preserve the corpses of the wealthy and influential by dehydrating the body – normally minus its vital organs – and winding it in resin-impregnated cloth. This keeps the dead in good shape for the journey to the afterlife. High-ranking nobility and clergy are often entombed with mummified minions: an eternal entourage. Necromancers

# LEVEL UP YOUR UNDEAD

One problem with (well, *for*) undead is clerics – the Turning ability can result in one-sided battles. A fix to this is to increase Will for especially evil or powerful undead. This will also help them resist spells like Banish, Command Spirit, and Turn Spirit, where relevant. Adding levels of Resist Good (*Monsters*, p. 11) has a similar effect.

Another difficulty is holy warriors with Higher Purpose (Slay Undead). Such delvers enjoy bonuses in combat with the undead. To counteract the effects on attack and defense rolls, increase the combat skill levels of undead opponents; to offset extra damage, add a level or two of DR.

It's also possible that high-powered undead – or those with powerful masters – have an aura or item that's equivalent to Protection from Evil (**Spells**, p. 64), but against *Good*. This would give DR 1-5 and Magic Resistance 2-10 against *direct* attacks by the weapons and spells of clerics, holy warriors, and similar goodie-goodies.

Don't go overboard with this – the *point* of playing a cleric or undead-slaying holy warrior is to be good at smashing undead! But when even liches, mummies, and vampires start to feel like fodder against the delvers, it's time to confront the heroes with *real* Evil.

Undead might be powerful for reasons other than being resistant to holy folk, though. Most have stats based on their capabilities in life. Anything with a body could enjoy improved ST, DX, HT, HP, Speed, Move, combat skills, defenses, and damage. Anything that has IQ 6+ and lacks Cannot Learn (draugr, liches, mummies, vampires, etc.) might have *serious* IQ and spellcasting ability.

Finally, remember that innate abilities aren't the only way to make the undead scary. Free-willed entities traditionally have enslaved undead servitors, usually skeletons or zombies. Tombs full of treasure are also full of traps. And whatever killed the now-undead person – e.g., the marsh that swallowed the drowned or swamp wisp, or the unnatural cold that slew the frozen dead – could be waiting to claim new victims.

regard such masters and servants alike as raw materials for undead slaves; the notes for zombies (*Monsters*, p. 62) describe these mummies.

Sometimes, the mummies *are* the necromancers! Such entities are free-willed and extremely powerful, physically and supernaturally. Their merest touch transmits a slow-but-deadly curse. They inevitably command any minor undead found nearby (particularly zombies preserved as lesser mummies). They also possess an intimate knowledge of their tomb, which is laced with traps *they* know how to avoid – a few of which are liable to be magical and programmed to let the mummy pass effortlessly.

A mummy cannot be strangled or poisoned; sustains no extra injury from hits to the eyes, skull, or vitals; and must be reduced to  $-10 \times$ HP to be destroyed (due to Unkillable). Though it may *rest* in a sarcophagus, it doesn't have to and it never *sleeps* – it just uses that location to regenerate. Destroying the sarcophagus won't harm the mummy but will prevent it from restoring itself if injured but not destroyed. The best way to deal with a mummy is to burn it, as fire inflicts double injury.

# **ABOUT GURPS**

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