

ONYX FOUND

A worthy group of adventurers have recovered Onyx from the clutches of hate. Onyx, High Priest of the Micheline Sect, was discovered in the control of Callum Grath, a Halmadonian member of the Cult of Hate. During the summer of last year Onyx had been reported missing in action in an area near the Elven Glade and had been presumed dead by many. The truth is now known that Onyx's father trapped his soul and used this Hero of the Valley as a puppet.

The story is not all good however as the control method has left Onyx a non thinking automaton only responding to the orders of his controller, at present Brother John. The Dark Seers have offered their help but as yet it has been declined.

DYMWAN ENTER ALDONAR TOMBS

Recent reports from the Aldonar Tombs show that the heavy Dymwan activity in the Tombs has meant any Valley Groups entering should pass through quickly before the Undead forces have time to gather.

TRAITORS UNMASKED

Sorcerer of the Green School of Magic, Fearon has revealed that he is the Valley sorcerer in the Cult of Hate. This is because his association with the Elven Glade, which has been corrupted to such a degree by Hate, has meant those who pledged status to the glade have also been corrupted. Fearon has not aided attacks on the Valley and was instrumental in the recovery of Onyx.

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EDITORIAL

Obviously the insult last time hit a chord with some, and a mass of adventure writeups came flooding in, well from a couple of people anyway. I have tried to get these adventures in chronological order and have included some from prior to Quad 26 so that bits may jog the memories of the Heroquesters and so help in their forthcoming endeavours.

Thanks go to those who have contributed to this issue. I hope that this is a sign of things to come, maybe like being on time. You will also see in this issue some adverts. When replying please mention Quad so that the companies concerned can gauge response.

*Best Regards
and I really do look forward to hearing from you*

Paul

QUAD 26 ERRATA

Tower Guilds : Cuddley Dalvain
Spellword is not the Guildleader of the Blue school of Magic.

Galnin is the assistant guildleader of the Seekers.

Duke Hanrow is the Halmadons
Heights Liason Officer.

The Guildleader of the Black School of Magic is The Guildleader of the Black School of Magic.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

AKA HOW TO GET SOMETHING PRINTED IN QUAD

The best and only way to get your submissions printed in QUAD is to send them to me in the first place. If the material is suitable then it will be used, so send me anything and everything that you can. I want write-ups of quests, notices, adverts, letters and plenty of scandal.

Please send all material to

**QUAD
C/O Paul Evans
Rose Cottage
6 Charfield Road
Kingswood
Wotton - under - Edge
Gloucestershire
GL12 8RL**

The policy of awarding articles of any substance with a five gest reward will continue, whether the article is published or not. I will endeavour to make these payments as speedy as possible. An SSAE guarentees a swift response and the return of any valued material where appropriate.

As SFB states later in this issue QUAD will be published for each of the Theme Weekends in 1997 and the deadline for material to be included is therefore 14 days before the start of the theme. Obviously material on floppy disk is preferred as I am not a good typist and the QUAD will be processed more quickly.

RIGHT TO REPLY

If there is anything that you would like to take issue with in this edition of QUAD then please write to the above address. I want any comments, criticisms, queries, questions and suggestions.

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The Dawn of The Dead

Halloween Theme 1996

Setting off from our towers, a mixed group at the command of the Cabal, we were sent to meet with the Azard-An at a site a day or so to the South West of the White Retreat. The job was to purchase a powerful item described as an Artefact that the Azard-An had recently captured from the Khalid.

The three sorcerers amongst us (Giles, Scrope and Rowena) had been issued monies by the Cabal in order to purchase the item. The rest of us comprised a wide ranging band including several Heroes of note from our alliance such as Melkeron (White Path High Priest), Gurthang (Morgoth High Priest), Jihad (Assassin) and Brother John (Hospitaller High Priest) to those who had status such as Phaid, Dark, Sister Mary and Barf, to those who were inconsequential such as myself, Bubble and Squeak.

We had an uneventful journey to the meeting place - a hut large enough to sleep us all and arrived there a day before All Hallow's Eve. Unsure if the Azard-An would be arriving that night or the following day, we occupied the hut ensuring that the (fairly powerful) undead around were dealt with first.

Whilst there we were attacked by hauntings, beings that appeared out of bright surfaces, mirrors, armour, and the like. There seemed to be four, each being powerful. No pattern to the arrival of these hauntings could be ascertained, sometimes an hour would pass and then one appear, sometimes only a few moments would pass before another. While they were affected by pain and flinched when hit the wounds had no lasting effect upon them. These hauntings were a constant threat to us whilst in the hut.

During the night a vision occurred of dead Azard-An who had been at the post some days earlier. We watched them go about their business waiting for someone to arrive - we were unsure if these were the Azard-An we were going to meet, but we found that we could not interact with these four. Interestingly we speculated about a connection between hauntings and visions but were unable to determine any.

A group of Dai-Fah-Dyne approached and requested assistance at the World Window (which is an inter-planar travelling tunnel half a day away) as there was a serious undead problem in the area. Squire Jeffrey (an enterprising Humacti) volunteered himself to go and it was determined that those who were not too powerful would go and investigate the doings at the world window and report back. The more powerful should dedicate themselves to the accomplishment of our primary mission.

Later that night we were approached by a group of ShadowsFall, who wanted to come in out of the rain and rest before continuing their journey onwards towards the World Window. We permitted them to come in after warning them about the Hauntings, and whilst they were there a haunting attack took place. The ShadowsFall left immediately following this attack. In our discussions with the ShadowsFall it was revealed that they had had several encounters with groups of undead - more as they drew nearer.

With morning the group split with those of us going off to investigate the world window leaving and the rest remaining behind to meet with the Azard-An. Squire Jeffrey had left at dawn and planned to meet us along the way. I took on the role of scout for our party, with Phaid leader. After travelling for an hour or so Phaid told us that we were likely to meet a Necromancer and that he was going to do a deal with him. The Humacti's in our party were distinctly unhappy about this, but when Phaid said that he was happy for the Necromancer to be slaughtered after the deal was struck. The Humacti's were much happier and agreed to go along with this. We travelled down the path dealing with the more numerous and powerful bands of undead along the way. Meeting some Dai-Fah-Dyne guards who would not let us pass suggested some intra tower problems. Bribes worked and got some information as well.

Finally we met with the Necromancer. It appears that this particular Necromancer was a Chancellor of the Dymwann, and that we would have no chance of killing him - he was far too powerful for us. Phaid did the deal with him and the Chancellor left. Needless to say the Humacti's were very unhappy.

Continuing our journey we encountered a group of ShadowsFall, the group from last night. They refused to let us proceed and after some discussions a combat broke out as they sought to kill us. We were driven back but regrouped and managed to drive the ShadowsFall away. Our investigations indicated that there were two competing groups of Dai-Fah-Dyne, those at the World Windows and those not there. Those not at the World Window were trying to prevent assistance getting through and thus force those at the World Window to lose the

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concession. Moving on we encountered the Dymwann Chancellor (plus powerful undead guards) who were fleeing the undead at the World Window. It seemed as though the World Window had been ripped through and that an army of undead were now flooding into Orin Rakatha - more than he would want to be around. We also met up with Squire Jeffrey who had just come back from there with a Dai-Fah-Dyne and he confirmed this story. We decided to head back and after fighting our way through several more bands of undead returned to the hut.

The powerful people had investigated the environs whilst looking for the Azard-An traders and during the course of the day fought many undead, and at least one powerful necromancer. They had met the traders who had agreed to come to the hut that night when it was safe. Returning to the hut they broke into the cellars where it seems an evil ritual of some sort had taken place - it was believed that this was the source of the hauntings and that we should be able to stop them in here somehow. However in the cellars there were also a number of powerful wraiths - these were eventually put to rest.

By now dark had fallen and both groups were at the hut. Now began a busy night filled with events. Throughout the night the hauntings appeared, with greater and greater frequency, we were also attacked at random intervals by smallish groups of undead wandering in from the woods. An Exorcist entered the building and spoke with us about the necessity to reverse the ritual that had been performed. He gave us the information required to reverse the ritual, but several things were needed we did not have, such as the bodies and items keyed to the bodies. The Exorcist mentioned great danger and it appeared in the form of Erlan Black (Undead Death Knight ex anti paladin of the Aldonar race) and loads of undead to give us a good kicking. He told us to go as he would be returning later that evening and had business to conclude. He didn't want us around.

The Azard-An traders returned with the item and spoke of the growing numbers of undead around. The item was revealed to be a mask, and identified by all three sorcerers. It appeared to be capable of helping ensorcelling, reducing the time taken and the cost required to perform it. It was also capable of allowing the wearer cast brown wizardry at vocal length. At our request the Azard-An withdrew for an hour whilst our sorcerers discussed the purchase of the item.

During the period the Azard-An traders were away, Lord Azard arrived and spoke to us. Calling "bring on the dancing girls" we were able to oblige by calling on Bubble who satisfied his desires easily. Telling us that it was crawling with undead outside and that under no conditions should we leave, he was a little unhappy at finding his men not here, but accepted this. He spoke to us about the war of the Azard-An with the Khalid and reminded us of how he had helped us in the early days of our arrival on Orin Rakatha. He pointed out that we also were at war with the Khalid and that it would be good for us to join together and that they really needed the money from selling this item to continue financing the war. We told Lord Azard that we needed the bodies of his men who had been killed here and he agreed to have them delivered in a little while so that we could perform the ritual to remove the haunting of this place. A little while later the traders returned and after long and protracted negotiations an agreement was reached and then they left.

Barely had the door closed on the Azard-An when in walked Baron Ulthar with Toril his personal bodyguard where he called a Dark Camp and Neutral meeting. Whilst this was going on Reorf Cyrandor arrived and called a Good Camp meeting. At the Dark Camp meeting Gurthang was promoted to a position in command of the Fell Knights of the Witch King of Angmar replacing their former commander, Blood. Baron Ulfar also warned us not to travel outside.

After the notables left we were then visited by Lord Mian, with an undead creature, assumed to be a banshee. Lord Mian stayed long enough to cast some invocations here where it was safe and was then off again. Mian also gave us warnings about not travelling outside, that there were a lot of undead out there and that we should not go travelling for any reason whatsoever.

Lord Veltyn of the Cabal was the next arrival. He teleported in (how ostentatious) and wielded his arrogance like a whip. He had come to collect the item (mask) that we had acquired and to make sure that it was not lost (a boost to our confidence that was!) In addition he told us of the many risings of undead that were happening across the length and breadth of Orin Rakatha. He also told us that the assistant guild leader of the Humacti's and one of the chief high priests had gone out fighting undead and were now missing, presumed dead. After casting spells on people to help us he teleported away.

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In walked the Exorcist and encouraged us to get on with the ritual, most moved down to the cellar and began to perform the ritual there. Under pressure of the many attacks from the hauntings we managed to complete the ritual and banish the hauntings.

Finally was the promised return of Erlan Black who stormed into the room, with a load of powerful undead, our defences proved inadequate to hold him. Gurthang cursed him and tried to attack but had no backup. Erlan felled Gurthang with a single word of power, who landed on me as I cowered in terror, and then Erlan beat him to death. Meanwhile his other undead paralysed many of us leaving us helpless.

A woman's voice from the main room advised Erlan to leave as now was not the time and that the value of this place had been destroyed by our meddling. Erlan was about to leave when he grasped Squire Jeffrey and said that he would take him to add to his army. At this Brother John leapt out and said "take me instead". Erlan Black accepted the exchange with an evil grin killing Brother John - apparently he had been looking for him for some time.

After this we fortified ourselves in and fought off minor undead attacks during the rest of the night. At dawn the undead presence reverted to a much lower level, but still far higher than normal. I fear that this upsurge of undead does not bode well for us.

A Visit To The Oracle

72 Hour November 1996

The Questers were the following : Me (Draal, favoured of Lolth), Tornado, Squire Jeff, Brains, Mordarius, Dark, Scrope, Barf, Eric Badgers-Head, Sargon, Mordenkanien, Elen Luin, a couple of Humakti archers and other hangers on.

The word was out, the Oracle was appearing soon in Orin Rakatha, He who it is said knows all, and can answer any question. Several groups of people assembled from the various Alliance towers to travel to the Oracle so that we could put our questions to him. Setting off North, to where the Oracle might be found, we spent several days travelling, until at last we were in the general area. We knew that the Oracle could be found in this place, somewhere within a couple of days travel, I will begin the tale here, with the more interesting events...

We were searching the area to find the oracle as night fell, so we headed to a way station, intending to sleep there for the night. Imagine our surprise to find that it was occupied by a Dimwann necromancer (with a guardian undead – a spectre of some form), who confirmed that he was waiting for his men to arrive. I counselled that we should slaughter him, his undead, and take his treasure. Squire Jeff (a Humakti I once thought – but seeming one happy to leave necromancers alive) thought it best to allow him to go on his way. The balance of the group went with Jeff, so we allowed the necromancer to leave, and he did, leaving behind his undead to play with us, it was soon dispatched, but it was fairly powerful, but nothing we could not handle.

A little while later in the way station we were attacked by a group of Astral Warriors that phased in around us, these we dispatched although not without some difficulty. Barf then mentioned that he had a empowered silver sword, captured from a Githyanki some six to nine months ago, and that occasionally Astral Warriors did indeed suddenly appear around him, he was of the opinion that they were after the sword. I resolved not to stand near Barf in the future, as these creatures were quite powerful, and did seem to concentrate on him, naturally I did not mention this to Barf.

We awoke in the morning as several Dimwann arrived, expecting to meet their leader at the way station. Jeff sent them on their way, rather than slaughtering them as any good Humakti would do. We continued our search for the Oracle, travelling on through the day, having several interesting encounters.

Several times we were assailed by the Astral Warriors as we travelled – being guided mostly by an Astral Navigator – and indeed they did concentrate on Barf or whoever was holding the sword at the time of their arrival. We met several groups of Dimwann, whom we spoke to, Jeff seemingly against conflict with necromancers, still he is a Humakti and I suppose knows what's best. Some hoardlings were in our way, but easily dispatched, I note that these hoardlings seemed to be quite fearful, and concerned that they were no longer being reborn – this loss of their almost legendary ferocity made them easy for us to deal with them. Finally, a couple of hours before sunset we arrived at the building containing the Oracle, only to find that we

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had arrived too late and that the Oracle was not seeing anyone else that day. His main servitor assured us that providing we arrived before midday tomorrow then we would be accommodated and would meet with the Oracle to whom we could present our questions.

Knowing now where we were to go we returned to the way station arriving an hour or so after dark. There were two incidents of note along the way. At the first, we saw someone on the other side of the river, some of our number recognised this person as a planar traveller who had aided, and been aided by us before. He told us some vital information after which he left. I will relate here his words.

The sword that Barf had was taken from a young Githyanki lord of an important family, won in honourable combat and that Githyanki was prohibited by tradition and law from pursuing Barf, or others to recover the sword for a year and a day – after that time he would be wanting his sword back. However another Githyanki, an ancient lord, called Sopaz, but of a lesser family was after that sword and had been trying to obtain it. It was this other Githyanki that was sending the Astral Warriors. If Sopaz obtained the sword then he could return it to the young Gith Lord and would have something called “Weapon Gift” over him. Weapon Gift, is a very important to the Gith, it places the recipient deep within the debt of the giver, and it takes much on the part of the recipient to discharge the obligation placed under.

For Sopaz to give the sword to the young lord and obtain the right of Weapon Gift over him there would have to be no witness around who could say that he had fought to recover the sword during the year – otherwise we would be able, by our words, compromise him and nullify the value of the Gift. Barf had the sword and we were all witness’ to the attacks by Sopaz’ minions, so it was our lives on the line. Handing over the sword in order to prevent further attacks was therefore not on.

Our second encounter was with another group of members of the Alliance, mostly from the White Retreat, who had been mauled badly by Dimwann and undead during that day. Most of the group were off meditating or reading spellbooks, we talked to their scouts encouraging them to bring the rest of their group back to the way station where there was fire and warmth and where we could eat and speak in relative comfort. They agreed to meet with us later.

We arrived back at the way station to find it occupied by a group of beings, half a dozen or so. This group were humanoid, but not human, they were quite closed mouthed about what and who they were, but we had no objections to sharing the way station with them. Then after being back at the way station who should charge in through the door, but a tall angry looking Gith.

“I am Sopaz, you have the sword I want, hand it over now or die.” After a few seconds pause in which we did not immediately hand over the sword he screamed “Kill them”, the astral warriors behind him surged forwards and the group with whom we had been talking sprang into the attack. A long and dangerous fight took place then in the hut, for these foes were might indeed, but in the end the tide was turned, and we began to make headway against them, as they began to fall. Sopaz called his surviving Astral Warriors to him and then he Plane Shifted away, escaping.

We had been badly mauled in this fight, and it seems that Sargon had been slain, he had been reading his spell book off in a quite room when the fight started and had been slaughtered before he could defend himself. The other group arrived later, and fortunately one of them, Tanada – a Reaper, had a resurrection potion, which she sold to us and we used to return life to Sargon.

During the course of the evening we met with several other groups seeking to use the way station to rest over, including a Firvulag, who was looking for necromancers, more Dimwann and someone who had almost been transformed into a Vampire, and was seeking to find out from the Oracle how she could reverse this transformation. All in all an interesting evening. We set guards and waited out the night.

Morning, we got up and set off to the Oracle, moving quickly, now that we knew where we were going there were several shortcuts that we took to arrive there well before midday. On the way we met a necromancer leaving the Oracle, who had we assume obtained some answer, finally the Humakti’s decided that it was time to kill a necromancer and this was the one. Arriving at the Oracle we discovered that there were a number of people already there, it was made clear to us by the chief servitor that this place and those visiting the Oracle were under the protection of the Oracle, and that to transgress of the Oracle's laws was not something one could

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do. If one struck another then the Oracle would take away the ability to strike another forever, if one spoke out of turn then one would lose the ability to speak, ever.

So who was there? Loads of Dimwann, Sopaz (now that caused some consternation), several Shadowsfall, Dai Fah Dyne, a Wizards Concillium – and us. The chief servitor told us that there would be a competition amongst those present to determine who would have the favour of the Oracle in the up and coming year, and that all seeking to ask the Oracle must take part in the competition. So we took part in the competition, the first stage of which was single combat against a foe. I was matched up against a Necromancer, and in single unaided combat I defeated that necromancer. I must remember this for the future, I wonder if this counts as being good enough to qualify for House Arduval? In most of the matches we were successful, but not all. The second stage of the competition was to gather weapons that had been hidden, the survivors of the first round set off to get these, I did not gather one, and was eliminated at this stage. The third round of the competition was a general knowledge round where questions about Orin Rakatha were asked, at the end of this round there were four remaining. Sopaz, Ahmed (a Dai Fah Dyne), Brains and Scrope.

The four were each given 20 minutes to compose a tale to entertain and amuse and eliminate the other contenders. Scrope told a tale of an elf who went dancing in the forest and then got blasted by lightning, Sopaz told a salutary tale about a lowly bakers boy made knight, Ahmed told a tale of daring and adventure about his master, and Brains recited a funny story. The Oracles servitor adjudged the best two to be Brains and Ahmed, the final round was of personal combat, with each contestant being given 30 minutes to prepare, themselves and one other to assist – Scrope went with Brains. Ahmed and his master went away into a room to prepare. At the end of the time the two confronted each other, Ahmed with a potion in one hand, Brains with his customary shield and mace. Ahmed doffed his cap pulling out a bundle of Gest and spoke quickly, “I have a potion of touch of death in this hand and a hundred guest in this one, both are worth the same. If I give you the money declare me the victor, or I will drink the potion and then use it on you which do you choose?” Brains was having none of this, he unleashed a mighty Power Hammer and strode across the circle, Ahmed was nearly knocked from his feet by the power of the invocation, and surrendered as Brains began raining blow upon blow down on him. Brains was declared the victor, and had the favour of the Oracle!

We then went back in and those there asked our questions of the Oracle as night fell. A few hours after dusk we were still there, most had asked their questions, when in from the dark night rushed a group of ghouls and skeletons, running round paralysing everyone, most people were paralysed, but the power of the oracle flared and the paralysis was removed from all. Bwains cast down the Silver Sword and took out his mace to smite the skeletons, Sopaz moved to grab the sword, and plane shifted away, an instant before I grabbed it. We were horrified at this turn of events, but the chief servitor of the Oracle said that nobody could travel to or from the Oracle by magical means and that Sopaz would be nearby. As one we charged outside to find him. In a few moments we saw him with half a dozen Astral Warriors, we pressed the attack upon them, relentlessly and one by one they fell to our might, Sopaz being felled by a Touch of Death before he could travel again. We brought the bodies back and looted them of their valuables. While we were still at the Oracles a group of Astral Warriors appeared and took back the body, a construct into which Sopaz projected his consciousness.

Now it appeared that the Oracle, which is a spirit, had inhabited the body of a pseudo-lich which was soon to become a lich. With the spirit of the Oracle leaving the area we resolved to return in the morning and stop the transformation process. Our scouts spotted a party of Dimwann coming from the ex-Oracles’ hut to attack us we believed, so we prepared ourselves. Invoking and casting. Falling upon them they were destroyed by our power and might. The ex-Oracles hut had more Dimwann around it, the pseudo-lich, as well as several other powerful undead. We attacked, it was a long hard fought battle, but ultimately we triumphed and the creature was torn apart, the transformation process concluded – but not in the way it had intended.

Draal, Favoured of Lolth

CALLING ALL ADVENTURERS

LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGE AND SOMETHING DIFFERENT? THEN READ ON

An adventuring group from within the Alliance will be conducting a private mission during the Seventh month of this year.

Adventurers are sought to join this group in their quest.

The quest will last several days and will be fraught with great peril. It is open to all races - less Sprites - and all groups within the Alliance - less Michelines and Humacti's. Mages and Good Priests are particularly welcome.

The mission will take place upon Orin Rakatha and will be against none of the Towers in particular. The precise mission details will be discussed amongst all participants prior to the start of the mission.

Anyone interested in accompanying this group should contact Araikas at Wolfhold.

Monsters or Players for the above contact SFB for details. Dates 26-30 July. Rank 10 - 50 ish

RULES UPDATES AND EXPLANATIONS.

Bless, protection from undead and protection from evil are no longer permanent when cast at rank 8 to 10. There is now a separate invocation which does the permanent effect at rank 8 - 10. Any characters who have cast these invocations already will not lose those already cast.

HIGH LEVEL SPELLS

Bolts - Fire, Dark and Lightning.

level	player damage		monster hits	
	total	locational	physical	magical
5	72	12	48	24
6	96	16	64	32
7	120	20	80	40
8	144	24	96	48

QUAD XXXVJ

SHITTY'S BIT

Welcome again to Quad, thanks to Paul Evans and all contributors without which we would not have much of a magazine. If there are any rules that you need clarifying please let me know so I can include them in the next issue for all.

Adventure prices - Note that if I do not receive the payment for an adventure 8 days in advance you do not receive the discount for early booking. Also if for any reason you have to cancel an adventure you will be charged 50 % of the price. The reason for this is that when players cancel, the adventure has to be adjusted accordingly and sometimes rewritten completely which requires unwanted time and effort. Although everyone has very good reasons for cancellations and I understand your hobby takes second place to personal and work commitments we have had as many as 6 - 8 people pulling out of adventures with no time to replace them. This has caused some events to be cancelled altogether which is unfair on the people who booked time off and could attend. So please let us know when you have to cancel, no reason is required but realise that the charge will be levied. If you are cancelling because you cannot get to the event or you don't get paid till the week after etc, ring and ask and I may be able to help. Before anyone complains about this just think how you will feel if that one weekend a month you have free and have booked to adventure gets cancelled the day before due to people pulling out !

Please note as from 01-04-97 there will be a charge of £10 on all bounced cheques.

Youth hostels - as from September 1997 when rent a hostels are not available, players will be charged the full youth hostel price.

To my knowledge all characters are now fully carded, if this is not the case please send details with an s.a.e. and I will update you immediately.

Heroquest 7 - Anyone who wishes to book on for Monstering should send me an s.a.e. and I will send them full details. The site is now confirmed in the Lake district, we will be meeting at a point very close to Ennerdale youth hostel (see guide). I am not organising anything for the Sunday night but I suggest players and monsters book into one of the many youth hostels in the area for the Sunday night to avoid the arduous drive on the first day. This way we can start early on the Monday and finish early on the Friday so no one falls asleep driving home.

Chosen Heroquest - it has been proposed that this is now to be run from 5th to the 10th of October 1997. If this causes problems to anyone please let me know NOW !

We have included a set of magic and power runes, all wizards and priests are expected to know these or at least carry a copy with them on adventures.
cheers for now

SFB

Heroquest is run primarily by Mark Roberts and any questions bookings letters etc should be sent to

**Heroquest
14 Grove Crescent
Barnwood
Gloucester
GL4 3JJ**

Please remember to include a stamped addressed envelope with all letters, this will ensure a prompt reply. I can also be reached on the **phone 01452 546871**. Office hours are :

Monday		5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Tuesday	12 p.m. - 2 p.m.	5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Wednesday	12 p.m. - 2 p.m.	5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Thursday	12 p.m. - 2 p.m.	5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

QUAD XXVJ

Coal Black and the Seven Ogre Magi

Christmas Theme 1996

Or A brief interlude on the way down to the Ikartharian Triangle.

We were travelling down to the Ikartharian triangle, mostly because someone thought we ought to go there as nobody had been there for some time, and we hadn't had our heads kicked in for simply ages, and where *better* to go for this than the Ikartharian Triangle! So we went along like lambs to the slaughter. We thought we should take along some tough dudes, as they would really enjoy getting their heads kicked in, people like Felix, Scrope ('coz he just loves to go to the triangle), Barf (because he is in desperate need of a kicking), Sargon (because he **needs** the points), Frazzle and Puddle (to do some squeaking for us), Mordar (well we all need someone to pick on), Lord Aracus and Draal to lead the group and guide us. A few of the chosen were collected and brought with us, in order to enhance the Glam factor of the group as we were low on Glam and the Chosen have got simply loads of it.

Well half way there we arrived at Mistress Blacks greasy spoon, where most of everyone stays, last chance to get some food and drink. So in we went. Now all kinds of things seemed to be going wrong. Mistress Blacks' was all closed up and dark, and she's never closed!

We couldn't get in, it seemed as though the place was full of Chaos Goblins, finally we found one door that was open. The goblins were able to afflict us with their chaotic powers, turning people to sheep, or making them think they were falling or in love with another, or asleep. And of course they had weapons to discourage you from getting close and personal. These guys were a major pain to fight but we eventually vanquished them and made it into the building.

Mistress Black was out, as was her guard, and about half the doors were locked by some kind of rune of another – Barf confirmed these to be chaos Runes of some type. We investigated these doors, and some of them were quite peculiar indeed. Sometimes people got sucked in, or the warding runes moved from one place to another, there was normally a way out, sometime you had to kill what was in the room, sometimes you had to find the key to get out, it was all very strange indeed. Mistress Black was recovered to consciousness as was her guard.

We ate and rested the night, drinking much spirits and enjoying ourselves. In the morning we awoke and prepared to travel when a Chaos Knight came in and afflicted us all with a spell of some form. Our abilities were swapped with those of the person next to us. We then fell upon him rending him with our various new powers. He didn't last long. We thought that we would be healed and our powers restored, but it was not to be, our powers faded away one by one. We found a large locked box that we thought was the source of this chaos, we unlocked it and one after another climbed into it, and vanished.

We emerged in another place where there was a path and no other way to go, so we went that way. Most of our powers and abilities were not working in this place – the power of Chaos I assume. There were several groups of Chaos Goblins to fight along the way, again, these were pains, except for the time when they used a chaos power on us of co-operation and bravery, at which point we formed a cohesive unit and slaughtered them. We also met the Easter bunny who was looking for his eggs – very strange indeed. In a big field there was a couple of undead to fight and a tree we had to run around three times before we could pass on over the gate. We travelled back to the building where there was the box, however, there was also a bunch of undead there, ghouls and skeletons, that could talk. These we butchered. Now we performed a rather silly ritual around the box to send people through one after another, where we emerged back in the real world – with our powers restored.

Mistress Black had prepared a feast for us which we gorged ourselves on, and much making of merry happened. While this was going on a few other people came in, some of who had horns on their heads, my suspicions aroused I got the evil priests to invoke. A little while later a major fight kicked off where it was revealed that a band of Ogre Magi had infiltrated this place and had replaced Coal Black and the others there and that they had been using us to try and solve the Chaos Problem they had been having. This was a damn fine run around like loonies butchering everything that moved fight, that we all enjoyed immensely. At the end of it all the Ogre Magi were dead and we had rescued Coal Black, I know this sounds confused, but I'm not sure how it happened either.

We rested the night, and then in the morning went into the Ikartharian Triangle, where we had our heads kicked in for us.

Draal, favoured of Lolth

Against The Cult of Hate

A group of us travelled down to the Ikartharian Triangle, on a matter of some urgency for Hunter Greenshields. We spent a week or so in the wilds until entering the Triangle. Secrecy was specified on this mission, as it was known that there was at least one Alliance traitor passing on things to the Cult of Hate, thus we were to be informed of our task only when we were out in the field.

Me (Draal, favoured of Lolth), Scrope, Sargon, Nerak (Drow Warrior), Felix, Ellen Luin, Puddle, Frazzle, Gus, Simon the Hospitaller, Brains, Hack

We had been booked into a building by Hunter and turned up expecting to be let in. Imagine our surprise to find that the building had been double booked by a group of Wizards Concillium! Nearing the hut we were attacked by their guardian elementals, and as often happens in such cases things broke down, with us charging in swords swinging and spells slinging.

The Concillium people were forced back and in the end teleported out, using a ritual pre-prepared. It's a little strange to find things set-up like this, but as we had captured the item they used to enhance their teleports, a candlestick, we were not too unhappy. After identifying things and similar research we discovered that there was a magical safe in this building. Being who we are Felix, used the candlestick to enhance his spells, to teleport most of our people in. There they fought a couple of elementals and activated a few wards, discovering a sword in the safe which was recovered before teleporting out.

Identifying the sword we discovered that it was a weapon designed to defeat elementals. Against a normal foe it would be a simple enchanted sword, however when wielded against an elemental it's full powers would be revealed, the magics would churn upon the blade, hotter than even a sword of fire, and even dispel the elemental totally! However such power was not without it's price (as is often the case), whoever bore the weapon for a while would become permanently afflicted with the curse of the weapon, the curse of hatred against elementals.

Resting until morning a sergeant of the Valdemar, who's area and house this was, delivered to us items that had been passed onto him, a box and a sealed scroll case. After verifying that the case had not been tampered with we opened and read a letter from Hunter Greenshields. It told us that he had discovered a way to break the hold of the Cult of Hate, however he required several items in order to do this.

Some Ikarthian Power runes – at least four different ones.

An Ikarthian Blue Bog flower.

Some tainted holy water.

Void matter that had passed through the internal workings of a Minotaur.

Anatomical piece of a creature tied bodily to the sphere of Hate.

The box was supposed to be able to contain anything without it being harmed.

After questioning, the sergeant he told us of an old temple in the area and described the Blue Bog flower to us. At the temple we figured we may be able to obtain some holy water. Whilst preparing to leave a group of Void Goblins arrived and attacked us, these we killed. We resolved that during the day we would hunt for such creatures, in particular a Void Goblin Shaman, as it was believed they used void matter was used for their talismen/foci.

We set off up a hill and reaching the top fought with Void Goblins, these were dispatched with us sustaining only minimal damage. Along this route we discovered a Gold minotaur, prowling, but rather than confront it, we chose to avoid it, hoping to use it later to pass any void matter through it's workings.

I scouted most of the way, finding a Blue Bog flower and a Power rune, which I left for the rest of the party to recover. Some distance on we encountered a small group of Wizards Concillium people, with whom Felix entered into some negotiation concerning swapping the sword of slaying elements for some arcane Blue magic teaching scrolls They were to carry his words back to the deputy arch-dean of the White school of magics.

Meanwhile I had discovered a white figure on the path. It was an Ikarthian Ghost, bound to it's duty beyond death. The ghost welcomed us and asked us to advance where we would be greeted by the priests of the

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temple, there we could freshen up before our audience. Also by the ghost was a Power Rune, which we recovered after a minor altercation with the ghost. I went off scouting down the path, and ultimately the party went another way, there they were confronted by some Void Hoardlings, which were dispatched, and a Shadowsfall discussed some things with the Party. After I returned we continued regrouping and sending out scouts to find more places to go, however, by now night had fallen and we were becoming tired. We resolved to return using a different route when above us higher on the hill a Void Shaman was espied, we charged up and attacked with a long battle ensuing. We were finally triumphant, and captured the Void Matter, putting it in the box.

Travelling back to the Gold Minotaur, encountered earlier that day, we hoped to feed it the power box, but it had moved on. Somewhat frustrated we returned to the way station intending to spend the night, before continuing our search for the required ritual elements in the morning.

About now, things started to go a little wrong. Whilst we tried to rest, there was an almost continual series of visits, allowing us only a little time between each of them. We were attacked by a small group of undead (skeletons and ghouls), and then almost immediately the Gold Minotaur, drawn by the power we had expended turned up. We fed it the box and slew it after a long fight.

A sprite arrived and squeaked at us for a while (annoying little things that they are!). Puddle and Frazzle went off into the woods with this sprite, claiming that they were all going to visit Hunter Greenshields and may be some time.

A group of three Shadowsfall demanded to speak to the members of the White Retreat, when we questioned them as to why, they confirmed the rumour that we had heard that there was a contract out on all White Retreat members, and they were here to see that it was carried out. These three Shadowsfall were soon taught the error of their ways, as we united to sly them.

A short while later two of the leaders of the Cult of Hate, the Morgothian and the Drow, (called Ebony) came storming in and demanded that we hand over to them the items we had recovered for Hunter, we decided that we weren't going to and a fight broke out. They had with them a Spirit of Hate, a creature that could inflict powerful blows that none could dodge, but that was immune to everything we could do. We fought with these and with their more normal minions and somehow managed to drive them off, in particular Ellen Luin's frostbite on the Morgothians leg being a particularly good move as it restricted his mobility and prevented them from fleeing into the night. The Morgothian was slept by Felix and Ebony welded, however the last command of the Morgothian to Snowy (the spirit of hate) was to protect them. We were unable to press our attacks, the spirit driving us off time and again. In the end they made it away into the night.

We then went to rest being badly wounded. By this point most of us were on almost no power and still wounded, in fact a round up of the party revealed we had more Party members than power at that moment, with but a few spells remaining. We did not think that they would be back as we had hurt them plenty. However after a short while Snowy returned seeking the Morgothians mace. It was unable to find it, clutched in Barf's hand where it was overlooked several times. The spirit left. I counselled that we should leave believing that we would be attacked by the Cult of Hate later. They knew of our mission and they would return in force, unfortunately nobody else agreed with me.

A little while later we were attacked in force by the leaders of the Cult of Hate and their prime minions, as I had predicted. They came storming in, fully spelled up and we were no match for them. The leaders are a Morgothian, a Drow, a Halmadonian and a Necromancer. However they did not slay us all, they tried to inflame our hatred of them, stealing spell books and humiliating people. It became apparent that they were not united, each of them retained their basic natures but that. They co-operated only in furthering the aims of Hate. This reveals to us a weakness that we may at some time be able to exploit. It also clarifies that Hate is neither good or evil, but stands apart. Finally they left so elated by their total triumph that they did not even bother to take the ingredients.

We were now at a low ebb indeed, having been completely trounced and humiliated. How much worse could it get? Then another sprite turned up to squeak at us. I hadn't believed that things could degenerate

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from where they already were, and I was deeply unhappy to find out that I was wrong. After a while though the sprites voice changed to something that was normal and it said “How I hate speaking in that stupid voice!” and started acting sensible. Things weren’t all that bad after all.

We talked with the creature at some length and it was someone (or something) called Alamaran of Alakazoo, - he and his people often went about, disguised as sprites. They were from the world or plane called Alakazoo where the Cult of Hate had originated. In the beginning on their world a being, “The Great Enemy”, had come and four weapons were constructed to fight against that creature. The weapons of Hate – one of which we had in our possession, the sword from the magical safe, the sword Felix carried. These weapons were given to four champions who carried them against The Great Enemy, but they were defeated. It seemed that his people had fled from the world seeking a place of safety and had ended up here, latching onto a spell that was being cast to come through. If they had brought the weapons with them or they had come through by another means was indeterminate. Alamaran was a creature tied to the sphere of Hate himself, so all we needed was a bit of his body to collect another of the ingredients we needed, but how to persuade him of that? It seemed that he knew of Scrope and Alamaran wanted us to arrange a meeting between him and Scrope. Thus the deal was struck.

In the morning we were having breakfast, with only a few of us up when a group of Wizards Concillium turned up and demanded the Sword. Quickly the others prepared themselves as the fight kicked off, the Concillium proved to be a powerful foe as they were well equipped and hit us with spell after spell relentlessly. Little wonder that we were sent reeling but we pressed the attack where we could and with several down or weakened it was hard going. Simon valiantly gave up his life saving another in this fight, as he blocked the blows of our foes with his body. Although we did manage in the end to drive them off, several of us needed elixirs to save ourselves. A while later the acting Dean of the White College of Magic of the Wizards Concillium turned up to conclude the deal his man had struck with Felix the previous day. After which we teleported home.

TOWERS (2) EX TOWER OF THE SUN

The T.O.T.S. had two towers when we first came to Orin Rakatha, however constant warring with the Kalid towers led to them losing first one then the final tower. They fought strongly against evil, initially attacking us when we first arrived because Wolfhold was in our alliance.

No one is currently sure where they have now gone.

It is known that some members of their race register on a discern nature of undead which has caused some consternation to the members of our Humacti sect.

TOWERS (3) EX TARANOR - EX VALDEMAR

The Valdemar tower was one of the three towers making up the Icarthian triangle. When the Icarthian tower was destroyed the Valdemar moved on splitting mainly into two groups, the first are now within the Kalid towers and are known as the Valdemar Legion. The second group are known as the Valdemar mercenaries and live in ‘The Village’ as towerless. They split into teams being run by the first team which is currently led by Kleinwort Ironfist (an ex-Valley guildleader).

The Taranor were mainly mercenaries who were allied to the Dai - Fah - Dyne when we arrived on Orin Rakatha, in much the same way as the Reader - Azad An. However the Taranor failed to gain enough status which we believe may have been partially the fault of the D-F-D, on leaving the Tower some were subsumed by the D-F-D, while a large number were butchered by the Kalid. Many of the remainder now reside in the Valley Alliance Tower and rank highly in the green school of magic where they brought a number of sorcery teaching scrolls. At present the tower is unoccupied.

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Dimwan lay down the Law

Celebration Theme Feb 1997

A meeting was called at the old Aldonar Fortress at the behest of the Dimwan with a subsequent meeting on the following night where we discussed the matters raised by the Dimwan.

There were representatives of many towers at the first meeting that we were hosting, a Kalid General, A Shadowsfall Judge, someone who purported to be Reader (of the tower of the same name), The acting head of the White School of Magic of the Wizards Concillium, A representative of the Morgoth Tower. Of our alliance Sorcerer Scrope represented WolfHold, Galnin represented the White Retreat, and Giles the Valley Tower. The Dimwan were present in number, the first chancellor, a Wraith Prince, Elran Black and Doomwraith (aka Lord Cardonaris).

At the meeting the Dimwan stated that there was a lot of disruption and chaos going on in Orin Rakatha and they were going to sort it out. They announced that their tower was going to go to war with two other towers in order to do this. The Drow Tower and the Bethellim Tower, neither were present. Stating that the Drow were a continual annoyance and constant source of trouble they were going to wipe them out - except those who had joined Wolfhold and were members of House Tundurgal. It was also stated that it was unnatural for hoardlings to be in a tower, they would destroy the Bethellim tower.

They stated that the Morgothians were bad buys, but not beyond redemption, and that the Morgothians should stay within their tower until these matters were sorted out. They spoke to Wizards Concillium and asked them to stop training anyone who the Dimwan declared war on, and that they would be increasing their training requirements in order that the Wizards Concillium not lose money. (I noted in passing that he did not declare the towers affected, but phrased it as those the Dimwan were at war with). They spoke to the person whom we believed to be Reader and said that they wanted Reader to stop any trading with anyone the Dimwan declared war on, and that Reader would be adequately compensated for any losses.

The Dia Fah Dyne were called bad boys and were encouraging bad trades, a source of disruption, but not beyond redemption. They should mend their ways. The Dimwan had taken control of the World Window and would be using it for the good of Orin Rakatha, if the DFD mended their ways and proved to be good traders in the future the World Window would be returned to them.

They spoke to the Shadowsfall and offered to buy them off of any contracts on the Dimwan, and they asked the Shadowsfall not to accept any contracts on them, that they would more than match any price offered. The Dimwan also said that the Valley Alliance have had continual problems with the Aldonar Tombs and if asked the Dimwan would be only too happy to sort them out, as masters of undead it was really down to them. When we seemed skeptical about this they said that we could accompany them if we wanted assurances.

The above is a summary of what was said by the Dimwan, soon afterwards they left. During these pronouncements when they told the Morgothians to stay in their towers the Morgothian became very agitated, Elran Black silenced him "By the power of my voice I command you to die" he said. Sir Gurthang carried the Morgothian away - I will note that Gurthang started no trouble, as I understand that he was under orders to avoid such. But it was the Dimwan who broke the truce at this point in time.

After the Dimwan left it was agreed by those present that we would have another meeting after people had contacted their towers and passed on the message to them for their feelings regarding the matters that had been revealed by the Dimwan.

During the course of the following day I accompanied a group who were intent on chasing down a traitor who had been supplying the Cult of Hate with potions and scrolls. We succeeded in our task and it was a Dai Fah Dyne called Madaxe, who has been involved in other activities against us in the past. Another group went out to investigate what the others were up to and as I understand it to attack any Kalid they should come across. They met some Kalid and undead during the course of the day.

That evening, we reconvened to discuss the matters further. Present at this meeting were those from the previous meeting, less the Dimwan, and Reader. However Reader had been present earlier but had left shortly before the meeting and was now represented by two of the Chosen. In addition were Azard-An, the

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Dai Fah Dyne Sultan of the Southern Marches, the Son of Bethellim and two representatives of the Drow Tower (the 12th Assassin and the 7th Sorcerer of House Arduval). At this meeting we discussed the matters at length, and below are the responses of the various representatives:

Kalid : he reported that the Dimwan had surrounded the Aldonar Tombs and that they had fought the undead and passes through them. They did not see any problems, and did not feel threatened. They were willing to meet again in 60 days where further discussions might take place.

Shadowsfall : Firmly against the Dimwan. They were not willing to have the Dimwan dictate terms to them and superseded their functions.

Reader's representatives - they stated that Reader would comply with the Dimwan and cease trading with those the Dimwan were currently at war with, or anyone else that the Dimwan declared war on.

Wizards Concillium : they would go along with the Dimwan.

Morgoth Tower : noncommittal, but unwilling to be dictated to.

Azard-An : concerned at the attacks being mounted by the Kalid, but generally very hostile to being dictated to by the Dimwan. He looks like a man badly in need of an alliance, and if steps were taken we could profit from this.

Dai Fah Dyne : sure that this was all a mistake and that they could work it out with the Dimwan - I take this to be compliance with the Dimwan, although that was not stated as such.

Bethellim : Pissed off at everyone who keeps attacking them - clearly against the Dimwan.

The Drow Tower : confident that they could withstand the Dimwan.

After the meeting broke up the Aldonar Fortress was swept by the Dark Wind, and many alliance people suddenly revealed that they were or had been possessed by undead, they attacked us. Discerning mostly as void zombies we were also attacked by other undead that came into the building. Ultimately we drove off these possessing spirits. It was revealed that all of these people had been cornered by Reader during the two nights and possessed, or influenced by him to be very favourable to the Dimwan cause. Our suspicions were that someone or something had impersonated Reader and had left before Azard-An turned up, whom we assume could recognise Reader. Another point of note, is that the Dimwan had already moved into the old Aldonar Tombs, and taken control of them. They were now denying passage into or out of the Tombs.

Draal, Favoured of Lolth.

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Glitter the Sprite - a Character Justification

I've just started up a new character called Glitter - a magical sprite. I liked the concept of a happy-go-lucky, fun loving character with lots of magic and a squeaky voice - and I've found a way to stop everyone ignoring you if you have a squeaky voice (later). So I checked out the points tables and found that the elven mage table was really good, but just a little too specific for my plans. OK, magic's very cheap but everything else is expensive, so on balance it seems best to buy off the half-orc tables. I can justify this on the basis that my parents once had a picnic near a cave where some creatures with deep voices once passed close by, err... on a Wednesday with an 'R' in the month, and on another plane where its usually a lot darker than it is here. I suspect that those creatures were probably half-orcs, or even orcs, so I think my claim to buying off the half-orc table is undeniable. And as a magical sprite I won't need to wear much make-up or ears or act stupid or anything. In fact, I might not tell anyone that I buy off the half-orc tables. After all, you know what people are like - they'd think I was milking it.

Then having chosen the tables to use I checked out the various classes appropriate for my character. Brief analysis showed quite clearly that Glitter ought to be a half-orc acolyte. OK, magic's a little expensive but hit points are really cheap. Besides, if I buy a lot of power instead of magic I'll be able to fool lots of monsters into trying the 'lets power-drain the sprite' routine. Then I can jump in with a 'touch of death' and drop the tough monster - won't it be great. And hit points are really cheap. Oh yeh, I've decided to cast the evil sphere. After all, who will suspect an innocent little sprite of being a nasty evil priest. Don't worry though - I'm not really evil. Its just that the evil sphere is quite efficient for half-orc acolytes. And did I mention that hit points are really cheap?

Of course, everyone knows that sprites are basically creatures of the forest. Animal and plant loving creatures - we sprites. So who could possible object to me taking nature as my second sphere. It means that I'll be able to cast some magic-like invocations so that I can carry on pretending to be a magical sprite. Honest guv, I wouldn't be taking nature so that I could use the 'efficient curing on myself' - routine, coupled with avoiding those nasty attract good invocations - no, that's not it at all. I'm a magical sprite, remember? Stop being so cynical.

And besides, my best mate plays a half-orc and he says that I can borrow some really gross skins from the half-orc guild. Yeh, I know I'm a fun loving magical sprite, but I do buy off the half-orc table, don't I? I've got this thin fun fur top with some silk (sort of worm skin) lining which, with cards for AC 7 and AC 8 skins would put me in physical AC 20 (with all the masteries, toughened skin and a point of dex). I'll be really gross.

And if you met this magical sprite (200 life, 200 power, max physical AC and invoked in the evil sphere) wouldn't you consider taking notice of his squeaky voice?

The moral of this story is **DON'T MILK IT**. The object of the game is to have fun - but we can achieve that without bending the rules into a double helix. Without exception, anyone buying off the half-orc (dwarven) table must speak in a funny voice: guttural for orcs; squeaky for goblins; and gravely for dwarves & duegar. Half-orcs and goblins must also have either a noticeably differently coloured face or (if you don't like wearing make-up) a piggy nose or a long goblinoid nose. Dwarves must wear beards, real or false, and if your beard is real I mean a beard, not stubble. All of these creatures have a noticeable non-human outlook. Half-orcs are often stupid or narrow-minded while dwarves and duegar have a subterranean attitude. If you are a member of a similar sort of race for whom you think it is appropriate to buy off the half-orc table without suffering these disadvantages - think again. Arabs and Numenorian are not half-orcs - they are humans. Lesser spotted flying dung beetles who do not wear make-up, nose or speak in a funny voice are humans.

A Disgruntled Ref

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To Look for Onyx

36 hour Dimmingsdale 07 03 97

The party - Brother John, Orcus, Dark, Phaid, Morgan, Tiny, Fern, Rowena, Telstar, Scrope, Brains, Neerak, Quicksilver, Hack, Draal, Sargon, Mordar.

The party had two objectives for this mission, to investigate the circumstances of around the disappearance of Onyx, High Priest of the Micheline Sect, and investigate The Order of the Rose. The party travelled to a remote monastery they knew belonged to The Order, and met with Brother Love and Brother Greed, two philosophers.

Arianas, one of the Unranked Spirits of Hatred, came to the party to talk on behalf of the Cult of Hate. The spirit demanded to know why the Valley had begun hostilities upon them. It went on to say that the Cult had never had an agenda against the Valley, and declared that the Valleys unreasonable actions have forced the Cult into defensive measures. A fight ensued and the spirit left warning that any further interference in their business would bring disastrous consequences for the Valley.

The Order of the Rose returned in force later the same evening and declared that people wearing symbols of the Valley had attacked them. Without further comment they attacked the party, revealing the nature of their order - psionic monks. The party were faring badly when they reasoned that the Cult of Hate must have something to do with it and convinced The Order to cease fighting. After much heated argument The Order agreed to show the party the Valley people who attacked them.

After a short journey the party spotted a group of figures huddled in the darkness arguing venomously amongst themselves. It appeared that the Valley traitor Cultist was there, but two people fled at the first appearance of the Valley. A brutal fight ensued, the two Anti-Paladins Ashgur Raze and Ebony fighting side by side with Onyx. The party fought well and drove the Cultists into retreat.

Returning to the monastery Brother John had a vision from his sphere in which he saw Fearon, sorcerer of the Green School, forcing Onyx to perform a sacrifice, Fearon ended up killing Onyx. He then saw Onyx talking to his father, and his father putting a chain around his neck. The final part of his vision was Onyx brutally murdering a family of helpless peasants.

The next day the party met with Pyloric Sinblade, assassin of the House Tilduring, who told the party about Onyx's father working with the Hate Cult, and the use of a Soul Trap on Onyx. The Drow also mentioned that Callum Grath, the Halmadonian Cultist, was in possession of the soul trap, and was thus controlling Onyx. The party discussed with the Drow and The Order and decided that they would have to re-capture Onyx's two spirits and recover his body to effect any cure. The Order gave the party a Witch Bottle with which to capture the spirits in. The Drow then gave directions to a spirit which they knew of. After meeting stiff resistance from Hate Cultists, Drow and Morgothians the party reached the location of the first spirit. The spirit saw the approaching party, capered about, and uttered a holy word. With a look of anguish and a wave of Horror, the spirit divided into six separate entities. A prolonged battle ensued at the end of which the tainted spirit was in the bottle.

Upon returning to the monastery the party met with two Valley members, Fearon sorcerer of the Green School, and Coreen Ballavis sorcerer of the Temple of the Earth. Fearon revealed that it was in fact he that was working as a leader in the Cult of Hate. He told of the Sphere of Hate in the tree, and how it was all the Valleys fault that the current situation has arose by repeated meddling. Fearon and Coreen both emphasised that they do not consider themselves traitors because they have never acted against the Valley. Rather they work with the Cult of Hate because they with their considerable resources actually get things done rather than squabble amongst themselves about rules, regulations and red tape as do the Valley. To prove his loyalty to the Valley, Fearon offered to locate the second spirit, and offered information about the movements of Callum Grath. Soon after this a ranking member of House Tumdurgal arrived and spoke to the party Drow. It was arranged that scouts were put out acting on Fearons information to locate Grath. The party were told that the Circle of Master Seers in Wolfhold are the only ones who can cure Onyx's affliction.

A Drow scout arrived later to lead the party to where Grath's group was. The party met with the Halmadonian in an open field. The Cultists were quick to attack. In his group Grath had Onyx, Crialus a

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Spirit of Hatred, an Earth Elemental, Drow and Uruk-hai. In and heroic battle the party slew the Halmadonian and took from his body the Soul Trap. Unfortunately Crialus made off with Grath's body. Returning to the monastery with Onyx they found him much changed. He was totally under the control of the user of the Soul Trap. Brother John took possession of the device. Onyx told the party of the Cult of Hate and mentioned that he was told to remove any befriend that was cast upon the Spirits of Hatred. Upon the next day, a group of Bethelim under the control of a Ogre-mage attacked the party in an attempt to recover Onyx and the Soul Trap. In a battle that destroyed both Arianas and Crialus, the party defeated the Bethelim. Unfortunately Morgan lost his life in this battle.

Upon returning to the Towers, it was decided not to hand Onyx over to the Seers for curing, and he is now within the Valley Tower.

A PUPPETS PERSPECTIVE

Killing and yet more killing. I fight and I slay.
I slay Good, Neutral and Evil - all without remorse.
I slay the weak and the defenceless, be they Male or Female, young or old - All fall before me.
Some may try to resist, or plea for mercy, but they cannot change what must be.
For I am the tool to be wielded.

I am the ultimate tool, wielded by whoever possesses the key.
The key may change hands, but the results are the same. I fight and I slay.
They may call me by different names - slave or friend - it matters not, a name is a name.
I am used to champion different causes, yet believe in none.
For I am the tool to be wielded.

Who is right? I care not, for only might is right. I fight and I slay.
For the strong survive and impose their will upon the weak.
Good, Neutral and Evil - all impose their will in the name of their Sphere.
Ask me not my opinion - I think as commanded - and I do what I have been created to do.
For I am the tool to be wielded.

Thus will I continue until I am no more.

Onyx

QUAD XXVJ

A Quest For Humact

72 hour 20 - 23 March 1997

I accompanied a group from the White Retreat and Valley Alliance Tower who quested for knowledge about Humact. The questors were: Squire Jeff, Sir Paulandis, Paris, Elan, Brother John, Annatharian, Elor, Sargon, Quicksilver, Tarquin, Mountain Clegg, Boltac/Bracken/Eric, Telstar, Mordar, Mudge and Tornado (me). Following a vision given to Squire Jeff we journeyed towards a Tomb located in the Eight Hills, just north of the Icarthian Triangle (*isn't everything just north of the Icarthian Triangle?*). In this tomb was supposed to be the body of a man who had knowledge of Humact.

As we approached the area of the tomb we were attacked by Hordelings, Undead (*there are an alarming number of these around lately!*) and a hard group of Dymwan, led by a Hepath of War. After a long and hard fight up and down a particularly steep hill, the Hepath of War planar shifted away. On a Dymwan body was a scroll - a map of the local area, with three verses of poetry on the reverse. We also learned that the Dymwan were after more scrolls which were in the possession of a peasant, who had fled to a nearby Trading Post - naturally we followed. On our way there we met some mercenaries who alleged to be working for the Wizards Concillium. They told us that knowledge of the location of the Tomb was hidden within three sets of scrolls, we had one, they had another and this peasant had the third. We agreed to meet them at the Trading Post later on.

We arrived at the Trading Post and settled in for the night. The peasant who had fled the Dymwan showed up and after a short discussion gave us twenty scrolls that he had found hidden in a room at the back of a ramsacked cave. The mercenaries then showed up and after another short discussion gave us the third set of scrolls. The mercenaries were tomb robbers and sought the same Tomb we were after. In return for their set of scrolls we agreed not to remove anything from the tomb, leaving it for them - they would be following us. Shortly after the mercenaries left the Hepath of War and a particularly hard Dymwan Necromancer, embodied with a Rank 8 Mummy, planar shifted in and attacked the party. After a short fight and several Fatal Diseases they both planar shifted out again.

The three sets of scrolls consisted of a map, a map key and twenty scrolls. On the each of the four sides of the map was a set of names, places or numbers. By solving the riddle of the three verses on the reverse of the map we were able to align a point on each side of the map (N to S and E to W) and then draw a line between each point. Where the two lines crossed gave us a mark upon the map, there were three marks to find - one for each of the three verses. Once we had found these three points we used the map key to point to the location of the Tomb. Sound simple enough? Unfortunately, in order to solve the riddle of the three verses we had to decipher the twenty scrolls. Lucky for me (*not!*) the runes were written (*very badly*) in Magic Runes and it took myself, ably assisted by a few others, about six hours - until 5.30 am - to decipher them. However by dawn, when *nearly* everyone woke up feeling refreshed, we had learned the location of the Tomb. The twenty scrolls told the tale of a people called the Otomi, and their religious beliefs. Quite frankly it was very barbaric and consisted of some unsavoury practices. What was interesting to note was their resemblance to The Tower of the Sun and their beliefs.

After some rest for the hard working scroll deciphers, we set off. As we neared the Tomb we were again attacked by the Hepath of War, the Dymwan Necromancer/Mummy and numerous other Dymwan who all had high level Undead embodied within them. A very long and hard fight ensued in which numerous high level magic and power was used - not least a Level 8 Vanish Animate on me. Eventually the bravery and skill of my comrades won through and we vanquished the foe. As we continued our travels we came to the entrance of the Tomb. We had to descend a short drop and then journey down a long steep tunnel, after dispatching some Acid Trolls. The tunnel ended in a blank wall which recognised as Magic and Power. I identified the wall and found out that we had to recite the three verses from the map to be transported to the Tomb. This we did and everybody below Rank 32 disappeared. Fifteen minutes later we were able to repeat the process and everybody below Rank 64 disappeared. We repeated this process until we all ended up in the Tomb.

As each group of people entered the Tomb, a few Undead were released through a ward to fight them - getting harder as the higher ranked members of our group appeared. When we were all within the Tomb and had defeated the Undead, we meditated and searched the area. After some time the owner of the Tomb showed up, an Unranked Skeletal King Efrete, he called himself an Immortal and did not believe that he was dead. He was accompanied by an Unranked Spirit of Death. The Humacts of the party spoke with the

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Skeletal King about their quest and were told that to find Humact we had to travel the Path of the Dead, through two Otomi Temples, until we reached the Temple of the Dead. Once there we would be transported to the location of Humact (*this I will not reveal, out of respect for my Humacti brethren*).

We set off. The Path of the Dead proved interesting and we had to pass several tests before reaching the Temple of the Dead, but we were aided by the information contained in the scrolls. We fought some Undead warriors who sought to take our place as living creatures and a sea creature who used poisoned blades and was only affected by Red magic. We entered the first Temple, that of the Sun God who demanded his appeasement - which we refused. After a long hard fight it became apparent that we would not prevail unless we did indeed appease the Sun God. We obtained the required materials and offered them to the Sun God, it worked. We then entered the Temple of the Fire God. Forewarned by our earlier failure we found out what was required to appease him - bread and water - and did so. We then found ourselves at the Gates to the Temple of the Dead and debated what we should do next. It transpired that in order to appear inside the Temple we had to Resurrect everybody.

We were transported to the Temple, which was located miles below ground (*very unnerving*). Within the Temple was a very Evil altar that contained hundreds of trapped souls. Sir Paulandis destroyed the altar and Brother John cast an Exorcism on it - to purify it. Shortly after we were attacked by some more Undead, led by an Unranked Skeletal King Djin. This fight was perhaps the hardest yet, with some high level vocal spells being unleashed against us by the Skeletal King. Again through the sheer skill and bravery of my comrades, we killed all but the Skeletal King - who was forced to flee. Unfortunately we paid a huge price, Mountain Clegg and Elan were both slain. After this fight we rested for the night.

In the morning we were rudely awakened, by some Unranked Ghouls gnawing upon our bodies. I was paralysed before I even awoke (*Paralysis is a pain*). The rest of the party rallied and destroyed our foe. We found that we had been ejected from the Temple of the Dead onto this (*unnamed*) plane. It was indeed a barren and inhospitable place, with very strong winds and a biting cold (*but it was much better than being underground*). We settled down for several hours in order to cast our high level spells and invocations, once prepared we set off.

The first thing we met was an Unranked Apparition, which the Humactis' advised against going near. Quicksilver and myself went into it's "home" and spoke with it. The apparition told us the location of a fort and a guardian who would be able to help us in our quest. As we journeyed on we were attacked by an Unranked Spectre, which was particularly hard. Again after a very hard fight we managed to defeat this creature when Telstar cast high level magic protection upon himself and virtually single-handedly destroyed the Spectre (*Magic triumphs over Power again!*). Unfortunately, Annatharian and Mudge were slain during the fight. We continued our journey towards the fort. We went through "Unranked Ghoul Alley", slaying them easily when they finally attacked, until we were just above the fort. The fort was an inhospitable looking structure at the end of a promontory of land, with one bridge across a ravine as its entrance.

The party meditated and prepared whilst I cast a spell to search the fort. As I crossed the bridge to the fort I was challenged by four Undead, who backed away from me and then fell as if attacked, disappearing before my own eyes - very strange. The fort was devoid of life, or unlife, but had several warded areas and a small shrine with a frame placed within it. As I returned to the party we were attacked by nine Unranked Ghouls and two Unranked Ghoul Warriors, we retreated to the bridge by the fort and fought them off. We searched the fort and entered one of the warded areas, which was a large shrine containing lots of candles. Whilst some of us searched the fort the others stayed upon the bridge and fought of the constant attack by the never ending supply of Unranked Ghouls, Ghoul Assassins/Warriors/Priests/Wizards. The search proved fruitless. A shout for assistance was heard from beyond the attacking Ghouls and the party rallied to the shout, aiding a lone figure fighting off the Ghouls. We retreated back to the fort to listen to what this figure had to say.

This figure was a representative of the Good Sphere, whom I shall refer to as the Marquis, and told us a little bit about Humact and our current situation. Most of what he said I will deliberately leave out, but we were told that our presence in the fort had weakened the Humact sub-sphere. The shrine where the one frame was located was an anchor for the Humact sub-sphere, it originally had six frames within it, the other five frames had been removed. In order to help strengthen Humact and restore it we had to try and recapture as many of the other five frames as possible, although it was unlikely that we would restore them all. The Marquis had

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one frame with him, which he placed with the other one, he then told us that the holders of the other frames would be drawn here. In order to receive the other frames we would be required to complete various tests set by the other holders. The other frames were held by a representative of the Neutral and Evil Spheres, an unnamed person and the Ghoul King. The land we were in now belonged to the Ghoul King and his minions and it was his creatures that were attacking us. The Marquis then showed us a portal located within the fort which would take us back to our own plane. We could use this portal at any time to save ourselves, however, the Humactis' rightly stated that they would stay.

The challenge was set and we knew what we had to do. Before long the representative of the Neutral Sphere showed up with another frame. In order to receive his frame, we were to give him a five minute lead to leave the fort and then six people would pursue him, the sixth person to reach him would receive the frame. The catch was that none of the six people were allowed to draw weapons until they had the frame. The six people chosen for this dangerous test were Quicksilver, Annatharian, Brother John, Elan, Tarquin and myself, Boltac came along in case one of the others fell. There was a concerted attack by the Unranked Ghouls and the seven chosen men slipped out the side of the fort, through a ravine and up a very steep and windswept hill. Unfortunately, we were seen by two Unranked Ghouls who gave chase. Boltac and Quicksilver were stopped almost immediately, Boltac fooled them and managed to escape to a lower path. Quicksilver would have been slain but luckily sprained his ankle and was powerdrained instead. The other five continued on, being chased by a lone Ghoul. We made it to the lower path and were about to look for the Neutral Sphere Marquis when we heard a cry of help from Annatharian. We were not overly concerned because we knew that our Humacti on full power and able to cast Aid of Humact and Repel Undead, was easily a match for a lone Ghoul. How wrong we were. The four of us returned up the hill to try and rescue Annatharian, who was held captive by the Ghoul. I cast Entangles upon the Ghoul and Dispelled his skin before I started to Bolt it. Unfortunately, I ventured too close and the Ghoul leapt down the hill, an amazing distance, and landed upon me - my luck was out. Brother John valiantly tried to rescue me but was unsuccessful as the Ghoul ripped my head from my shoulders.

Meanwhile, Boltac had managed to stumble upon the Neutral Marquis, but alas was then captured by an Unranked Ghoul Assassin. He was taken down to the fort where his throat was ripped open before the party and he too was slain. The party ventured forth and managed to reach the Neutral Marquis and obtain the third frame. The Ghoul King then showed up and gave the party the fourth frame, saying he would return shortly to reclaim it. The party prepared for what was to be the final assault. Minutes later the Ghoul King and his minions attacked the party. A Mass Dispel 5 was cast, as well as a Mass Dispel 4, Mass Dispel 2 and Mass Weakness and several range Harms. This combined with the massive blows from the Ghoul King and his minions proved too much for the party. Mountain Clegg, Annatharian, Brother John, Tarquin, Elan and Sir Paulandis were slain and Elor, Quicksilver, Paris and Telstar fled through the portal. Squire Jeff, Mudge and Mordar retreated to the large shrine where Sargon was reading his spellbook. Squire Jeff and Mudge fought the Ghoul King valiantly every step of the way until they were within the large shrine. Unfortunately all four were then overwhelmed and slain.

The end I hear you say - and so it should have been. As the dead journeyed down the tunnel towards the great light, the Good Marquis appeared and guided us away from our deaths and took us to a meeting place where we met those who fled through the portal. He then explained that Humact had saved all those who had died for him and prevented them from having to be Resurrected. We were told that we had done well and restored the balance to the Humact sub-sphere. Again I will leave out the majority of the conversation, for one thing that we all learned was that if you seek an answer to your belief or knowledge of it, then it must be sought and quested for by yourself. If you read about it, then you have not truly sought or learned.

I would like to say that it was an honour to quest with so many fine and heroic people.

***Tornado
Sorcerer of the Blue School of Magic
Hero of the Valley Alliance***

QUAD XXVJJ

24 hour Brean Down 05-04-97.

The party - Nerak, Araikas, Draal, Twilight, Sargon, Rakshaal, Kayden, Ishmaelin, M'ul.

The party travelled to the Aldonar home plane via the plane of the sleepless dead. It can now be confirmed that in fact there is no home plane, only another area of the plane of the sleepless dead.

Note the party at one point travelled through the Aldonar tombs and although the Dymwan allow access - they will destroy anyone who remains in one area long enough for them to gather their forces.

FORTHCOMING ADVENTURES

April 18th - 20th	Theme weekend	Quantocks
May 2nd - 4th	36 hour Thranduil mission sponsored by the chosen.	Kinver
May 11th	8 hour Elven Low Level	TBA
May 16th - 18th	36 hour, pre heroquest	Kinver
May 26th - 30th	Heroquest 7	Lake district.
June 13th - 15th	Summer theme	Kinver

QUAD XUVV

HEROQUEST - TOM'S STORY

With the Dark Brotherhood no longer trying to take over the Village, most peoples efforts went into finding more out about the Empire. They sent their first legion to attack us thinking we were not capable of defending ourselves, and in a straight fight were probably right, but our groups were masters of hit and run, and one of our adventuring parties got behind enemy lines and slew the legion commander. This slowed them for a time but we learnt that 3 legions were now on the way to destroy us !

At this time the valley was split into 8 camps ; Raucus and the village, Lord Blackwolf and what remained of the Dark Brotherhood army, the new good camp run by the Micheliners, the Goblin King and his men, the Deep Wood Elves, the Lizard men, the Drow and the Duergar. So a treaty was arranged whereby all groups would put aside their differences to stand against the Empire. 6 of the groups agreed but the Drow laughed at the idea saying the Empire would pay if they were foolish enough to come below the ground. The Duergar never showed at all.

So we stood and fought against the Empire and did OK because they did not expect us to be allied. During this time our leaders realised we were fighting a war we could not win and started to look at other options which was when we first learnt of Orin Rakatha. I'm not sure exactly what happened next except that we were given the keys to two towers on Orin Rakatha and we made plans to evacuate the valley leaving behind only humans in the Village and the Deep Wood Elves. The trouble was that a being known only as Nexus stole one of the keys from us and a group had to go to his home plane and get it back. Fortunately for us they succeeded and were recognised as Heroes for their efforts.

The plans were now set to leave and the Empire were attacking in force, for some reason the Shark Cult helped the Empire and tried to poison all our water but they were stopped and many Lizard men chose to flee the Empire with us. The Empire made a last great effort to defeat us at the Battle of the Portal but we mostly escaped. We would have been more successful had Lord Blackwolf not left during the battle taking most of the Valley treasures and supplies with him.

So we travelled the planes across Thranduil and onto Orin Rakatha, Blackwolf had taken the key to one tower where he set up Wolfhold leaving everyone else to move into the other, now called the Valley Alliance tower. We did not make a lot of friends, in fact the only people we actually did not fight at first were the Reader and Azad - An. We hired a trading post from the Reader from where we explored the new world. We met : Kalid, who we fought, Bethelim who we fought, Halmadon's Height and Tower of the Sun, who we fought, we met the Dai - Fah -Dyne and Taranor who did not like our trading etc with the Reader and Azad - An, and we met the Wizards Concillium who did not like our Cabal because we had our own magical teaching scrolls. All in all our first year was not easy.

To make matters worse, next to our tower were the Aldonar tombs but before I talk about them I need to tell you the story of Kranium Doomwraith, now known as Cardinaris, head of the tower of the Tombs of Dymwan. Kranium Doomwraith (KD) was one of Lord Blackwolf's original adventuring buddies who was always a necromancer. He fought against the Village in the 'Brotherhood Wars' and was a member of the Council of Ten. During the first Heroquest the Deep Wood Elves supposedly permanently killed KD, however he appeared again in the final battle and in human not undead form. From then on he continued in the Council of Ten but was only ever skulking in the background, and finally even gave up his leadership of the Necromancers Sect, by the setting up of a challenge to recover some amulet of power. Mian won this and little was seen of KD at all until his long term plans for transformation to the Wraith of Doom were revealed during the Aldonar Heroquest. No one seems to know which came first KD's name as an adventurer in the Valley or whether he was always fated to follow on from the Zombie, Skeleton and Ghoul of Doom as dictated in the Aldonar prophesy. Since then he seems to have taken control of the Tombs of Dymwan tower and even his long term associate Lord Blackwolf is now opposed to him.

Next issue - the history of the Aldonar, as Tom continues to relate the stories he has heard. Remember to ask those people who were actually present for their version of what actually happened.

Power Runes

A: 𐌆	J: 𐌰	S: 𐌱
B: 𐌋	K: 𐌗	T: 𐌞
C: 𐌘	L: 𐌚	U: 𐌛
D: 𐌹	M: 𐌺	V: 𐌟
E: 𐌽	N: 𐌜	W: 𐌿
F: 𐌿	O: 𐌾	X: 𐌿
G: 𐌷	P: 𐌺	Y: 𐌿
H: 𐌹	Q: 'kw'	Z: 𐌿
I: 𐌇	R: 𐌚	TH: 𐌿
		CH: 𐌿

Examples of Power Runes:

<i>Mace Wielder</i>	· 𐌱 𐌛 𐌽 𐌺 · 𐌱 𐌺 𐌹 𐌹 𐌺 𐌹 𐌹 ·
<i>Prayer</i>	· 𐌽 𐌹 𐌽 𐌿 𐌹 𐌹 ·
<i>Dwarven Child</i>	· 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 · 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 ·
<i>Power Weaver</i>	· 𐌽 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 · 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 ·
<i>The Wood</i>	· 𐌹 𐌹 · 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 𐌹 ·

Runes of the Cosmos

A:	H:	NN:	U:
B:	I:	O:	V:
C:	J:	P:	W:
D:	K:	Q:	X:
E:	L:	R:	Y:
EE:	M:	S:	Z:
F:	MM:	T:	Begin Sentence
G:	N:	TT:	End Sentence

Example of Runes of the Cosmos:

Battle



