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THE PROPHECIES OF DRAKEEN

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DRACONIAN



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Halloo, halloo! Gather round and hear a tale of great adventure, of heroism to fire the heart, raging passions and fierce-fought battles to stir the very soul! 'Tis a bright and cheerful day here in the great marketplace of his Imperial Highness, and you good folk are here to enjoy it. What better way than to hear a story of how all this came to pass? Nay, I do not mean how the marketplace was built, but rather how it is that we avoided the black doom that spread over the land some three centuries before.

Ah, we owe all our good fortune to the brave actions taken those long years ago . . . You, noble sir, come and listen as I weave this tale! Of course, my poor old storyteller's throat grows dry with naught to nourish it but the dry dust and the parching rays of the sun . . . yes, a drop of that wine would help oil the tongue, thank you, noble one. Ah, that is a proper pressing of the grape, it is, sir! Why, it reminds of the story . . . oh, yes, my lord, that tale I shall recount another day.

I see by ye're eager faces that the tale can begin. Now let me see, my memory is not what it once was, in the days of my far-off youth. Oftimes the clink of coins can shake these stories out of my poor befogged head . . . ah, my cap is glad of the coinage, kind lord, a thousand blessings on your house! Now, where was I?

Yes, yes. And so I begin.

It came to pass in the Years of Darkness that a paladin ventured forth to slay the last of the Drakkhen. Though it was a mighty deed (and mighty foolish, withal) that tale were better told another day. Suffice it to say that this paladin slew the last of the Drakkhen, those great and mighty beasts beloved of the Father who once ruled over the world.

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And so this man brought doom upon the world. Though he paid for his crime with his life, still the doom remained, to the great sorrow of the peoples of the world. The Emperor, sorely troubled by the events unfolding around him, retreated to take the counsel of his advisors. Meanwhile, the dread consequences of the paladin's act ravaged the Empire.

Magic failed, and all that was builded with magic failed, too. Great buildings fell, mobs roamed the streets, and many died. Warfare broke out on the borders. Famine and pestilence stalked the land. And no one knew what to do; all looked to the Emperor for guidance, but he was in seclusion.

When the *HMS Shadrak* returned from its epic voyage and their tale was told of a mysterious new island where the dragons dwelt, the Emperor determined what he should do. He summoned four of his subjects to undertake the Quest that would save the world from the doom of the paladin. With the Emperor's blessing, the four boarded the Imperial Barge and set forth on their quest.

This, then, is their tale. Gather round, gentle folk, and attend me well as I bring back that long-lost day . . .



PREPARATION

The Lord Chamberlain smoothly moved forward as the Emperor left the throne room. The Lord Chamberlain's gaze was steady, though the slight tremble in his hands betrayed the tension of the past few days. "Come," he bid the adventurers. "We must prepare you for your quest."

With his direction the servants soon prepared the adventurer's bags for their journey. Guided by the Lord Chamberlain, the servants took the bags through the palace halls and out into a side exit, where a troop of grim-faced soldiers awaited them. With a few brief orders, the soldiers formed a guard around the adventurers and proceeded to escort them to the docks. Along the way, the Lord Chamberlain counseled them.

"The Emperor commands that you be given every courtesy and aid in your quest. To this end he has sent three of his most powerful advisors to be with you on the first part of your journey. They will impart the benefits of their vast experience, in the hopes that this knowledge will be of some use in the ordeal ahead."

Though the adventurers questioned him, the Lord Chamberlain refused to say more of these advisors, except that "You will know more when the time is right. Be patient, for there is still time for you to learn."

The weather was gray and chill, with an icy breeze that cut through clothing like a keenly whetted knife. The walk to the docks was eerily deserted; no people were on the streets, and the echo of the soldiers' feet was the only sound from the city around them.

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The four chosen ones were led to the docks where the Imperial Barge awaited them. Normally festooned with bright banners and ringing with merriment and music, on this day of destiny the Barge waited grim and gray, like some great sea-beast crouching at the quay. The Lord Chamberlain stood at the edge of the dock, his face expressionless. The ramp creaked wearily under their feet as the four companions came aboard. The soldiers watched without expression until the ramp was withdrawn, then at a sharp word from their commander they turned and marched back they way they had come.

The captain, a lean man much weathered by salt seas and northern winds, greeted them brusquely as they stepped onto the deck. "Welcome aboard. The mate will show you your cabins." His manner did not invite discussion or questions, and indeed the captain hurried off as the mate motioned them to the cabins. The mate was even less garrulous than the captain, and in the absence of conversation the adventurers took notice of their surroundings.

The entire superstructure of the ship was made of richly finished hardwoods, intricately carved and lovingly polished, as might be expected of the Emperor's private pleasure craft. The cabins were equally well-appointed, with soft furs, lustrous silks, ornate brass lanterns and fixtures, and clear glass windows that overlooked the bay and the ominously darkening sky.

As the adventurers laid in their luggage, the shrill whistles of the deckhands heralded the casting off of the great barge. With gathering speed, the Imperial Barge left the quay on its fateful journey, the Lord Chamberlain the only witness to its departure. When the ship finally vanished in the hazy distance, the Lord Chamberlain turned his back and began the lonely walk to the palace.

On board the barge, the adventurers had little time to themselves, however. The mate knocked on their doors and stuck his head in their quarters without so much as a by-your-leave. "Ye're to come wi' me," he growled with a heavy accent. The adventurers shared a few glances and a shrug, and then accompanied the mate as he led them down the passageway to a heavy oaken door, where the mate left them standing outside. The adventurers looked at one another uncertainly. Finally, one of them opened the door.



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This was clearly the Emperor's cabin, for it occupied the entire aft section of the deck and stretched the width of the ship. Heavy beams crossed the ceiling, their dark surfaces gleaming with varnish. Oil lamps burned brightly to dispel the gloom that filtered in through the windows in the side of the cabin. The cabin was richly furnished with fine rugs and tapestries, ornate chests and carved benches. In the middle of the cabin, three men sat at a highly polished table. They were arguing fiercely as the door opened; the argument stopped abruptly as they noticed the adventurers standing outside.

The eldest man, a tall, lean figure in purple vestments set with glittering silver stars, waved an impatient hand. "Come in, come in," he snapped, his white beard jutting forth angrily as he spoke, his dark eyes gleaming from under bushy white brows. "No time to waste! Enter and let us begin!"

The adventurers entered and stood gazing uncertainly at the three. Of course, they immediately recognized the Imperial Arch-Wizard who had summoned them into the room. But the other two men at the table were familiar to none of the adventurers.

Sensing their uncertainty, the Arch-Wizard spoke again. "This is Khangral, Warlord of the Eastern Marches," he said, gesturing at the burly man to his right. The Warlord was an imposing figure, not much above middle height but broad as an old tree stump and gnarled thickly with muscles. He was arrayed in a chain byrnie washed with silver, his graying hair held from his brow by a thick headband of beaten gold. His deep blue eyes took their measure while he quaffed a great draft of ale. The hilt of a broadsword was evident, leaning against the table where it could be grasped swiftly at need. The scars that criss-crossed his heavy arms hinted at the depth of combat experience he possessed.

"And this is the Loremaster Salegor," continued the Arch-Wizard, motioning to his left.

The Loremaster nodded, his multiple chins wabbling. He was even bigger than the Warlord, but the Loremaster owed his size to indulgence in the finer things of life, not incessant practice with weapons. Staring at his plump white hands with fingers like sausages, it was hard to imagine Salegor even grasping a weapon, much less wielding one. Yet the keen gaze as he stared at the adventurers bespoke a powerful intelligence, and indeed nothing less than that could have made Salegor the Loremaster in charge of the Imperial Archives, that vast repository of knowledge.

"We have precious little time, so your instructions must begin at once," said the Arch-Wizard. "I will discuss the casting of magic and its uses; for though magic is now lost to us, still may you employ it on the island that is your goal. And you must be very skilled indeed to succeed in your quest."

"Tomorrow, Khangral will drill you in weapons training and small group tactics, the better to prepare you for the inevitable battles you will face. Listen well, for this instruction is critical."

"After that, Salegor will share with you the translations he has made from certain documents he discovered in the Imperial Archives. These ancient prophecies may guide you through the mysteries and challenges that lie ahead, so attend him well."

The Arch-Wizard paused, gazing at each adventurer in turn. "So, are you ready? Now we begin!"





The Arch-Wizard led the adventurers to his cabin, a much smaller one than the Emperor's. The cabin was crowded with books and scrolls and miscellaneous paraphernalia; there was much rearranging in order to find a seat. Finally, the adventurers were ready to learn, and the Arch-Wizard began his lecture.

"Though you are not all wielders of magic, it is good for you to hear my words. I speak of concepts that can be helpful to all – if you remember my teachings!

"While casting spells in combat is an easy process, quickly learned by all novices, casting spells out of combat is a somewhat trickier affair. Perhaps some instruction is in order.

"To cast a spell when you are not in combat, first the wizard must select the spell according to the usual practice. I trust I shall not have to cover the basics, for those are contained within the book that all are given in the earliest part of their training. In any event, the wizard should move to a position next to the intended target of the spell. When you are ready, use the arcane gesture you have been taught for spellcasting (for the initiate, this means pressing the right button) while pointing at the feet of the intended target. The spell is cast and takes effect immediately; if it is successful, the knowledge of its success appears to you in the form of bright letters.

"Now to other matters. The simple light spell is one of the most effective tools of a wizard, especially in the dungeons. Why, you can't make out the simplest of inscriptions if you can't see. And light spells cost very few spell points. In fact, they can even be used outdoors if you're having trouble seeing at night. Of course, if you find yourself with few spell points remaining, you can always take a torch from the wall and use that to illuminate your path.



"Remember, just because you're a wizard or a priest doesn't mean that you can't fight. Your spells can aid you in combat, particularly Shield, Strength, and Invisibility. Cast them on yourself or on the other members of your party. This can often be a far more efficient means of conquering your foes than simply blasting them with lightning. And it is true that the lessons learned from battle will make you a more effective wizard.

"If you want to move with great agility, use the Speed spell. Used outdoors, this can make the entire group move with great speed, which is useful for covering the vast distances that you must during your quest.

"Remember that spell points will return, albeit slowly, with the passage of time. If you are exhausted, perhaps the group should wait for some time while your spell points regenerate.

"Do not forget about your spells in the heat of combat. Wise use of the magics available to you can mean the difference between life and death. Often magic can solve problems that seem to have no other answer. And as you gain in mastery, more magic will be available to you. Experiment with your powers if need be.

"Don't ignore items that you may find. Certain rings and scepters can improve your physical qualities, while others contain powerful spells locked within them. Try them out to find the best combination.

"Wizards are extremely powerful at higher levels, though it is difficult to achieve that level of mastery. Individual combat is a good way to attain higher levels; of course, you should be well outfitted (with equipment or spells) before you tackle any particularly deadly opponents. Don't let the group automatically fight as a team; refrain from that style, and just attack by yourself as you were taught early in your training.

"For those of the Amiga school of magic, Level 24 is the highest attainable level of magical mastery; beyond that it is not possible to go. Be warned; at the highest level of magical mastery, when spell points reach their maximum, they may cease to regenerate when used. However, for magicians of the MS-DOS school, these restrictions do not apply." The Arch-Wizard's intensity made for an exhausting day of instruction and drills. Of course, magic did not work any more outside of the Isle of the Drakkhen, so actual practice was impossible. But still the wielders of magic knew more of their craft than before, which would serve them well on the quest.

The adventurers, their heads spinning with spells and counterspells, ate sparingly of the rich food offered from the Emperor's personal store. Darkness seemed to fall with unusual swiftness, and a dank fog cloaked the Barge that night. They seemed to drift in a cloud, detached from the world, separated from all the strife and terror behind them. But still a cold trickle of fear ran through their hearts, like the first drops of rain from a raging winter storm. Time was running short for their quest, they knew. And there was so much to learn, and so much was wagered on the success of their venture. Sleep was a long time in coming, and their dreams were clouded with formless black shapes and dread emotions.





The next day dawned bright but hazy, and it was impossible to see for more than a mile or so in any direction from the ship. The adventurers broke their fast with biscuits and tea, taken standing up as the crew went about their business. "Khangral, the Imperial Warlord, awaits you on the foredeck, masters," a young sailor told them anxiously. "He seems eager to see you . . . " His voice trailed off as the adventurers brushed past him, striding eagerly for the foredeck. Perhaps some activity would help them forget the troubling dreams of the past night.

Khangral was standing in the middle of the foredeck, arrayed in his battle armor. His legs were planted at shoulder width, his hands cupped on top of the hilt of the broadsword that rested point first on the deck. He looked like some elemental force of war, the spirit of battle condensed and solidified into one unstoppable killing machine.

"It's time to see how thoroughly you have been trained," he growled, "And to test your courage, as well." With a sudden swift motion, Khangral whirled the broadsword into the air and charged headlong at the four adventurers!

Being the carefully selected heroes that they were, this did not catch them unprepared. Khangral's rush was greeted by empty air as the adventurers scattered to the sides, avoided Khangral's sweeping blade while drawing their own weapons. When Khangral spun to face them again, he was greeted by an array of bright-edged steel that glittered in the early morning light.

"Hah!" Khangral shouted. "So you are not without some skills, I see." He sheathed his sword in one smooth motion and strode forward. "So, let us begin your instruction. There is much that I have to teach you." The adventurers laid down their weapons and listened as the Warlord gave his sage advice on strategy and tactics, condensed from the knowledge of countless battles and encounters.

"If it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger," he said. "Battle is the key to success in your quest. You must know when and how to engage the enemy, and when to turn and run. And know when you must talk instead of fight, for mark me well: you cannot win if you try to fight everyone you encounter."

"The ideal party has one of each type; a warrior or amazon, a scout, a magician, and a priest. You can't win without at least one wizard, though much depends on the strength of your weapon arms.

"Equip yourself before you do anything. Make sure that you have your gear properly arranged before you set forth and begin any combats. Is your armor all in place and properly set? Are you using the best weapon for the task? You may find weapons that are more powerful than those you bear; even magical ones. A magical weapon is always better, if you can find one.

"Remember, not all items are usable by all people. Trade them around to find the best combinations. Often it's best if you spread around the best armor that you find, rather than concentrating it all on one person. This will help your party survive.

"You must get tough; wander around and fight. Pick your fights carefully. To get individual characters up to higher levels, don't just send the whole group into combat automatically. Tackle easier opponents one-on-one.

"So that there is a record of your travels, you have a special spell called Save Adventure (activated by the disk icon). Record your adventures often; it's best if you do it before you enter a dungeon and after you get out of the dungeon.

"Automatically fighting can be dangerous. Some creatures won't attack you unless you attack them. And even after a fight has begun, sometimes you can get away if you cease fighting automatically.

"Those who turn and run away will live to fight another day.

"The forest lands are the safest to wander about in, for the creatures there are not too powerful. The swamps are deadly, and the icy waste deadlier still; you must beware of the monsters that dwell there. Only the powerful may journey there with impunity. And the desert is the most dangerous of all; the deadliest creatures will assault wanderers in that land. Do not go there until you are mighty indeed.

"Look for the red dots to take. Always investigate tables, desks, bookcases, tapestries. You never know what you may find, from information to valuable keys to useful equipment.

"Find the armory that we believe exists on the island; the information we've gathered indicates that it lies to the north east in the land of ice. There you can get better equipment, and get rid of the excess cash you may accumulate. Go to the armory to upgrade weapons at every opportunity. You can sell excess weapons for cash, too. Money is only useful in your quest to buy better equipment or to purchase healing from the priests, so do not hoard your funds. The Emperor will reward you richly enough should you succeed.

"Some equipment is only usable by certain character types, so try it out on different party members. It's a good idea to save pieces of equipment that you can't use if you think they will command a high price at the Armory.

"The teleportation pads at various places can transport you great distances very swiftly; use them to move rapidly across the island. Their location is marked on the map that Loremaster Salegor has for you, though we are not sure of how they are connected. Some experimentation might be in order. Though we have heard that sometimes the teleportation pads are haunted by immensely powerful, malevolent beings, so perhaps you should wait until you are more powerful before attempting this experiment.

"Don't run into the markers at the crossroads unless you are prepared for a battle. From what we have been told, they bring monsters. And the monsters that guard the crossroads are said to be very fierce.



"Magic weapons are generally better than normal weapons, especially + 2 magical weapons. Watch for the amount of damage being done to determine this. You can gauge the effectiveness of various types of armor by looking at your protection number.

"If you are paralyzed, wait for it to go away. Or try a cure spell to relieve the effects.

"Avoid the flickering lights on the ground; touching them brings death in the form of a great Drakkhen. Until the appointed time, that is. But more of that from the Loremaster, who has been studying these matters closely. You will learn of this when you speak with him tomorrow.

"You must do things in the proper order to succeed, though there is more than one path to success. The prophecies uncovered by the Loremaster will point the way to victory, but you must find your own methods.

"Go to the temples to be healed, or use cure spells. The temples will even resurrect a dead man for the right price. You will also heal slowly through the passage of time, and your spell points will return. So rest when you need to, but remember that deadly monsters stalk at night outside. Perhaps it is safest to find a protected place inside a building to rest and recuperate.

"Orient yourself using the sun and the map that the Loremaster has for you. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west, of course, though it may not be seen in the middle of the day due to the haze overhead. It's easy to become disoriented in the vast open spaces of the island. You can use the various terrain types to help discern your direction, as shown on the map we have provided. The ice lands are at the far north, the marshes to the south, and then the forests, and finally the great desert lands of the south. Sometimes you can see the limits of these lands as you travel, and of course you can see the bright blue ocean water when you are near the edges of the island. If you follow the roads you should be able to keep your head rather well. The Loremaster tells me that the Prophecies hold more directions, which he will tell you of.

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"Beware of the demons, for they wield great power. They can even destroy magical items, to your great sorrow and possible demise as your magical protection melts away.

"The flying creatures can be of tremendous power, and often can only be reached by magical spells or by a bow and arrow. Bows can be obtained at the armory.

"The great drakkhen are fearsome opponents. Do not try to come to grips with one until you have attained great personal power."

The day has been long and grueling, filled with lengthy weapons practice sessions and lectures delivered with all of Khangral's blazing intensity. It is with profound relief that the four companions greet the arrival of darkness, though the ominous feelings of last night soon return with even greater force.

Tomorrow they meet with Loremaster Salegor, who seems to know a great deal about what lies in store for them. The day should prove most interesting. And then the next day, the Imperial Barge should reach the Island of the Drakkhen, where the adventure truly begins. With that thought, the adventurers head for their berths and fall into an uneasy sleep.



The Loremaster sent one of the crew to awaken the adventurers and escort them to the Emperor's cabin. There they enter, still wiping sleep from their eyes, to see the Loremaster seated at the table with a vast array of food spread before him. Plump sausages, rich butter, warm biscuits studded with blueberries, honey, cream, the aroma of fresh brewed tea, fresh fruits of a dozen varieties all heaped in silver serving dishes. "Come, come, my friends, we cannot possibly face the long day ahead of us without a proper start. And the Emperor's chef has been good enough to break out some of the Emperor's private foodstuffs for our benefit." He reached for another biscuit and dipped it into a bowl of honey.

The adventurers fell to, and soon the food which once seemed an overwhelming quantity had mostly disappeared. "The exertions of the previous day have given you a greater hunger than you expected, or so I suppose," said Salegor. "But in any case, it is time for me to impart my findings to you. Steward! Clear the table and bring me my parchments, there's a good fellow."

The Loremaster told them of his researches, of the long hours spent poring through crumbling scrolls, straining to grasp a bit of meaning in a long dead language. When the news of the paladin's folly reached Salegor, he remembered a reference somewhere in his years of research. After days of intense effort, he located the only surviving copy of the Prophecies of Derigenes. This is a collection of ancient prophecies and maps penned by the mad sage Derigenes before he vanished in a mysterious incident three centuries past.





The Prophecies came to Derigenes in a series of visions that haunted him for years. He knew not what they portended, but he faithfully recorded them, albeit in an obscure dialect. Salegor told the adventurers how he managed to decipher the cryptic language and uncover what meaning he could, though much is still obscure.

"And there is no guarantee that these words will help you," said the Loremaster, "for you must interpret them correctly if you are to succeed."

Here, then, are the Prophecies as recounted by Derigenes.



PROPHECIES

Know, O Prince, that it shall come to pass that darkness shall spread over the world, and men shall tremble at the raging of the Dragons. And in this time of great troubles four heroes shall strive to set aright the great wrong that was done. They shall come to the Isle of the Drakkhen to find the eight gems and return them to the Father.

Though they be armed and caparisoned with the finest goods of the Empire, when they arrive on the island . . . (here the text was too faded to be read, explains Salegor) . . . so they will be near the Prince of Earth's demesne known as Hordtkhen, and with but a few items between them. So it is that they first must attend to their weapons and armor, and assure that they be fully ready to fight.

Still, they will prevail, if they have great courage.

Know that the Isle of the Drakkhen is large and fraught with danger. The icy waste to the north is dangerous to wander; but even more deadly is the searing desert to the south, where the fiercest creatures roam unchecked. Do not venture there until your powers have grown to a high level lest you perish in battle with your mission unfinished. While in my visions, I penned a map of this strange land, as much as was revealed to me. Though my vision was hazy, still I think that this may someday help to guide those who may find this mysterious island.

And while you may wander there, be observant lest you lose your way in the trackless lands. The mountains are not your goal, but they may serve to guide you in your quest. The lonely mountain lies beyond the icy waste; the mountain with two companions emerges from the rising sun; beyond the desert lies the mountain with a companion on its left hand; and beyond the sunset is the mountain with the





companion at the right hand. Do not trust the stars, despite what you may be told, for the stars will lead you astray.

These are the words that are revealed to me, speaking across the ages to those who undertake this quest:

Follow the advice of the Drakkhen Princes and Princesses; they will guide you in your quest, though it be to their own sorrow. The Drakkhen are torn by internal strife, which you will use to your advantage. Be not swift to take a life of a Drakkhen Prince or Princess, but bide thy time until the moment is revealed to you.

If you slay all without talk, then victory shall evade you.

(The next passages are unclear, as the scrolls have deteriorated with age. Several gaps are unavoidable, and the language in places is unclear. Derigenes also drew various maps and pictures to illustrate his visions; these drawings are included in the hopes that they may guide you in your quest. His visions were of each palace, and of events that may transpire their, though it is clear that some or perhaps all of the palaces must be visited more than once.)





Enter the dwelling of the Prince of Earth that lies before you; the quest begins with but a single step. The challenges within are many, but the tests will forge the iron of your will.

I have had several visions of this palace, recorded here so that the chosen ones may have these words to guide them. But know above all things that my visions are clear on one point: you must visit the palace several times. Each visit has its own purpose, which I have recorded here. Do not attempt more than is foretold for one visit, lest victory escape you. Destiny requires that events are fulfilled in the proper order.

Death awaits within the moat for those who heed not these words. Pass only when it is right, and not when death is left behind the drawbridge. Where one goes, all will go.

The dwellings of the Drakkhen are protected by magical force fields, so that only those who know the right symbol may enter. Intruders are met with fierce opposition, that the sanctity of the Drakkhen lords may be protected. Your perils begin within these walls.

To journey past the fields of force, the pyramid with the extra floor is the target. Other symbols summon the guardians of Hordtkhen, to your ultimate sorrow.

Do not pass by the weapons you see on the walls, even in this antechamber. Take them for your own, as you will need them in your battles to come. Remember to equip them, for they do no good in your pack. Of course, not all that you see can be reached by mortal man, for the lords of the Drakkhen are as tall as trees. Find the Prince of Earth in his chambers; when you see his imposing presence you will know him for the lord he is. Do not think to challenge the Prince while you are weak, and he is in the full flower of his strength. And yet you must hold discourse with him, and he will spare you. But look to the tapestry, and you may find hidden treasure that will serve you well.

In this palace there are many weapons to be found and taken by the heroes in their need. Inspect the desks, for you will find spell books that can aid your understanding of the great riddles that confront you. Though your wizard will need his spells of understanding to puzzle their meaning.

Seek the red dots and take them, for they hold the keys to the hidden places whose secrets you must unlock.

Take the empty phials that you may find, for there will be a time when they may be filled with a precious elixir. Stand by a pool with an empty phial in your hand and it will be filled with a potion.

The old hermit will give you knowledge unless you give him death. Whenever you see him, find out what he knows. Clues to your quest may lie in his words.

Your task with the Prince of Earth is not yet finished, but now is the time for you to leave when you have heard his words. There are still mysteries to be unearthed here, and tasks yet left undone, but you shall return when the appointed time is nigh. Do not pry too deeply into the secrets herein, for you are not yet ready for the dangers that dwell here.

You must leave Hordtkhen's palace, and yet you will return when the time is right. Not once, not twice, but even more must you visit these halls.

Leave now, and the wise man will make a record of his journeys within, lest he forget them.

The adventure beckons you onward, and many are the ways that may be traveled. Danger lurks at every turn, and monsters prowl unfettered in the Isle of the Drakkhen. And when darkness falls, the danger grows even more intense. Hideous beasts of great power and malevolence may strike at any time, so beware.

Yet the adversity will temper you, and thus strengthen you. These challenges you face are necessary to the task before you. But choose your battles well, and seek to avoid those you cannot win. Use all the powers within your command to aid your skills, and you may prevail.

You may wander to learn the boundaries of this island, and this may indeed aid you, for as yet your strength is not great enough to meet some of the tests ahead. But when you have your fill of wandering, know that you must journey to the east where lies the very image of the Earth Prince's palace, and yet it is not. Far past the flickering lights you must go. Beware! A dire fate awaits you if you trespass on the lights; do not shadow the lights lest the shadow of doom descend upon you.

The road can guide you in your journey, though you may need to travel off the road at times. Beware the lakes, for they are deep and treacherous. I see heroes sinking in them, but they may be saved by their movement to the land, though each must be told to move. And quickly before drowning overtakes them, though the group may be cured to stave off this fate. Sometimes gathering the group together will help, though it can only aid you when the group is close to the edge of the water.

Enter the false Palace of Earth and talk to the one that dwells within, to learn that which you will need to know.

Leave the false palace by going south, and follow the path that brought you to the true palace. Return to the Earth Prince's palace, where you must now resolve more mysteries of the Earth Prince.

Enter the dungeon again, heeding the danger which lurks outside. Once bitten, twice shy.

When you are within, you must go up the stairs, and head west until you find the bench that holds the key to your progress. East now, and far as you can go; pass through the locked door when you hold the key.



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The room holds treasure, and to the south lies both powers and perils. The danger is the deadliest you have yet faced, but your need is great and your courage far greater. Enter and slay the beast that is within, if you can. Only the strong can survive; I pray that the journey through the wilderness has tempered your steel to the hardness required.

The pentacles are the next step for you to take, and both of them hold your future. Take heed of the words that appear; you need both verses to proceed.

When you have the words you seek, one of your party must stay behind and stand at the lectern to activate the handle. Once, twice or thrice, you shall see when the others have reached their positions. Wait until the time appointed comes to pass before you act.

The other heroes must leave their companion behind and talk to the Prince once more. Do not come to him in anger, for he will destroy you. Talk with him instead, and you will learn. But do not speak overmuch lest you anger him and he lashes out. You cannot yet withstand his killing blows, and your lives are forfeit if you try. Your time to contest with this Prince will come, fear not, and you must gather your strength for that titanic battle.

When you have his message, make your way past him to the east through the door that he stands before. Now is the appointed time; let your companion left behind act now to open the way. The secret door appears in the south wall, where it was not before. Now go to the south, and there your party must split once more. Send one hero East and South to wait for your actions. Send another hero south to the pentagram where he will take the step that he must take. A secret door appears for the watching hero who went East and South. Go through the doorway and read the runes carven into the figures therein, and your task is complete for now.

Remember that you must shed light upon the runes in order to read them.

Fill the phials at the pool to gain a useful elixir. Leave the castle when your mission is accomplished. But know that you will be returning, for much is left to do.


7

Now you should be more powerful, better able to withstand the rigors of travel on this dark and dangerous isle. The Palace of Haaggkhen, Prince of Water, is your next goal; it lies in the northwest. Go there now, and return to the Palace of Earth when you are bidden to do so. Now my vision is of the time when you are told to return to the Earth Prince's Palace. Do not heed these words until that time, for attempting to act on this vision until you have followed your fated path is disastrous.

You must journey to the Earth Prince's Palace yet again when the word comes to you. This time shall come after you have done many deeds and visited other places on this isle; you will be told when the time has come. Then shall you seek the Prince that has been found before. While words were your weapons in past encounters, now is the time for action. Do not quail in the face of this terror, for the slightest hesitation may mean your doom. Slay the Prince now to continue your quest.

Seek the Palace of Haaggkha when you have won the day, or seek oblivion if you have not. For only those that prevail in this test may pass on to grasp the crown of victory.

Now your task here is done until the appointed time draws near; then you must venture within these doors once more to read what is writ therein for the final time.









Death awaits the unwary. Only those who have attained sufficient mastery of magic can pass through the lock; the spell is the key. Yet I have dreamed of this another time, but my vision is unclear; for I cannot see the one who enters. There is more than one way to enter. Where one goes, all will go.

Battle awaits within, and the fields of force protect the inner sanctum. Being opposed to Hordtkhen, the Prince symbolizes his opposition as the method for entry; the policies of Hordtkhen are inverted.

When you are within, seek the pentagram that will heal you, for it may aid you in your battles.

Beware of the bats, for they will attack in ever greater numbers once you awaken their wrath. Though you must seek them out, for only through the bats may you reach the object of your quest. They lie behind the lettered door, and green is the color of their desire; avoid that to avoid them. He who leads must follow all others. One by one the heroes follow the path of gold to the doorway beyond.

To stay and fight is to lose when the enemy is without end. Higher magics may provide another answer to this riddle for those whose mind and body are clear. For poison, only a priest or priestess has the cure.

Look through all that you see, for therein lies the help that can aid you... The tomes of magic rest on the lecterns of knowledge.

The first fireplace burns with hatred for all that lives; beware lest you are consumed in the flames. But once you have descended, you must

- . SHIELDS (BUCKLERS)
- HAAGGKHEN, BUCKLER, SCEPTER
- C. RECUMBENT FIGURES, EVIL DUDE, ARMOUR
- D. PRISONER
 - F. TELEPORT POOL
 - F. BAT, DEATH SQUARES
 - G. SPELL BOOKS
 - H. RING of STRENGTH
 - I. 2 VIALS
 - J. CUIRASS, GREAVES, SWORD K. POOL of MAGIC

 - L. SECRET DOOR TRIGGER SEE ROM D









The light must be the last to go.

Then the battle is joined, and it is fierce. Only the powerful will survive. But to the victor goes the spoils of war, and they are rich. Now you must find the room where the prisoner awaits, and slay those that guard. Once you have seen what may be seen, then is the time for talk, and then is the time for action. Freedom is the answer, if you quest for the question. Let the prisoner go forth.

Then you must slay that which is already dead, but beware of the lightning of death that lies beyond. The treasure is great, but so is the danger.

Do not stay overlong here or the lightning will surely slay you. One who is shielded well, and perhaps has magical fleetness, may grasp the prize without harm.

Read what is carved in stone and it shall be a source of enlightenment in your journey.

Now go, for all that can be done now has been done.

Bring all the heroes to the room south of the deadly lightnings, and an exit will be revealed to you.

Journey over the vast arctic wastelands, and grow stronger through your travels. You will find the armory towards the rising sun, and near there is the palace that is twin to Naaktkha's, where you must go. But be ready to return to the palace of Haaggkhen, for your task here is not yet complete. Only when the word is given may you finish what must be done here.



You will journey far and engage in many battles before you return to this place; you will be told when the time has come.

When the word comes to you, now must you enter this palace and slay the Prince, if you dare to do so.

Now leave once more.

Seek the desert once more for the final deeds that are required.





To enter here, first you must journey to the palace that is its twin, yet it lies far to the east. You will find the armory towards the rising sun, and near there is the palace that is the image of Naaktkha's, where you must go. Answers lie within the palace that is the twin to Naakhtkha's; ask and ye shall be answered. Armed with this knowledge, follow the setting sun to the true palace of Naakhtkha, where the Princess awaits you.

Your powers must grow great now, for the challenges that face you are more strenuous by far than before. Only those of great courage, fortitude, skill at arms and magic will survive the test. The beasts grow ever stronger, and they are many. Hone your skills and sharpen the edge of your determination; prepare the fighting steel of your souls.

Only those with the knowledge of the false palace may enter here; to all others the door is forever closed. Once within the frigid walls, the symbol of your desire points to the ground: a pyramid upended. Choose wisely and the forces yield to your passage. Choose falsely and your doom approaches.

Though the rooms are many, the need is twofold. Find the figures that bear the inscriptions; read them and know what must be known. Seek the handle that will open the inscriptions; read them and know what must be known. Seek the handle that will open the door that is not there, but elsewhere. Only thus can you open the way to where you must go.







Then find the Princess Naakhtkha and harken to her words, for thus shall you learn. Come in friendship, not in fear, or you will not gain what you need. Where does she dwell? Where else should the one of highest rank be found but here?

Treasures too await your grasp; do not ignore the bounty that is offered. Much will you gain if you persevere.

When your knowledge is filled, seek again the wilderness, for your journey is not over. Battle beckons you, and fighting will threaten to consume you unless your skill and courage prevail.

Now is the time to leave this place and seek the palace of Princess Haaggkha in the land of morning, past the great river, set amidst the spreading marshes like a jewel glittering in the sudden stab of torchlight. But you will return here to follow your fate, as the twisting path you tread demands. You have far to go and much to do before you return to this palace; you will be told when the time has come.

Seek the Princess Haaggkha when you have won the day, or seek oblivion if you have not. For only those that prevail in this test may pass on to grasp the crown of victory.

Enter here as you have entered before, when the word comes to you. Now the events that were foretold have come to pass, and the cosmic forces move toward resolution. Slay the Princess if it is within your power.

The Prince Naakhtkhen holds discourse with you, and gives you his gem in return for your service. His words bring you one step closer to your final goal; follow his commands.

Journey to the palace of Haaggkhen, where you must do as you are bid. Return here when the appointed time draws near, to see what is written once more.









Seek the Princess, though the way may be long and dangerous. Bring peace with you and you shall know the truth when you ask for it. Your gifts from her will be of royal quality, and they will be needed sorely in the trials to come. Do as the Princess bids you, though the task seems hopeless.

But know that the opposite way to the Princess offers a path to great treasure, though it is guarded by that most fell beast, a great Drakkhen whose power burns brightly. Turn all locks to enter, and when you confront death, use whatever means you can to prevail. Sometimes the one who avoids combat is the one who wins. Great treasure lies beyond.

Leave the Princess and seek the palace of Hordtkhen, thence to follow the commands given unto you. But do not hasten there if your power is yet too weak. For only those whose strength is that of ten may hope to prevail in battle with the malevolent majesty of the Prince.

Be sure of your power, for the test is severe. Mastery of your art and skill is needed; the slightest misstep and death will surely follow. When you prevail, as you will if your heart is true, then you must return to palace of Haaggkha.

Once again, as before. You will return here when you are bidden, and this time you will gain further knowledge of your quest. Find the princess to know your fate, and listen to her plea.

Striding forth into the wilds where evil dwells, you must find the oasis where royalty dwells. Venture far, through terrain that you have never seen before. Beware the deadly dwellers in the sands, those who rage at all living things. Find the Princess Hazhulkha to find the true path.









The Princess dwells far to direction of the setting sun in the blistering heat of the desert lands. Be warned! The desert is the deadliest of all the Isle of the Drakkhen, and fell creatures lurk here. Only the most puissant of heroes may venture here with impunity. Do not tarry on your way, or you risk death and the destruction of all.

The palace lies in ruins, though she remains yet. But death is the gift given to those from the north or the south. Approach as would the sun and be welcome; if you do not, death awaits. Your position must be precise, for the spell that guards the entrance admits of no error. And indeed the palace looks alike from all directions. Be guided by the arrows that lie on the ground for the true directions. Where one goes, all will go.

Though all within has been laid to waste by the warfare that rages among the lords of the Drakkhen, there are still tasks that must be done. Indeed, though the despoilers raged through the palace, they did not find all the treasures. Look carefully and there may be rewards for your patience.

But your quest is nearing its end, and the way is harder than ever. Find the figures and read their riddle, for you must know these words. Guard the memory of the writings and it will aid you in your quest. Slay the evil knights or be slain; though the battle is hard, the reward is great. Grasp the gem and keep it safe.

Greet Prince Naakhtkhen in peace and heed his advice for the profit of the League of the Ninth Tear. His words are harsh, but fair. Leave to do his bidding.

Go to the palace of Naakhtkha, the Ice Palace in the far north. Once again you must venture there, to follow where fate leads.









Entry is forbidden to all except those who know the true path. How do you enter the desert palace when entrance is forbidden? Only the ones who enter properly are recognized. Enter not from the directions of the sun; embrace the north wind and you shall be allowed to pass. Where one goes, all will go.

The symbol of the palace is the thing that it represents; the pyramid itself allows you to pass through the mystic fields.

This is the penultimate challenge; do not waver when the end is in sight. The battles will be hard, but you must persevere.

Seek the room where the lord will tell you of your fate. The pentagram is the key, but time is of the essence. One must be in the pentagram when the sun is highest to unleash the power that is coiled within.

The rest must head to north and east and wait for the Prince. Now upwards your destiny lies, and the final Prince that must die. When the deed is done, your destiny is nigh.

Be vigilant, and seek out the figures that rest in peace. View the hieroglyphs thereon and your knowledge will increase. Great treasure awaits for those who seek it out.

Should you prevail, the quest is almost at an end. But do not fail when victory is in your grasp. You are near to the fate that is foretold, but you must still travel far.









You must possess the eight gems of destiny foretold. But before the circle may be closed and fate fulfilled, you must view once again the sentences graven on the tombs of the fallen. Visit once more each of the palaces where the figures lay and the words were written. Read them once more. All must be read for the destiny to be complete.

The end is at the center of all things. Fate then leads to the lights of the ground, but you must enter there with empty hands. Worldly possessions will impede your path. A light step will complete the cycle and end the mystery. One final step in the right spot brings victory at last.



And thus were the prophecies revealed to the adventurers. Salegor spoke far into the evening, and few were the hours they slept that night. They next day scarcely dawned at all, for the sky was black with evil clouds that threatened great rain but vouchsafed but a few cold drops. A chill wind blew from the east. The chill seemed to enter their very hearts as the adventurers watched from the railing, the revelations of the night before reverberating through their minds. Wrapped in their cloaks, they respected a mutual silence as they stared off the bow, searching for a glimpse of what lay ahead. The fateful cry came from the lookout above. "Land ho!"

They knew that the real adventure was about to begin . . .

Ah, my friends, the sun is setting and the stones of the marketplace grow cold. I fear these aged bones do not fare well in the dank night air, so I must find a tavern with a proper fire. Of course, a cup of hot mulled wine would go far towards removing the chill . . . ah, you are most generous, sir, most generous! Return again to hear the rest of the tale, for it is one of high adventure and epic heroism.

What's that you say? How does it end? Why, of course, all folk know that the heroes prevailed. Else we would not be here with the chill of the night making our bones creak with rheumatism to discuss it, would we? Hah! But of course the tale of how 'twas done is indeed a glorious one, filled with many hours of bright flashing blades, miraculous escapes, spells of awesome power, and heroism beyond that which may be found today. Ah but, this is a tale for a time when the sun shines high in the sky!

I shall be here in the morning ready to take up the thread of my story and weave an even more glorious tapestry of the imagination for your delight and edification. Good evening my friends, and dream well!







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