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**Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons®**

ADVENTURE **12** GAMEBOOK

**CURSE
OF THE
WEREWOLF**



By Chris Martindale

0-88038-432-8

CHARACTER STATS CARD

THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF



NAME: Feral, the Wolf

AGE: 21

CHAR. CLASS: Warrior

SKILL POINTS:

As Man	As Man-Wolf	As Wolf	
12+__ = __	Same As Man +1 = __	Same As Man-Wolf +1 = __	Fighting
10+__ = __	Same As Man +1 = __	Same As Man-Wolf +1 = __	Physical
10+__ = __	Same As Man +1 = __	Same As Man-Wolf +1 = __	Sensory

Hit Points: 21 + _____ = _____

Experience Points: 6 + _____ = _____

OVERCOME WITH WOLFEN FURY!

Despite having been placed under the Curse of the Werewolf by the evil sorcerer, Vlachos, you have managed to escape into the woods. Now you can hear the sorcerer's soldiers all around you as they search through the forest for you.

"He's here!" one of them shouts suddenly, and you know you've been discovered. "Quick! After him!"

Fearfully you let the wolf grow within you, let its power and its cunning and its savagery flow like molten lava. The enemy is drawing near, and it may be your only hope.

You drop your sword—your lengthening hands cannot hold the slim hilt. Your muzzle has grown as well, and you can feel two-inch incisor teeth against your tongue. You straighten to your full height, now a full foot taller than before, and you arch your back and let loose a howl that floods the forest. The sound of fleeing wildlife comes from all around you in reply, and your opponents stop in their tracks.

You are now the wolf, and your prey is within sight.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to **163**. If it's less, go to **75**.

Whatever the outcome, only your decisions, and the luck of the dice roll, can help you remove the

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

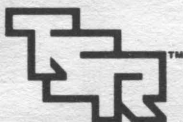


An **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®**
Adventure Gamebook #12

CURSE of the WEREWOLF

By Chris Martindale

**Cover Art by Tim Hildebrandt
Interior Art by Stephen Fabian**



TSR, Inc.
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**To Michael and Carlos
and the other readers:
I hope you like this one, too**

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

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AN EXCITING NEW EXPERIENCE IN BOOKS!

Welcome, you who are about to endure the **CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF**, to an exciting, totally new concept in role-playing gamebooks.

Based on the popular **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** Game, Adventure Gamebooks require only two standard six-sided dice, an ample supply of luck—and, most of all, your skill in making decisions as you play the game. If dice are unavailable, a simple alternative, requiring only pencil and paper, may be used instead.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Adventure Gamebooks read easily, without complicated rules to slow down the story. Once you have read through the simple rules that follow, you should seldom find it necessary to refer back to them. Your options are repeated clearly in the text at each choice point, with occasional reminders about additional options you may wish to consider to improve your chances. Your adventure reads like a book, plays like a game, and offers a thrill a minute—with **YOU** as the hero!



YOUR CHARACTER

In this book, you are Feral, son of the legendary warrior, Agnor the Wolf, and if ever there was a man born to wield a sword, it is you. Since you were six years old, your father has honed you just as he would a fine blade, shaping you in his own image—that of a noble warrior, one who pledges his courage and might to the cause of good. Despite your comparative youth, you are already stout of muscle and of heart and battle-hardened. You bear many scars as testament, including a distinctive gash down one brow and cheek.

For the last three years, you have fought alongside your father in the Khefan border wars to the west. Although your side was triumphant, it is a victory marred by great loss. Agnor the Wolf, the greatest warrior of his day, fell there on the field of battle. Although you avenged his death, it could not erase the ache inside you. For the first time in your life, you are on your own.

But you are not completely alone. Traveling with you is Kuda, the hulking black warrior who was your father's constant companion. He is your friend as well.

As you journey homeward, there are dark forces at work. A curse awaits you, one that will test your self-control and force you to struggle for your very identity, and even your life. So, warrior, take heed. . . .

PLAYING THE GAME

ESTABLISHING YOUR CHARACTER

YOUR Feral will be different from someone else's because YOU help to create him.

Carefully tear out the removable **Character Stats Card** at the beginning of this book. This card is your record of Feral's character makeup. It also doubles as a bookmark.

Since we hope you will be playing this adventure many times, it is suggested that you write on the card in pencil only, so that the character stats can be erased easily when you are ready to play again. If you have access to a photocopier, you may wish to make several photocopies of the Character Stats Card before you fill it in. Permission is hereby granted by the publisher to make photocopies of the Character Stats Card *only*. You may also reproduce the card by writing on a 3" x 5" card or a slip of paper.

You are now ready to round out Feral's individual identity by establishing his strengths and weaknesses. Your character's **name**, **character class**, and **age** have already been entered for you. Before you fill out the rest of the card, it is necessary to understand the game's scoring system.



SCORING

Playing the game requires you to keep track of three things—**hit points**, **skill points**, and **experience points**—on the tear-out **Character Stats Card** located at the front of the book. An explanation of each of these follows.



HIT POINTS

You, as Feral, the Wolf, have a specific life strength, represented by **hit points**. Once your hit points are reduced to zero, Feral ceases to exist, and you have come to the end of the adventure, whether the text has come to an end or not.

Feral loses hit points often when he fails to hit his enemy through the roll of the dice, because his opponent will usually succeed in hitting him back. As a result, you must deduct a stated number of hit points from his hit point total.

Feral may also lose hit points through sneak attacks, traps, or through carelessness when he has no chance to fight back. In such instances, you will be instructed to either roll a die for **damage** or you will be told how many hit points to subtract. Feral, as an experienced warrior, starts out the adventure with 21 hit points, plus a random

chance to improve this score. Roll one six-sided die (creating a number between 1 and 6) and add the result to 21 for his total hit points. If you are dissatisfied with the result of the first roll, you may make one additional roll, but you *must* accept the second total whether or not it is better than the first.

Guard Feral's hit points carefully. Don't be afraid to spend them when the goal seems worthwhile, but note that Feral has few chances to recover lost hit points during this adventure. Be wary of combat and danger. Feral is a formidable fighter, as man, man-wolf, or full wolf, but his luck and hit points won't last forever.



SKILL POINTS

Your adventures in battle have given you formidable skills as a warrior. In this adventure, your skills have been divided into three categories: **Fighting**, **Physical prowess**, and **Sensory skills**. These skills, and how to use them, are explained below.

A number, called your **skill score**, represents your abil-

ity in a given skill. The higher the number, the better your skill. You must help determine what your strengths are. Your base skill scores are already written on your Character Stats Card under the heading "As Man," but in addition you have 5 more skill points to add to your scores. You may divide up the 5 points any way you wish, as long as you add at least 1 skill point to each of the three skills. There is no right or wrong way to divide up your skill points. Study the explanations of the skills that follow before deciding, then fill in your final skill scores for Feral as a man on your Character Stats Card. Note that there are also blanks to fill in for Feral's skills as a man-wolf and as a wolf. These will be explained later under the section entitled **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF**.

Note that each time you start this adventure anew, you may experiment with different strengths and weaknesses.

Art A

Fighting

Fighting is your ability to battle with weapons, with your hands, and even with fangs and claws, as you will discover later. Feral carries a longsword and dagger, both of which he is able to use with deadly precision.

You will be told in the text when you must use your Fighting skill score. When you do use it, roll two dice and add the result to your Fighting skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number given in the text, you are successful.

Sensory

Besides the obvious uses of sight, smell, hearing, and the like, sensory includes an ability to sense the intentions

of others. As a warrior and a man, you have alert senses, but you will see later that they, too, become heightened when you undergo a transformation to a more wolflike state. You will be told in the text when to use your Sensory skill score. When you do use it, roll two dice and add the result to your Sensory skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number given, you have succeeded.

Physical

A character's Physical skill score enables him to have a better chance of success when any task involves physical strength, speed, or endurance. This skill, too, increases as you become more wolflike after the curse is placed upon you.

To use your Physical skill, roll two dice and add the result to your Physical skill score. If the total is equal to, or greater than, the number given in the text, you have been successful.



EXPERIENCE POINTS

As in real life, experience increases chances of success in a given situation because you have encountered a similar situation before and understand the possibilities that may occur. You, as Feral, begin this adventure with a base of 6 Experience points, plus a random chance to improve

your score. Roll one die and add the result to your base score of 6 to determine your total number of Experience points. Record this score on your Character Stats Card. If you are dissatisfied with your die roll, you may have one, and only one, chance to improve your score. Roll one die a second time, but you *must* accept this second roll, even if the total is lower than before.

Experience points may also be spent on any die roll to improve your chances of success, but once they are used up, they are gone and must be deducted from your total.

In this book, you may use only 1 Experience point on any given dice roll. Simply add it to the overall total, remembering to deduct it from your Experience point total. Experience points also play one other important function in this book, explained in the section, **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF**. Because of this, we recommend you be *very* careful about spending Experience points as you play this book.



THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

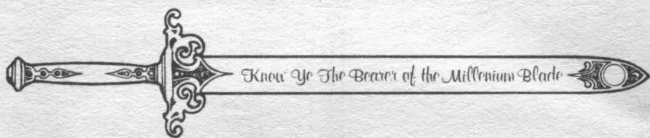
When the wizard casts his spell on you, your body immediately begins to undergo a dramatic transformation. You grow thick mats of fur, your fingers grow longer and look

more like claws, your senses become more heightened and animal-like, and your thinking process becomes somewhat more simple. However, in this state that is halfway between man and wolf, which we call "Man-Wolf," your skills also become heightened. In each of your three skills—Fighting, Physical, and Sensory—you receive a bonus of 1 point. Record this fact on your Character Stat Card in the column marked "As Man-Wolf."

The curse, which can only be removed by the wizard who placed it upon you, is progressive—that is, as time passes, you become steadily more wolflike. At times, you even become a full wolf. In this state, your desires and thinking process resemble those of a wolf rather than a man's. However, your abilities are even sharper than those of the man-wolf. You receive an additional bonus point, over and above that of the man-wolf, in each of your skills. Record this fact on your Character Stats Card in the column labeled "As Wolf."

As time goes on, you discover that you can become the full wolf at will, thus improving your skills in particularly dangerous situations. You are reluctant to do so too often, however, because each time you do, it becomes more difficult to return to your man-wolf state. You fear that the next time you may not be able to change back.

One last—and very important—fact about transforming yourself to the full wolf state. Each time you do so, the effort of changing back costs you 1 Experience point, which must be subtracted from your total on the Character Stats Card. And so we don't forget to tell you, at the end of your adventure, the number of Experience points you have left determines your chances of becoming human again! So, unless you like to roam the woods in packs and bay at the moon, spend your Experience points wisely!



PLAYING WITHOUT DICE

Should you ever wish to play this adventure when dice are unavailable, there is a simple substitute that requires only pencil and paper. Simply write the numbers 1 through 6 on separate slips of paper and mix them up in a container. Then draw one of the slips, note the number, and place it back in the container. Mix up the numbers and draw a second time. Each draw represents one roll of a die. If only one die is called for, draw only one number.

Your character—Feral, the Wolf—is now complete, and you are ready to begin your adventure. Start on page 15—and good luck!

You are Feral, warrior son of the legendary Agnor the Wolf, and you are headed home.

For three years you have been away, fighting in the Khefan border wars in the west alongside your father. It was there that he finally fell on the field of battle, and there that you avenged his death and helped turn the tide of battle in your side's favor. Now the wars are finally over, and you are going back to Mennan, your village, for a much-needed rest.

You do not travel alone. At your side is Kuda, the black warrior who was your father's ally and closest friend. Now he rides with you.

Something troubles you as you ride. It's an odd premonition, perhaps, but you have a feeling that things in Mennan have changed in three years—for the worse.

You rein in your horses at the crown of the hill and peer down at the rustic village of Mennan. What you see is almost as foreign to your eye as it is to Kuda's.

"Is it always this silent at midday?" Kuda wonders aloud, for the village seems all but dead. Everywhere you look, doors and shutters are closed, livestock stand untended, and no one ventures into the fields to work. There aren't even any children playing.

"This isn't the way I remember my village," you say to Kuda. "Come on. Let's see what illness plagues this town."

Turn to 7.

Descending the inclined passage slowly, you hold the torch out to illuminate walls wet with seepage. The dank smell plays havoc with your hyperactive senses, and you must breathe through your mouth to continue.

"What is that up there?" Kuda says, holding the torch out to illuminate a dark, motionless form in the center of the tunnel. It proves to be a rock, a bit over waist high and covered with lichen and molds. Kuda shrugs. "I could've sworn I saw that thing move. . . ."

But before the words are even out of his mouth, it does move! The mottled gray thing unfolds like a crumpled wad

of parchment, and only then do you realize that it was bent over at the waist. The creature has spindly legs, and its limbs are grossly exaggerated in length and size. But the real nightmare is its face—the long, pointed chin and hooked nose, the eyes empty of all but the basest of emotions.

The troll takes a lumbering step toward you, reaching out with a long, sticklike arm. “No pass!” it belches, barely forming the words. “No pass!”

Reflexively you slash out, and your blade takes its arm off at the wrist. But the troll shows no sign of shock or pain. Instead, it just holds the bloodless stump out for your inspection. “By the gods!” is all you can mutter as nubs begin to grow from the stump, lengthening into fingers and then the fat of a palm, until in a matter of minutes, the hand has regenerated completely!

“How can we fight . . . such a thing?” Kuda exclaims, but you have no answer to offer. Your sudden panic at the sight has unleashed the wolf in you—for better or worse!

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to 55. If it's less, turn to 132.



To retain your human identity, you will need all the strategy you can muster against your deadliest foe.

“Why do you hesitate?” the wizard taunts you. “Afraid you’ll get your fur singed?” He extends one hand and sends a cone of blazing fire hissing in your direction. You somersault to safety, but the attack still leaves your hair blackened and smoking. Subtract 1 hit point.

A guard finally clears the top of the stairs. This is your chance, you realize. You leap across the platform and grab the soldier’s sword and knife, then kick him back into his comrades, clogging the stairwell again.

“Tsk, tsk,” Vlachos says with a smirk. “Do you really think you’ll be able to get near enough to use those?”

“I won’t have to,” you tell him. Suddenly you whirl about and hurl the dagger from the platform, striking the soldier who holds Kuda prisoner. Your ally in turn frees the minotaur, then throws the sword toward the holding pens, where the other arena fighters are held. Its blade flies true, slicing through the bolt on the pen door. The fighters, monster and human both, cheer and burst from their imprisonment.

You turn to Vlachos. This time it is your turn to smirk. “Look around you, wizard. Your evil handiwork is free now, ready to rend you limb from limb. Your magic can’t possibly stop them all. One of them is sure to get to you. Unless . . .” You hold out your hand.

The wizard laughs, but his glances at the creatures as they overcome his guards and surround the platform prove his nervousness. “This isn’t over, wolfling!” he sneers. He stoppers the bottle and throws it to you. “There is enough there for all of you scum!”

You hold the vial aloft, staring at the milky liquid inside and smiling to yourself. You know that your humanity and your future are contained in the tiny bottle. You remove the plug and put the vial to your lips. Turn to 127.

The Dark Moon warriors go on the attack like whirling dervishes, pummeling you with a storm of scything kicks

and punches. Even the werewolf retreats in the face of such an onslaught. Subtract 2 hit points.

“Come along, beast!” growls one of the assassins behind his mask. “At least make some sport of this. Fight back!” He leaps and spins, whacking you across the muzzle with his boot. “Fight back, I said!”

As if in answer to his command, the wolf in you chooses that moment to act. You spin with the momentum of his kick, all the way around, and your talons slice cleanly through the renegade monk’s jacket, staining it in crimson streaks. The mocking fighter suddenly freezes at the sight of his own blood and passes out on the spot.

The other gapes incredulously, his own resolve melting at what he has seen. The werewolf grins; it senses his sudden fear and is attracted to it. You pursue the martial artist, warding off his panicky blows easily, and seize him by the throat so his feet dangle above the ground, your talons poised for the kill.

But you hold them in check as you, Feral, wrestle with the werewolf for control. *I will not let you kill!* you tell the wolf.

Instead of killing him, you chop the monk with the edge of your hand and render him unconscious. You have forced the werewolf back once more; as you transform to your man-wolf state, subtract 1 experience point.

Turn to 146.

5

You work your way through the corridors slowly but surely, fighting your anxiousness. As you descend into the bowels of the palace, you find your mind growing steadily clearer. The farther you get from the dizzying effects of the moon, you surmise, the more control you have.

“The dungeon,” Kuda whispers, pointing to the end of the long corridor ahead. There is a massive steel door there, the inset window heavily barred and sporting a huge lock. You see no sign of a guard on this side.

Without a word, you know Kuda’s plan. You go to the door and stay out of sight, while your ally positions himself in front of the barred window. “Open up!” you call, pounding

on the door. "We have a new prisoner!"

The squat face of the jailer appears at the window, eyeing the black warrior. "He's a big one, ain't he?" the jailer chortles. "My torturers should like that. He'll hold up for a good long time." You hear the key turn in the lock, and the door starts to swing open.

You hit the door with all of your might, and the jailer grunts as it smashes him back into the wall. He is unconscious before he sinks to the ground. Kuda searches the jailer's station, but there are no other guards.

You pull the jailer back to his chair, positioning him with his head bowed as if asleep, then take his keys and a torch and hurry on into the depths of the dungeon.

Turn to 83.

6

You feint several attacks at the troll to test its abilities, but it's almost impossible to catch the giant off guard. With two heads to watch you, no movement goes without notice. . . .

You see the net swinging in from one side, trying to sweep you toward the club's range, but you slash at the net with your talons, cutting a ragged hole in it and rendering it useless. *Now, while it's distracted!* you think desperately.

You dash within the creature's grasp and leap high enough to smite its bald head with your fist. The head immediately goes limp and hangs over onto the creature's chest.

The hawk-nosed head contorts in rage, but it's not the one that controls the club arm, so it must take the time to drop the net and transfer the club to its good hand. In that moment, you strike. You rush to the troll's blind side and attack from behind, leaping onto its back and getting a stranglehold on it with both arms. The troll bellows and tries to brush you off, but you hang with steely determination until the oxygen to its brain is cut off. You leap away as it topples to the ground.

"Take the club!" Regis calls from the platform. "Kill it!"

You force back the wolf and return to your man-wolf state. "Do your own dirty work, tyrant!" you cry. "I

refuse!" The king is livid with rage as he motions for the troll to be dragged from the field, preparing for your next opponent.

Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of the transformation. Then add 1 point to your experience point or hit point total for your victory.

Now you have a choice to make. You can fight again and try to gain additional points (123) or you can attack the platform (62).

7

Your powerful horses carry you down the slope into Mennan at a fast gallop, hooves thundering. Surely the people hear you coming, yet no one ventures into the street to greet you. "Ho!" you call out, bringing your steed to a halt. "What's wrong with you people? Come out I say!"

A feeble reply sounds from behind a securely bolted door. "Please, m'lord," an old man's voice wails, "have pity on us. There are no more taxes to collect, and there's no harvest to impound, for we've too few men left to bring it in. Please, pity us and begone."

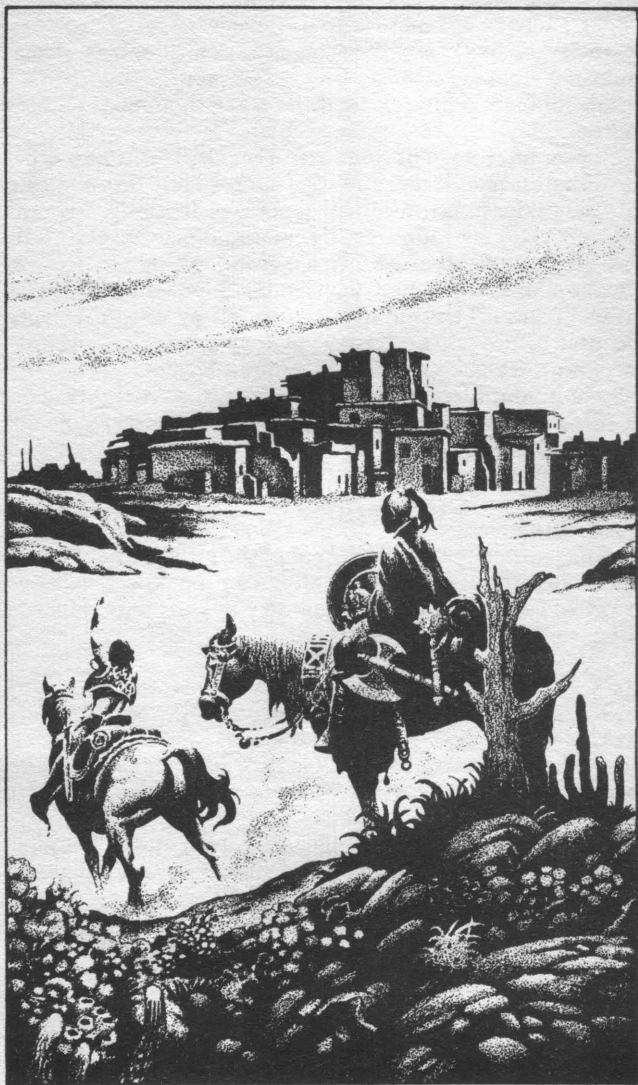
You are puzzled. "Taxes? Impounded harvest? What nonsense is this? Come out, all of you! Don't you recognize me? It's Feral. Come along, before you embarrass me in front of my friend!"

You hear your name whispered throughout the village, to be met by sighs of relief. Almost in unison, doors are unbolted as the people of Mennan pour into the street to greet you. You are shocked at what you see. Each looks starved and exhausted, and many have turned gray before their time. Their eyes appear hollow and filled with despair. There are fewer of them than you remember.

"Feral!" calls a stooped old man. At first you don't recognize him as Juett, the once-burly village smithy. "Thank the gods you've returned! We—" He looks about, disheartened. "Where is your father?"

"Agnor is dead," Kuda announces firmly. "The Wolf died in battle."

The news comes as a blow to the people of Mennan. If any hope had glimmered in their eyes at all, it seems to fade



with those words. "The Wolf—dead?" one man groans. "Then there is no one to help us now!"

"Help you with what?!" you demand. "Juett, tell me, what has happened these three years past?"

The old man grimaces, as if the mere thought is painful to him.

"A year after you left there was a revolt. The king was deposed by his own lords, and the country split into warring fiefdoms. Mennan lies in the domain of Regis II, a tyrant without peer. He plunders the land and people, taxing us into starvation, stealing our harvests, taking our women for the slave trade and our young men for his private army." Tears fill the old man's eyes. "They were here only minutes before you arrived. They took my son—my youngest, Feral. He is no warrior. He's but a boy!"

By now your blood is boiling. While you were fighting for freedom in the west, your own people were being enslaved. You should have been here!

"Perhaps there's still time," you say to yourself, then add to Juett, "Which way did they go?"

The smithy no more than raises a finger before you're reining your pony to a gallop, out of the village and into the hills after them. Kuda yells after you, but his words are drowned out by the thundering fury in your ears. Turn to 181.

8

Vlachos lies stunned in the wreckage of the platform, his arm splayed backward at an impossible angle, shattered. Bruised, Regis hurries to the wizard's side. "Master? Wake up, master!"

Master?

The reek of the doppelganger is in your nostrils again, the same stench you smelled last night. The tyrant turns on you and verifies your suspicions.

Regis is a shape-shifter!

There is no king. It's all a charade—Vlachos has installed a puppet of his own creation, one through which he himself can rule.

Regis shifts from one form to another, each more mon-

strous and threatening than the last. "You'll pay for your insolence, pup!" it shrieks in a shrill tone. "You'll pay dearly indeed!"

You don't wait for it to attack. Expecting battle momentarily, you become the wolf.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to 115. If it's less, turn to 32.



9

The lamia edges closer, coiling around to encircle you with its tail while its fanged maw presses ever closer to your throat. Try as you might, you can't make yourself move! *Those eyes!* you think. *Their mesmerizing stare will be the death of me!*

"Snap out of it, Feral!" Kuda calls from the stairway. You abruptly feel wind on your cheek as a sword sails past your face and digs into the rearing neck of Regis with a solid *thwack!* The lamia recoils in pain, suddenly sprouting a human arm to pry the blade from its flesh. You can tell the wound isn't mortal; it will renew its attack in a moment. You must move now!

You flex your hand. "I . . . can move!" you exclaim. "The spell must have broken when the shape-shifter averted its

eyes!" You leap aside, away from the flailing coils of the lamia, and pause at the head of the stairs to look back at Vlachos. "This isn't over, wizard!" you warn, matching the hatred in his glare with your own. Then you hurry down the steps. Subtract 1 experience point.

Kuda is retreating up the steps toward you, fighting barehanded to stem the tide of soldiers that surges at the foot of the stairwell. "We're trapped!" the black warrior cries, but you grab him with one arm and vault over the side rails and drop fifteen feet to the ground.

"We may have hurt Regis and Vlachos already," Kuda says hopefully. "Did you see the looks of his followers when Regis changed? Not even jaded nobles will tolerate a wizard and his ilk on the throne for long!"

"Perhaps," you say, "but revolts take time to fester and grow. Right now, time is what we have too little of." You chance a look back to see the soldiers leaving the stairs and following after you. You shove Kuda toward the arena gate and run.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 215. If it's less, turn to 147.



10

You leap aside just as razor-sharp talons rip through the air past your head. For a moment, the doppelganger is its true self—gaunt, with jaundiced eyes and transparent

flesh—and then it is metamorphosing again, one monstrosity after another. “Surrender!” it laughs. “I promise death will be quick!”

You evade another blow, this time from a swirling, new-grown tail, and leap inside to land a flurry of blows. Your speed and strength have an obvious effect on the beast, and it grows angrier still.

“Wretched dog!” it shrieks, sending townspeople scattering in fear. “How will you fare against this?” There is the sound of bones reforming and the squeak of stretching flesh as the shape-shifter grows and grows. Its neck lengthens like a snake, and it sprouts other necks from the main stalk until a hydra towers in the street. Each face of the creature is that of Sonder. It stamps a foot, and the whole earth seems to shake.

“Wolfman!” someone calls. You see the serving girl from the tavern, the real one this time, hurrying toward you, carrying your father’s sword. “Catch!” She throws it with all her might.

The weapon falls into your oversized hands, but as the wolf, you barely recognize it. Your human side struggles to remember the finer points of fencing, but instead, the werewolf acts out of anger and simply hurls the blade at the hydra.

Powered by supernatural muscle, the sword sings through the air and buries itself hilt-deep in the shape-shifter’s massive chest. Sonder cries out and collapses, his body reverting before your eyes to its natural repugnant state.

Turn to 125.

11

You descend the ladder one after another, with you in the lead with your torch held high, then Kuda and Keela, and the wolf brothers bringing up the rear. In the flickering light, you see that the tunnel is ancient, carved by hand from the blackened bedrock. “The scent is definitely stronger here,” you say. “Vlachos is somewhere in these caverns! This way.”

A short way down the tunnel, its dank walls are lined

with doors on either side—dozens of them, with heavy oaken panels set into the walls. You stop at the first and look through the barred window, but the darkness beyond is impenetrable. All you can hear is breathing—shallow, wet, and gurgling, and definitely not human. The hackles raise on the back of your neck, and you hurry along.

Torchlight reflects in staring eyes as you pass door after door after door. Some moan at you; others cackle madly. Only one speaks in a language you can understand. “Come here,” it says. You stop and exchange glances with Kuda, then step closer to the window, where you meet the penetrating gaze of whatever creature lurks there. For a moment, there seems to be understanding between you and the figure. It says only two words: “Destroy him!”

“I intend to,” you say. The massive head behind the door nods and recedes into the darkness of its cell.

You burn through two more torches before reaching the end of the dungeon row, where you confront a set of open double doors. The scent is strong here, overpowering. “He’s in there!” you tell your companions. “Vlachos is there!”

Turn to 96.

12

The displacer beast approaches, apparently from directly before you, its eyes glaring, fangs gnashing, tentacles coiling in the air like serpents. Every fiber of your body wants to strike directly in the heart, but your senses all tell you its heart is more than two feet to the right.

Close your eyes, you tell the wolf. Close them and strike! Right . . . there!

Your talons flash through the air, in one movement severing a tentacle in midstrike and then tearing into muscle where your eyes would have found only empty air. You leap back as the shrieks of the beast fill your ears from right next to you. Its weight falls against your legs, even though it doesn’t appear to be there. But where it does lie, it now sports a savage chest wound that leaks life with each weakening beat of its heart. You are victorious. Subtract 1 experience point as you return to your man-wolf state.

You push the body aside and check your friend. Kuda ap-

pears shaken after hitting his head in the fall, but it doesn't appear serious. You help him up and continue through the passageway.

Turn to 120.



13

With a mighty effort, you succeed in holding back the wolf—as a warrior, you recognize the need for strategy here. Brute force won't defeat this armored creature.

Kuda does not possess your self-control, however. With a loud cry, he launches himself at the creature, striking it a stinging blow with his sword as it passes him. The effect on the creature is negligible—sparks fly from its rocky hide—but the effect on Kuda is considerable. Immediately his movements slow, and he staggers uncertainly. Of course! A gorgon's breath is paralytic! "Hold your breath, Kuda!" you yell. "Hold it and get away from there!"

The gorgon turns toward your voice. "That's it. Come this way," you taunt softly. And as if in answer, the monster charges.

You hold your breath as it draws closer and, as it lowers its head to gore you with its horns, you wrap an arm around its powerful neck and drive its head into the ground, flip-

ping the beast through the air. It lands on its back, exposing the vulnerable softness of its underbelly.

You waste little time. You seize your shortsword and plunge it into the creature's great stomach, and the gorgon lurches and then is still.

You are victorious. You may reward yourself with either 1 additional hit point *or* 1 additional experience point, but not both.

You look around till you see Kuda. He is stunned, but the paralysis is slight and already fading. Vlachos scowls at you from the platform. "Enjoy your victory, wolf. You will fight again on the morrow!"

Turn to **186**.

14

In the morning, you are taken to the arena. A crowd has gathered in the grandstand, and your enemies have taken their places on the platform with their most favored guests.

You are taken to the center of the playing field, and Regis II addresses you. "Welcome to the arena of Carilon, where no quarter is asked and none is given. Today we have planned a full schedule of combat to the death. There are many opponents to choose from. It is time for you to meet your first."

Roll two dice. If the total is 2-4, go to **167**; 5-7, to **79**; 8-10, **197**; 11-12, **74**.

15

Vlachos turns his palms outward. Lightning leaps from them and crackles across the room at you. You throw yourself against the wall. Your cheek sizzles at the closeness of the bolt, but at least it doesn't strike full force. That fate befalls Regis in your stead. Sneaking up behind you, the werewolf takes the brunt of the charge and is burned to a crisp.

Vlachos curses and redoubles his efforts, and the lightning glows with power as it arcs around you. You search for some defense . . . the mirror! You reach it just before the lightning overtakes you. The mirror takes the full impact of the bolt and turns it back on its source!

The wizard has barely enough time to cry out before his magic comes back at him and burns him to the ground.

You stand alone in the room, reveling in your humanity, when Kuda appears in the doorway, rubbing his throbbing head. You flash him a triumphant smile. "It's over, my friend. Let's go home." ✕

16

Sonder's scent is still heavy in the clearing. It is distinct from the smell of the other men, not so much musky as . . . corrupt? Yes, that's it. Like rotten eggs. Strange, but at least it gives you something to follow. After returning your sword to its scabbard, you set out after your foe at a rapid pace. "Try to keep up," you call back to your friend.

You discover that your speed, even in this semi-wolf state, is astonishing, far swifter than it ever was before. You glide through the forest like a wraith, leaving nary a limb to sway in your wake, leaping fallen trees that any other man would have to climb over. Here in the woods, you feel at home, and your body sings with its newfound power. But such exhilaration is tempered with a steely control. You almost lost yourself to the wolf back there. You must not let it happen again!

You break out of the forest after several miles and find yourself at the edge of a village you don't remember. The sign above the road reads "HODSON'S BEND," and the odious smell of Sonder leads directly into the town.

Kuda breaks through the underbrush beside you, breathing heavily. "By the gods, Feral," he wheezes "I thought we'd never catch up!" He looks toward the town. "Is he in there? I could go in after him." He thumbs the edge of his ax. "I can be very persuasive when I want to be."

"You wouldn't know who to look for, my friend. On the other hand, I have this." You tap your nose. "It should lead me straight to Sonder if I can get there in one piece. Quick, give me your belt sash and gloves."

You take the long sash and carefully wind it around your head and face, then cover your furry hands with the leather gauntlets and the rest of you with the warrior's cloak. "How do I look?"

“Strange.”

“Granted, but at least no fur is showing. Well, here I go. If I don’t come back in an hour’s time—”

“I’ll come looking for you.” Kuda reins his skittish mount closer and lays a wide hand on your shoulder. “Good luck, my friend.”

You force a smile and start across the clearing toward the town. Turn to 175.



17

You move laterally, circling and keeping the two orcs in front of you and also in front of each other. With one blocking the other’s path, you will only have to face one at a time.

The orc with the ax moves in with a sudden flurry of motion. You leap out of his range, but the second orc aims two blades at your chest. You bring up the chain in response and loop it about both of the second orc’s wrists, immobilizing his weapons. The orc remains unflustered. It pulls the chain taut and snorts, “I have him! Finish him off!” Too late, you realize that it is *your* weapon that is immobilized as the larger orc moves in with its ax.

Maybe I still have a weapon after all! you think. Flexing your muscles, you yank the orc completely off the ground and swing him through the air like a mace. The other orc is too stupefied to move, and the first orc crashes into its partner. Neither stirs.

"You have won, son of Agnor," Vlachos calls from the platform. "Now kill them!"

You hold the chain out before you. "That is your style, Vlachos, not mine!" You pull the chain apart and drop the shattered links in the dirt. The wizard scowls.

The guards come out to drag away your opponents and clear the field for the next battle.

Add 1 point to either your experience point or hit point totals for your victory. Now you have a choice to make: you can stay to fight again and try to gain additional points (123), or you can attack the platform (62).

18

Regis II shrieks at the death of his master and breaks down sobbing, a puppet without a master to work its strings. He will no longer be a threat to anyone.

Mot Zaret rubs his glistening scalp and the lump that has begun to sprout there. Kuda helps him to his chair. "Is the magic gone, wizard?" you ask urgently.

He laughs and extends his hand, and there, dancing in his palm, are the powers of friendship and trust and love. "Not as long as you live!" he tells you. "Are you ready?"

You look at Keela for strength. She smiles, but her expression is forced. *She's nervous for me*, you realize.

"I am ready," you say aloud.

The turtlelike wizard waves one hand before your face and speaks in a low voice, in a foreign tongue. The floor of the chamber begins to shift, and the room starts to spin. The golden glow in his hand slowly grows and envelops you.

Roll one die and add the result to your remaining experience point total. If the total is 11 or more, turn to 134. If it's less, turn to 200.

19

The dire wolf doesn't wait for you to cross the clearing. Instead, it bounds straight at you with a disquieting zeal. The joys of the hunt and the kill burn in its eyes.

You meet its initial lunge with a broad slash of your blade, but the wolf's bulk knocks the sword from your grasp

and drives you to the ground. Pain erupts through your shoulder as daggerlike teeth dig deep into your flesh. With frenzied panic, you rain blows on the creature's face with your free hand and manage to drive it back.

You stand unsteadily, spattered with blood, knowing that the wound you've suffered is mortal. But you cannot give up. Not yet.

"Take the girl!" you call to Kuda as you recover your sword and hold the grinning beast at bay. "No arguments. It's up to you to stop Vlachos and the tyrant now. Go!" Regretfully, your friend complies.

The wolf charges again, this time for the kill. You meet it straight on, and the Millennium Blade sinks deep into tissue and muscle that no other weapon could penetrate. The dire wolf exhales once and dies, and you are not long in following. ✖

20

You struggle to your feet, still unsteady from the blow, and your opponents press their advantage. Instead of giving you the chance to recover, the soldiers rush you all at once.

You knock two reeling before a sword blade nicks your thigh. A second strikes you a glancing blow on your cheek. Neither is a telling wound; instead, they serve only to anger the wolf. Growls rumble deep within you. Your talons lengthen even more. When another soldier comes at you, one slash shreds his helmet plume and leaves deep gouges in the metal.

The soldiers begin to retreat in the face of your renewed rage, and you follow after them, pressing your advantage in turn. *Next time I won't miss!* you decide. *The next time, I will sink my talons into his throat and. . .*

No! You shake away such thoughts. They are not your own. They are the wolf's. "And I am not a wolf!" you cry aloud. Your senses react too late as, unseen, a mace slams down on you once more, and this time you drop onto your face, all but unconscious.

Subtract 2 hit points and 1 experience point and turn to 64.



21

The wizard spreads his hands, and lightning dances between them. "Time to die, cub!" he bellows, and even your clouded brain realizes that in the open you're sure to be toasted.

Reflexively you dive into the crowd of guests on the platform. Surely he won't strike you here, with so many of his followers around! But the lightning that leaps from his fingertips seems to have a life of its own. It lances over the heads of the shocked guests and then, curling in the air, it delves directly into their midst without touching one of them. Instead, it ferrets you out with a single-minded purpose. You howl as the sputtering electricity burns into your back, singeing your nerve endings and filling your nose with the stench of burning fur. You sink to your knees, and the horrified guests finally find their legs and flee toward the stairwell.

Vlachos advances on you, pouring on the energy until your muscles begin to spasm and your brain feels as if it is boiling. *I—I'm dying!* you realize. *I've taken too much dam-*

age to survive. I'll die here on this platform, and Vlachos will triumph after all!

But suddenly the wolf is there, in your mind, giving you the drive for one last effort. You spy your discarded sword and begin to crawl agonizingly toward it, whimpering with each movement, feeling your life slip away until . . .

Your long wolf hand closes on the sword hilt and flings it back in Vlachos's direction. The blade seems destined for the surprised wizard's chest, but unfortunately you never know if it reaches him or not as blackness claims you. . . . ✘

22

Your senses are so acute that you can pick out Vlachos's moves behind you as if you are looking directly at him. He marks runic symbols in the air, then extends one hand toward you. The air around it crackles with energy.

Suddenly you dart to the platform's banquet table and jerk a shiny metal serving tray from beneath its lavish load, then turn just as the force beam leaves the wizard's hand. It sizzles across the space separating you and strikes the mirrorlike tray, then ricochets backward.

Vlachos hasn't time to move before his own beam blasts him off his feet.

You move in on the wizard quickly, before he has time to regain his senses. With his hands tied, he can't mark his unholy symbols, and you gag his mumbling incantations.

Anxiously you sip from the vial and wait for the change to occur—if it will.

You hold up your hand and stare. Nothing. No, wait! The hair is coming loose and beginning to fall from your arm. The talons begin to fade, and your muzzle and fangs as well. You're human again! Human!

You go to the edge of the platform and look out over the arena. The guards have either surrendered to their former prisoners or have joined with them after seeing what it was they served. You locate Kuda in the crowd below and toss down the vial. "Give this to Hester and the minotaur and the others—just a sip for each."

"And here's something for you," Kuda calls back. He walks to the limp form of Regis, the shape-shifter, and

picks up his royal crown. "A gift from the people!" He tosses it into the air as you hear a chant from both monster and soldier alike, "Feral! Feral! Feral!"

As Vlachos watches morosely, you catch the crown and carefully set it on your head. ✕

23

Before you can even issue a challenge, one of the men is beside you, whirling, his boot rocketing toward your face. You raise your sword, but it is knocked from your hand. A fist lashes into your face, a foot into your midsection. You stagger back against the wall, gasping for breath and watching the silent figures that stalk you. Subtract 3 hit points.

Kuda leaps out and dives for the masked figure before you can even warn him. It is over in the blink of an eye. A side kick to the stomach stops Kuda cold, and a palm thrust to the nose lays him out.

"Very well," you sneer, clenching your fists in anger. "If it's a fight you want, it's a fight you'll get!"

Will you face the Dark Moon assassins as the man-wolf (213) or the werewolf (61)?

24

You ride double along the road for some time before Kuda voices his concern. "This looks like it's going to be a long ride," he says over his shoulder. "Are you sure you're up to it?"

"I think so. At least it's giving me a chance to rest." For just that reason, restore 1 point to your hit point total. Remember that you cannot recover more hit points than you started with.

It's almost nightfall by the time you reach the vaulted walls of the city. It is not a metropolis such as you've seen in some of the kingdoms you've seen in the west, but for the tyrannical ruler of an insignificant fiefdom, it is most impressive. A great palace looms up from the middle of the city, surrounded by a small cluster of homes and shops, which is in turn surrounded by a high wall and moat. It will be difficult to get inside.

“What’s wrong?” Kuda asks over his shoulder. “You’re trembling.”

You look anxiously toward the eastern sky. The moon is beginning to glow where the darkness is gathering, and you can feel its effects already. The lunar glow is making the wolf stronger. It’s getting harder to think, to keep control, to . . . “Let’s go,” you tell Kuda. “Let’s get this over with while we can.” You stare back at the moon.

If you want to try to sneak past the walls, turn to **155**. If you elect to try to outwit the gate sentries, go to **196**.



25

Time seems to creep by. The only inkling you have of its passing is the slow but steady growth of your wolfish alter-ego. You don't think you can hold out much longer. . . .

Your ears suddenly perk. “Someone’s coming!” you whisper.

Shuffling footsteps approach, and then you hear the clatter of pans. “Here’s your slop, my little pets!” the jailer laughs. His meaty hand slips through the bars, holding two plates of yellow bread and a ladle of gravy.

You seize the jailer’s wrist, jerking him off balance and slamming him against the door. “Unlock it!” you order. “Unlock the door before I yank your arm off!”

The jailer whimpers but readily complies. The jingle of keys greets your ears, and you hear the tumblers click into place.

Your weight on the jailer's arm causes the door to swing open violently, spilling both of you across the floor. By the time you roll to your feet, he has already drawn his sword. "I've always wanted a pelt for my mantle!" he says, sneering. "Yours will do fine!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 21 or more, turn to **82**. If it's less, turn to **184**.

26

You cower on the ledge, struggling to keep the wolf at bay, when strong hands drag you back through the window. Kuda returns you to your cot, safe from the maddening moonlight.

You feel battered and weak, worse than any combat has ever left you. There will be no escape tonight. "Got to . . . rest," you stammer before drifting off into a much-needed slumber.

You must subtract 4 hit points because of your ordeal, but you regain 1 with a fitful rest.

Turn to **14**.

27

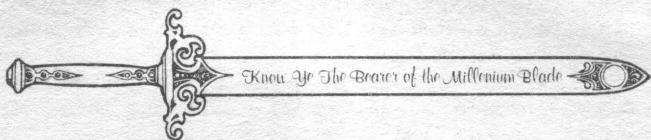
Try as you will, you can detect no weakness in the sorcerer. You'll just have to take your chances. With a growl, you draw the Millennium Blade and stalk across the chapel.

Vlachos hurries to the pulpit, where a book lies open, and begins to read frantically. The shape-shifter moves into your path to slow you, metamorphosing into a great tusked boar. "Kuda!" you call. "You and the others handle the shape-shifter. I want Vlachos!"

"You're too late!" the wizard laughs, throwing up his hands in triumph. "The ultimate spell is complete!" The air around him suddenly shimmers with energy, and Vlachos begins to grow, first two feet, then five, then ten. He towers above you, his voice roaring through the ca-

verns. "No longer the human! Now you face Vlachos . . . the demi-god!"

Will you battle this new threat as the man-wolf (187) or as the werewolf (106)?



28

Quickly Hester slithers to your side. "I have it, Feral!" she hisses, holding out the vial she has taken from the wizard's pocket. "Let me help you. . . ."

You strain to shake your head. "I won't be needing it, my friend. . . . Save it for yourself . . . and the others."

You call Kuda to your side. "Take the crown," you say weakly. "You are fair and just. Be good to my people."

"Our people," he says softly as you drift off into eternal darkness. ✕

29

You reach the edge of the forest and peer out onto the field where you first encountered Vlachos and the soldiers. They are not there, nor are their horses, for that matter. You can move into the open without fear.

Suddenly your ears prick up. *What is that sound?* you wonder at the drumming in your ears, not yet used to the hyperactive senses that your man-wolf form enjoys. Then you realize that it's hoofbeats! Frantic, you turn to flee back into the woods as a lone horseman tops the nearest hill.

"Feral!" calls a familiar voice that brings you upright. You hear Kuda laugh, just as he does in the heat of battle, reveling in the excitement of the chase.

He sees you close up and his jaw drops.

"Aye, old friend," you say, grinning sheepishly. "You are not insane. It is I."

The warrior's mouth works, but it cannot find the words. "How did—what—" he stammers before you wave him to remain silent and explain what has happened to you in detail. He listens patiently, though from his shocked expression, you wonder if any of it is sinking in.

Finally he nods. "So what do we do now?"

"I haven't given it much thought," you say with a shrug, crouching on your haunches. "Whatever it is, though, I have to do it soon. I can feel the wolf-creature inside me fighting for control. I don't know how long I can keep it down. If only I could get my hands on that wizard!" You stand bolt upright. "That's it! We've got to find the wizard! Either he cures me, or . . ." You slash the air with your claws; further explanation isn't necessary. "You don't have to come along, old friend. This is between Vlachos and me!"

Kuda feigns shock. "A battle, and I'm not invited? Feral, I'm truly hurt!" He hefts his ax to one shoulder and offers you a hand up onto his horse. "Shall we be going?"

Turn to 108.

30

You strike the first sentry to the ground with the flat of your blade, and the blow is so forceful that teeth clatter across the cobblestones like dice. You duck beneath one sword stroke and leap over another, bouncing about the alley with gymnastic aplomb, all the while deftly fencing as if your broadsword weighed nothing. Finally you hurl the blade aside. You don't need it against these fools. They're like children against you. You can kill them any time you please. . . .

"Stop it!" you chastise the wolf. "Get out of my mind!"

The largest of the sentries lurches toward you, shouting like a madman. You evade his morning star and crumple his helmet with a well-aimed punch. As he falls, another attacks. You seize the man's breastplate and begin slamming him into the walls, again and again.

"Feral! Stop it!" A hand seizes you. Kuda stares at you with undisguised dread. "Come back, Feral!" he pleads. "Just concentrate and come back!"

You look at your hands, frozen in the process of change,

the fingers lengthened, the talons razor keen. "Get back!" you command the wolf. "I am the master here. I am the master!" But, despite your efforts, you fail to make the wolf subside. "Kuda!" you exclaim, panicking. "Kuda, I can't change back! I'm losing control!"

Your sensitive ears hear more voices, angry and in number, from blocks away, but you cannot will yourself to move until they appear at the end of the alley.

"Come on!" Kuda says, all but dragging you out into the street. Turn to **97**.

31

A short time later finds you standing in the shadow of a tall mesa. You tracked the wolf's scent this far, but now its scent is giving you mixed signals. It doesn't seem to go in any direction, except . . . up?

You shade your eyes against the setting sun and peer at the plateau. Silhouetted against the sky, you glimpse a figure—no, two figures, one hulking and familiar, the other lithe and agile. And feminine, as her screams attest.

You hurry up the side of the mesa, fighting through the underbrush and scrambling for handholds. With your superior speed and agility, you pull ahead of Kuda and reach the top in scant minutes. There you find that the wolf has cornered yet another victim, only this time it is no mewling child. The dark-skinned girl appears to be about your age and stands defiantly at the lip of the cliff, trying to fend off the beast with nothing more than a sharp stick.

It is only when she throws her head back and howls that you realize it isn't her skin that is dark. It's her fur. "A wolf-girl!" you gasp in astonishment.

The dire wolf snaps at her and she steps backward in response, past the edge of the cliff and into thin air. For an instant, she seems to hang there, suspended.

Move! you tell your muscles as you race across the plateau, unmindful of the dire wolf or anything else but saving the girl. *I've got to get there in time. . . .*

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to **105**. If it's less, turn to **124**.

You cannot contend with the shape-shifter. By the time you have reacted to one of his monstrous identities, he has shifted to another, and you are held constantly off guard.

You slash at Regis's face, but it is suddenly out of range, arched backward on an almost serpentine neck. A muscular tail drops from beneath his royal robes and lashes out at you, hurling you all the way across the platform, directly into Vlachos. Subtract 3 hit points.

"Imbecile!" the wizard screams at his servant as the two of you collapse in a pile. And in that instant, drained and beaten, your wolf's reflexes take over, and you bite out at the sorcerer's leg.



Vlachos suddenly goes rigid. Sweat beads his brow as he realizes what has happened. He tries to mumble a hurried spell, but it's too late. The change has already begun. "Fool!" he growls at Regis as the curse of the werewolf starts to overcome him. "This is your fault! You!" He leaps across the platform, his wizard's robes flapping open to re-

veal his lupine transformation, and his attack on the fearful changeling carries them both off the platform.

You limp to the edge and look down at their broken bodies far below, and your spirit sags. There will be no cure. And with that realization comes the wolf.

Turn to 205.

33

Kuda points down the hall toward two doors. "The first cell contains Nicodemus. The second . . ." He just shrugs.

You hurry past the first door and the cackling old man behind it and find a sign scrawled mockingly on the second. "SORCERER'S ROW," it reads. You peer through the barred window. The gloom is thick inside, but slowly you begin to make out thin patches of whiteness along each wall.

You recoil. Bones! The wizards are skeletons!

"But how?" you stammer, rushing to Nicodemus's door.

"You said the wizards were making noise!"

"Aye!" cackles the bony old man through the window.

"That they do, boy. Say, you're awfully hairy, you know that?"

"Look at his eyes, Feral!" Kuda whispers near your shoulder. "The man is mad. Stark raving mad!"

"Mad, you say?" the old man gibbers. "I knew a man once . . . just let me think a minute. Say, how about another joke, boys, and how come you don't shave now and then?" He pauses just long enough to rap on the wall of Sorcerer's Row. "Keep it down over there!" he berates the silence. "We're trying to have a conversation over here! You want me to call Zaret about you? Yes, that's what I thought."

Your spirits sag. "And who is this Zaret?" you ask.

The old man giggles like a schoolgirl. "Who is Mot Zaret, you ask? Is he a pauper, a piper, a pumpkin-pie eater? Is he not the greatest of all wizards, master of all those who disturb an old man's sleep?" He bangs on the wall again.

"A wizard, you say, old man?" you persist, your hope so sparse that you will grab at anything. "A true wizard?"

"Feral, he's just ranting. . . ."

"Shhh. Quickly, old man. Who is this Mot Zaret?"

Nicodemus presses his face against the bars. "Mot Zaret is one not even Vlachos can destroy, one who is kept prisoner in the very bowels of the dungeon. Or—"

"Or what?"

"Or not." He laughs and shrugs. "Maybe he doesn't. Maybe he isn't. Or maybe he's me. Yes, that must be it! He is me, and I am him! And now for some magic tricks. . . . How about some pumpkin pie?"

"Pay him no heed, Feral." Kuda pulls you away from the door. "He is out of his mind!"

"But it's a chance," you say, trying to convince yourself as well. "If this Mot Zaret exists, we must find him!" You set off down the hallway, and Kuda follows loyally behind.

Turn to 144.

34

You spit your words out with vehemence. "As my friend has told you, Lord Vlachos, we will not fight for your enjoyment."

Regis moves for the first time. He stands and walks to the window, as if inspecting the night. "A pity it is evening right now," he says in a soft but threatening voice. "If it were daytime, you could bid the sunlight farewell." He grins deviously. "You will never see it again!" He motions to the guards.

Turn to 130.

35

The dire wolf hears your howl and spins around, ready to defend its territory. You charge across the mesa at full power, the largest you have ever grown, the most savage. It will be beast against beast, and to the death this time!

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. Add 1 for your fury. If the total is 25 or more, turn to 182. If it's less, turn to 80.

36

You make it to the grandstand, but the guards are closing in quickly. "Go ahead," Kuda says, stationing himself on the lower staircase. "I'll hold them off here." You nod in

agreement and hurry up onto the platform.

The royal guests are cowering in their chairs, but Regis and the wizard are waiting for you. The first thing you notice when you reach the top is the unmistakable stink of a shape-shifter. Who is it? Someone in the crowd, or . . .

Regis steps from his throne to protect the wizard, and your senses tingle. So there is no real king! Regis II is the doppelganger, a conjured puppet through which the wizard may rule! You move toward him, and he begins to change.

His footsteps make no sound as he glides across the platform, for he no longer has feet to make them. His legs have changed in the blink of an eye, merging into one powerful coil of serpentine muscle. To the shock and revulsion of the guests, the tyrant's whole body is changing, his torso slimming and shimmering with scales until you no longer face a man at all. Now, swaying before you with a hypnotic rhythm, is a twenty-foot-long serpent with a human head!

Regis II is now a lamia!

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 25 or more, turn to **94**. If it's less, turn to **9**.

37

With the finesse of the hunter, you sidestep the dire wolf's bull-like charge, raking your talons down its side as it passes. But its hide is like leather armor, and the muscle beneath is as thick as steel plating. Your slash merely irritates the beast, speeding its retaliation. It turns on you in an instant with a speed that belies its hulking size.

You lock your paws about its massive head and hang on, dragging your legs to slow its thrashing, but you fail miserably. If it keeps up this bucking, you will lose your grip and, quite possibly, your life. Even your clouded wolfen mind knows you must end this quickly if you are to survive.

You plant your feet and wrench backward all at once, with all your strength. There is a brittle crack, like a dried cornstalk breaking, and the dire wolf falls limp.

A howl of victory explodes from you, marking this enemy's territory and prey as your own. You turn with just that thought in mind, the victor searching out his hard-

earned spoils, but you find the dire wolf's quarry no longer cowering. Instead, she walks directly toward you, and you are shocked to realize that she matches you in fur and fang and talon. This girl is as much a wolf as you are.

"Deny the wolf," she tells you, her voice soothing, like tonic to your jangled senses. "Make it go away. You can do it!" In answer, the werewolf retreats within you, returning your self-control as you revert back to the man-wolf. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of the change.

Kuda appears just then, rubbing his eyes and staring at the dead wolf at your feet. "So that's what killed my horse!" he exclaims. "Good going, Feral. Who's your friend?"

"I . . . I don't know," you say with a shrug, looking at the wolf-girl. "Just who are you?" Turn to **78**.

38

You stalk silently toward the sentries, Kuda following you. The shadows are stark on one side of the hall, and you might be able to slip by unnoticed.

"Hold there!" calls one of the guards, and gleaming halberds are turned in your direction. One of them is already screaming for reinforcements. You bound across the corridor and knock that one unconscious while Kuda disables the other one. He confiscates their swords while you listen for other guards.

"Footsteps! They're coming!"

You go to the nearest window. Ripping the bars free, you start to climb out onto the ledge, but Kuda stops you long enough to throw a blanket over you. "The moon," he cautions. Then you both climb out onto the ledge.

You're outside the third floor of the barracks. In the courtyard below, soldiers mill about in confusion. You follow the ledge to the end of the barracks and leap across to the lower roofs of the palace itself. Turn to **199**.

39

"Well?" you taunt the soldiers. "I don't have all day!"

The soldiers come at you all at once, making it impossible to fend them off with your weapon but easier to evade

them. You move to the side, always keeping the first several fighters in the way of the others so you have to fight only a few at a time. You slash and parry by reflex, pitting one blade against three. Groaning bodies begin to litter the clearing. Your self-confidence grows. You are better than you ever were—better, stronger, faster . . .

The final soldier's blade slips through your defenses, pricking your furry flesh, but it's a piddling wound. Yet the irritation sparks a rage within you. Your own sword slams into the man's shield hard enough to dent the metal and send him hurtling backward, unconscious.

You don't want to stop there, do you? a voice inside your head urges. *Pursue Sonder. Throw down your sword and tear into him with your talons. Rend and—*

"Stop it!" you growl, looking at your hands and seeing that the change has begun. You steel yourself, forcing the creature back. "I will not be the wolf! I will not!"

The pressure eases slowly, and the wolf subsides. Subtract 1 experience point. You open your eyes, half-expecting Sonder to attack, but he is gone. Aside from the unconscious soldiers, there is only one figure in the clearing, a large black man sitting atop a sturdy charger. Kuda is watching you. He holds his ax handle cautiously. "Feral?" he whispers, as if questioning his own sanity at the thought.

"Aye, you're not going mad, old friend," you say. "It's me, Feral." When he fails to move or return your nervous smile, you begin to explain, telling him all about Vlachos and the curse and Sonder.

Sonder! "I had almost forgotten about him!" you snap, whirling about in a crouch and sniffing the air. "He was here only moments ago! If I can pick up his scent, there may still be time to catch him!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 16. If it's less, turn to 137.

40

You advance toward the ankheg warily. Its neck stalk swivels to follow you with its multi-faceted eyes.

Suddenly you feint with your staff. The insect doesn't move. You feint again. Still nothing.

You rush toward the creature, extending the staff to try to spear it, when it suddenly moves with blinding speed. Your weapon is shattered, and your momentum sends you hurtling straight into the creature's embrace. The thin, double-jointed arms with their bladelike lining close about you, and you haven't even the time to cry out before it's over. ☒

41

Regis's fists inflate to ogrean proportions, almost five times their normal size. He seizes your entire head in one hand and slams you up against the wall. In a moment he will doubtless crush your skull. Unless . . .

Opening your jaws wide, you bite into his palm.

Regis yelps and releases you, but he fails to renew the attack. The shape-shifter just stands there looking at his hand, which is shrinking back to regular size and starting to . . . grow hair?

"Master!" he mutters, trembling, as yet another change begins, one utterly beyond his control. "Master! The curse! The— Ooooooo!"

The wolf's howl brings an instant response. A side door suddenly opens into the room and in stalks his master, Vlachos.

"The cure!" Regis begs, straining to form the words. He lacks your force of will; he is defenseless against the transformation. "Master, please! The cure!"

"Calm yourself!" Vlachos snarls after casting you a nasty glare. He closes his eyes and begins to whisper, extending a hand toward his servant. Energy crackles through the air.

Suddenly you dart between the two of them, praying that your timing is correct. There is a bright flash that jolts you, and then you feel a tingling sensation all over. It leaves you groggy, and it takes you a few moments to realize that you're human again. Human!

But your joy is short-lived, for you now face both Vlachos and the Regis-wolf together, and with none of your wolfen abilities to protect you.

Whom do you choose to fight—Vlachos (102) or Regis (204)?

Let Kuda face the minotaur, you decide. At least he can pit his great strength against that of the monster. With Hester, you must be more careful. You don't want to hurt her, but at the same time, you don't want her to kill you.

You make your choice. Kuda and the minotaur are taken to holding pens to await their turn at battle. Hester is released.

She slithers forward with a dull gleam in her eyes, her forked tongue flicking past her lips. You cringe as you realize that she is more snake than woman now. She will show no mercy.

Vlachos lifts a single halberd and throws it onto the field. "Have fun, children!" he shouts, laughing.

Hester moves in a quick sidewinding motion and has the weapon in hand before you can reach it. She handles it deftly. The blade whistles about and leaves a crimson slash on your shoulder. Subtract 2 hit points from your total.

Anger boils within you. *No! She is my friend! I must not get angry!* you remind yourself grimly.

You evade the halberd on the next swing, and the next, but you know you can't escape it forever. Another stinging cut slices across your back, giving fuel to the wolf and its blood fury. Subtract 1 more hit point from your total.

You hold the wolf in check, roiling just beneath the surface, but how long can you maintain it? Hester is pressing in for the kill.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf to see if you can hold the werewolf in check. If the total is 19 or more, turn to **95**. If it's less, turn to **216**.

"Well?" asks Kuda impatiently.

"It isn't that easy," you say. "I can't just turn it on and off. It just happens." You try again, desperately reaching out with your senses, but to no avail. But you can sense that something is there, and it's coming closer.

"Quick!" you whisper, checking along the corridor for a cell door. "We've got to find a place to hide!"

"There's one!" Kuda whispers, holding up the jailer's keyring. He tries each key before the archaic lock finally unlatches, and you slip through the door just as squishing footsteps seem to be almost upon you.

You listen at the door for a moment. The wet, shuffling gait pauses just outside the door, and you hear breath rattling in ancient lungs. *It knows we're here!* you think frantically, but after a long minute, the creature moves on.

"Feral!" Kuda whispers anxiously.

"It's okay. It's gone."

"It may be," he says, "but whatever's in here isn't!" He turns and holds his torch aloft. "Why are the walls moving?"

A gelatinous coating covers each wall and oozes to the floor, where it puddles and moves slowly toward you. "Ochre jelly!" you gasp and reach for the door. But the corrosive animal has dripped down onto the door handle as well. It surrounds you now.

"Burn it!" Kuda yells, thrusting his torch forward. But touching the jelly extinguishes your only fire. Plunged into darkness, you listen to the slurp of the ochre jelly and wait for the horrible death you know will come. . . . ✕

44

You attack the creature with relish. Your ferocity takes the shape-shifter completely by surprise, and you pummel and slash at it without mercy. Sonder has to cover his head in defense, but when he looks up again, you freeze in your tracks.

You find yourself staring into your own face! At least, it's how your face used to look, as a human.

"No!" you scream.

"Yes!" the Feral image answers with cocky defiance. "I am the son of Agnor. *You* are the beast. Look at you! You are the evil one here, the wizard's creation. It is you who must be destroyed!"

The wolf whines with frustration. *It can't be true!* you argue with yourself. *I am Feral. . . but I am also the wolf. How can I be two separate beings at once? I can only be one. But am I a man or . . .*

While you struggle with your identity, Sonder takes advantage of your distraction. You look up in alarm just as one of his outsized fists comes crashing down on you, nearly smashing you through the floor planks. A second blow follows, and then a flurry of them, so quickly that even the wolf hasn't time to emerge. You taste blood in your mouth just before you black out. ✕

45

From the sound of it, the stirges seem to be farther away, so you turn to face the basilisk. "Remember," you caution Kuda, "don't look into its eyes!"

Suddenly two forms hurtle from the shadows behind you and slam into your backs, their flexible snouts digging into you and drilling for blood.

"Scouts," Kuda curses, "flying ahead of the flock!" He rips at the stirge that clings to his shoulder, than takes his knife to the one clawing at your own back.

But it is too late to matter.

You stand stark still, wide-eyed, feeling your limbs growing stiff and heavy, your lungs hardening, refusing to breath. The stirges' attack shocked you into looking up, and that is when your gaze locked with that of the red-eyed basilisk. You turn to stone before you can even utter a sound. ✕

46

"Stop whimpering!" Vlachos growls at the cursed Regis II. "I'll take the curse away." He begins to chant under his breath, at the same time making swirls in the air with his hands. When he extends them toward Regis, you know it is your time to act.

You leap between them just as the spell reaches its pinnacle. There is a flash of heat all around you, and slowly you can feel the wolf slipping from you. Your hands lose their fur and talons, your face its protruding muzzle. You are becoming human again!

"No!" sobs Regis as he collapses on the platform, sobbing. "I don't want to be a werewolf! No! Not that!"

You must act quickly, before Vlachos has time to recast



his curse on you. You seize the ornamental knife on Regis's belt and charge the wizard, praying to any gods who will listen.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as a man. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 87. If it's less, turn to 201.

47

You lunge for the table and overturn it, but not before your hands close on the Heart of the Wolf.

Lights suddenly burst from the jewel like miniature rainbows, splashing the room with color. You feel a tremor inside you, a rush of undreamed of power that chases away your pain and exhaustion. You feel yourself growing, rising, towering above the others. And you feel something else in you—another presence. "Pitiful mortal!" you say to Vlachos, or at least your voice does. "Would you test your puny might against Lar-Tal-Bot himself?"

You have no control at all as your giant hands lower to grasp the wizard in one and the shape-shifter in the other. There is a flash, and the two are no longer there. Only sand sifts through your fingers.

The sudden power drains from you as quickly as it came. Where one minute you were fifteen feet tall, now you are normal size again, lying spent on the chamber floor. Tentative footsteps approach. You hear someone gasp. "Feral!" Kuda whispers. "You're human again!"

You look at your hands, then feel your face, your chest. "He took it!" you laugh, delighted. "The wolf god took the curse away! I'm human, Kuda!"

Your eyes fall on Keela.

She stands alone by the door, smiling outwardly, yet obviously feeling quite different inside. *Is this what I really wanted?* you ask yourself. *To be human again—for what? To go back to a village now foreign to me, a home that is no longer a home? What have I gained . . . and what have I thrown away?*

For an instant, you think you hear the voice of Lar-Tar-Bot inside your mind. "The heart decides!" it says, and immediately you feel the curse of the werewolf come over you

again.

You smile wolfishly at Keela's exuberance and Kuda's dumbfounded expression. "It's all right this time, Kuda," you assure him. "It is my choice."

The warrior looks to Keela and then to you. "Then this is good-bye . . . isn't it?"

"I fear so, old friend."

He smiles. "It's just as well. There are other battles to fight—a man like me can never be idle for long." He clasps your shoulders. "Take care, Feral."

You smile and, taking Keela's hand, set off to return the Heart of the Wolf to her people . . . and yours. ✕

48

You slip out into the hallway, checking for guards, then head immediately for Hester's cell. "We can't just leave her here," you tell your friend as you wrench her bars apart and tear loose her chains. The girl throws her arms about you in gratitude. Your response is confused. You've always liked girls but not snakes. "Come along. We don't have much time," you say.

You sneak out into the main hallway, moving swiftly, the only sounds those of Kuda's boots and the occasional rustle of Hester's scales. Suddenly you freeze. Ahead, at the end of the row of cells, a guard is cursing and whipping one of the prisoners in his cell. Hester hisses in anger, but you hold her in check. Your ears have told you that more guards are coming.

If you decide to attack the guard beating the prisoner, turn to 135. If you think you should hide from the guards, go to 91.

49

You wait until the ring of soldiers tightens around you, then make your move.

Your sudden leap takes all of them by surprise. You sail over their heads and dash for the sanctuary of the dense woods. Vlachos is screaming behind you, "Get him! Get him!" but by the time his men react, you have already reached the shelter of the trees, and you disappear into

the wild like a ghost.

"I'll have your heads if he's not found!" Sonder curses as his men form a line and beat the bushes for you. You are well ahead of them, for now at least, but the dizziness is slowing you.

"I have to stop," you pant, "but I don't dare. Got to keep moving!"

The soldiers are moving closer. Suddenly one of them calls out, from off to your left, "I see something!" and the rest react like hounds on a hunt. They beat a path in that direction, leaving your area of the forest and letting the natural silence settle once again.

What could they have seen? you wonder, then dismiss the notion as irrelevant. What matters is that now you have time to rest and regain your bearings. You also regain 1 hit point. Mark this on your Character Stats Card.

After a short interval, when you are sure the soldiers are long gone, you start back to the clearing to regain your father's sword. Turn to 29.

50

The pain lasts only a few moments, but it leaves you spent and numb, barely conscious. You can't even protest as Sonder dismounts and drags you up by the hair. Never have you felt so . . . helpless. You try to raise a fist, to fend him off, but it's no use. . . .

"By the gods!" you gasp, staring at your fist. Where once had been sun-bronzed skin and callouses, there is now only hair—thick mats of it! Your fingers curl like claws, tapering to razor-sharp talons. You're covered with fur, and your nose and mouth have extended into a short muzzle. With a start, you realize where the distant howling came from. "A werewolf!" you stammer. "I'm a werewolf!"

"Not exactly," Vlachos says with a grin, his soft features turning dark and sinister. "Your change is not dependent on the cycles of the moon, though that certainly influences it. It is permanent. You will remain as you are, and the transformations will progress, until there is no Feral left—only the wolf." He motions to Sonder. "We will part company here. You and the others secure this one. He'll be good

for the arena." With that, the sorcerer heels his horse and gallops away.

Sonder's men dismount and approach you with ropes in hand, intent on taking you. As they near, you leap to your feet and kick Sonder into his men, bowling several of them over. Before they can recover, you retrieve your sword and lope toward the woods, vanishing into the underbrush.

"After him!" curses Sonder, and you can hear his men beating the bushes to find you, but your alien body is stronger and swifter than ever and you easily outdistance them.

Adjust your Character Stats Card to reflect your transformation. You now have two phases from which you may act. As the man-wolf, you retain your conscious mind, but you may add 1 point to each of your skill scores. As the werewolf, you are more powerful but have less control of your mind. As the werewolf, add 2 points to each skill score.

"How long can I run?" you whisper, surprised that your muzzle can even form the words. "Even now I feel my wolfen side gnawing and fighting for control! I must hurry, but where? Should I try to follow the wizard, Vlachos, on my own, or should I confront the soldiers and force them to reveal his destination?"

The wolf senses your confusion and growls with delight.

Make your decision now. Will you follow Vlachos (168) or fight the soldiers and Sonder (121)?

51

The Regis-wolf lunges at your throat, its fangs a hair's-breadth away. You twist at the last minute and use the beast's momentum against it, flipping it over your hip and straight into its master.

"Get away from me, you cur!" Vlachos snaps, but his face slackens with dread when he realizes that Regis is no longer present to hear him; only the wolf remains in his stead. It slashes at its former master, shredding his robes. Desperately the wizard casts spells to try to escape its clutches. Eldritch bolts and lightning crisscross the room, and a drapery begins to blaze. The flames quickly spread to

the wall tapestries and furniture. You flee as the chamber becomes a blazing inferno. The two villains are still locked in combat when the ceiling abruptly gives way.

The soldiers come then, hundreds of them, but no one pays you any heed. Kuda locates you in the crowd. "I think I missed something," he says, confused.

"It's over, my friend. Let's go home." ✠

52

The creature is as impregnable as a fortress. Its hide is impervious to your talons or blows. Even your supernatural strength is nothing next to that of the hulk. Blows that you manage to evade knock foot-deep holes in the arena field. The only advantage you have over it is your speed, but you know that eventually even that will fade and you will be left helpless.

Think, Feral! you urge yourself. *There has to be a way!*

The lumbering giant lifts its leg and takes a ponderous step toward you.

Seeing your opportunity, you leap into the air and drive both feet into the umber hulk's chest. The blow, like the others, has little effect, except that it strikes while the creature's leg is still off the ground and puts it completely off balance. Like a falling building, the hulk topples backward, and the whole arena seems to shake with the impact. You hold your breath for a moment, but the monstrous beast, like a turtle, cannot right itself once it's on its back.

Vlachos and Regis leap to their feet.

"Excellent!" Regis exclaims. "Now for the kill!"

You laugh as you revert to the man-wolf. "Even if I could figure out how to kill it, there is no chance." Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of changing.

Your two enemies fume like spoiled children. Finally Vlachos motions for a cadre of guards to drag the helpless hulk from the arena. "Bring out the next opponent!" he calls.

Add 1 point to either your experience point or hit point totals for your victory. Now you have a choice to make. You can stay and fight again to try to gain additional points (123) or you can attack the platform (62).



53

How could a half-blind, nocturnal creature be a wizard? The thought is incongruous, and yet there is something about it that makes sense. . . . Of course! The scrolls!

You pick up several parchments. The ink has faded completely, if it was ever there at all. A blind sorcerer would have no need for ink, as long as the letters were raised to the touch of his fingertips! You look down to the floor of the chamber. As you expected, it is glazed with the dried trail of the sluglike man. This is obviously his home!

You whirl on the larger man, drawing your sword in a single motion. "Imposter!" you snarl. "What game are you playing?"

Its illusion broken, the burly image ripples like disturbed water, and you find yourself facing a creature such as you've never seen before. It lowers its knotty head and sneers an inflated lip at the small wizard. "I'll win yet, wizard!" it croaks. "You wait!" Then it shambles back down the passage from which it came.

You move to give chase, but the real Mot Zaret stops you. "Don't bother," he says. "The rakshasa can be dangerous, but for the moment, it is beaten. It will not soon be back."

With squishing footsteps, the wizard dismisses Kuda from his chair and sits down. "Now, what is it you seek Mot Zaret for?"

Turn to 110.

54

Your sixth sense is nagging at you. It draws your eyes to a single tree among the many that stand around you. It's the only one that isn't swaying in the breeze. You draw your sword just as the treant realizes it's been found out and up-roots itself to reach out at you!

You slice through the groping limbs of the treelike creature and bury your blade in the heart of the wood. A horrid scream rings through the forest as the strange creature drops, mortally wounded.

The stink returns instantly, fetid and corrupt, as the treant writhes in the dirt and changes into Sonder! A *doppleganger*, you realize, kneeling by the creature.

"Sonder, tell me where to find your creator and master."

The creature laughs despite its agony. "I'll see you rot first!" Then its laughter turns to an eerie groan and death claims it quickly.

Kuda breaks through the trees and stares at the fallen creature, who even now is reverting to the true form of the doppleganger—saucer-eyed and clear-skinned, so that even the bones and organs show through. "By the gods!" he mutters. "I've no taste for such sorcery!"

"Then you'd better develop one quickly," you advise him. "Bring your horse. We're going to the royal city after Vlachos." Turn to 24.

55

The troll lumbers toward you, devoid of grace, groping at you with its new hand like a child after candy. "How do we stop it?" Kuda cries, a rare tinge of fear edging into his voice. "Normal blades can't harm a troll!"

You barely hear his words as you, the wolf, are caught up with rage. There is a monster before you, a threat, and you respond in kind. You attack, sidestepping the troll's long arms and slashing at its middle. You feel your talons sink

in as if they are slicing through mud.

But this time, the troll screams.

It shambles backward, its eyes bulging as if pain were somehow a new experience. The wounds in its stomach still do not spill blood, but neither do they heal.

"That's it!" Kuda exclaims. "Magic! You're cursed by magic, so your talons must be magical, too!"

The troll flees down a side tunnel, bawling like a baby. "We won't have to worry about it anymore," you say. "Let's keep moving."

Subtract 1 experience point as you transform back to the man-wolf, then turn to **120**.

56

You decide to pick the most dangerous foe, for Kuda's sake, since he must fight the one that remains. You address the platform: "I choose the minotaur. Where is my weapon?"

Vlachos laughs. "You have ten of them—at the ends of your fingers. Guards, let the battle begin! Release the minotaur!"

Hester and Kuda are taken away before your opponent is released. The huge minotaur immediately roars with defiance and chases its tormentors from the arena. Then it turns on you.

Your sixth sense tingles. What is it about this creature? It seems so familiar . . . or is it just the wolf in you sensing the minotaur's apprehension and, perhaps, fear?

"Fight!" Vlachos commands. "Fight or die!"

If you choose to take advantage of the minotaur's apparent apprehension, turn to **101**. If you decide to try to find out why this creature seems so familiar, turn to **194**.

57

Vlachos looses a pyrotechnic display of sorcery that lights up the chamber and prevents you from getting near him. Lightning and force beams and cones of raw energy blast at you all at once, and you must quickly retreat. Only the Millennium Blade saves you; its eldritch steel absorbs the errant power being funneled at you.

"Maybe that power can work for me!" you decide, heading for the single ceiling column in the chamber. You slash once with the mighty glowing blade and cleave the stone column completely through. "No!" the Vlachos-god roars, too late. The cavern trembles; sections of ceiling begin to fall, crushing the screaming Regis II. "Everybody out!" you call, herding your friends through the door.

Vlachos tries to follow, but the doorway was not meant for fifteen-foot man-gods. He is still trying to squeeze through when the cavern gives way and buries him beneath tons of rubble.

"Feral!" Kuda suddenly gasps. "Look at you! You're changing!"

Indeed, the hand that holds your still-glowing sword has turned completely normal, and the rest of you is quickly transforming as well. You feel no pain, no discomfort, just purifying strength that flows from . . . "Keela, quickly! Hold the sword!"

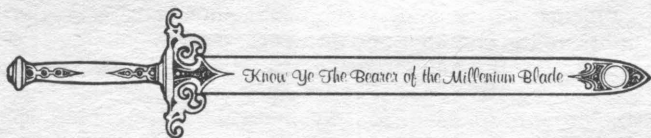
"Feral, I—"

"Don't argue!" You thrust the weapon into her hand and watch as the glow flows into her arm and shoulder, healing and purifying as it goes. The curse on her people is removed finally, after generations. "Gieryn, Lupus—quickly, before the glow fades!"

"No!" the brothers cry in unison. "We were born as we are, and we will stay this way. Our sister has a reason to be human. We do not." They step closer to you. "You will take care of her. She is of your world now."

You put an arm about Keela's shoulders. "That I will."

"I'm cold," Keela says, shivering against you. "Let's be rid of this place. We can save our good-byes till later." The two of you lead the way from the tunnels, back to the Mount of Lies and up to the light of day. ✕



Like a shot, you dive partly off the platform, grabbing the edge with one hand and reaching for the vial with the other.

It bounces off your forearm and seems to spin in the air forever before your hand closes around it. Your heart sings as you raise it to your lips and sip. You wait. Nothing happens. You snarl with frustration as you pull yourself back up onto the platform. You are about to smash the rest of the vial against the empty throne when you notice your hair starting to fall out. Soon it's coming loose in tufts, then in handfuls. You reach up and pull it from your face, and you realize that your muzzle is gone as well as the fangs and the talons from your fingertips. "I'm human!" you cry.

Turn to 178.

You sink to your knees, shivering uncontrollably. A liquid cold rushes through your veins, seeking to consume you, but something is fighting it. *Magic!* you think. *It has to be!* The same sorcery that created you, that cursed you, is now saving you! But the struggle within drains your strength. To determine your damage, roll one die. If the result is even (2, 4, 6), subtract 2 hit points. If it's odd, subtract 4 hit points.

While the troll is distracted by its strange, unhealing wounds, Kuda sneaks to your side and drags you back up the tunnel until you are completely lost from the creature's sight. Kuda stops only when you are back at the three-tunnel split. There you rest until the chills subside, meanwhile recovering 1 hit point. But you must subtract 1 experience point as you change back to your man-wolf state.

"Let me choose the path this time," Kuda says firmly. After pondering it a bit, he points toward the tunnel leading up. "We'll take the high road." Turn to 162.

Concentrating, you speak slowly and try not to growl as you say, "Yes, my son. For what do you wish forgiveness?"

The drunk's brow wrinkles. He seems to suspect something, but his rum-soaked brain is too numb to acknowledge it. "Well," he begins, then a bubble of realization floats to the surface. "I don't remember you from around here. "What's your name, Father?"

"This is Father Jacibo," Kuda intercedes, "and he is far too busy to be bothered by such drunken sots such as you."

"Why don't you let the priest answer for himself?" the drunk slurs. He nudges you. "What's your name, priest?"

By now you are panting with dread. You're certain he suspects something! You decide to just play along with him. "My name," you say slowly, "my name . . . is Father-r-r-r . . ." You clamp a hand over your mouth to smother the growl, but it's too late.

"So, a priest, eh?" The thug laughs and rips back your cowl. The furry, growling creature he finds there is not at all what he expected. As customers gasp and cry out at your appearance, you give the drunk a right cross that lifts him off the floor and lands him three tables away.

"Get the monster!" someone calls out, and blades unsheath everywhere. Suddenly a morning star whistles out of nowhere. You catch the chain in one hand and swing the morning star's wielder into the oncoming crowd. The wolf is howling within you for battle as you find yourself in the midst of a full-blown barroom brawl. You revel in the excitement, but all the while your logical side, your Feral side, knows you must break out and get away. Soldiers are bound to come soon.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as a man-wolf to see if you are strong enough to overcome the wolf's violent nature. If the total is 21 or more, turn to **72**. If it's less, go to **203**.

61

You transform yourself into the wolf with glee, expecting that it might unnerve these monks to witness such a thing. But as you grow in stature and your muzzle lengthens, you don't see a hint of hesitation or fear in their piercing eyes. On the contrary, the smaller man glides toward you soundlessly and aims a wicked spinning kick at your head.

His foot hits home, and you feel anger flare instinctively. Subtract 1 hit point.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 25 or more, turn to 4. If it's less, turn to 122.

62

Now, while I have the chance! you think.

You bound across the arena to where Kuda is being held. The guards are not expecting your attack, and not even the shrieks of the crowd can alert them before you strike. Kuda grabs their swords and throws one to you. "To the platform!" you yell.

Regis's soldiers are only now beginning to react. They head toward the platform, seeking to cut you off before you can reach it. You'll have to move fast!

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 36. If it's less, go to 151.



63

The wolf's need to run overcomes all other senses. While the mob is preoccupied, you flee back in the same direction you came from.

You reach the woods near the basilisk's lair and collapse. "It's over!" you moan. "The wolf is so powerful now, Kuda, I can barely keep it in check, and I have no idea where to find the wizard's other items. Vlachos has won!"

"No more self-pity, Feral!" Kuda snaps. "I'm surprised at you. Didn't you hear what was going on down there? A child is in danger, but you'd rather moan about your fate. Are you going to just give up, or are you going to do something about that child?"

You must make a saving throw against resignation. Roll two dice and add the result to your present experience point level. If the total is 12 or more, return to the edge of the woods and turn to **170**. If it's less, turn to **205**.

64

Your hands are tied viciously behind your back; then you are thrown over the saddle of your own horse. "I can't wait to see you in the arena, my furry friend," Sonder says mockingly. "I'll watch with delight as they rend your flesh!"

You wrinkle your nose at the man's nearness. Your nose has picked up his scent, but it is unlike that of all the others. It's not exactly musky, but foul, like carrion. It seems strange but somehow fitting for Sonder.

You spend the rest of the day sprawled across your horse, being led along the bumpy road to Carilon, Regis's kingdom. Still, at least you have the opportunity to rest. Add 1 hit point to your total.

Sonder reins his horse to a sudden halt and stands in his stirrups, poised as if listening. "We're being followed," he says suddenly. "Two of you come with me. The rest of you stay with the wolf." The villain and his assistants ride over a hill and out of sight.

Followed? you wonder. By whom?

The sun descends almost an hour lower in the sky before Sonder and the other riders return. There are four of them now, but only one horse carries its rider upright—Sonder. The other two soldiers are quite dead and strapped across their ponies. The fourth horse must bear their slayer. You gasp when you recognize the limp form draped across Kuda's great stallion. Is he dead? "Kuda?" you whisper.

A familiar grumble puts your mind at ease. "Feral? Is it you?" The dark warrior lifts his head and gasps. "By the gods! What happened to you, boy?"

"What else? A sorcerer's curse."

"It figures," he sighs, shaking a rivulet of blood from his forehead. The wound looks like . . . teeth marks? "Your friend there"—he nods toward Sonder—"isn't what he appears. I took his cohorts easily enough, but this one isn't human. He's some sort of doppleganger."

"A changeling?" At least that explains the stink of the man.

"Aye. Before I knew it, he'd changed into four or five beasties one right after the other. I just couldn't fight him. From here on, we must be careful, my friend. I have no taste for magic."

As you travel on and night begins to fall, you feel your control beginning to slip. The moonlight stirs the wolf inside you, pounding at the mental wall you've built to hold it back. It's a good thing you are bound.

About an hour after the sun has gone down, you reach Carilon. Sonder leads you through the gates and to the palace itself, where you are left in the charge of the palace guard.

Turn to **159**.

65

You draw your sword and stalk the evil wizard, oblivious to the sounds of battle around you.

"Put away your sword!" says Vlachos, his confident smile meant to hide the doubts and fears that your senses have already noticed. "Isn't life as a wolf preferable to death?"

"Lift the spell, Vlachos!" you order. "Lift it and live. Your choice."

His features twist with rage. "Never!"

Your sword slices through the dank cavern air as you attack.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to **218**. If it's less, turn to **138**.



66

You wait until the shape-shifter is almost upon you, then leap straight up. The action is so sudden and unexpected that Regis has no time to recover his balance. He passes beneath you and plummets, screaming, to the arena floor far below. If the fall didn't finish him, the minotaur will.

You turn toward the scowling Vlachos. "I've come for you, wizard!" you growl.

Turn to 70.

67

The dire wolves circle outside as Keela introduces you to her brothers. To your surprise, they accept you right away. Their suspicions are saved for Kuda. "We've not seen his kind in a while," Keela confides, and you laugh to realize that she speaks not of his color but his bare skin. The warrior takes their stares in stride.

Gieryn wears an uneasy look. "What is it about these caverns that troubles you?" you ask.

"It is a place of evil. Don't you feel it? Ages ago, a cult called the Mages of Eternity dwelt here. A powerful lot,

they were, and malevolent to the core. It was they who cursed our ancestors and turned them into wolves." He looks you over. "Is that what happened to you?"

"Something like that. How many of you are there?"

"An entire village full," Keela says, beaming, "and growing with each generation. We've learned to live in harmony, though it wasn't always that way. Over time, we have developed techniques to control the wild and violent wolf that permeates our natures." She grins. "Just as I did for you earlier. I can teach this to you, if you'd like."

"But I don't want to control my wolfish side," you tell her. "I want to destroy it. I want to be human." She lowers her gaze. "Gieryn, have you ever thought of finding a cure? If the spell that cursed you came from here, there might be something left to reverse it."

"We have no desire to be human, Feral. We were born as wolves. It is our way. It is all we know."

"Besides," pipes Lupus, "even if we did, we would not dare to look here. The mages themselves may be long dead, but evil still thrives, both on the Mount of Lies and within it, in these very caverns. Strange creatures, ghostly sounds . . . I want no part of it! Keela, you remember that shepherd who brought his flock to the mount and built his cottage there? We tried to warn him, but . . ." He shrugs. "We saw neither hide nor hair of poor Vlachos ever again."

You and Kuda gape at one another. "Vlachos? The shepherd's name was Vlachos?" You sniff the stale cave air, searching for a familiar scent that has been tickling your senses for some time. "I can smell him! He's here somewhere!"

"You mean Vlachos is still alive?"

"Much worse than that, Gieryn," Kuda tells them. "Your shepherd has somehow become the most powerful sorcerer in the land, and the most evil. If we don't reach him before long, Feral's curse will become permanent!"

"Then I'm coming with you," Keela says, taking your arm. Looking into her face, you realize that, even as a wolf, she is quite beautiful. "And don't try to talk me out of it, brothers. Feral saved my life out there. I owe him everything."

"But—but, miss," you stammer, "I can't ask you to—"

"No more talk now," she says emphatically. "Come along. I've been in these caves before, when I was a daring child of eleven. I think I can get us to the Mount of Lies." She picks up your discarded torch and starts up the passageway. Lupus and Gieryn look at each other, sigh, and follow after her.

Vlachs is here! you repeat to yourself as you and Kuda hurry to catch up. The spell can still be lifted. Your spirits soar; there is still hope!

Turn to 150.

68

You make your way through the less populated back streets, keeping to the shadows, steadily working your way toward the royal palace.

Suddenly you cock your head and listen intently.

"What is it?" Kuda whispers.

"Footsteps."

You push your warrior friend into a side alley and put a finger to his lips. The footsteps continue to grow louder—you are being followed! You look down the alley and realize you can never make it to the other end in time. "Be ready," you counsel.

Figures round the entrance to the alley, five of them in all. At first you suspect a street gang, but then you see the flicker of the street torches reflecting off light armor. Sentries. "You there!" the leader yells. "Come forward and identify yourselves!" When you fail to move fast enough, they draw their swords. "Come forward!" they order again.

"Shall we make a run for it?" Kuda whispers urgently.

"And have them sound a general alarm?" you counter. "That would bring the whole city down on us. We have to handle this now, quickly and quietly." You raise your hands as Kuda lays down his ax in surrender, and together you approach the guards. Only when you are closer do you draw your blades and prepare to attack.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 30. If it is less, turn to 208.

Kuda reins his steed onto a little-used path and gives it the heel. By dusk, you are still riding hard without a destination in sight, and your discomfort starts to grow. It will be night soon, you realize, and you're out in the open, with no place for shelter, no place to hide.

Kuda senses your alarm. "Don't worry, Feral. It'll be cloudy tonight. Besides, you aren't really a werewolf. The moon probably wouldn't affect you anyway."

"'Probably' isn't good enough, Kuda," you say. You spy a spreading oak on the horizon. "Head for that tree, and use your rope to bind me to its boughs tonight. We will camp till dawn."

"But, Feral—"

"Please, Kuda. For your sake."

Reluctantly the warrior does as you say, and evening finds you bound securely to the tree with five thicknesses of rope. "Eat your fill and then turn in," you instruct your friend. "No matter what I might say during the night, don't untie me!" Kuda grumbles but agrees.



As the hours tick by and your friend's snores grow louder, you sit idly and stare at the clouded sky. *Maybe I was wrong, you think. After all, the moon has peeked through a dozen times now, and I'm still in full control. Oh, well, best learn to tolerate it. I'm in this for the night.*

A searing light suddenly burns down on you, and the moon grins maliciously through the thinning clouds. You can feel your blood begin to boil. There is a roaring in your head—the wolf's howl—and a groan in your arms and back as your bones realign and lengthen. A growl rumbles in your expanding chest, and all five ropes snap at once.

You leap to your feet, the werewolf sniffing the air for prey while you try in vain to control it. The beast looks from the sleeping Kuda to his skittish horse and back again, as your black lips curl away from your dripping incisors.

No! you shout from within. *I won't let you!*

But in the bask of the moon, it is the werewolf who is supreme. In its control, you can only obey as your transformed body stalks forward and slays the great steed with a single swipe of its knifelike claws. *This should do nicely, it decides as it crouches to feed. And if not, there is always the other!*

Your meal is interrupted before it begins, as a howl rolls across the grassy plain. Your ears perk up. The call strikes a chord within you, but not one of brotherhood. It's a call of challenge.

With a snarl, you race across the fields, following the echoes to their source.

Turn to 154.

70

"I'll have the last laugh, son of Agnor," Vlachos says cunningly. As you gather yourself to leap, he suddenly holds out a thin vial. "Your cure," he says, then laughs and begins pouring it out.

"No!" you scream. You have to save that potion, yet the wolf is snarling for vengeance, wanting nothing more than to destroy the wizard. If your animal side takes over, you might lose the cure forever!

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to 3. If it's less, go to 119.

71

As the wolf turns back toward the child, you leap forward and land astride its back, wrenching its head away from the girl. In response, the creature bucks like a wild horse, and it's all you can do to stay aboard. Finally it lunges backward and slams you against a tree trunk, knocking the air from your lungs. You fall from its back and lie dazed in the grass. Subtract 3 hit points.

Your head spins, and you can't catch your breath. You realize you're in no shape to fight. Yet your foe returns, sensing your vulnerability. Your only defense is to become the werewolf.

The hulking dire beast is taken aback as you rush it suddenly with your talons flashing and fangs biting deep. The battle is fierce. Neither of you gives ground at first, but finally the giant wolf backs away and flees into the night.

You sink to your knees, dazed and exhausted, straining to force the werewolf back into its prison lest you frighten the poor girl any more. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of the change.

When you are the man-wolf once more, you reach out to the girl. "I won't hurt you," you say softly. She grins and crawls toward you and hugs your neck. "It's all right," you tell her, even as the townsfolk surround you.

Turn to 152.

72

Using all the willpower you have, you unclench your fists, duck a flying bottle, and hurry toward the door. Kuda is already waiting for you there, and you both duck outside quickly.

"Soldiers!" you warn Kuda as the faint sound of metal clanking and the scent of preservative oil from their sword blades reach your senses. You push your friend into the shadows just as a contingent of royal marines rushes by and dashes into the erupting tavern. As soon as they are

out of sight, Kuda pulls you out of your hiding place and leads you back in the direction you came.

"Where are you going?" you growl at him. "The palace is back that way!"

"I didn't get to talk to the barkeep before you started tearing the place up," he says. "But I did talk to another man, a merchant, who has seen the king's wizard many times traveling the path to the southern territories. Since no one seems to have seen him return to the city today, he is probably there. You do want Vlachos, don't you?"

Your incisors tingle at the thought. "Oh, yes. I want Vlachos!"

"Then let's be off to the southern territories."

You leave the city the same way you came, in disguise, and no one bothers to question you. Within minutes, you have found Kuda's hobbled horse and are back in the saddle behind him as he heads south. The moonlight has little effect on you as you ride. Both of your identities are exhausted and fall into a much-needed slumber.

Add 1 point to your hit point total because of the rest. Remember that you may not regain more hit points than you started with.

When you awaken, you are still riding, but it's daylight and you are in control once again. Turn to 69.



You sense a surge of fear in the sorcerer's face as he takes a sudden, panicky step toward the pulpit, and your eyes flash to the book lying open there. "The source of his power!" you whisper quickly. "I knew it!" With a desperate surge, you launch yourself across the chapel, even as Vlachos makes his own move toward the pulpit ahead of you. His hands start to close on the book.

You scurry up onto a pew and leap, somersaulting over the pulpit completely and grabbing the book from his grasp as you pass.

"Feral!" Keela calls out in warning. "Watch out!"

You put up a hand to halt the Regis-thing's advance. "Think about it," you suggest, holding the book over the candle flames of the altar. "It's time to bargain, shepherd, or your precious book will go up in flames!"

Vlachos tries to look unconcerned, but panic shows through the cracks in his composure. "What is it you wish?" he asks, now more than willing to cooperate. "That silly curse? Of course, of course. It was only a joke, after all." He begins to mutter and gesture frantically, and you barely feel the change flash through you. When you look at your hand again, you find it bare. Human!

"What else?" Vlachos asks, smiling nervously. He spies Keela standing just inside the door. "Your little friend here as well, I suppose?" He repeats the spell, and Keela cries out, not so much from the pain as the sudden shock of seeing her flesh bare and human.

"There. I've done as you ask," the sorcerer says. "Now give me the Tome of Time." His features pull tight with anger. "I must have it! Give it to me now!"

"So you can curse us again, or perhaps destroy us?" you say with a laugh. "I think not, old man!"

But what *will* you do with the Tome of Time? If you choose to burn it, turn to 112. If you decide to give it to Kuda while you keep Vlachos busy, go to 217.

Even before the pen doors swing open, you can see your next opponent. It towers head and shoulders above the

gates—actually, *heads* and shoulders.

A giant two-headed troll lumbers across the arena field toward you, its bald right head already exchanging strategies with the hawk-nosed left. One hand carries a knotty cudgel, while the other clutches a long net.

You do not ask for a weapon. The wolf's talons have already grown in reflex. You will need all of the lupine abilities you can muster.

Vlachos calls, "Let the battle begin!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to **6**. If it's less, go to **212**.

75

Pain suddenly erupts at the base of your skull as a blow from a mace pitches you forward onto your hands and knees. You roll quickly away to avoid a second blow, but your senses are impaired and your vision swims. Subtract 1 point from your hit point total.

The soldiers surround you once again. You can surrender if you wish (**192**). Or, if you prefer, you can fight on. Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to **165**. If it is less, turn to **20**.

76

The corridor of stone of the middle tunnel continues unchanged well past the split in the corridors, but gradually it begins to widen, and the walls take on a pock-marked quality. The small holes grow larger as you walk until they become miniature caves and tunnels. You feel a shiver run along your spine. It's like being watched by a hundred different eyes.

Something snarls nearby. Its cry seems a mixture of jungle cat and banshee wail, and its reverberations make it all but impossible to tell which cave it came from. You whirl and put your back to Kuda's, covering every possible avenue of attack.

A black form hurtles from the uppermost hole on the north wall, no more than a dark blur. The tingling along

your neck warns you a split second in advance, and you throw yourself backward to knock Kuda from the creature's path.

The displacer beast's catlike body tenses, ready to spring again, its two barbed tentacles lashing out at you. You barely manage to knock them aside with the blade of your sword. They seem to strike exactly where you don't expect, as if your eyes are deceiving you.

Then the legends are true! you recall. The displacer beast's greatest weapon is illusion. It is not always where it appears to be. But how do I fight something I cannot find?

But you already know the answer. Even now you are changing, reflexively turning into the wolf as the beast moves in for the kill.

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 21 or more, turn to 12. If it's less, turn to 202.



77

Fearfully you let the wolf grow within you, let its power and its cunning and its savagery flow like molten lava. The enemy is drawing near, and it may be your only hope.

You drop your sword—your lengthening hands cannot hold the slim hilt. Your muzzle has grown as well, and you

can feel two-inch incisor teeth against your tongue. You straighten to your full height, now a full foot taller than before, and you arch your back and let loose a howl that floods the forest. The sound of fleeing wildlife comes from all around you in reply, and your opponents stop in their tracks.

You are now the wolf, and your prey is within sight.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill as the werewolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to **163**. If it's less, go to **75**.

78

Before the mysterious wolf-girl can say a word, you notice two figures standing on the knob of a small rise. Each carries a longbow and quiver. The girl cries out, "Gieryn! Lupus! Come over here!" She points to the man-wolves as they approach. "My brothers."

"Keela!" calls the larger of the two, Lupus, as he approaches. "You scared us to death! Next time you wander this far, I'll . . ." He looks at you. "We appreciate your help, my friend. Tell me, what are you doing in these parts, especially with a bare-skinner?" He motions to Kuda. "We haven't seen one of his kind since the shepherd, Vlachos, disappeared from the Mount of Lies."

"My name is Feral," you say, clasping the two brothers' extended hands, "and Kuda is . . . wait a minute. Did you say Vlachos?"

"Aye. An old shepherd. He brought his flock to these parts a few years back, wishing to build his cottage atop the Mount of Lies. He was warned not to; the mount is an evil place, where an ancient cult called the Mages of Eternity once dwelt. But he built it anyway, and we've not seen him since. His cabin stands empty these days."

"Can you take us there?" you ask anxiously.

"I will," Keela says, taking your arm. "I had best stay with you from now on, so you don't lose control to your wolf nature again. Our people had the same problem once, ages ago, when the Mages of Eternity first cursed our ancestors. But through the generations, we've developed ways of controlling our animal natures." She squeezes your arm. "If

you stay long enough, I can teach you to do this.”

“I don’t want to control the wolf,” you say flatly, “I want to destroy it! I want to be human again!”

She lowers her face but says nothing. Instead, she starts off across the fields with her brothers in tow, and you follow along after them. Turn to **195**.

79

The holding pen doors swing open, and out stalks a small crowd—at least it seems to be at first glance. As they come closer, you realize with dread that “they” are one creature, a single beast wider than it is tall. It has two legs supporting its thick-skinned body, and the one eye it possesses is perched over a menacing set of mandibles.

A horror such as this can have only one name: **umber hulk**.

You allow yourself to transform into the werewolf. It will have a better chance of handling this creature than you would.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to **52**. If it’s less, turn to **99**.

80

Locked in combat, you battle the dire wolf back and forth across the plateau, your agility and fury versus its superior size and strength. And when matched evenly, with nothing held back, you start to lose.

The dire wolf muscles you around by sheer size and weight, butting and shoving with its head and forelegs. You realize its plan only when your heels touch the edge of the cliff.

The wolf howls in victory and rises up on its hind legs, towering over you. Then it starts to lunge. . . .

Thwack! Thwack! The wolf yelps in pain as something yellow suddenly protrudes from its side—arrows! Two at first, then three more, biting deep and shoving the creature off balance. Its lunge becomes a drunken fall that takes it over the edge, pulling you along with it.

You twist in the air in a desperate attempt to grab the

ledge before it's too late.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the werewolf. Add 1 more for the wolf's fury. If the total is 20 or more, turn to **156**. If it's less, you miss the ledge and plunge to the valley below. Start over at the beginning of the book.



81

The column you are pushing against groans but little else. You push harder, then harder still.

A hairline split begins to appear around the shaft of the beam, then widens. Wood splinters from the base, and the entire platform starts to shake. You leap out from under the structure as the column collapses and the whole platform comes crashing to the ground.

Turn to **8**.

82

The guard eyes the two of you warily, not quite knowing which to fight first. He tries to back through the open door, but Kuda blocks his way and the man raises his sword to strike.

Your leap spans the cell, and you tackle him before he can take another step. The two of you sail out into the hallway and collide with the far wall, where you collapse in a heap of motionless limbs. The guard is unconscious, sporting an angry knot over one eye. You grimace at your own soreness, but at least you can stand. Kuda throws you the jailer's sword and takes the keyring and his knife for himself. "Put him in the cell," he tells you, starting down the corridor. "I'll check out the wizards."

You do as he suggests, pulling the guard inside, then binding his hands and gagging him with shreds of his tunic. Then you lay him on your bunk. By the time you are finished, you find Kuda standing in the doorway of the cell. "What is it?" you ask when you see his dread expression.

Turn to 33.

83

From down the darkened hallway, you hear a faint but mad cackling.

The laughter emanates from behind one of many doors that line the halls of the dungeon. Carefully you peer through the barred window. A bloodshot eye stares back at you.

"Have you come to do something about those blasted wizards?" asks the shrill, crazed voice of an old man from behind the door. "You can't expect Nicodemus to sleep with all that racket, you know."

You look at Kuda. Wizards? "We'll take care of it, Nicodemus. Where are these wizards?"

The old man cackles insanely. "In the next cell, of course. Are you as crazy as I am?" There's another burst of mindless laughter.

You hurry to the next cell. There on the door hangs a sign, on which is scrawled mockingly, "SORCERER'S ROW." You forget the jailer's keys in your excitement and simply rip the door open.

Immediately the smell of rot and mildew assails your hypersensitive nostrils. Despite the gloom, you have no trouble discerning the gleaming bones shackled to the walls within.



You breathe a silent curse. "That old fool! These wizards have been dead for years!" You march back to Nicodemus's door. "Are those all of the wizards, madman? Mind you, I want no more of your gibberish!"

"Aye," Nicodemus agrees. "Except for Mot Zaret, of course. If he exists at all."

"Mot Zaret?"

"Perhaps he's merely a legend, a myth, a fairy tale. Who knows? He is said to be the greatest of the great. Not even Vlachos can destroy him. Instead, Vlachos is said to keep him locked in the depths of the dungeon, as he keeps me." His mad face brightens suddenly. "Perhaps *I* am Mot Zaret . . ."

"The prattling of a lunatic!" Kuda scoffs over your shoulder.

"Perhaps," you say, "but if there is the slightest chance that this Zaret might exist and could cure me, then we must check it out." You leave the ranting Nicodemus and head farther down the slanted halls of the dungeon.

There are fewer torches farther along, leaving most of the hall to languish in shadow. You pause, hold your torch aloft, and have just begun to proceed again when suddenly you feel a presence in the corridor with you—coming closer.

"What is it?" Kuda asks as you stop and snuff out your torch. You motion him to keep quiet while you prick up your ears and listen.

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 17 or more, turn to **98**. If it is less, go to **43**.

84

"Come on then, pup!" Regis taunts from a bugbear's fanged maw. "Come ahead . . . if you are eager to die!"

Angered, you leap to the attack, but it is just what he wanted you to do. He laughs as displacer beast tentacles suddenly sprout from his ribs and ensnare you. The barbs on their underside bite deep, and pain flashes through your arms and chest like liquid fire.

The pain triggers something within you. The wolf is suddenly there, without warning, subjugating your will to its

own. Your talons grow in an eyeblink, slicing through the tentacles as if they were rolled from clay. The doppelganger screams, but it only adds to your wolfen frenzy. You charge the creature, bloodthirst hazing your mind.

“The window!” Regis warns frantically, but his words mean little to the raging beast you have become. You slam into him and the momentum carries both of you out the high palace window to certain death below. . . . ✘

85

At that moment, Keela discovers you. “I’ll show you to your quarters,” she says with a smile. “You will be staying in our extra yurt.”

As she leads you across the village, you wonder just how to phrase your question. “Keela,” you begin as she ushers you into the round tent where you will stay. “We’re friends, aren’t we?” She nods, her smile broadening. “Good. And as a friend, would you help me if you could?”

“Of course, Feral. All you need to do is ask.”

“It’s about the statue in the center of the village. I need the stone from its chest. The heart.”

The smile abruptly fades. “You know not what you ask!” she says in a hushed voice. “The statue is of Lar-Tal-Bot, our deity. It would be sacrilege! If the others even heard of your request, they would force you from the village.”

“But, Keela—”

“I am sorry, Feral. I cannot do this thing.” She hangs her head and rushes from the tent.

Kuda sighs. “We’ll just have to steal it, then.”

You shake your head and sit down wearily. “She’ll be watching us now. We’ll have to wait for the cover of night. I just hope I can resist the moon.”

You ready your supplies and fidget impatiently as the sun completes its descent toward the horizon. It’s barely peeking past the treetops when Keela suddenly reappears at the door of your yurt. “You have to leave,” she says softly.

“You didn’t tell—”

“Never mind that,” she snaps, hurrying you from the tent. “Follow me.” She shoulders her own pack and leads the way through the village, purposely avoiding any oth-

ers. It isn't until you are out of the village and traveling back through the hills that she permits you to speak.

"What's this all about?" you ask, grabbing her to slow her down. She lowers her head and says nothing. She merely reaches into her shoulder pack and presents you with the pulsing Heart of the Wolf.

"Your people are letting me have it?" you marvel, but her silence denies it. "You stole it? But they'll banish you from the village, maybe worse. Why, Keela?"

She finally looks up into your eyes, and her smile tells you why. For you. She stole her people's greatest treasure for you. "Go now!" she whispers. "They will not be far behind. I don't know how long I can stall them."

"You won't have to," you say, taking her by the shoulders. "There's nothing for you there now, Keela. You're coming with us. No arguments!" You head off toward the woods near the basilisk's domain, pulling her along after you.

Turn to 92.

86

You move to defend the the bearded man from the slimy-skinned creature. "I don't know what you are," you tell it, "but if you are here to hurt the wizard, you will have to face me first!"

The burly man lays his hand on your shoulder. "Thank you, my friend," he says, but you realize that his hand does not feel natural. Despite what your eyes tell you, there are talons there, and before you can move, they seize you by the throat and dig in fiercely. "Fool!" cries the rakshasa as it drops its illusion of humanity. "You should have looked deeper!"

By the time Kuda can act, you have already paid the ultimate price for your mistake. ✕

87

Your frenzied attack catches Vlachos off guard. Hastily he casts a Fireball spell; you throw yourself to one side as the crackling ball of flame sweeps by and strikes Regis instead. The shape-shifter who would be king shrieks and disintegrates on the spot.

Vlachos is still casting spells and intoning curses when you reach him. Your dagger strikes deep, and the wizard gasps and slowly sinks to the platform.

Turn to 161.



88

You launch yourself at the giant wizard, slashing, tearing, and biting like a cornered wolf.

Vlachos hurls you away like a child would a rag doll, but no attack follows. Instead, he stands rigid and trembling, staring at the pin pricks your teeth have made on his flesh. "The curse!" he gasps, his voice growing thick, growling. "I must revoke the curse, before it is . . ."

It's too late. The wizard lurches backward, struggling within himself as the curse of the werewolf boils in his veins. Hair sprouts all over him, his face distends and stretches into a snarling muzzle, and his howls rock the cavern.

Then his eyes fall on a victim—Regis, the shape-shifter.

"No, master!" pleads Regis, but the giant beast ignores his protests. It dispatches him with sword-length claws in the blink of an eye, and then turns its attention to you.

With the speed born of fear, you race through the chapel doorway, the Vlachos-wolf close behind you. When it finds its size is too large for the portal, it howls and slams against it, again and again, until the walls of the cavern

shake and the ceiling begins to crumble. You watch as the great beast is buried beneath tons of rubble.

Turn to 220.

89

The girl still holds the tankard of ale before her. "Compliments of the house, stranger," she says with a smile, showing rotten teeth. Then you see the knife concealed beneath her serving tray.

Suddenly she lunges, but you disarm her easily. However, as you do, she tears away your mask and claws at your chest.

You notice flecks of blood on your chest hair. She inflicted no more than a scratch on you, but her nails shouldn't have been able to pierce your tough wolf's hide at all. You seize her hand. Sure enough, her fingers sport claws. "Who . . . *what* are you?" you ask, aghast.

The other patrons, paralyzed with fear at the sight of your face, begin to flee from the tavern, but the girl makes no move. Instead, she smiles mockingly and laughs. There is madness in her eyes and her laughter . . . no, not madness. Evil. An evil you have seen before. And the closeness of her threatens to make you ill from the stench.

A corrupt, fetid stench. Sonder!

Turn to 103.

90

The hobgoblin leader attacks with relish, forcing you backward from the very first stroke. Thankfully Kuda joins battle with the other two. It will take all of your concentration just to stay alive against their leader.

The great sword that it wields is nearly impossible to defend against. With each parry, it gouges chinks from your blade. Much more and you won't have a sword left to fight with, you realize ruefully. You change your strategy to one of evasion, and even that becomes well-nigh impossible. Hiding behind stalagmites gains little when the goblin's blade can slice through the formation like hot butter. You duck, crawl, and backflip out of the sword's deadly arc, until it buries itself in the cavern wall. Now is your chance!

You know you can't keep this up forever!

"Retreat!" you call to Kuda, knowing he will understand that in this situation, it's the better part of valor. He slings one of his hobgoblin opponents into the other and hurries back to join you, then you both run full speed back the way you came. The goblins do not follow.

"Where to now?" Kuda asks.

"Let's try the middle passage," you say. Turn to 76.

91

You move to stop the guard, but Kuda holds you back. "The other guards are coming, Feral! We can do more good on the loose, where we can strike at Vlachos and Regis instead of just their lackeys."

Despite your anger, you know his words are true. Grudgingly you conceal yourself in an empty cell and wait.

You hear the guard cry out. "Where is Hester?" you ask suddenly.

"I thought she was with you."

You peer out from your hiding place and see the snake-girl struggling with the guard, coiling about him and biting him. In moments, the other guards arrive and drag her off, but by that time her venom has gone to work. The guard with the whip dies horribly.

Kuda sees you tense once more to charge the guards. "We can't help her now!" he warns, and you know he is right. Angered but helpless, you remain concealed as they drag Hester away.

Kuda peers out after a few minutes. "Only two guards left," he whispers. "We've got to get by them somehow."

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf to see if you can sneak by the guards. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 131. If it's less, go to 38.

92

You find the opening to the caverns with little trouble and make your way back to Mot Zaret's chamber. You fight to control the anxiousness that throbs in your breast. *Human again!* you tell yourself over and over. *I'm going to be human!*

Kuda rounds the corner into the dimly lit chamber and is immediately chastised. "Put out that light!" cries the pale, turtlelike Zaret from his chair across the room, and the warrior complies. "Well," smiles the little wizard, coming across to greet you, "I didn't know you were bringing guests. I am Mot Zaret," he says, taking Keela's hand. He turns to you. "Did you do as I instructed?"

You lay out the basilisk egg and the medal and the pulsing jewel on a table. He inspects each carefully, starting with the egg. "I have no use for this," he says, shaking it gently. "You shouldn't have taken it. It's about ready to hatch." Next he moves on to the medal, turning it over and over, even biting it. "Fool's gold!" he says. "A treasure indeed . . . but only to a fool!" Last he picks up the heart, and to your relief, at least he seems surprised by this item. "Very interesting!" He shakes his head, squinting at it. "I sense some magic inherent in this jewel, but . . ." He lays it back on the table and shrugs. "I cannot use it, nor any of the others."

You sink into his small chair, almost sobbing. "Then we've failed!"

"Oh, no!" Mot Zaret contradicts you. "You've succeeded, and very admirably. You've brought me everything I need." He holds his hand aloft, palm up. "The greatest treasure of a lonely basilisk is not its egg—it is friendship." A golden aura begins to dance in his palm. "The treasure you received from the townfolk you helped was not a medal. It was their trust." The aura brightens once more.

"And didn't your friend Keela here steal her people's most precious possession, risking her own life in the process, to help you? There can be no reason for such sacrifice save love. You have won her heart—the heart of a wolf."

The aura brightens still more, so much that you must shield your eyes from the glare. "These things—friendship, trust, and love—are the most elemental and powerful ingredients of magic. They are what is needed to cure you. I have only to funnel their energies through the proper spell. . . ."

"Which you will never do, you gibbering fool!" comes a commanding voice booming from somewhere in the ca-

verns. It is a voice of menace, a voice you recognize only too well—the voice of Vlachos!

Turn to 172.



93

Your senses don't seem to be working. You stretch them to their fullest, testing the crowd, but you pick up little more than a faint tingle.

"C'mon, men!" calls the barkeep, hefting his shovel at Kuda. "He's only one man. And if he's in league with this devil, I say we hang him, too!" The crowd begins to advance toward the dark-skinned warrior. You are out of time. You must act—now.

Using the wolf's senses has brought on the transformation, and you are once again the werewolf. With a fierce growl, you burst your bonds and dive into the crowd, searching out the tingling sensation from your senses.

Your senses draw you toward a woman and her small daughter. You grab the woman and hold her between you and the crowd. You're taking a chance, but the wolf acts from instinct, not logic. A child cries out, "It has my mommy!" but it is not the child you saw with her. Then who . . .

Sonder's voice issues icily from behind you, its source a mutable thing midway between child and monster and still changing. "Son of Agnor," it shrieks, "you are dead!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to 10. If it's less, go to 149.

You gasp as you gaze into the lamia's eyes. They're mesmerizing, like deep pools of silver, reflecting everything. You try to fight their power but begin to sway in time with the serpent's body, unable to pull your eyes away. "Drop your sword," the creature instructs soothingly. Suddenly your weapon is too heavy to hold. "You are mine now," the lamia continues, slithering closer, its eyes on yours and its fanged mouth advancing on your throat. "Mine!"

Something primal stirs within you. While the human side of you cannot deny the charm of the lamia, the wolf side can and does. It howls loudly, waking you to the danger. As Regis's head arches to strike, you pick up your sword quickly and strike first. Your blade slices upward and across with panicky force, nearly separating the serpent's body from its human head. The shape-shifter gurgles and flops about on the platform in its death throes.

You throw down your sword as you feel the wolf rushing over you now, and you almost welcome the flood of power and savagery. You turn to face the astonished wizard and are barely able to form the words, "You'r-r-r-re next, Vlachos!" And to the wolf's satisfaction, you see a flicker of apprehension, perhaps even fear, cross the wizard's face, mingling with the hate in the mage's eyes.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to 174. If it's less, turn to 21.

You refuse to give in to the wolf and its fury—not if it will endanger your friend. But while you argue with yourself, Hester moves in again, and her halberd slashes deep. Subtract 3 hit points from your total.

You sink to your knees, refusing to fight, as the crowd boos your feeble performance. The snake-girl looms over you, weapon raised. "Hester!" you plead. "Please, don't!"

There is a flicker of sympathy in her reptilian eyes, and then the snake's control is no longer there and she is Hester once again. She stares in wonder at your wounds and at the bloodied halberd in her hand, and the horror washes

over her. And then it turns to rage. "Vlachos!" she screams. "This is your doing!" She propels herself toward the platform with that coiled, sidewinding motion.

Vlachos glares at her disdainfully and extends his hand. Instantly a searing beam of energy leaps outward and scorches her to a cinder.

You stagger to the snake-girl's side. Her body is still smoking. She is alive, but just barely—and for how long? A howl of rage escapes your throat as you bound toward the platform, zigzagging to avoid the archers' arrows and the wizard's beams.

Turn to 143



96

The room beyond the double doors is a black chapel of some sort, with pews hewn from ebon rock and an altar statue too hideous to describe. Through the crack of the partially opened door, you see that Vlachos is indeed there, lighting candles near the altar, and he is not alone. A gaunt figure with translucent skin is with him, carrying candles and other paraphernalia. The strange creature is wearing royal robes and a crown.

"Regis II?" you whisper, sniffing. Sure enough, the stink of the doppelganger is heavy in the air. "It is indeed Regis. The tyrant is one of Vlachos's shape-shifters!"

"The people would never accept a sorcerer as sovereign,"

Kuda says, "so Vlachos uses a puppet to rule."

"No longer!" you growl. "His ruling days are over! If only I knew his weakness . . ."

"If he has one," Kuda notes ruefully.

Just then, Vlachos goes rigid with alarm. He whirls and your eyes meet. There is surprise, and hatred, in his gaze, and perhaps a hint of fear, as you throw the doors wide open.

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 20 or more, turn to **73**. If it's less, turn to **27**.

97

People scream and flee as you rush through the streets, no longer trying to hide your features. Now only your escape matters, escape and regaining your own identity.

"Can you change back yet?" Kuda calls as he leads you toward the wall. You want to answer him, but you can't. You merely follow along, praying silently.

A sword blade flashes from a darkened doorway, and Kuda gasps and falls. Your eyes fall on the smiling sentry as he steps into the light, and something in you snaps. You advance on him, and his smile suddenly freezes in terror.

You are the werewolf . . . and this time it is for good!

You attack the soldier like a dervish. He never knows what hit him. More soldiers appear, and you attack them as well, oblivious to their weapons or the wounds you suffer. You welcome them with a frenzied joy—the joy of the hunt, of the kill.

When there are no more soldiers to bar your way, you sort through the fallen bodies and find your friend, pick up his limp form, and tuck him under one arm, then run for the wall. You clear the twenty-five-foot wall in a single jump, then take the moat in the same fashion and make for the woods. By the time the main garrison is called out, you are miles away.

It is morning before Kuda awakens. During the night, you have tended his wounds, though the dressing is comparatively crude. He is surprised to see that you are still in the full wolf state. "Feral? Are you still there?"

Your words are thick, almost unintelligible. "Barely," you grunt. "Just wanted to . . . make sure . . . you're all right. Must go." You point toward the woods. "Home now. You know?"

He smiles sadly. "I think so. I promise you, Feral, I will bring Vlachos down, and Regis as well. It is my oath." He holds out his hand. "Still friends?"

You bare your fangs in an attempt to smile. "Always," you growl and reach out for his hand, but then the wolf is there and Feral is gone forever. You turn, howling, and lope off into the woods. ✘

98

Your acute senses easily pick out the creature's movements—creature, because no human ever made such sounds. They are soft, shuffling, squishing sounds, like walking in wet mud. Its breathing is harsh and raspy, and only a few feet off the ground. And it is getting closer.

Where can we hide? you ask yourself frantically, but there is nowhere in the open corridor to go.

"Snuff out the torch," you whisper, "and keep in the shadows. It's our only chance." Kuda does as you say, and the corridor is plunged into darkness.

Slowly your eyes adjust to the gloom, enough to pick out movement. As the squishing footsteps grow louder, you see a stumpy figure dressed in rags shamble past you and down the dungeon incline. The figure is an albino, so pale that it almost glows in the dark, and its skin gives off an oily sheen. The dwarven creature has a bulbous, hairless head, and its huge eyes squint as if trying to see. The little humanoid is apparently blind, but it moves through the halls unerringly.

Kuda comes out of the shadows in its wake. "What *was* that thing?" he asks in disgust. "Ugh! Look at the slime it left on the floor."

"All the easier for us to follow it. I want to find out what that was." Relighting the torch, you motion for Kuda to follow and head down the hall.

The creature leads you a merry chase, down this corridor and around that curve, always staying just far enough

ahead to be out of sight. But there is always the glistening trail to follow, and follow it you do, right into a subterranean chamber and to the massive trapdoor built into its floor.

"How could that little creature have opened this?" Kuda asks, shaking his head as he tests his own strength against the lock. "It won't budge!"

"It will for me," you say, pitting your supernatural strength against it. The door creaks open slowly.

Kuda peers through the open trapdoor. Irregular stone steps lead down into total darkness. "You first," he offers.

The torch lights your way as you venture into the caverns below. The network of tunnels you find is ancient, far older than the palace and dungeon above. The dwarfish creature is nowhere to be seen, but he—it—has been here. Slimy tracks crisscross the ground.

Ahead, the tunnel splits into three separate passages. One leads upward to another level. A second leads down, and a third, straight ahead. Your senses seem garbled down here. They seem to tell you there is magic, and danger, in every direction. "Which way?" Kuda asks.

Roll one die. If the result is 1-2, go to the high tunnel (162); 3-4, the middle tunnel (76); 5-6, the low tunnel (2).



99

The umber hulk advances on you like a juggernaut, showing no emotion, no anger. It's the perfect fighting machine—cold, calculating, deadly. And slow.

You realize its lack of speed is the only advantage you have. You dart in with lightning quickness, striking blow after blow at the creature, slashing its thick, nearly invulnerable hide and retreating before the thing can mount a countermove. For each of its blows, you deal five more, but inevitably the results are the same. While it cannot catch you, you cannot harm it. There must be some way. . . .

You dash in once more, aiming a kick at the creature's ponderous middle, but your feet slip on the sand and you fall. A shadow hovers over you before you can regain your footing—the shadow of a monstrous fist, falling like a meteor.

Like hammering a nail, the hulk pounds you mercilessly into the ground. ✘

100

With Kuda following close behind, you run for the far end of the town, where the girl was last heard. Most of the mob is there already, but by the time they realize your presence, you are already past them. As you plunge into the woods, you see a small cluster of people a short way ahead. The parents, the boy, and the man he dragged along with him are all frozen in dread at the sight before them. Instead of slowing down, you leap up and over their heads.

The dire wolf crouching before you is at least the size of a healthy steer. It bares incisors the length of your fingers as it spots you. Your abrupt arrival has diverted its attention from the girl, but it won't for long. You must attack now, before the great beast can reach her.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 24 or more, turn to **170**. If it's less, turn to **71**.

101

A plan formulates in your mind, but first you will have to bend the minotaur to your way of thinking.

You attack the beast, leaping and snarling, scarring its

upraised arm with your claws. The slash was not meant to go deep, only to antagonize it, to goad it on. From all signs, it has been successful. The beast bellows with rage and paws the ground, exposing angry red scars across its shoulders.

Whip scars! "So that's where I know you from!" you say in sudden realization. "It was you I saved from the torturer last night!" But it's too late to make amends now. You've made your decision.

The minotaur charges, but you evade it and slash at it once more, feeding its anger even as you move closer to the platform. Seething with rage, it comes at you again, but this time you don't even try to evade it. Instead, you catch its flailing fist and yank it off its feet, sending it crashing into the massive support columns of the platform. The beams that fail to splinter on impact can't support all of the weight, and the entire structure begins to collapse.

Turn to 8.



102

You decide to attack the more dangerous of your two opponents, the wizard, fearing he will replace the curse you've fought so long to be free of. Before the confused shape-shifter-wolf can think to protect its master, you lunge at Vlachos with all the skill and strength you can muster.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as Feral the warrior. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 15. If it's less, turn to 164.

103

"What's wrong, Feral?" the "girl" purrs. "You look as if you've seen a ghost."

You feel her flesh begin to squirm beneath your hands as if it's alive, and you hurl her away from you in disgust. "By the gods! I know *who* you are, Sonder! But *what?*"

She climbs back to her feet, grinning, and speaks with Sonder's decidedly masculine voice. "It's simple," she says. "I am . . . whatever I want to be."

Immediately she begins to change, imperceptibly at first—the shade and color of her hair, the thickness of her lips, the angle of her eyebrows and the slant of the eyes. Then her face flattens and broadens until the bone structure becomes masculine, and suddenly you find yourself staring into the face of Sonder, atop the body of a young girl. He laughs evilly. "Unnerving, isn't it?"

"A doppleganger!" you say in sudden realization. "A shape-shifter. You're not Vlachos's aide. You're his creation! At least that explains your stink."

He looks insulted. "I beg your pardon."

"It's an unnatural smell," you continue, "the smell of conjuration, of brimstone and sulfur and the charnel pits. The smell of the abyss!" You draw your sword. "And I'm just the one to send you back where you belong!"

"Are you really, puppy?" the figure mocks. Its body begins to change as well, fleshing out and packing on lean muscle until it matches the hawkish face. "Didn't you hear what I said before? I can be anything!" He spreads his arms and laughs, and the changes that envelop him happen almost too fast for your eye to follow. One minute he is a man, then just as quickly a lizard creature, then a towering ogre, and then a combination of all three. "I can be anything," it repeats, "but right now, most of all, I am your death!"

It lunges at you as a beast half again your size, snapping reptilian jaws and clubbing at you with massive ogrelike fists. You bring your sword up, but it is simply batted away

as the creature pounces.

And in that split second, without any conscious decision, you become the werewolf.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 22 or more, turn to **219**. If it is less, go to **44**.

104

Fighting to keep the wolf's anger in check, you maintain your man-wolf state and carefully draw your father's sword. "Feral," you whisper to yourself, "if you can keep your head and keep that wolf under control, you might make it through this yet!" You slice your blade through the air and smile wickedly. "Come along, then," you tell them. "I relish a good fight!"

The soldiers look apprehensive. Sonder must goad them to the attack.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 21 or more, turn to **39**. If it's less, turn to **118**.

105

You are past the wolf before it even realizes your presence. Desperately you reach out for the wolf-girl, straining. . . . Your hand catches hers, and pain shoots through your shoulder joint. With nothing to cling to, her weight pulls you right over the edge.

Your hand reaches out reflexively and finds the edge of the cliff. You hang there by one arm, holding the girl with the other and hoping that the turf on the edge of the cliff doesn't suddenly give way.

Wild, angry eyes peer over the ledge at you, then a mouth full of gleaming teeth. You close your eyes. There's nothing you can do to prevent the dire wolf's deadly bite.

But when you open them again, the wolf is no longer there. Your ears pick up the din of battle above you. Kuda! But he won't stand a chance against that brute! "I have to get up there," you growl, straining to pull yourself and the girl back to the ledge. Slowly you inch upward, closer and closer, not even realizing that you are changing as you go.



By the time you reach the top and pull the girl to safety, you are the werewolf.

You arrive in time to see the dire wolf slam your friend to the ground and seize his shoulder in its jaws. He howls in pain, and it mingles with your own howl. But yours is one of rage.

Turn to **35**.

106

You transform into the wolf and roar your defiance at the man-god. The werewolf is not impressed with his size or power. It sees only prey—very large prey.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. Add 1 for wolfen fury. If the total is 26 or more, turn to **180**. If it's less, turn to **88**.

107

You cannot resist the wolf's call to battle. It takes over without warning, howling and charging the monstrous gorgon. Kuda shouts a warning, but it falls on deaf ears.

You leap over the creature, raking your claws down its back, but the only result is to create a series of sparks. Its tough, scaly hide is thicker than forged armor. The beast seems impervious to your attacks.

The behemoth turns and charges again, but this time you decide on a more direct approach. You wait for it, refusing to leave its path, and when it is within range, you aim one blow at its less-protected forehead. The results are immediate. The creature stumbles sideways and falls, shaking its head and panting. You move in for the kill.

Wait! Your limbs are suddenly heavy and your movements slowing. Your lungs refuse to work, and you gasp from the effort to breathe. Breathe . . . of course! Your wolfclouded mind could not remember that gorgons have breath that causes paralysis. And now it is too late. ☘

108

You ride along the roadway that leads southward, bitterly eyeing what few farms remain. "It was not always like this," you tell Kuda. "Once these farms were ripe with

harvest, but now. . . . I swear to you, my friend, I will see this tyrant overthrown if it is the last thing I do!"

A mile or so farther on, Kuda reins the horse to a halt. There is a fork ahead. The road to the city takes a slight jog to the right, while what appears to be a seldom traveled path juts across the rugged landscape to the left.

"Which way did Vlachos go?" wonders Kuda.

"I'm not sure. I could try to track him with the werewolf's senses, but I don't like letting the creature loose. It's too hard to contain. My present senses are heightened beyond the norm—maybe that will be enough."

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, follow Vlachos's scent and turn to **24**. If it's less, turn to **69**.

109

You try to sidestep the shape-shifter, but you misjudge its speed. The two of you collide and roll across the platform, a mass of claws and fangs and tentacles. There seems to be no limit to the doppelganger's shifting abilities, and it's all you can do to hold the creature at bay.

Turn to **173**.

110

"Where are your chains?" you ask Mot Zaret. "We heard you were kept prisoner here below the dungeon by Vlachos."

"Oh, that one!" he chuckles, but from him it sounds like wheezing. "I am a descendant of the original Mages of Eternity, whose caverns these once were. I have lived here all my life, hence this blindness, for all practical purposes. Now, this Vlachos is not a true sorcerer; he is not even of pure blood. He is a human—a shepherd, of all things. But he has stumbled upon some of my ancestors' spells and talismans, and now he wields them with relish. Fortunately they do not lend him power enough to destroy me. On the other hand, he is too much for one such as I to stand up against, so we are at a stalemate. Vlachos likes to think he holds me here, but he does not—I move about freely in the tunnels or the dungeon, sometimes in the palace itself." He

laughs again. "That aggravates him to no end!"

"Perhaps you cannot destroy him," you say, "but I can . . . if only I can rid myself of this wolfish burden. My time is short. The beast is becoming too powerful to control. Can you help me?"

Zaret looks thoughtful. "No," he tells you emphatically. "Vlachos's magic is strong. I cannot reverse it—not without help."

"Help?"

He comes closer. "Are you prepared for a quest? For that is the only way I can help you. There are certain . . . things you must acquire for me."

"Such as?"

"Three things. First, bring me that which a basilisk treasures most. Second, a treasure that cannot be bought or stolen. Third, and most important, the heart of a wolf."

"Little man, I have no time for riddles," you say.

"That is all I can tell you," Zaret says, holding up his stubby hands. He points to one of the passageways. "This will take you near the basilisk's lair, but you must hurry. You've not much time. Have you, Feral?"

"You know my name?"

He smiles toothlessly. "Go, my friends."

Giving him your thanks, you leave the wizard's chamber and head down the dark tunnel.

Turn to 191.



Your senses search the surrounding area . . . nothing. Maybe it was the beating you took. *Try harder, concentrate, you think. There!* You feel a slight tingle. . . .

"Look!" a child yells, "the monster's changing!" The crowd gasps, and you know immediately that tapping the wolf's hyperactive senses has once again transformed you into its likeness. It's just as well—you're going to need its strength and agility. With little more than a shrug, you snap your bonds and leap over the heads of your captors. The tingle is coming from a cluster of men and women on the right . . . but which one?

You land among them and grab the nearest one, a pudgy man with shiny pate and wispy hair. "I know you, Sonder! You can't escape my wrath!" The old man just stammers incoherently.

A woman screams. "Look! The monster has the mayor!"

The mayor? Gulp. "I won't hurt him," you say, trying not to growl. "Just keep back!" You work your way through the crowd toward Kuda, whispering to the mayor, "Stay still and you'll be fine."

"See here," says a small but sturdy figure, weaving its way through the crowd toward you. Another woman screams when she sees the mayor step out from among the crowd—the same mayor that you still hold! He sees his double, apparently for the first time, and his jaw drops. "My word!" is all he can mutter.

The pudgy figure in your stranglehold begins to shake violently, shifting and changing until you are thrown off your feet. Before you now stands the strange doppelganger, with its oversized hands and feet and colorless saucer eyes. You can clearly see its brain and heart and the ichor in its veins through its translucent skin.

"Fool!" the doppelganger cries in a shrill, maddened voice. "I will kill you all!" It makes a frantic lunge toward you.

Moving by reflex, you duck beneath its arms and slash with your claws, feeling them sink deep. The shifter groans and slowly sinks to its knees, its eyes filled with disbelief as its life spills out onto the street. Turn to 188.

You lower the book till the flames touch it. The fire quickly spreads across its pages, as if they were smeared with lamp oil. You hurl the thing away from you and let the fire consume it.

"Do you know what you've done?" screams the wizard, but his words are drowned out as the book explodes and the power contained in its pages is turned loose in the room. The entire cavern shudders. Chunks of the ceiling give way; one of them crushes the shape-shifter where he stands.

"Get out of here—fast!" you call to your companions, and all flee the chapel save Vlachos. On his hands and knees, he scours the floor, scrounging for scraps of pages from his precious book even as the ceiling comes down around him. You leave him there and get out just before the entire chamber is buried beneath tons of rock.

The tunnel walls crack and shake in chain reaction as you make your way back to the ladder beneath the Mount of Lies, and even as you climb, you feel the caverns and tunnels giving way beneath you. You barely have time to make it to the cottage and out the front door before the entire mound begins to sink and is swallowed up by the earth. The Caverns of Eternity, and Vlachos, are no more.

You stay close to Keela, knowing from experience what she must be going through after her transformation. Gieryn and Lupus act no differently toward her, bare-skinner or not, but ultimately she refuses to go home with them. "I don't belong back there anymore, and you know it," she tells them. "I am different now. I am human. I must seek my destiny among my own kind." She turns to you. "Will you help me, Feral?"

You take her arm and smile. "You'll have a hard time getting rid of me, Keela," you say. ✕

You strain your muscles to the limit, and slowly a link of your chains separates. Suddenly you're free! Now for Kuda.

The bars of the cell are not as well made as the chain and

soon bow to your incredible strength. Power is singing within you as you snap Kuda's bonds as well.

"Now what?" he asks.

If you choose to escape down the corridor, turn to 48. If you elect to go out the window instead, turn to 211.

114

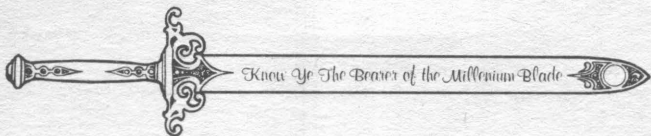
You and the wolf circle one another, watching for some sign of a weakness. You choose the same moment to roar defiantly and charge, and the collision almost makes the ground shake and the trees sway.

The dire wolf is powerful beyond belief. You are immediately on the defensive, even with your fabulous sword. Any wounds you deliver, even deep ones, have little effect on the beast as it presses the attack on you relentlessly. You stand your ground and refuse to succumb, striking blow after blow until the dire wolf falters, but even then you do not stop. Your eyes glaze over and spittle forms on your snarling lips. You strike until the sword flies from your grip, and still you continue with your fists and your claws.

Strong hands seize you from behind, and you flail angrily, trying to reach back at this new enemy, but a soothing voice stops you, easing the fiery rage in your mind.

"Calm yourself," says a soft, feminine voice. "Tame your wolfen side." Your vision clears to see the wolf-girl looking you in the eye, smiling warmly. Subtract 1 hit point. She motions for Kuda to release you. The dire wolf lies dead at your feet. "I am Keela," she says simply. "I am in your debt, my lord."

Both your ears perk at once. "What is it?" Kuda wants to know, but instead of answering, you push the two of them back through the fissure and draw the overgrowth around it. Something is coming. Turn to 148.



Regis laughs evilly as he shifts from one shape to another with the ease of someone changing suits, but his show of terror fails to unnerve you.

The king swings an ogre-sized fist, but you step inside his swing and land a blow of your own that knocks him reeling. Any chance of a follow-up is stymied when two more arms suddenly sprout from the changeling's sides and seize your wrists. "What have you to say now, pup?" Regis taunts.

You say nothing. Instead, you just lean forward and bite him.

You mean it as a diversion only, to shock him into letting you go. But your bite has a decidedly different effect as the doppelganger backs off, trembling.

"Master?" He looks to Vlachos uncertainly. "Help me, master-r-r-r . . ." and his voice trails away into a growl as the curse of the werewolf flows into his bloodstream. Hair sprouts across his arms and face; his features stretch into lupine features. "Help me!" he pleads. "I cannot change back! Help me!"

Turn to 46.

The animal rage you know only too well comes over your opponent, and you scramble backward to keep clear of it. The Regis-wolf comes straight after you, so close that its breath is hot on your face. Talons reach out for your throat. . . .

Suddenly you feel a low window sill just behind your knees, and you cannot stop your backward momentum from carrying you over the edge, with Regis right after you. You grab in desperation for the sill, and your fingers just catch it! Regis, in his animal panic, gropes to hang on to you, but his talons only rake down your back as he falls past you to the ground below.

Hissing in pain, you strain to pull yourself back up but feel someone prying at your fingers. "You will regret killing my servant!" Vlachos snarls, pulling at your hands. One gives way, and you dangle above the city by only one hand now. But you can feel your grip slipping. . . .

In desperation, you surge upward and grab the wizard's robes. Your sudden move pulls Vlachos forward, and he has no time to grab for anything as he's jerked through the window. As you plummet to your doom, you at least have the satisfaction of knowing that your enemy goes as well. ✕

117

This won't do, you think to yourself. Kuda's expression mimics your own. The guard will place you right into Regis's hands. You need time to think, to form a strategy. . . .

"Look!" Kuda suddenly says, pointing into a darkened alley nearby. "An ale-enslaved pilgrim in need of salvation."

The guard peers into the gloom. "I see no one. . . ."

"I believe I heard him, too, Brother Kuda," you say, playing along. "I must see to the man, my son. After all, salvation is my business." You usher the sentry into the shadows, out of sight of the street.

"I still don't see . . ." is all he has time to say before your hand closes around his throat. He struggles mightily, but your iron grip closes off the oxygen to his brain, and within seconds he blacks out.

"He'll have a good-sized headache when he awakens," Kuda says as you both hide the sentry's body amidst the alley's refuse. "Now what?"

"I'm not sure," you say slowly. "The moonlight seems to be affecting my br-r-r-rain." You have to fight to keep your words from sounding like a growl.

"We could assault the castle," says Kuda, "but we don't even know if Vlachos is there. Perhaps we should ask around." He snaps his fingers. "We might even find a sorcerer, perhaps one who could lift this curse of yours."

"But where should we look?"

"Where else?" Kuda says with a grin. "A tavern."

Turn to 171.

118

The men come at you one at a time, seemingly without strategy. But as you meet each man and repel his attack, another takes his place. You begin to realize their plan.

They're not trying to outfight you; they want to outlast you. Already your sword arm feels leaden, and you know you must end this quickly or they will succeed.

Something solid crashes against your skull, and stars suddenly blossom before your eyes. You lurch forward, dropping your sword, only to have the mace land again and stain your vision scarlet. The wolf within you tries to come out in defense, but your senses are too scrambled.

Roll one die to determine damage. If the result is even (2, 4, 6), subtract 2 hit points. If it's an odd number, subtract 4 hit points.

The soldiers encircle you. In your condition, you know you can't fight them. You must escape.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 49. If it's less, turn to 158.



119

You can't manage to control the wolf. Your attack is so savage and so fast that Vlachos isn't sure what hits him. You slash savagely through his robes, staining them red. The wizard cannot cope with you at such close quarters. He flees to the other side of the platform and unleashes eldritch lightning all about you.

The pain from the bolts is intense, but you refuse to give up. Subtract 3 hit points, then roll two dice and add the re-

sult to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. Subtract 1 because of the wizard's attack. If the total is 24 or more, turn to **169**. If it's less, turn to **183**.

120

"Is that a light ahead?" Kuda whispers.

The tunnel opens into a gloomy chamber which, to your surprise, is not only warm but sparsely furnished.

"Someone lives here!" you observe. There is a cot and a chair, neither in good shape, and a moth-eaten tapestry hangs from one wall. A trunk is heaped full at the foot of the cot, and piles of scrolls and parchments litter a nearby tabletop. Other passages enter into the chamber as well, like the hub of a wheel. There is no one in sight. Cockroaches scatter at your approach.

Kuda sits down wearily while you sift through the materials on the table. The scrolls are unreadable; not only are their languages foreign, but also most have faded completely, leaving only their raised impressions on the paper.

"Well," Kuda asks, "do you think it's Mot Zaret's chamber?"

"Indubitably," says someone else. "I know it is."

Both you and Kuda start at the voice and whirl to see a large, jovial-looking figure standing in one of the other passageways. The man is draped in dark sorcerer's robes and has a flowing white beard, but the cheeks above his beard are flushed with life. He laughs wholeheartedly, and you instantly like this bear of a man. "I am Mot Zaret," he says, coming toward you with his hand out. "How may I serve you?"

"Help by serving them not!" comes another voice.

You turn to find the strange dwarven figure you followed in the dungeon, squinting his eyes against the glare of your torch. "This man is not Mot Zaret," it says in its wet, belching voice. "I am."

You look from one to the other in confusion. One of them is lying . . . but which one?

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 17 or more, turn to **53**. If it's less, turn to **86**.



121

The wolf is strong within you; its anger mixes with your own and festers like an open wound. You are a wolf! You are the hunter, not the hunted! How dare they treat you like this?

No! you think in panic. *I am not a wolf! I am a man!* Still, even a man should not be hunted like an animal.

"Sonder!" you yell. "I am coming for you!"

The soldiers are all around you in the woods—you can hear them muttering, and they sound frightened. "Good!" you say, seething with anger. "They should be!"

You break into a clearing. Sonder is there on foot, and he whirls to face you. But there's something strange about him. . . .

"He's here!" Sonder calls. "Hurry! We can take him alive!" In answer, the soldiers filter out of the trees and form a ring around their leader, their sword blades pointing in your direction.

If you choose to fight as a man-wolf, turn to 104. If you choose to become the wolf, go to 77.

122

With a curse, you leap at one of the Dark Moon warriors, but the other is suddenly there between you, digging a vicious heel into your ribs. You shake off the blow and start after your new assailant, but the first reacts instantly and launches a flying kick to your head. Your legs are swept from beneath you, and the full force of the blow slams you hard to the stone floor. Starbursts dance before your eyes, and the hallway starts to spin. You try to struggle to your feet, but a palm crashes against your skull and your vision darkens. Subtract 4 hit points.

As if coming from a distance, you think you hear a door open and a malevolent voice speak. "To the dungeon with him!" it barks.

Subtract 1 experience point and turn to 130.

123

You stand your ground and await the next opponent. Roll two dice. If you roll a 2-4, go to 167; 5-7, 79; 8-10, 197; 11-12,

74. If your roll sends you to a section you've been to previously, roll again until you arrive at a different section.

If this is your third or fourth battle, your *wolf side* has been subjected to much violent emotion and could be growing too strong. You must make a saving throw against the wolf. Roll two dice; if the result is 6-12, you are safe to fight again. If it's 2-5, turn to 205.

124

You sprint toward the cliff, but the dire wolf whirls to block your path. "Out of my way!" you curse the beast, slashing with your sword. You look to the girl and see her falling out of sight, but her hand catches the edge and her talons dig in. "Hold on!" you call.

The giant wolf lunges at you, and the impact knocks you from your feet and the sword falls from your hand. You land on your back with the wolf atop you, and it is all you can do to hold its slavering muzzle away from your throat.

In the heat of battle, your eyes stray to the cliff. The girl's hand is gone!

"No!" you sob, anguish and guilt and defeat all flooding through you and channeling themselves into a molten stream of pure hatred. You seize the dire wolf by the throat and wrestle the creature away from you. As you leap to your feet, your rage is so great that you welcome the werewolf's transformation.

Your giant foe springs, its enormous jaws ready to snap your head from your shoulders in one bite. You drop beneath its leap and rake your claws from throat to hip, opening the beast like a melon. It lands amidst blinding pain and staggers drunkenly until it topples over the edge of the plateau. You howl to the sky, your rage not yet entirely spent. It feels as if it will never leave. Perhaps this time it won't.

"Calm yourself," comes a soft voice from out of nowhere. The werewolf side of you still has the presence of mind to follow the voice to its source. You peer over the cliff.

About ten feet down, you see a narrow ledge, and on it stands Kuda, holding the wolf-girl. She raises her hand up to you, and you lift them both to the top.

“Look at me,” she says slowly, her voice a soothing cadence like a lullaby from your youth. She touches your face, and something passes between you. She smiles, showing perfect teeth, including incisors. Even as a wolf, or perhaps because of it, she is strikingly beautiful. “Come back to us,” she whispers. “Refuse the wolf and come back!” She takes your hand and coaxes you as the transformation reverses itself. You are the man-wolf once again. Subtract 2 experience points for the change and the wolf’s fury.

“Just—just who are you?” you stammer. Turn to 207.



125

The townspeople gather to stare at the doppelganger’s body. Many stare at you as well as you slowly change back to the man-wolf state. You can see the fear and revulsion in their eyes. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of changing.

“That is your devil,” you say to them sternly, “but you wouldn’t see that, would you? You wouldn’t listen when I tried to explain, because that—that *thing* looked like you, and I looked different.” The people lower their heads in shame. The real serving girl brings your cloak and blade to you. She still sports a lump on her forehead from Sonder when he first took her place.

“I am Miri,” she says softly. “Please forgive my people.

They are good and kind. They are just frightened these days, with the soldiers always around and the regent's sorcerer, Vlachos."

"Maybe I can do something about that," you tell her. "Where can I find this wizard?"

"I have heard the soldiers talk when the rum loosens their tongues. They say he spends most of his days somewhere in the southern territories, a day or so from the city. Follow the main road southward, but take heed. That is a strange and forbidding region. Many dangers await you."

You thank her, then Kuda pulls you into the saddle behind him. You cast the townspeople one last look. "Maybe next time they will think," you mutter softly.

"Perhaps there won't be a next time," Miri answers.

Kuda gives the horse his heel, and you leave Hodson's Bend behind. The ride gives you a much-needed chance to rest. Add 1 hit point to your total and go to **69**. (Remember that you may not recover more hit points than you started with.)

126

You stand over the wizard's body, triumphant but finding no joy in your triumph. Resignation descends on you like a dark pall. You've succeeded in getting your vengeance but nothing else. Some other petty dictator will rise up to take their place and bleed the people, and you will not be there to stop them. For even now the soldiers have overcome Kuda and are reaching the top of the stairs. You pick up your discarded sword, even though you haven't the heart to wield it. "Come ahead, then," you say despondently.

Strangely, the guards do not rush you. They simply stare at the fallen wizard. You notice that many wear expressions of profound relief. Kuda is there among them, but not as a prisoner. He steps forward and comes toward you with a broad smile. "They are with us, my friend! They had no idea what it was they served!" He holds something out to you. "They wanted me to give you this."

You look at the dented, dirty item in his hand. It is Regis's crown. "The king is dead!" one of the guards cries. "Long live the king!" The others take up the cry, and soon the en-

tire arena is resounding. "Long live the king!"

Smiling broadly as you realize their intent, you place the battered crown upon your brow. . . . ✠

127

"Feral! Look out!" It is Kuda's voice, echoing across the arena.

Without turning, you sense Vlachos behind you. But have your senses warned you too late?

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to **22**. If it's less, go to **190**.

128

You learn an immediate lesson in the superiority of size and strength. The dire wolf batters and hurls you about the clearing like a rag doll in a whirlwind. Even when you recover yourself, you find your blows mean little against such a juggernaut, for the scent of victory is in the beast's nostrils and nothing short of death will stop it. On the other hand, you are beaten and bruised and bloody, but never bowed. You stand your ground, exhausted but ready to battle to the end.

To determine your damage, roll one die. If the result is even (2, 4, 6), subtract 2 hit points. If it's odd, subtract 4 hit points.

Something whirs past your ear and wrings a yelp from the startled dire wolf, and you see an arrow protruding from its throat. You hear another whir approaching, and even your clouded mind knows to drop to the ground as a small cloud of arrows scythes overhead. The dire wolf howls and falls dead.

Suddenly there is someone there beside you, helping you to your feet. It's the girl you inadvertently saved, though you see now that she is no ordinary girl. Like you, her fur is dark, and her pointed lupine ears peek out through her mane of hair. The girl is wolfen, just like you!

"Look at me," she tells you, and her tone is so liquid and warming that you cannot refuse her. Meeting her gaze is a revelation; there is a calm there, an inward tranquility

that reaches out and ceases the wolf's rantings within you as well. "Simply refuse the wolf," she says. "Refuse it, and you can come back to me!"

As she speaks, you feel the wolf retreating and allowing you to gain control once again. The transformation to man-wolf completes itself. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of the change.

Kuda comes across the fields just then, carrying his huge ax at the ready. He stares at the dire wolf's motionless carcass. "So that's what killed my horse!" he exclaims. "But where did the arrows come from?"

"Yes," you say to the girl, "just who are you, and where are the archers?" Turn to 78.

129

You decide that the girl is no threat. But the hooded figure . . . it has to be Sonder! You stalk across the room to the mystery man, grab him by the cloak, and lift him into the air with one hand. Your talons flex angrily, and you have to fight to keep them away from the man's throat. "There is no wizard to help you this time, Sonder!" you warn.

"Sonder?" the man says fearfully, trying to free himself from the confines of his own hood. When he succeeds, you are startled to see a face that you don't recognize.

"See here," calls the barkeep angrily, "what are you doing to Brother Solido?"

"Brother Solido?"

"Aye. Our local priest."

You swallow hard and lower the cleric back into his chair. "Oops!"

One of the farmers regards you sternly. "How dare ye act this way!" he blusters. "We don't even know who ye be!" Before you can stop him, he grabs the sash and pulls it from your head.

The eyes of everyone in the bar widen in unison.

You laugh weakly, say, "Surprise!" and start backing toward the door.

You turn just as the serving girl lunges at you with a knife she's kept hidden beneath her tray. You try to evade her.



Roll one die. If the number is odd (1, 3, or 5), you succeed in dodging the main force of her attack. Subtract 2 hit points. If it is even, her attack catches you full force. Subtract 4 hit points.

You recover and knock the knife from the girl's hand, then seize her by the arm. "Who are you?" you roar. The other men, frozen till now by your appearance, flee from the tavern.

But the girl does not follow them. Instead, she looks you in the eye and laughs. And recognition begins to dawn. The mad look in her eyes, a look you have seen before. And the putrid scent that emanates from her . . .

The smell of Sonder. Turn to 103.

130

In the musty stink of the dungeon, you are shoved into a dank, small cell, followed by Kuda. The door slams shut as a growl slides from your throat. "You'll get used to it, dogman!" the jailer says with a smirk through the barred window. "Your meals will be at noon sharp—every few days

or so." He leaves, laughing, his footsteps fading slowly in the distance.

Silence settles over you, deafening in its totality. "So this is how it ends," Kuda says forlornly. "Somehow I expected to go amidst the din of battle, not caged like an animal."

"It's not over yet," you say. "We'll get out of here somehow."

"Hello!" comes a voice from down the hall, its echo carrying all the way to your door. "I say there, hello!"

"Who are you?" you call back. "Can you get us out of here?"

The voice laughs. "Why, it's a joke! I haven't heard one in ages! Please, tell another one."

"I'm not joking!" you say, irritated, then realize who the voice must be coming from. "You're a prisoner, too, aren't you?"

The voice titters, then drips with sarcasm. "No! I'm taking a vacation! Of course I'm a prisoner . . . aren't we all? You are really too much, you know. You'll have poor Nicodemus rolling on the floor in a minute. Go on, tell another joke. Say, have you heard the one about the farmer and his three daughters?"

"Are there any others down here?" you interrupt.

"Any other *whats*—farmers or daughters?"

"Prisoners!" you shout in irritation.

Nicodemus, too, seems peeved. "It's a dungeon, isn't it?"

You look at Kuda and cross your fingers. "Any sorcerers?"

"Funny you should mention that," Nicodemus says. "The cell next to me is just crawling with wizards, making noise all night and keeping me awake. I say, keep it down in there! Can't you see we're trying to talk?"

"We've got to get to them!" you say, straining against the door. "This isn't about to budge. We'll have to wait until the guard brings us our food."

Kuda shakes his head. "If he ever does." Turn to 25.

131

You wait until the guards move on to check some of the other cells, then slip silently past them.

No other guards seem to be at their posts. Doubtless they're still dealing with poor Hester. At any rate, no one challenges you. You find the barracks door and snap open the lock, then, stealing a blanket to protect you from the moonlight, you head for the palace grounds.

Here there are many guards on duty—Regis must be nervous about having you so near—but you are in no mood to play hide-and-seek with the fools. As you come upon each guard, you simply take him, swiftly and silently, the way your father taught you. Before long, you are inside the palace and prowling through the royal halls themselves.

“What are we looking for?” Kuda asks.

“What else? Regis . . . and the wizard.”

Turn to 176.

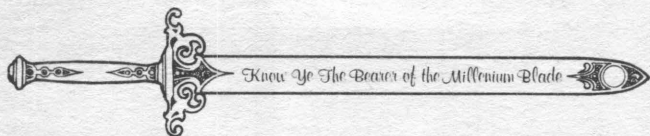
132

The troll shuffles toward you with an old man's gait, reaching out with its newly grown hand. Even as the wolf, you backpedal to stay clear of a touch that some say can rot a man to the bone. But when your back is against the wall, the natural instincts of the wolf come to the fore. With a snarl, you slash at it with your talons.

The troll's abrupt movement spoils your aim. You succeed in cutting furrows in the creature's shoulder, and the creature groans with unaccustomed pain, but you also brush its crusted skin with your palm.

“No!” you gasp. “I touched it! I touched it!”

Quickly! You must make a saving throw against troll rot. Roll two dice and add the result to your remaining hit points. If the total is 12 or more, turn to 59. If it's less, you have contracted the fatal rot and must start the adventure over.



"Of course, my son," you tell the drunk, forming each word carefully to keep an errant growl from escaping your throat. "For what must you be forgiven?"

If the thug suspects anything, his slack features don't show it. "I am ashamed, Father. I have robbed and pillaged, looted and burned—not to mention lying and—" he belches—"getting drunk." He sways uncertainly. "Such things play havoc with one's self-worth, you know. So I ask the forgiveness of your gods." He closes his eyes, prepared to accept his penance.

"Very well," you tell him. "You are forgiven."

He opens one eye. "That's it? No penance—none at all?"

"All right," you sigh. "You are not to drink, you are not to pillage or rob, and you are not to lie for one year." The man looks at you pleadingly. "For one week." The look does not fade. "How about twenty minutes?"

A look of gratitude comes over him. "Thank you, Father," he slurs, patting your back. "Now my conscience is clear. Drinks all around, barkeep!" Then he looks at you and adds, "In about twenty minutes." Laughing, he stumbles back to his table. Several more bar patrons step up for your impromptu confessional, but Kuda pulls you aside and heads for the door. "Services are over for the night," he explains. He stops at the door to get his ax, and then you are back outside in the moonlight once again. You pull your robes close and grit your teeth.

"While you were playing games with the rowdies," Kuda says, "I bought a bit of information from the barkeep."

"Such as?"

"There are no other wizards in Carilon. They were all rounded up by Regis and put in the dungeon, I suppose to limit Vlachos's competition."

"There's no cure to be found here, then," you say bitterly.

"Not unless you want to sneak into the dungeon to find a wizard." He sees the look in your eye. "I was being sarcastic, Feral!"

"You can afford to be sarcastic, my friend. You won't have to worry about scratching fleas in your old age." You look above the town at the spires of the palace. "We must go into

the castle, one way or the other. Either we find a wizard and a cure, or we find Vlachos." A growl escapes as you mention the evil wizard's name.

Begrudgingly Kuda leads you in the direction of the palace.

Turn to 141.

134

All of a sudden, a fire blazes within you, filling you with pain, purifying you. You sink to your knees and cry out. When it is over, you are afraid to open your eyes. *Did it work?* you wonder.

Slowly you reach up and touch your face. You feel bare skin! "It worked!" you cry out in joy. You leap up and hug Kuda. "I'm human again, old friend! Do you see? Keela, I'm . . ." You see her expression. "Keela? What is it?"

She wipes away a tear to smile. "I'm just happy for you, Feral, that's all. Now go, please. Go back to your own world."

"Keela, I—"

"Just go!" she snaps, then starts to weep again.

Kuda thanks Mot Zaret and pulls you from the chamber. "Try to forget her, Feral," he consoles you. "You two are different now. She has her world, and you have yours."

"But her world was mine," you say, "at least for a little while. Did I have to let it go? Since the minute I was cursed, I have wanted only one thing, but now—now I'm not so sure." You pull away from your friend and look behind you. "I can't leave, Kuda. Maybe I can get Zaret to change me back. . . ."

"He won't have to, Feral," comes a soft voice from down the tunnel. A girl is coming toward you—a human girl.

"Keela?"

She flies into your arms. "It was Mot Zaret's ancestors who cursed my ancestors," she says. "He owed me a favor. Now help me. I'm not very familiar with being human. In fact"—she rubs her bare skin—"it's a rather chilly experience."

You laugh as the three of you start toward the daylight at the far end of the tunnel. ✕



135

You hear the moans from the cell up ahead as the lash cracks once more, and you can tolerate it no longer.

You rush forward into the cell and grab the blood-stained coils of the upraised whip. Before he knows what's happening, you've yanked the guard off his feet and wrapped the whip about his neck. "How do you like your cursed leather now?" you taunt the torturer.

A moan of gratitude comes from farther back in the cell. You look up, but the shadows are too thick to see clearly. All you can make out are two eyes reflecting the torchlight from the corridor.

You're so intent on staring into those eyes that you fail to remember the other guards behind you. Kuda and Hester rush forward to help, but there are simply too many of them. The three of you are beaten senseless.

Roll one die. If the result is even (2, 4, 6), subtract 2 hit points from your total. If it's odd, subtract 4 hit points.

When you awaken, it's daylight. You are lying on the dust of the arena combat field. Kuda is only a few feet away. An audience is gathered in the grandstand, and your "hosts" are present on the platform. "Good morning,"

Vlachos says to you. "I hope you are well rested from your exercise last night. Today you will have your choice of combat." He motions toward the rear of the arena. There guards have brought forth a huge minotaur and are prodding it with their spears. "Whichever you choose, your black companion fights the other. You may fight the minotaur," Vlachos says and pauses for effect, "or Hester."

You whirl about and see them dragging a familiar form into the arena, hissing. The figure is Hester, but her curse has advanced and you barely recognize her. Her snake side is dominant now. "I will not fight either of them!" you declare.

Vlachos simply laughs. "Then they die anyway . . . and so do you!"

It appears that you must fight one or the other . . . but which? If it is the minotaur, turn to 56. If you choose to fight Hester, turn to 42.

136

With his knife and the torch, Kuda rushes to battle the other two hobgoblins as you square off with the leader. "Give up!" it taunts, patting its magnificent blade. "Promise, kill quickly!"

You grin at him. "Save it, ugly one! You have fighting to do!"

With a grunt, it launches its attack, and your own blade is barely able to defend against it. The beast's weapon is truly amazing; sparks fly when the two blades meet, and yours takes the worst in each melee. Finally it shatters altogether.

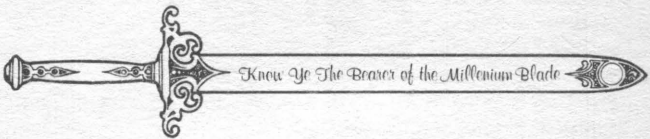
The hobgoblin leader laughs at his apparent victory and raises its sword overhead like a headsman's ax, prepared to deliver a death blow. Its overconfidence is shortlived, however, as you step inside his defenses and ram the broken shaft of your blade through its mail shirt. The creature grimaces at its vanished victory and slumps to the ground. The others, seeing their leader fall, quickly flee back down the tunnel.

"Nothing like a little exercise," Kuda says, brushing himself off. "Are you all right, my friend?"

You don't answer right away—your eyes are alight with the beauty of your hard-earned treasure. You pick up the great two-handed sword that the hobgoblin wielded and read the words inscribed in its steel: "KNOW YE THE BEARER OF THE MILLENNIUM BLADE."

"It's light for its size," you say, working the great sword in the air. "Hardly a feather's weight, in fact. There is magic here. I can feel it!" You turn to the nearest stalagmite and slash at it. Sparks light the gloom, and the head of the formation is sliced cleanly away. "A magnificent blade!" you say, nodding. "It will serve me well."

You continue through the tunnel, knowing the hobgoblins will molest you no longer. Turn to **166**.



137

The odor is there for just a moment, a stink like something old and rotten, but a sudden breeze whistles through the trees and it is lost. You are tempted to become the werewolf and use its senses, but you are frightened . . . the price could be too high.

"Maybe I can pick up his trail," you say half-aloud, half to yourself, as you race into the woods, leaving Kuda behind.

You see clues at first—trampled leaves, broken twigs, the unnatural sway of a tree limb. But all at once the clues stop. The trail is ice cold.

Then why are my neck hairs standing on end? you wonder, confused.

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 18 or more, turn to **54**. If it's less, turn to **177**.

138

"Devil!" you growl, feeling the wolf's power surge through you as you lunge for the wizard.

Vlachos cowers before your attack, flipping through his book and uttering an urgent spell. Suddenly a cone of fire bursts from his extended palm, and you cannot evade it in time. The flame hits you full force, and you scream in pain. The stink of singed hair fills your nostrils as you fall. Subtract 4 hit points.

The evil sorcerer stands over you, grinning triumphantly. "That will teach you, beast!" he says, laughing. "Give the gods of the void my greeting!" He points his smoldering palm at you once again.

"Feral!" Keela cries in the midst of her battle with the shape-shifter. "The Heart of the Wolf! It's your only hope!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as a wolf. If the total is 20 or more, turn to 47. If it's less, turn to 142.

139

The two orcs rush forward, anxious for the battle. Their obvious eagerness is unnerving.

Quickly they outflank you, and you find yourself on the defensive. The orcs hit and run, both at the same time so one can always get through. Their blows are whittling steadily away at you. In no time, your movements begin to slow and your breathing grows harsh.

Suddenly the smaller orc leaps at you, its daggers aimed at your chest. You disarm it with one sweep of your chain, but it keeps coming, tackling you and mauling your shoulder with its tusks. You drop your chain, and immediately your talons tear through the pig-warrior's light armor. But even in dying, it snorts with satisfaction. Its dead weight is pinning you to the ground, so that the orc with the ax can move in unhampered. The smaller orc's sacrifice has spelled your doom, you realize as the ax rises and falls. ✕

140

You barely raise your sword in time to meet the first wave of the stirge horde, their built-in sensors homing in on the heat of the blood in your veins. You react by reflex, slicing one batlike shape after another from the steamy air. When the flock finally dissipates, you find yourself covered

with blood, mostly the blood of the stirges, and utterly exhausted. You slump against the wall, your sword falling from your numb hands.

"Feral!" Kuda calls, trying hard to lift his own blade. "There are more!" But neither of you are prepared as a new wave of creatures flutter from the darkness . . .

. . . and fall at your feet! They have solidified in midair!

The basilisk!

"Don't look!" you warn as you reach for your sword. "It's right behind us!"

A voice like a small storm echoes through the tunnel. "You," it intones, "are an enemy of the blood-drinkers?"

"Of course," you say, holding up one of the dead batlike creatures. "Nasty things!"

The basilisk laughs. "Yes, I agree, most bothersome. Why have you come here?"

"To look for you. And to seek a favor."

There is surprise in the booming voice. "Really? What sort of favor?"

You hesitate. "I must ask for the one thing that a basilisk treasures most."

There is silence as it considers your request. "Very well," comes the answer, "but you must do me a favor in return."

"You must—"

"Yes?"

"—talk to me. Few are those who seek out a basilisk, and fewer still those who survive the conversation. Please stay, if only for a little while. I promise to keep my eyes averted."

"A small price," you tell it. "What would you like to talk about?"

You stay for several hours, reclining on the ground amidst the litter of statues and talking at length with the great six-legged lizard. It keeps its eyes closed for your benefit. You speak on any subject that comes to mind—politics, religion, the plight of magical animals in the face of civilization—and finally you get around to discussing your own problems and those of your people. The basilisk speaks intelligently, based on its many years, and listens just as well.

When you are finished, it retreats to its lair and brings

back a pale orb the size of your head. "I have no hoard of gold, if that is what you expected," it tells you. "The only thing of value I have is one of my eggs. It is yours . . . if you promise to return and talk again."

The basilisk seems to smile. You promise, then take your treasure and climb from the pit.

Turn to 189.



141

"We can't just walk through the front door," Kuda says as you both survey the palace of Regis from just inside the heavily guarded grounds.

You struggle to think, despite the moon's jarring effect on your mind. "What about . . . the windows?" You point a taloned finger toward a balcony on the second floor, overlooking a garden. The windows there are ajar. "I . . . could jump."

"Do you think you're up to it?"

You smile. "We'll . . . never know . . . until I try." Pulling your robes closer, you slip from your hiding place and hurry across the grounds. To the guards, you are no more than a flitting shadow. Your feet make no sound as you pad into the garden and make for the balcony.

You smell the guard before you see him. The spark of a flint shows him to be standing under the balcony, lighting his pipe. Quickly, before he looks up, you take another step and leap.

You sail over the man's head and land like a whisper on the balcony rail.

The guard stands below for several minutes, smoking leisurely, and you begin to think you will have to dispose of him, but finally he wanders off. Kuda sees his chance and rushes through the garden. You pull him up quickly, and both of you slip through the open balcony doors.

You find yourselves at the end of a lavish hallway, replete with crystal chandeliers, carved side tables, and gold-frame mirrors—all bought with the sweat and blood of your countrymen, you realize angrily.

"Are you all right, Feral?" Kuda asks, and you realize that you can think freely, unhampered by the wolf. The effects of the moonlight can't penetrate the castle walls.

"Much better, my friend," you reply. "Now, do we go for Vlachos or for the dungeon?"

If you choose to search for Vlachos, turn to 214. If you seek the dungeon, go to 5.

142

You scramble for the table on blistered hands and knees, wincing from the pain but refusing to give up. The wizard's flames are right behind you. Another fiery burst overtakes you. The pain, too much to bear, encompasses you.

You collide with something, unable to focus your eyes. Only the sound of the table crashing over tells you what it is. Something rolls off onto your chest, something round and cracked and . . . squirming?

A small form wriggles out onto your chest, yawning and bleating. Your vision clears only after Vlachos has met the newborn basilisk's gaze. He stands frozen in that same shocked position, unable to scream, unable to do anything. Regis comes to his master's rescue with eyes wide open and instantly shares the same frozen fate.

You slump against the overturned table, beyond the burning and the pain, and give in to the soothing darkness. ✕

143

Once you are under the platform, safe from the archers and Vlachos's magic, you pit your strength against the sup-

port columns. They are each a foot thick, but you are in the throes of the wolf's berserk fury. Either the beams will give . . . or your heart will.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the werewolf. Add 1 for the wolf's fury. If the total is 21 or more, turn to 81. If it's less, turn to 185.

144

Deeper and deeper you go, into the very depths of the dungeon. The corridors deteriorate into crude tunnels, and the cell doors that line them become few and far between. Lit torches, except for the one you carry, are few and far between.

You halt for a moment and hush Kuda with an upraised finger. "There's something behind us!" you whisper.

"What is it?"

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 17 or more, turn to 98. If it's less, turn to 43.

145

You look the sorcerer in the eye and think over your choice. You decide that the arena might be best. You might be able to get lost in the audience during combat or, better yet, get a chance at this sorcerous scum. "Very well," you say. "I choose the arena." Kuda opens his mouth to protest but you silence him with a glare.

"A good choice," Vlachos says, "but first you must prove yourselves worthy."

"I have one last question," you interject. "Doesn't his highness ever speak for himself?"

Regis II leans forward on his throne, smiling wickedly, and you know then that he is just as evil as his wizard. "Gentlemen," he says in a soft but menacing voice, "to the arena!"

Turn to 206.

146

You rush to Kuda's side and find him still unconscious but breathing easily. "It's just as well, old friend," you say

to him. "From here on, this is my battle alone!"

Retrieving your sword, you find the ornamental double doors not only solidly constructed but locked as well. With a deep breath, you launch your shoulder against them, feeling the wood splinter and the lock tear loose. You burst into the royal chamber.

Before you, you see a man dressed in kingly robes and crown, his reflection staring back at you from the mirror he faces. Half of Regis II registers surprise at your sudden entrance; the other half is too alien to display such emotion. It is gaunt and translucent, showing every vein and artery through the skin, and the stink of the doppelganger is thick in the air.

"So you know my secret!" says the tyrant-creature. "A pity you will never leave here to tell of it!" He begins to change in rapid succession, from bugbear to hellhound to harpy, and finally to a combination of all three. His shifting fails to unnerve you as he'd hoped. You growl in response and prepare for battle.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 41. If it's less, turn to 84.

147

You put your shoulder to the gate, but you have no strength left to summon. You are totally exhausted. The gate won't budge.

"Feral!" Kuda calls. "The soldiers are coming!"

You pick up your friend and climb the ten-foot gate quickly, but not before a crossbow quarrel buries itself in your back.

You collapse on the other side of the gate. Kuda follows you over and tries to help you up, but you wave him on. You know from the wound that you are finished. "Go on ahead," you tell him. "We have failed, but you might yet succeed. You have to get away. Hurry! I will hold them here!"

"Feral, I—"

"Go, my friend! Go!" you urge.

Grudgingly the warrior bids you farewell and heads toward the gates of the city. He will still have to deal with the

guards there, but at least you feel confident you have enough strength left to slow down the soldiers here.

You feel the gate open behind you. You stand and throw away your captured sword and welcome the wolf's transformation. It awaits the soldiers with a gleeful snarl. ✘



148

Shading your eyes against the sun's glare, you see two figures skulking through the dense grass on the far side of the clearing. More dire wolves?

"Keela!" someone calls out.

The wolf-girl's face brightens. "It's my brothers!" she exclaims, then calls to them. "Gieryn, Lupus! Over here!"

The figures come out into the clearing, their hairy forms clad in hide britches only. They carry great longbows and full quivers of arrows. The larger of the two, Lupus, spies you and approaches, while the other inspects the monster you slew. Closer up, you can see their resemblance to Keela and, in some ways, even to you.

"Keela, come out of there!" Lupus orders. "You know the elder's warning. No one should enter the caves. Remember the evil!"

She starts out to join them, tugging at your arm to follow,

but you seize her shoulders and hold her back. A finger to your lips hushes her. "Listen!"

There is still something out there, something beside the young wolf-men. Not one thing but several. "Do dire wolves travel in packs?" you ask. She nods, suddenly fearful, and you yell out to her brothers. "Both of you, get in here, now! Hurry! There isn't much time!"

"Keela, who is—"

"Look out behind you!" Keela screams.

Three dire wolves explode from the underbrush like charging rhinos. Gieryn and Lupus rush for the fissure, with the monsters breathing heavy on their heels, and slip through a split second before their pursuers reach the wall. The crack is simply too small for the beasts to fit through. "Thank the gods for that!" Keela sighs.

Turn to **67**.

149

You leap backward, away from the creature's groping claws, but they just lengthen to follow you, becoming barbed tentacles like those of a displacer beast. One seizes your ankle, and you howl in pain. Roll one die for damage. If you roll an even number (2, 4, 6), subtract 2 hit points; odd, subtract 4.

Kuda spurs his pony forward, ax at the ready, and charges the shape-shifter, but a second tentacle lashes out and snatches him from the saddle. It holds your friend aloft as its head begins to change, growing saurian, the mouth widening and filling with razor-sharp teeth. "Relax, warrior. It won't hurt long!" the beast snarls and begins lowering Kuda toward its growing maw.

"No!" you howl and launch yourself at the changeling. Your fist hammers against its jaw with maniacal force. There is a dull pop, and suddenly the creature stops changing. The saurian beast goes limp and collapses at your feet, then slowly reverts to its original form.

Kuda kneels beside it and feels for a pulse. "You must have struck before its muscles could solidify. That punch broke its neck."

Turn to **125**.



150

Keela points to the ceiling, where a metal ladder hangs from a darkened shaft. "We're under the Mount of Lies," she says, "but I don't remember that being there. Do you think it could lead to Vlachos's home?"

"There's only one way to find out," you say. One by one, you begin to climb.

The shaft leads up to a subcellar of the shepherd's cottage. You find the latter nearly empty, but the cellar is just the opposite. It is crammed full of ancient relics and artifacts. "These things belonged to the Mages of Eternity," Gieryn tells you fearfully, "I can feel the magic in them . . . the evil."

"Vlachos must have found the shaft and begun to loot the stores below," Kuda surmises.

"And then he found something that could change him from shepherd to sorcerer." You sniff the air. "The scent isn't as strong here. Vlachos must be down in the tunnels."

Turn to 11.

151

The soldiers react quickly and form a solid line between you and the platform. You might be able to leap over them, but Kuda would never make it. "This way!" you shout and suddenly bolt for the arena gate. It's still bolted shut. You'll have to batter it down . . . or climb it.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 20 or more, turn to **215**. If it's less, turn to **147**.

152

The girl's parents pull her away as the others seize you and lift you into the air . . . onto their shoulders! "He defeated the great beast!" cries one of them. "He saved Betheny from the wolf!" There is much laughter and reveling as they carry you back to town. A celebration is declared, and there is much drinking and laughing on your behalf. Betheny's parents bless you again and again. Betheny herself spends much of the day bouncing on your knee.

"Feral," Kuda says, motioning toward the sun. "We'd better go. It's getting late, and you know how you are at night."

"Not just yet," declares the mayor of the town. "We haven't given you your reward yet!" He presents you with a rolled parchment. "This makes you an honorary citizen of our fair community. And this—" he hands you a handmade medal, attached to a red ribbon—"this is for driving away the beast that has plagued us for so long. It isn't much, but it represents our heartfelt gratitude."

You inspect the medal and the strange glowing ore it is cast from. Zaret's treasure that cannot be purchased or stolen, only earned? "This means a great deal to us," you tell them, smiling. "You'll never know how much!"

Everyone gathers at the edge of the village to see you off late in the afternoon, and you leave in the same direction the wolf took. "I think I know what you have in mind," Kuda says. "The heart of a wolf. Right?"

You nod. "Just one more item. One more."

Turn to **31**.

153

You have no control over the wolf. In the face of the moon, it is all-powerful, and it must follow its instincts. It despises the city with its herds of pink-skinned humans and its myriad stench. The wolf must get away!

You scamper along the ledge of the barracks and then

onto the lower roofs of the palace itself, howling at the moon that watches overhead. An alarm sounds, but you pay no heed, not even when arrows begin to rain all around you. In moments, one finds its way into your back.



You climb higher onto the palace, panting and whining from the pain. Two more arrows strike home, but the wolf refuses to stop.

When you reach the jagged parapet of the main roof, you stop and teeter on the edge. You suffer from the wounds of six arrows now, and the pain is overriding the wolf's natural tolerance. You address the moon with one last, anguished cry and topple from the ledge.

It seems like an eternity before you reach the ground, but it is the wolf that feels the impact. Feral, the son of Agnor, is gone long before that. ✕

154

You bound over the next rise to find your quarry, a monstrous dire wolf, fully the size of a fighting bull, stalking a lithe female figure across the moon-silvered landscape.

The girl has no chance at escape and has apparently accepted it. Instead of cowering, she stands her ground with a stick as her only defense against two thousand pounds of lupine muscle.

You aren't concerned about the female, at least not as Feral the human would be. You see only the dire wolf—a competitor, a rival. You growl a warning, and the wolf starts at your presence and issues a challenge of its own. Howling madly, both of you charge.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 25 or more, turn to 37. If it's less, turn to 128.

155

"How will we make it over the moat?" Kuda asks softly as you approach the city on foot, having hobbled the warrior's horse and left it in a thicket near the road. "The wall's no problem—I have my rope—but that water looks positively unwelcome."

With the moon climbing higher in the sky, you have trouble thinking clearly, and his question makes little sense. You pull your cloak tighter and hide your head within its cowl. The strange feeling abates somewhat. "Never mind the moat," you answer, your voice husky and thick. "Let me worry about it."

You approach the city from a secluded side, away from the main gate. Once the guards on the top of the wall have moved along, you sneak down to the water's edge.

"I'm not much of a swimmer," Kuda begins, then stops as you abruptly lift the larger man off the ground, take a few running steps, and leap into the air. Your leg muscles propel you the fifteen feet to the other side as if you were jumping a rain puddle. "By my father's rickety bones!" Kuda gasps.

You crouch beside the wall, hiding in its shadows from the growing moonlight. "Hurry, Kuda!" you urge.

The black warrior unwinds the rope from around his shoulder, clears his small grapnel hook, hurls it in a tight circle around his head, and heaves it to the top of the wall, almost twenty-five feet straight up. It catches on the first

try. He offers the rope to you.

"No time," you tell him impatiently and push it back toward him. Throwing back your cape, you dig your talons into the wall itself and begin climbing. Kuda stares incredulously as you cling there like a spider, your nails digging into the mortar between the stone. "Stop gawking and climb!" you call back to him from halfway up. By the time he has recovered from his shock and started to climb, you have already cleared the top and dropped to the far side.

You find yourself in a dark alley, lined with trash and skittering rodents. "It's all clear," you call up to your friend. He lowers his rope and joins you.

Turn to **68**.

156

Your hand grabs the ledge, but panic flares when the earth proves too loose to hold your weight. You begin to slide, frantically clawing to prevent it, but there isn't sufficient purchase and you begin to fall again.

A powerful hand suddenly seizes your wrist and holds you there, dangling. Kuda smiles down at you, but as the wolf, you barely recognize him. Fury and panic have warped your senses; you fight to break his grip.

"Feral, stop struggling!" Kuda yells, but you can't—not until another voice cuts through the fog that fills your mind.

"Calm yourself," the wolf-girl says in a soft, melodic voice that instantly curtails your struggles. You look up into her deep azure eyes and feel a kinship between you, a bond. Is it a common wolfish nature or something else? "Come back to us. The wolf is gone. It cannot stand in your way.

Kuda grunts with distaste. The squirm of your transforming flesh beneath his palm is disquieting, to say the least. By the time he hauls you up, you are the man-wolf again. Subtract 2 experience points for the change and the wolfen fury.

Under your full gaze, the wolf-girl looks away shyly. "Who are you?" you ask.

Turn to **207**.



157

The minotaur hurls you across the arena, directly at the platform. You land atop the structure, directly in front of the king and his hated wizard.

The royal guests scatter in terror, hurrying toward the stairs. As they do, they block the guards attempting to climb up from the arena floor. You have the villains all to yourself. You notice that the smell is back—the stink of the doppelganger. Everyone else has fled. Except for . . .

Regis stands to protect the wizard, his features twisting and reshaping themselves into a myriad of strange and horrifying creatures. So there is no king after all—Regis is merely one of the wizard's creations.

“You will regret this, wolfling,” the shape-shifter says in its shrill voice. Then it attacks.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 18 or more, turn to **66**. If it is less, go to **109**.

158

You attack the closest man, grappling with him dizzily and gaining just enough of a hold to lift him into the air

and slam him into his comrades. But your movements are far too sluggish. The one with the mace is at your shoulder before your reeling senses can warn you. *Wham!* The studded ball falls again, and this time a wave of numbing darkness rushes over you. Subtract 3 hit points.

You cannot even muster the energy to open your eyes. You lie there limp as they drag you back through the forest to the scene of your first encounter.

Turn to 64.

159

Your weapons and belongings are confiscated. You are put in chains and thrown to the floor of a large guard-filled chamber.

The stink of the changeling is heavy in the air—you're certain there is one, or perhaps more than one, nearby. You feel eyes on you, and not just the eyes of the guards.

You stand as best your chains will allow and regard the haughty, regal-looking man on the throne with undiscovered contempt. Regis II nods his mock greeting. The grandfatherly wizard behind him wears no expression at all.

Since entering the palace, you have been more able to keep control over the wolf—the absence of direct moonlight, most likely. But now the wolf struggles to be free, for you have seen your tormentor, and your rage strengthens the animal within you. It is all you can do to hold it in check, but there are too many chains, too many guards, too much space to cover. Now is not the time.

“Very good, son of Agnor,” Vlachos says, watching you. “You are stronger than I suspected. You will make good sport for the arena.”

“The arena?”

The wizard's hated features work their way into a serpent's smile. “An entertainment of sorts, for our more affluent citizens.”

“I will not fight for your entertainment, you strutting poppinjay,” Kuda snorts.

Vlachos shrugs. “That is up to you. If it's not the arena, then it will be the dungeon.” He leans closer, grinning

evilly. "And I guarantee you won't like that."

If you choose the arena, turn to 145. If you choose the dungeon, go to 34.

160

The smaller man comes at you first, pivoting on one leg to slice a roundhouse kick toward your head. The foot is a blur; you barely see it in time to raise an arm, but even then the glancing blow numbs you clear to the shoulder. Subtract 1 hit point. Your hand closes on the ankle before your foe can jerk it back, and that's all you need. With a jerk, you pull the assassin off his feet and swing him into the nearest wall, not once but several times, just to be sure he's not feigning unconsciousness.

Suddenly a kick comes out of nowhere, slamming into your stomach and doubling you over in pain, and the second Dark Moon fighter follows it with a lethal spin kick. Subtract 1 hit point. But your senses tingle with warning; you slip beneath his leg at the last possible moment and lean into a backfist that lifts him completely off the ground. He lands several feet away, as limp as a dishrag.

Turn to 146.

161

You climb down from the platform, victorious but somehow uneasy in your victory. You have accomplished what you set out to do. You have regained your humanity and brought the wizard and his puppet tyrant to defeat. But what of Hester and the minotaur and the others like them? Vlachos is dead—there is no hope for curing them now.

Kuda is waiting for you below, with Hester and your towering bull-like ally. The snake-girl has regained a more human form, but still bears evidence of the serpent. "What of the wizard?" she asks hopefully.

You take her hand. "Hester, I don't quite know how to explain . . ." you begin, but suddenly a startling thing happens. When you take her hand, you notice her reptilian scales giving way to flesh, human flesh, and then the change is spreading up her arm and all over her. It must be the effects of Vlachos's spell—enough of it still lingers on

your skin. "Quick, bring all of the gladiators!"

And one by one, with a laying on of hands, you bring humanity back to the arena of Regis II, just as you have brought peace back to your country. You smile as you realize that your father, Agnor the Wolf, would be proud of you.

✠

162

The higher tunnel inclines upward for perhaps fifty feet or more, then levels out and widens into a long cave lined with stalagmites that jut upward like broken teeth. The drip of groundwater echoes all around you. The air is dank and cold.

What was that? you wonder. *Are my senses too acute, picking up the merest whisper of insect legs on the rocks, or . . . No, there it is again!*

"Be ready!" you whisper to Kuda, hefting your sword. "We're not alone." You stop and call out to the shadows ahead of you, "Come out, skulkers!"

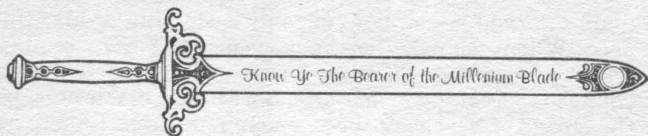
Three figures step into the light of the torch. Each stands a head taller than you and nearly as broad at the shoulders as Kuda. All bear the same warped, bestial features. "Hobgoblins!" Kuda gasps.

The apparent leader steps forward and appraises the two of you, fingering its mail shirt and the ornate hilt of its sword. "Our tunnel!" it snorts. "You pay!"

"Pay? With what?" Kuda asks, patting his empty pockets. His answer comes as one of the hobgoblins unsheaths a wickedly beautiful sword.

"With blood!" it says as they start toward you.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to 136. If it's less, turn to 90.



Your keen ears hear a twig snap behind you—another soldier! You flinch a split second before his studded mace descends, barely missing your skull and striking a glancing blow against your shoulder instead. You whirl and slash, extending your stiletto-like talons, and sparks fly as they strike his metal breastplate. The soldier staggers and drops his weapon, staring dumbfounded at the jagged gashes in his armor. When those gashes begin to seep crimson, he gasps and passes out.

Blood! The smell of it swirls into your nostrils, filling your being with the reek of wounded prey. With a growl, you leap among the soldiers and toss them about like wheat in a strong wind, your nails gleaming with the blood of their wounds. Now, while they are down, a few quick bites, and. . . .

No! You back away, chasing the thoughts from your head and staring at your outstretched hands. *What have I become?* your brain whirrs. *These are not my hands. They are the hands of a monster!* Then you throw back your head and cry aloud, hearing your garbled voice ring pleadingly through the forest. "I am a man . . . a man!" You sink to your knees, choking back tears of helplessness.

Gradually the wolf subsides, though you realize it only after your hands have reverted to their near-normal size, the fingers shortened and the talons all but retracted. Even your muzzle recedes. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of the transformation.

You, Feral, are in control once again. You breathe a sigh of relief. But for how long? The thought itself terrifies you.

The ground around you is littered with the unconscious forms of the soldiers you fought, but Sonder is nowhere to be seen. Only a mighty war-horse stands before you, its dark-skinned rider eyeing you warily, holding his great ax at the ready. "Move away from those soldiers, monster!" he warns.

"Kuda? It's me, Feral!"

There is disbelief in his gaze. The ax remains poised. "What kind of sorcery is this?"

"The worst kind, old friend," you explain. "I've been

cursed, and one of those responsible is getting away. I—”

“Feral?” he gasps. “Is—is it really you?”

“That’s what I’ve been trying to tell you. Now hush a moment and let me concentrate. Sonder might have left a scent I can pick up.” You sniff the air.

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 17 or more, turn to 16. If it’s less, turn to 137.

164

You move as fast as you can, but the wizard is already muttering a spell under his breath, and you feel a familiar burning in your veins. “No, not again!”

Vlachos laughs evilly. “A wolf you shall stay, my impetuous young friend!”

“Then by a wolf’s hand you will die!” you shout as your humanity is stolen once more and the werewolf returns. “You have just conjured back your worst enemy, Vlachos. Could Feral the human do this?” You turn as you sense the Regis-wolf’s sneak attack, seize him, and lift him high overhead. You hurl the beast against the nearest wall, where he collapses, unconscious. “Would Feral the human be fast enough to evade your sorcerous attacks?” He lashes out at you with a cone of fire, but you somersault away and once more begin to close the gap between the two of you.

Vlachos retreats . . . straight toward the open window.

The wolf lunges at the wizard, determined not to let its quarry get away, but the movement only hastens his flight. You watch as he topples over the sill. Desperately you catch his robe and hold him dangling outside the window, high over the city. “Pull me in!” he cries. “I’ll cure you again! Just save me!”

But the robe abruptly tears, and you hear Vlachos screaming all the way to the ground.

Kuda stands dizzily in the doorway, watching silently as you try to control the wolf in the wake of Vlachos’s death. There is no hope now for a cure, and knowing this is as much as admitting defeat. “I don’t have long,” you tell him. “I must get out of the city while I can, before . . . someone gets hurt. I must seek my destiny in the wild.”

You stoop to pick up Regis's discarded crown and hand it to Kuda. "Rule well, my friend," you tell him, then slip out the palace window and clamber down its stone facade. Halfway down, Feral, son of Agnor, simply ceases to exist. It is the wolf who bounds from rooftop to rooftop, then over the city wall. The woods beckon, and their call cannot be denied any longer. ✘

165

You realize you can't fight them all at once, even as a wolf. You must force yourself to use some sort of strategy.

The animal side of you seems to understand. When the one with the mace attacks next, you disarm him and use him as a human club, swinging him by the heels to batter down his comrades. Soon all of them are sprawled throughout the clearing, unconscious or injured.

Sonder! The blood of your foes is in your nostrils, fueling a rage that you have never known the likes of before. You search the clearing for him, growling, wanting only to find him and slash and bite and rend. . . .

"What am I thinking?" you say aloud. It comes out as a garbled howl. You have become the wolf almost totally, your hands and talons lengthening, your nose growing into a muzzle, and your fangs growing as well. "I am not a monster!" you tell yourself over and over, trying to sound confident. And slowly the killer rage leaves you. Your hands, your face, everything slowly changes back to the man-wolf state. But if it happens again, will you be able to come back?

Subtract 1 experience point from your total for the change.

You glance about the clearing for Sonder, but he is nowhere to be seen. There is only a large war-horse before you now, and a dark-skinned warrior sitting astride it. "Kuda?" you say.

Your friend reins his skittish mount closer, his expression one of disbelief. "What madness is this? Feral? By the gods! . . ."

"I haven't much time," you tell your friend as you sniff the air. "One of the villains responsible for this is getting

away. If I try, I may be able to pick up his scent."

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 16. If it's less, turn to 137.

166

"By the gods!" Kuda sighs, resting himself against a wall of the tunnel. "How far do these things go? I feel as if we've been traveling all night!"

"We have been," you say. "With the wolf's senses, I estimate it's dawn. We must be some distance from the city by now. The question is, where are we? Judging by the creatures we've seen hereabouts, this is no ordinary catacomb. I..."

Something catches your ear. You hear sounds, still very distant—the cries of the hunted, the crashing pursuit of the hunter. But where can they be coming from, and from whom?

"Feral, I—"

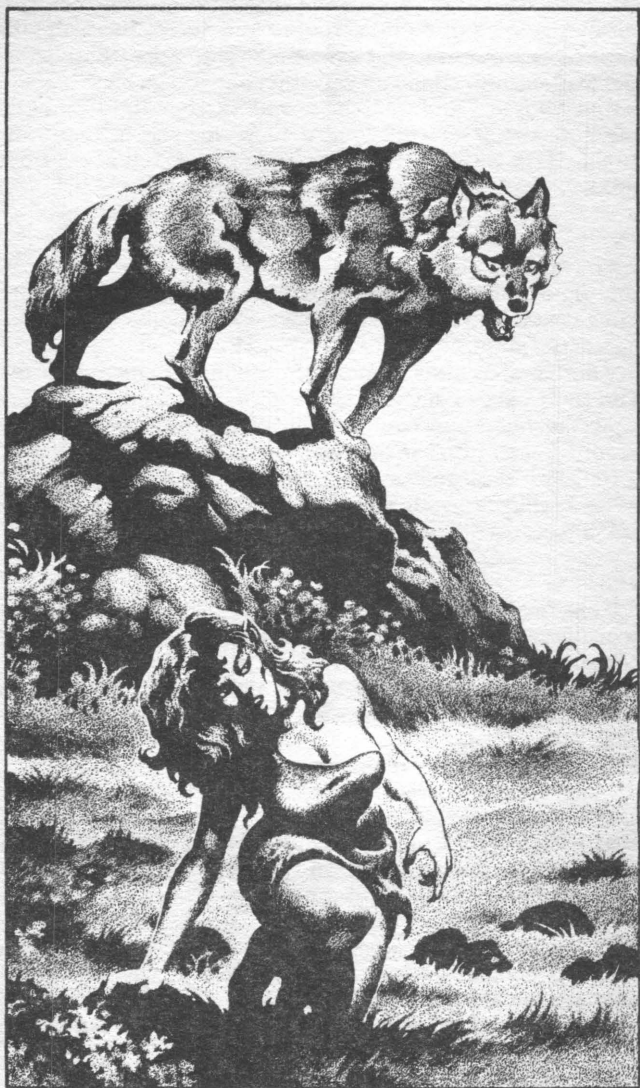
"Ssshhh!"

A scream echoes erratically through the caverns, high-pitched and full of terror. You do not need your hyperactive senses to hear it this time; even Kuda's features tense at the sound. Almost as one, you both leap to your feet and pursue the fading echoes to their source.

"Look there!" Kuda calls out as you turn a corner. "Sunlight!" Directly ahead, the sun does indeed pierce the cavern's gloom through a fissure in the rock. You squeeze your body through the crack in the rock, though it takes several strokes of your gleaming blade to clear away the strangling creepers that clog it. As you break out into the clearing beyond, you find the hunted and the hunter. Both turn at your arrival.

The hunter is just that, in the most primal aspect. What a shark is to the water, a dire wolf is to the woods—only this is the largest one you've seen by far, fully the size of a healthy steer. Its quarry, cowering before it in the grass, is a lithe, beautiful female who is—no, it can't be!— wolfen, just like you!

The dire wolf glares malevolently at you for a full min-



ute, as if sizing up a potential lunch. It finally decides the smaller meal will be less trouble and stalks the wolf-girl once more, drooling and growling. Your grip tightens on the Millennium Blade as you start across the clearing.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. Add 2 more for the Millennium Blade. If the total is 24 or more, turn to 114. If it's less, turn to 19.

167

The holding pen doors swing open, and a towering insectoid figure lumbers out with a slow, mechanical gait. You have never seen an ankheg before, but you have heard stories of the mantislike creatures. You know you will need all of your combat skill to avoid those long, segmented arms and their barbed edges.

At Vlachos's command, one of the guards throws a thin, reedlike staff into the arena—your only weapon.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 209. If it's less, turn to 40.

168

"Vlachos it is, but for the moment, he'll just have to wait," you say to yourself. "Right now I've got to get out of these blasted woods!"

Concealed by the underbrush and moving slowly, you slink through a rift in the line of soldiers. They pass on either side of you, a hair's breadth away, but as soon as they've gone by, you make your break.

"There! Over there!"

Your heart freezes at the bellowed alarm, and you turn with sword drawn, but the soldiers are not bearing down on you. Instead, they are hurrying away, one man pointing off into the forest at something he's seen. *Now is my chance*, you think. *Run!*

You burst from the woods and are almost trampled by a single thundering steed. "Hagon's Beard!" the black warrior atop it curses, his ax at the ready. "What the devil . . ."

"Kuda, be quiet! You'll give us away!" You step closer.

“See? It’s me, Feral.”

He stares in astonishment. “What? Can it be? You’re not the Feral I know.”

“I’ve no time to argue,” you say, leaping up behind him, despite his protests. “It’s me, okay?”

“By the gods . . .”

“I’ll explain later. Just give this horse the heel and let’s get going. We’ve a wizard to catch.”

Turn to 108.



169

The magical bolts slam you backward into the platform’s banquet table, spilling food and at the same time giving you an idea. You seize one of the great serving platters and hold it up before you as a shield. The bolts slam into the platter and some of their energy travels into your fingers and hands, but the brunt of the attack is diverted. Subtract 1 hit point.

Vlachos intensifies his magic, lighting up the platform like a fireworks display. Your shield blackens and begins to burn through. You realize that in moments it will be destroyed, and you will have to face the wizard’s wrath unprotected.

In a last desperate attempt, you summon all your waning

strength and fling the platter like a saucer across the platform. The whistling metal plate catches the sorcerer square in the neck, and at that same moment the fiery storm around you ceases abruptly.

You limp over to where Vlachos lies motionless, his neck obviously broken. But what about the vial?

A glint of sunlight catches your eye. You spot it rolling along the edge of the platform, teetering precariously and dribbling out its curative contents.

And then it drops over the edge.

You dive for it, praying that the wolf's speed and dexterity will be enough.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 21 or more, turn to **58**. If it's less, turn to **179**.

170

With a roar, you leap at the wolf as it stalks the child and catch it broadside, knocking it off its feet and into a tree. It attacks in reflex, but you block the snap of its jaws with your sword. Your weapon is wrenched from your grasp. The giant wolf recovers and begins to stalk you once again.

Let me out! the wolf within you urges. *Let me fight, let me rend it to pieces, let me snap its bones!* But you know you can't become the werewolf. Then it would be animal against animal, and you would have no advantage at all against this huge beast.

The wolf hurls itself at you, gnashing the air in search for your tender flesh. You stand your ground, and at the last moment, you lunge, putting all of your power behind one punch. It lands directly between the beast's eyes. The wolf yelps and staggers backward, its fury, and its advantage, suddenly gone. With its tail between its legs, it hurries off into the forest.

You approach the small child, who looks up at you through her tears and smiles. "Nice doggy!" she says as you pick her up. You turn to find yourself once again surrounded by the townspeople.

Turn to **152**.



Locating the tavern isn't difficult. You merely head toward the noise.

Inside, the inn is loud and smoky, filled with raucous laughter and shouting. The tables are crowded with people, and from the looks of them, not the more reputable citizens. There is a place to check your weapons at the door. Kuda leaves his ax, but you're certain a fair number of knives and swords have still found their way inside.

You work your way to the bar, and Kuda elbows a space between two rough characters leaning against the rail. As rough as they seem, neither challenges him. "Barkeep!" Kuda calls.

The burly bartender stops cleaning a mug and approaches you. You notice he wears a much-scarred cudgel on a wrist thong. "What is it?" he snaps.

Kuda lays a coin on the bar. "Information."

Someone suddenly taps you on the shoulder. You can smell the ale-heavy breath even before you turn and see the glaze in the man's eye and the numbed expression on his face. The drunk is a full head taller than you are and twice your weight. You notice that he didn't check his mace at the door. "Father," he addresses you in a slurred voice. "I have sinned mightily, and now I need forgiveness. You will forgive me, won't you, Father?"

You swallow hard. In your present condition, you can

barely form words, let alone pretend to perform absolution in a bar. You must concentrate. Your disguise is on the line.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as a man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, go to **133**. If it's less, turn to **60**.

172

The wall nearest you suddenly begins to melt, and through the resulting fissure steps your nemesis, Vlachos, accompanied by a figure in regal garb and crown. The stink of the doppelganger is already in your nostrils as the tyrant Regis begins to shift, changing form as another might change his clothes.

"So you brought your puppet, eh, wizard?" you say with feigned casualness.

Zaret squints through his nearly sightless eyes at them. "I sense a book," he says urgently. "Is he carrying a book?"

"Yes."

"The Tome of Time!" the old wizard stammers. "It belonged to my ancestors. It is the key to his power!"

Vlachos sneers. "You talk too much, little worm!" A searing bolt shoots from his fingertips and bowls the small wizard over. You leap to his defense, but Regis comes to the aid of his master, laughing and shifting once more, into a saber-toothed tiger. You tense yourself for its leap.

A dark form hurtles past you and lands astride the cat's broad back. "Never mind this one!" Kuda calls back, riding Regis like a bucking bronco while Keela rushes to help. "Get Vlachos!"

You face your adversary, the wolf's thirst for vengeance filling your throat. Will you attack as a man-wolf (**65**) or as a werewolf (**198**)?

173

Tentacles begin to snake from the metamorph's shoulders and wind around your throat. The barbs on their undersides bite into your flesh. You gasp for air, and your vision begins to darken. . . .

Suddenly a giant hand looms over you, blocking out the sun as it gingerly plucks the shape-shifter from you. The

minotaur pulls Regis down from the platform, screaming, and the other warriors in the arena cheer from their holding pens. They begin to break down their doors, and the audience flees in terror as the creatures attack the guards.

You turn toward Vlachos. "You're mine now, wizard!" you growl.

Turn to 70.

174

"If it's a battle you want, wolf cub," the sorcerer warns, "it's a battle you will get!"

You hear one of the guests on the platform scream. Until now, he and his companions had stood frozen in shock, but the sudden prospect of a battle between a sorcerer and a monster has finally loosed their tongues and their leg muscles. They stream toward the stairwell in panic, hurtling between you and Vlachos and obstructing the wizard's line of fire.

"Now's our chance!" you spur your wolf-self. You spring into the air, completely over the fleeing guests, landing right next to the stunned Vlachos. He makes a feeble attempt to defend himself, but you land a blow with your fist atop his skull and drive him to his knees, then seize him by the throat and lift him bodily into the air. "The cure!" you snarl.

He spits in your face. "Never!"

The wolf is growing too strong. "I don't . . . have . . . time to argue!" you stammer. You grab his forearm in your fang-rimmed jaws. "The curse . . . of the werewolf . . . eh, Vlachos?"

There is a sudden change in the old man's mocking features. You can almost smell his fear. "Very well!" he snaps. "Just put me down!"

You oblige, careful not to take your talons too far from his throat. The spindly little man works his magic and utters an incantation.

Nothing happens.

Your hand closes on the wizard's throat. "Give it time!" he squeaks. "It is only now starting to work!" He points to your arm and, sure enough, the hair there has started to

fall out in clumps. Your stature is diminishing, as are your muzzle and talons, until . . .

"Thank the gods," you stammer. "I'm human again! I'm normal!"

"Yes," says Vlachos, the fear gone from his voice and replaced with the same familiar menace. He glares at you. "Normal . . . and vulnerable. Let me see, what shall I do with you? I could turn you into a toad, or a bug to squash beneath my heel. Or I could simply burn you to a crisp where you stand. Even simpler, I could merely draw my blade and . . ." His face slackens when he finds the sheath on his belt empty.

"Looking for this?" you say with a smile, holding his stolen dagger up just long enough for him to recognize it before you drive it home. The wizard gasps and tries to utter a final spell even as he dies, but he fails to finish it.

Turn to 126.



175

Your palms are sweating as you enter the town. Several people on the street at you. *It's just the disguise*, you tell yourself. *You look strange—how did you expect them to react?* Besides, if they knew how you *really* look, they'd be running away.

Or running toward you. With torches and clubs.

Pay them no attention, you tell yourself. *Just mind your own business.*

The heavy sash encumbers your breathing, but it has no

such affect on your ability to follow Sonder. His stench is everywhere, like a heavy pall in the air, strong enough to nearly turn your stomach. What is wrong with the man that he should smell so bad? Maybe he's sick—or maybe it isn't him at all. Maybe your nose is too sensitive now, so finely tuned that normal smells and odors are blown way out of proportion. That would explain why none of the townspeople seem conscious of the reek.

You sift through the lingering scents, pick out the freshest trail, and follow it down the street to the local tavern. There you sniff again. The stench is so strong that you almost retch. You step onto the porch and pass the swinging doors.

It's like stepping into a room full of smoke. The air itself is clear, but the stink of Sonder is so great inside that your olfactory senses are almost overwhelmed. Your nose will do you little good in here. You feel strangely handicapped, almost as if you were human again. You pick your way through the maze of empty tables and take a seat near a corner, where you will have a good view of the room.

There are six people in the room, not counting the double-chinned barkeep and a petite serving girl. Five of the men appear to be farmers, with sun-bronzed skin and a look of independence, though the tyranny of Regis has dimmed much of the latter. The sixth man, however, is no farmer. You cannot identify him, for, like yourself, he is swathed in a black cloak and hides his face within a shadowy hood.

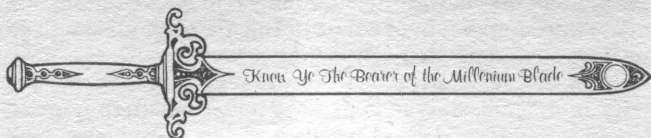
Sonder! It has to be!

Tense with rage, you step past the serving girl and her proffered mug of ale and start across the room. There is a tingling at the nape of your neck. An alarm of some sort? Yes . . . the wolf is sensing something. Danger, and nearby. Not from the hooded man; he's too far away. It's coming from . . .

No! It can't be! Your senses must be confused by Sonder's stink.

. . . the serving girl?

If you choose to accost the mystery man in the dark cloak, turn to **129**. If you decide to trust your confused senses, turn to the girl and go to **89**.



176

You stick out a hand to halt Kuda. "I sense danger nearby. Move silently," you whisper.

The corridor opens into a larger hall ahead, and it is there that you sense someone's presence. You pad softly to a corner of the hall and peer around it.

What you see is an ornate door, a massive panel with inlaid gold and intricate bronze leafwork. Two figures flanking the door command your attention. Each is dressed in black, from head to foot, including the half-mask that conceals much of their faces. They stand perfectly rigid, like unmoving shadows. "Ninjas?" you whisper.

"Actually, they're Dark Moon assassins—renegade monks from far-off Belgard," Kuda replies. "They were involved in an attempted coup of neighboring Kania some time back, but their plans were thwarted and their order scattered. Now they have hired themselves out as mercenaries. I have seen their kind of fighting before. Against their martial arts, Feral, I'm afraid we're badly out-matched."

"We'll see," you say confidently. Without another word, you step around the corner.

Turn to **23**.

177

Suddenly something seizes you by the throat from behind, lifting you, kicking, into the air. You twist about to see your attacker.

A treant! The strange treelike creature draws its root from the ground and holds you at limb's length, laughing chaotically. And as you watch, a face begins to form in the barklike flesh.

The face of Sonder!

“What’s wrong, pup?” it sneers mockingly. “Haven’t you ever seen a doppelganger before?”

The werewolf within you panics and surges to the fore, and you slice bloody gouges in the treant’s bark, but its grip is too strong. As your vision darkens, you hear Kuda coming just before you black out, but you realize it’s too late. . . . ✕

178

You climb down from the platform, noting that Regis’s followers have either surrendered to the arena combatants or thrown in with them after seeing who or what it was they served. The reign of tyranny is over.

You rush to Hester’s side with the vial. Her wounds are severe, her breathing shallow. “Hester, you can’t die!” you whisper to her. “Don’t give up—not now!” You put the potion to her lips.

Her breathing stops. “No!” you plead.

The minotaur leans over both of you and points to the mortal wounds in her side. Immediately they begin to heal at an incredible speed, and the scar tissue that forms over them is human, not reptilian. Her scales are starting to shed, and her coiled tail slowly transforms into shapely human legs. Her breathing returns, soft and steady, and when at last her eyes open, she sees you and smiles.

You give the vial to the minotaur and send him to share it with the other monster-men as Kuda comes to join you. He is bloodied from his fight with the guards but doesn’t appear to be hurt seriously. “Now what, Feral?” he asks.

You help Hester to her feet and smile. “Now we go home!” ✕

179

You dive for the vial, sliding across the rough wood on your stomach and reaching out into space. But your clumsy fingers fumble with it helplessly, and the vial falls beyond your grasp.

You sink back onto the platform, sobbing, knowing that the transformation to full wolf will complete itself very

soon. You wonder how you will feel as a wolf. What kind of life will you have? Will you even have the consciousness to realize it?

A low, guttural sound comes from below the platform and slowly forms the word "Friend." You look to see the minotaur's hand lifted up toward you, and in it rests the lost vial. There is almost a quarter of the precious fluid still left!

You take the glass tube and put it to your lips.

Nothing happens—at least not immediately. But just as your spirits begin to sag and you start to contemplate life as a wolf once again, you notice the hair coming off your arms in clumps, and from your shoulders and legs as well. As you eagerly pull the fur from your face, you notice that your muzzle is gone and your fangs and even your talons have vanished! You are a man again!

Turn to 178.

180

You attack the wizard like a whirlwind, channeling all of the anger and frustration and fear that you've built up into an icy white rage. Vlachos, for all his immense power and size, still retreats from you.

"What's wrong, godling?" you taunt. "Can't a god deal with one such as I?"

"I *am* a god!" Vlachos roars, more to convince himself than you. He lashes out with lightning and fireballs, all of which you manage to evade, and you note with satisfaction that he is not as large as before. The self-doubts you've instilled are working against him. *Now, you decide, while he is vulnerable!*

Your leap carries you high into the air, close enough to land a punishing kick to the giant's chest with all your strength.

The blow rocks the wizard from his feet, and he stumbles backward, right into the central ceiling support, and the stone shatters beneath his weight. The ceiling caves in with a roar, and you barely make it to the doorway ahead of a hundred tons of rock.

Turn to 220.



181

You find the armed contingent a few miles out of town, traveling along the edge of a forest. You count ten of them, including the boy. One is a balding old man in a traveling cloak, and the rest are soldiers. Their plumed helmets and polished armor make you chuckle. *Toy soldiers, more for marching than fighting*, you think. You give your horse a nudge. *This should be easier than I thought.*

“Stay your ground!” warns the hawkish leader as you approach. You ignore him and rein your horse near Juett’s son. “Go home, boy!” you order him as you eye the others. The boy doesn’t move. “I said go home!” You slap his mount, and the startled beast bolts for home.

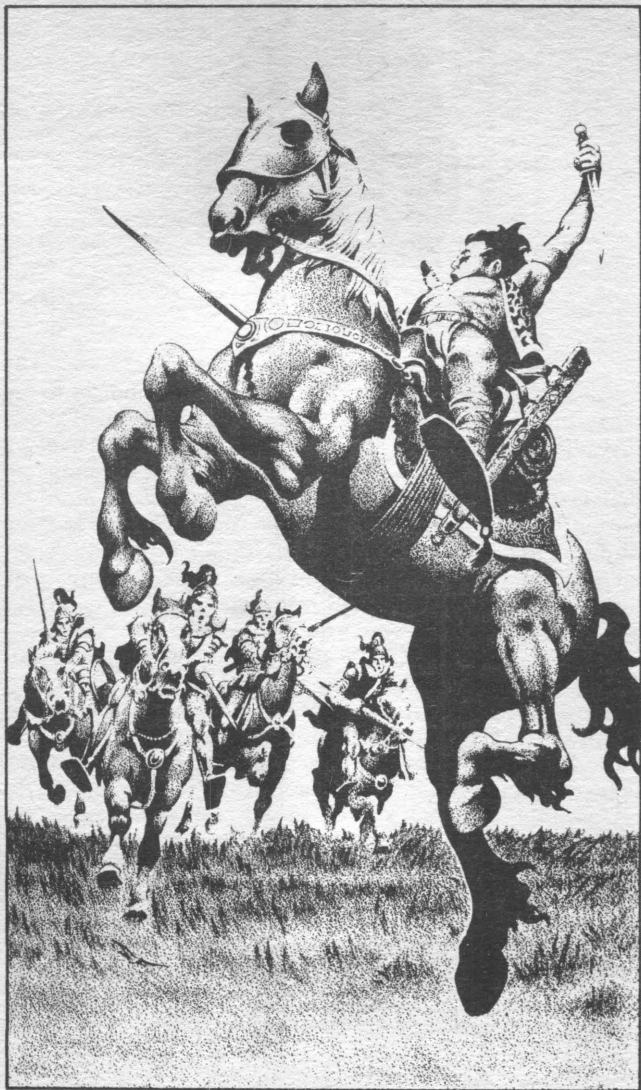
A few soldiers move to intercept Juett, but those who do suffer the flat of your father’s blade. “Call your men back!” you warn after toppling three men from their mounts. “Next time I will not be so merciful.”

“Oh, my!” marvels the robed old man mockingly. “He has spirit, eh, Sonder?”

The hawk-nosed leader sneers, displaying yellow, rotten teeth. “He’s nothing. My men will—”

“Your men will do nothing! This is a warrior, you fool, not some simple farm boy. He’d cut them to ribbons.” The old man turns and smiles at you. “I am called Vlachos. And you?”

“Feral,” you answer arrogantly, “son of . . .” You decide



not to complete the thought. Your father is dead. It is time his mantle was handed down. "I am Feral . . . the Wolf."

"The wolf, is it?" Vlachos ponders the title, then shrugs. "So be it." He waves a hand.

Instantly you feel pain—burning, blinding, unrelenting. You feel as if your blood is boiling to steam, as if your bones are warping and snapping and protruding through the skin. It's almost as if you are being kneaded, stretched, re-shaped like clay beneath a sculptor's hand. You lurch from the saddle, and your pony bolts, leaving you to writhe in the grass in agony.

And far away, through the haze of pain, you swear you can hear a wolf howling.

Turn to 50.

182

You slash out at the dire wolf and pummel it, your arms like whirlwinds in the grip of your berserk fury. The wolf backs away and you pursue it, the reek of blood in your nostrils, the taste of victory on your tongue.

The wolf backs closer and closer to the precipice. You roar, invigorated at the prospect of another melee, but the sound must unnerve the great beast. It backs out over the edge, right out into empty air, and falls kicking and yowling to the valley far below.

"No!" you yell at the sight of your prey being snatched from you. "The kill was mine! Mine!" You howl and stalk restlessly about the plateau, looking for something, anything to kill, to rend and tear and bite. . . .

A dark form slips into your path, and you raise your talons to strike, but something stops you. You find yourself looking into the eyes of the wolf-girl, and the uncontrollable rage of the werewolf suddenly fades. "Calm yourself," she says, her voice soft and lilting, like music to your ear. "Come back to me. Refuse the wolf and come back." She takes your hand in hers as it reverts, like the rest of you, to its normal man-wolf state.

Subtract 2 experience points for the strain of the transformation and the wolf's fury.

The wolf-girl grins sheepishly at you, and you can't de-

cide whether she's beautiful despite her wolfish air or because of it. "Just who are you?" you ask. Turn to 207.

183

You grimace at the intense pain but manage somehow to fight your way through the shower of lightning. You can't see Vlachos through the flashes and sparks, but you sense his presence. He is near. . . .

You flail outward blindly and are surprised when your talons make contact. They slice through something, and the lightning abruptly stops. You blink yellow spots from your eyes to see Vlachos teetering on the edge of the platform, clutching a gaping wound in his stomach and glaring at you. Then his eyes glaze over. As he falls backward, dead, the half-full vial slips from his nerveless fingers.

"No!" you shout.

You dive for the vial, but you're too late. It shatters on the platform, and your soul cries out as the precious fluid seeps between the cracks.

Turn to 205.

184

Snarling, you launch your body across the tiny cell and slam into the guard. The sword flies from his grip as well as coins from his tunic pocket, which jingle across the floor and out into the corridor. In the midst of the struggle, you fall against the open door. The ominous sound of its slamming shut brings the battle to a sudden halt.

Kuda checks the door. His expression tells you that it's locked. "Well?" you snap at the jailer. "Get it open!"

He fumbles at his belt. "My keys . . . they're gone! I must've dropped 'em somewhere."

"You did," Kuda sighs, pointing through the barred window. "Out there."

You rush to the door. Sure enough, the keys are out there, lying near his sword and a handful of coins. "Glory be!" he whispers fearfully. "There ain't a change of the guard for another four days!"

Kuda looks at you frantically. "Can you hold out that long?"

The admission of defeat you feel inside only hurries the transition. "No," you tell him, just before the wolf takes over, and your quest—as the human Feral, at least—comes to an end. ✘



185

You strain against the stout pillars, pitting every fiber of your being into the effort, but you are too exhausted. You sink to your knees in defeat. Subtract 1 experience point.

Suddenly there is a commotion from the holding pens. You hear guards yelling and screaming. You look up to see Kuda running toward you, dodging arrows as he runs. Behind him, the minotaur and all of the other creatures head out into the arena. It's a revolt!

The creatures help you to your feet and gather around you at the platform base. Then, as one, you all begin to strain against the columns. Immediately you hear a loud crack. The main support splinters, and the entire platform begins to shake. You and the others barely reach safety before the whole platform comes crashing down. Turn to 8.

186

The guards take you to the barracks outside the arena, where you and Kuda are assigned cells and shackled to

your bunks.

"Oh, new fighters," says a decidedly feminine voice from the next cell. You move as far as the chains will let you and discover a beautiful girl staring back at you through the bars. "Welcome, my friends, to Vlachos's Circus of the Bizarre."

"My name is Feral the Wolf," you tell her. "The wizard has a sick sense of humor, it seems."

"No need to tell me," she says. "My name is Hes-s-s-ster." She averts her eyes in shame, but you have seen that they are slitted and decidedly reptilian-looking. "I was a pick-pocket in the streets of Carilon, and some said I was as slippery as a serpent. The wizard didn't think prison was enough of a punishment, so. . . ." She begins to sob and stands back away from the bars so you can see that her shapely torso alters into a serpentlike trunk.

You reach out to her through the bars. "I know how you feel, Hester. Don't cry. I'll find us a way out of this. I swear." You turn back to Kuda, jailed on the other side of you. "This has gone far enough!" you declare emphatically. "Vlachos must be stopped!" You sit down on the edge of your bunk, take your shackles in your hands, and pit your wolfen muscle against them.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 113. If it is less, go to 14.

187

The power of the Millennium Blade thrums in your hand. Becoming the werewolf would forfeit the blade's power, just when you need it most. You face Vlachos, man-wolf versus man-god. Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. Add 2 for the Millennium Blade. If the total is 25 or more, turn to 180. If it's less, turn to 57.

188

The townspeople mill around the fallen doppelganger, stares of disbelief shifting from the creature to you as you revert to your man-wolf state. Subtract 1 experience point

for the strain of the change.

"It was a creation of the same wizard that cursed me," you explain.

"Vlachos!" the mayor breathes, and all nod in agreement. "We know of him. That's why we were suspicious of you—we thought you were one of his minions. Please accept our apologies."

"Are you searching for this Vlachos?" a soft voice interrupts. It's the real serving girl this time. She pushes through the crowd, carrying your sword and cloak, still sporting a lump on her head from when Sonder took her place. "I am called Miri. I have heard the soldiers tell tales in their drunken reveries. They are in fear of Vlachos, I assure you—more than they fear the king himself!"

"Did they say where Vlachos lives?" Kuda interjects.

The girl nods. "In the royal city of Carilon, in the palace itself. At least as far as I know. Follow the road. It will take you to the very gates of the city." She gives you the sword and cloak and then kisses your cheek. Beneath your fur, you blush. "Godspeed to you, brave warriors," she wishes you hopefully.

"Aye," says the mayor. "Providence be with you."

Kuda holds his prancing mount steady while you climb up behind him. "You will not see me again," you call to the crowd, then wink at the girl. "At least not looking like this. Farewell." Then Kuda gives the pony a jolt and you leave Hodson's Bend at a fast gallop.

Turn to 24.

189

On the far side of the basilisk's lair, you come upon a small town not unlike Mennan. On first sight, it appears equally as lifeless. "Should we check it out?" Kuda asks after hiding the basilisk's egg for safekeeping.

You shrug. From here on, Mot Zaret's instructions were very vague. Where does one find a treasure that can't be purchased or stolen?

Suddenly someone in the town screams, and your decision is made for you. "It sounds like trouble!" Kuda says, but you are already running down the slope, unmindful of

your appearance and how the townspeople may react to it. Someone is in trouble, and for the moment, that is all that matters.

You head straight into the middle of the town. Its single street is empty, but your sensitive ears pick up a woman's sobbing from one of the buildings that line the street. "My baby!" she wails. "Where is my baby?"

Abruptly a door opens. "There is the creature that took your baby!" calls an angry-looking young man. He is pointing at you. "There's the monster!"

People stream through the doorway, what seems to be the entire town in one angry, seething mob, cursing and waving any weapon within reach. You hardly have time to react before the wave of bodies overtakes you and pulls you, kicking and scratching, to the ground. Kuda, only a few steps behind you, is captured as well. "Monster!" one of the men shouts, pounding at you with his fists. "Where is my daughter? What have you done with my daughter?"

Someone else comes running up, a young boy. "I heard her!" he yells. "I heard Betheny screaming! The sound came from the edge of the woods at the other end of town!" He pulls one of the men by the sleeve, urging him to follow. Betheny's father and mother follow as well, and soon half the mob is running after him. The weight on you is considerably less. You can throw the rest of the townspeople off with a mighty shrug and free Kuda as well. But what of the girl? What of Betheny?

If you decide to escape while you can, go to **63**. If you choose to look for the girl, turn to **100**.

190

You turn, expecting an attack but not so quickly. There is a sudden bright flash that blinds you, and then the wizard's force bolt strikes home, tossing you into the air and off the edge of the platform.

You know immediately that the fall is fatal. You can't move; you can only watch as Vlachos stalks down from the platform, reveling in his triumph and eager to finish you off.

"You did surprisingly well, son of Agnor," he says with

grudging respect. "You have revealed my plans and trampled them beneath your heel. But I will have the last laugh!" He mutters a brief spell under his breath and waves his arms in the air, and you wonder just what kind of death he has planned for you.

Suddenly Vlachos screams, and you crane your neck painfully to see just why. You see Hester coiled about his legs, her teeth sunk deep into his thigh. The wizard hasn't even time to retaliate, her venom works so quickly. Within seconds, the mighty Vlachos is as stiff as a board.

Turn to 28.

191

You travel the tunnel for what seems like hours. By the time you emerge from a densely wooded hillside, it is daytime. "Where are we?" Kuda asks.

"We've been traveling south all night," you say, looking about. "These territories are unexplored, as near as I can remember."

A roar builds somewhere nearby, low in the earth, then exploding to the surface like a volcano. Even the trees seem to shake. "That wasn't our basilisk, was it?" Kuda asks.

Holding your torch high, you follow the reverberations of the roar through the woods. They lead to a rift in the forest floor from which steam escapes in ever-rising clouds. There is no doubt in your mind what to do. With your sword clenched between your teeth, you descend into the pit.

The clouds of steam obscure your view until you are almost to the bottom. There you find the pit floor littered with small figurines of squirrels, rabbits, and snakes, all carved from solid stone.

"This is no artisan's work," Kuda observes, holding up a statue of a stirge with wings still spread in midflight. "These were living creatures once—the victims of the basilisk!"

"Shhh!" you motion, putting a hand to your ear. "Something's coming!"

The pit intersects with an east-west passage, and it is from the east that you have picked up a flapping sound,

rhythmic and multiplied by hundreds and growing steadily closer. You look at the stirge in Kuda's hands and envision an entire flock of the blood-drinkers bearing down on you.

But there is something stirring in the western tunnel as well. Your hypersensitive hearing can pick up the scrape of a scaly hide on rock and the low rumble of a reptilian throat. The basilisk! It is coming as well.

Which will you face first—the basilisk (45) or the stirges (140)?



192

You teeter unsteadily on your feet. The world will not stop spinning, and the soldiers are getting closer. *Don't give up!* the wolf tells you. *Fight to the end!* But you are more rational in judging the situation. What you want most, you admit, is to get at Vlachos. And if you surrender, what will the soldiers do? Take you to the kingdom, to this "arena" they mentioned . . . and to Vlachos! Live to fight another day, your more human side counsels.

You raise your arms in surrender.

The soldiers immediately surround you, a row of blades suddenly pressed at your throat. Then the smirking Sonder approaches and, without a word, cuffs you viciously in the head. "What do you have to say now, puppy?"

“Only this,” you say and land a sudden kick to his stomach that lays him low. Immediately a mace explodes on the back of your skull, but it was worth it.

Sonder snarls between wheezes. “You will regret that, whelp!”

Subtract 1 hit point from your total and turn to 64.

193

As you make your move, the wizard flips open his tome and frantically reads spell after spell, sending flames and lightning and plumes of poisonous gas at you. You evade each and work your way steadily closer, till the wizard can almost feel your hot breath on his face.

“No!” he cries, flipping pages, too panicky to even read them. “I will destroy you! *I will destroy you!*”

You spring at him and slash out, knocking the book from his hands, then seizing him by his scrawny throat. He gasps as you lift him off the ground and poise your talons, ready to strike.

The saber-toothed tiger pauses in midbattle and shifts back to Regis II. “Don’t harm the master!” he beseeches. “I beg you!”

“I will not beg!” Vlachos hisses. “Kill me now, wolf! Let it be done!”

Your talons inch closer, so close that they prick the wizard’s skin, but somehow you manage to hold them at bay. “I . . . am not . . . a wolf,” you stammer, fighting back the rage. “I . . . am . . . a . . . man!” You push the wizard away from you, and the werewolf’s fury subsides. “I don’t need to kill you, Vlachos. You’re already beaten!” You turn your back on him and start to leave.

Your senses tingle immediately. You turn even as Vlachos’s dagger scrapes your side. The wolf reacts with a flash of razor talons. First the wizard’s dagger hits the ground, and then the wizard himself, dead.

Subtract 1 experience point and turn to 18.

194

The minotaur stalks toward you slowly. It appears confused. *It’s now or never*, you decide.

You walk toward the creature and speak in a low voice that no one else will hear. "I do not want to fight you, and I don't think you want to fight me." It nods. "Were you human once?"

The minotaur nods once more.

"You were. Have I met you before?"

It nods its head and turns enough for you to see the raw lash wounds across its shoulders. Of course! The eyes! It's the minotaur you saved last night!

"Archers!" calls Regis from the platform. "If they don't fight, shoot them down!"

"I'm afraid we must put up a show," you tell the minotaur. It snorts. Whether it understands or not, you can't tell. You can only hope.

You circle the beast, growling and snapping, leaping at it menacingly, and the minotaur does the same. The act won't fool them for long; you must make your move soon. You work your way gradually toward the platform. . . .

Suddenly the minotaur surges forward, bellowing madly. Its monstrous hands seize you and lift you high over its head, ready to dash you against the ground. The attack is so sudden that there is nothing you can do about it.

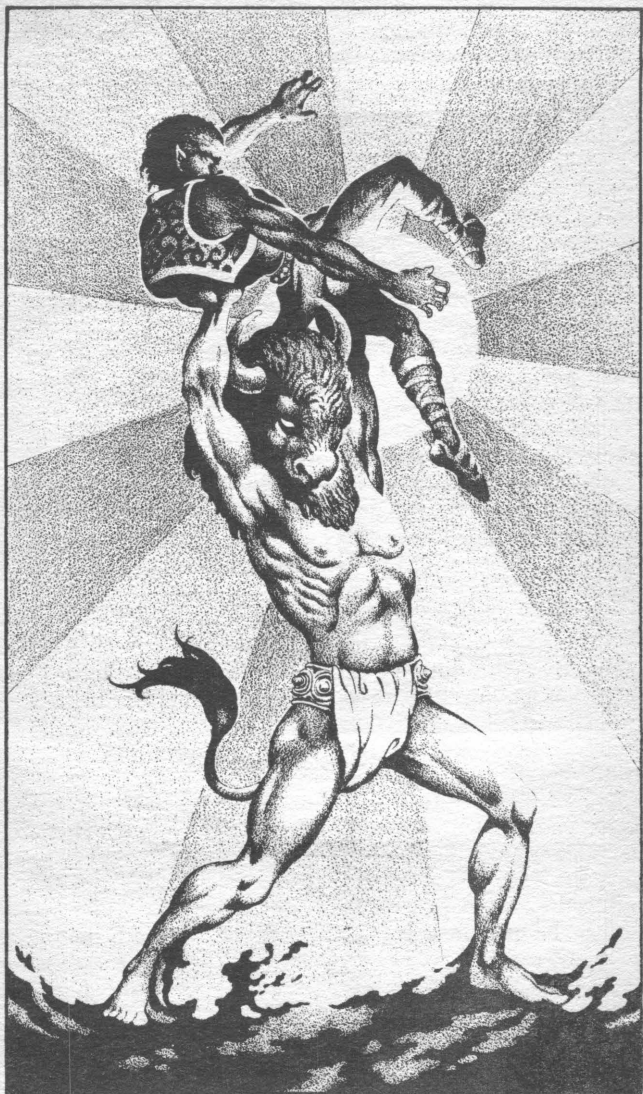
Turn to 157.

195

The Mount of Lies, you find, is little more than a tall mound of earth upon which sheep graze untended and a quaint cottage stands empty. You break the latch and swing the door open on protesting hinges.

Clouds of dust swirl into the air, sparkling in the moonlight that spills through the window. Indeed, a film of dust covers nearly everything in the cabin—the mantle, the single table, the three legged stool, the plank flooring. "No one's been here for a long time," Keela says with a shrug.

"My senses say otherwise," you say, sniffing the air. "The scent is recent here." You inspect the floor and find a faint trail through the settled dust. It leads halfway across the room, then vanishes. You probe the planking near where it ends with one talon and pry loose a trapdoor leading to the cellar. Kuda retrieves a lamp from the mantle; there is a



small amount of oil still left in it. He lights it and holds it above the open cellar door.

"Treasure!" Keela gasps.

You drop into the cellar, with Gieryn right after you, to inspect piles of ornaments and books and relics only a scholar could identify.

"I don't like the looks of it," Gieryn says. "I sense evil connected to these things." He spies the only empty corner in the cellar, where the floor opens into a shaft with a ladder that plunges into darkness. "Of course! It makes sense now," Gieryn goes on. "Vlachos somehow found the caverns beneath the mount, where the Mages of Eternity kept their stores—"

"—and he started to loot them," you conclude. "At least, until he found something capable of turning a shepherd into a master sorcerer."

A sword in one of the piles catches your eye, its wondrous blade reflecting the lamplight. The steel is inscribed. It reads, "KNOW YE THE BEARER OF THE MILLENIUM BLADE." In your hand, it is feather-light and thrums with power. You take it as your own, and offer your sword to Kuda. "Your ax might be too large to wield in the caverns below."

"Below?" Gieryn gasps. "You're going below?"

"I am, too," Keela tells her brothers, "and so would you if you had any gumption at all." She looks at the lamp. "Not much oil left. We'll need some torches."

Turn to 11.

196

Kuda hobbles his horse and sets it to graze away from the road, then returns with a bundle from his pack. "Remember how we sneaked into Khafi during the border wars?" he asks.

"We dressed as priests."

"I saved my robes. Here, put them on, and pull that cowl down over your face. Keep your hands inside the sleeves as well. It wouldn't do for anyone to glimpse that fur, would it?"

You disguise yourself in the billowing robes, concealing

your sword inside the folds, against your chest. "We'll never make it through," you mutter.

"We'll see. Now, walk!"

You approach the gate, feeling the sentries' stares burning into you even at a distance. Could they be shape-shifters as well? You sniff the air but notice nothing unusual.

"Hold there, ax-wielder!" orders the head sentry, waving his sword imperiously. "I'll just take your weapon. Now, what business have you in Carilon, and with a rag-tag priest as well?" He nudges a second guard and motions him toward you. Your hand tightens on your sword hilt inside your robe.

"The cleric was summoned by Regis himself," Kuda says casually.

"I was not told of this."

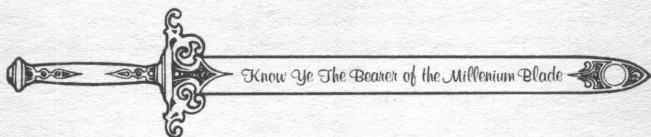
"And I was not aware that the king needed your permission, soldier. It makes no difference to me, mind you, except that his majesty seemed quite insistent—something about torturing a disrespectful sentry to death and needing absolution. . . ."

Both guards halt in their tracks and swallow hard, exchanging worried looks. "Enter, then, if that's the way it is. Perhaps I can send word to the palace of your coming? . . ."

"No need, my son," you whisper, motioning with one sleeve. "The king will know soon enough."

"But I insist," the soldier says firmly. "As a matter of fact, I'll escort you myself." He preens for a moment, straightening his uniform and armor at the thought of presenting guests to the king. "Come along." He leads you through the gate and into the streets of Carilon.

Turn to 117.



197

The pen doors swing open, and two orcs emerge onto the playing field. Each of the swine-faced warriors is heavily armed. The bigger of the two carries a battle-ax, while the smaller unsheaths twin daggers. Both look like veterans of the arena, their many scars offering testament.

You know you can't afford to face them as the wolf. The wolf could be easily outwitted by two such experienced opponents. You turn to the platform for a weapon. In laughing response, Regis throws down a length of chain—the chain from your shackles last night.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 17. If it's less, go to 139.

198

You let your sword drop as the wolf comes over you, stronger now than ever before. You feel yourself growing to almost seven feet, your arms and hands and talons lengthening and your face stretching to lupine proportions. Even Vlachos is taken aback at how powerful you have become under his spell.

"S-Stay back!" Vlachos stammers, pointing a hand at you that still glows from blasting Mot Zaret. The wolf responds by growling deep in its throat. Here, finally, is the enemy. With your anger building to a molten fury, you pounce!

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the werewolf, adding 1 point for your wolfen fury. If the total is 25 or more, turn to 193. If it's less, turn to 138.

199

You and Kuda glide along the top of the palace like shadows, camouflaged by the midnight sky. Torches flicker below like fireflies as the search for you continues.

"Feral!" Kuda calls you toward the rear of the palace. There, some twenty feet below, is a wide, open balcony. Double doors stand slightly ajar. You motion for your friend to stay behind while you drop silently to the balcony and peer through the door. The sleeping chamber is empty. At

your signal, Kuda leaps down. Despite his size, you manage to catch him.

You pass through the room cautiously and put your ear to the door at the far side. You hear voices moving past, shouting orders to "Triple the king's personal guard, and Lord Vlachos's as well!" You wait until the voices have faded, then peer into the hall. It's empty.

"We can't get to Vlachos and Regis," you tell Kuda as you seek out the servants' stairs at the rear of the palace. "Nor can we get out of the city, with the guards alerted. So there's only one place we can go."

"One place?"

"The only place where they won't expect us—the dungeon!" Kuda's jaw drops. "Think, old friend. Where better to find allies, to stir up a revolt, to . . ." You snap your fingers. "To find a wizard! If Vlachos holds any power at all, he's bound to have imprisoned any wizards who offered competition."

"And if we find them," Kuda finishes, "we might get your curse lifted! It's worth a shot, Feral!" Turn to 5.

200

You keep expecting some sort of pain or warm sensation, anything that would suggest the change is occurring. But nothing happens. You can still feel the wolf within you.

You open your eyes and find yourself looking into Keela's own gaze, and in that moment you feel your disappointment wash away. "You said you could teach me how to control the wolf?"

She smiles. "It will take time."

"I have plenty of that."

Something catches your eye across the chamber. You walk to where the crown of Regis II lies, dented and dirty, on the floor. You look at the sobbing shape-shifter. He won't be needing it. Instead you take it to your friend Kuda and place it atop his noble brow. "Rule your people well."

"You mean your people, don't you?"

Taking Keela's hand, you smile. "Once, but not anymore. Now her people are mine!" You pick up the Heart of the Wolf and start out for your new home. ❖



201

Worried now, Vlachos casts a spell of Paralysis at you, but it is hastily intoned and the effect is dampened. It barely slows you down.

“Regis!” Vlachos orders. “Attack him now! Protect your master!”

The sobbing of the changeling turns to a growl as he looks up at you, rage in his eyes. The urge to kill that has haunted you for days is plainly visible on the creature’s face as it bunches itself to spring.

You brace yourself to evade the charge, but your reflexes are sluggish from the Paralysis spell. The wolf hits you full force, and its fangs sink deep into your flesh. The dagger slips from your numbing fingers as you drift into blackness. . . . ✕

202

You cannot overcome the wolf’s natural, instinctive urge to strike out at an obvious threat. Your talons flash at the attacker, tearing at its snarling face, but they find only air instead. In response, a barbed tentacle rips into the flesh of your back, wringing a howl of pain and rage from your

throat. Roll one die to determine damage. If it's 1-3, subtract 4 hit points; if it's 4-6, subtract 2 hit points.

You roll away from the beast, unable to tell if you are truly moving away from it or not. Your senses are flooded with pain, and you have no choice but to retreat. Helping the stunned Kuda to his feet, you hurry back down the passageway. The displacer gives chase, but you lose it by reaching the three-way split in the tunnel and ducking into the low passageway.

Subtract 1 experience point and turn to 2.

203

You try to force the wolf to leave the fight, but you can only manage a halfhearted attempt. The thrill the melee brings is just too strong. Deep down, you are frightened. It's as if you are *becoming* the wolf.

Kuda is at your side suddenly, trying to draw you toward the door. You almost knock him reeling, but recognition finally pierces your clouded mind. "Feral, we have to go!" he all but yells in your ear. "Soldiers will be here before long. . . ."

You hear someone whistle, and the door suddenly shatters inward. The soldiers are already here.

The rest of the bar brigands retreat from the bar in confusion. Suddenly you and Kuda are facing the soldiers alone. "By the gods!" exclaims the captain when he sees you. "It's true! A monster has escaped from the arena! Take him—alive if you can!"

The soldiers surge forward in a solid mass of kicking and punching muscle. But the battle spirit is still strong within you, and you shrug them off like shaking water from your pelt. The soldiers themselves are your greatest weapons as you send them reeling back into their own comrades, tumbling them like dominoes. The wolf laughs inside you; it is time it bared its talons. . . .

You turn to see Kuda held by three men, each with a dagger to his throat. "Surrender, or he dies!" the captain cries to you.

Never! the wolf decides, determined to renew its assault, but you mentally restrain it. *Do you want to get Kuda*

killed? you ask it. *We can do nothing!*

While you are arguing with yourself, a cudgel explodes at the base of your skull, sending pin-pricks of light dancing before your eyes. You sink to your knees, and another blow from the barkeep knocks you senseless. Subtract 3 hit points for your beating.

You hear the captain's voice, as if from far away, shout, "Take them to the palace!" You feel yourself lifted and dragged from the tavern.

Subtract 1 experience point and turn to **159**.

204

You attack what was once Regis the shape-shifter before it can become completely accustomed to its new form. You tackle the beast barehanded, and it takes all of your battle experience just to stay clear of those ever-lengthening talons.

"Blast you, Regis!" curses Vlachos. "Get out of the way! I can't cast a spell without hitting you!" But the wolf is too engrossed in the struggle to listen.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as Feral the warrior. If the total is 22 or more, turn to 51. If it's less, turn to 116.

205

You sink to your knees, feeling yourself slipping away. "No! N-N—" you try to stammer but your voice is gone and comes out as a pitiful whine. You can feel your body changing for the last time, surpassing all previous transformations and completing the transformation of man into wolf. Feral, son of Agnor, simply ceases to exist, and only the wolf remains. . . . ✕

206

You are led outside to a large arena, enclosed in a huge tent. At least the tent will shelter you from the maddening rays of the moon.

The two of you are taken to the center of the arena, unchained, and left to face an empty grandstand and a thirty-foot platform. Atop the latter is a throne, a banquet table,

and seating for guests, though the only persons there now are Regis II and Vlachos and a small cadre of personal guards.

Vlachos walks to the rail and throws down two shortswords. "My friends, your opponent awaits you." He motions toward a holding gate at the far end of the arena.

The doors open, and out stalks a nightmare. Its shape is bull-like, yet it's twice as big as any bull you have ever seen, and its hide is covered with reptilian scales. It snorts and paws the ground, hate glowing in its eyes.

The gorgon roars a challenge, and immediately your wolfen side answers. It is straining to get loose and fight, but you wonder how effective it could be against this armored monster.

Roll two dice and add the result to your physical skill score as the man-wolf to see if you're strong enough to refuse the werewolf. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 13. If it is less, turn to 107.

207

Before the girl can speak, there is a sudden movement on the far side of the mesa. Two figures climb into view, each dark furred and muscular and carrying a sturdy longbow and quiver. "Keela!" calls the larger of the two. "You had us scared to death! Are you all right?"

The wolf-girl runs to them and hugs each, then pulls them over to meet you. "I am Keela," she says, bowing her head modestly, "and these are my brothers, Gieryn and Lupus." She puts her arm around you. "This," she tells them, "is my savior."

You blush beneath your fur. "I was just trying to help. I am Feral, and this is my friend, Kuda." The three wolf people look at him strangely, and Kuda shifts his weight awkwardly.

"Excuse our stares," apologizes Gieryn, the smaller brother, "but we see so few bare-skinned people in these parts. Why are you here?"

"We are after a wizard," you say, peering off the cliff where the wolf's body disappeared into the valley below. "At least, we were. I suppose we'll have to keep looking."

"First you must come to our village," says Lupus, "at least to share a meal. After all, you saved our sister." He winks at Keela, and she blushes in reply.

Along the way, you talk to Gieryn at length about their people. "We are descended from men who were cursed, in the same manner as you, by an ancient cult called the Mages of Eternity. We are the twelfth generation since the curse."

"Originally our people were wild and violent," Keela explains, "but through the ages, we have developed ways of controlling our wolfish nature, just as I did for you." She takes your hand. "If you were to stay, I could teach you how."

"I don't want to control my wolf side," you tell her frankly. "I want to destroy it. I want to be human again."

Keela lowers her eyes and doesn't speak again till you've reached the village.

The wolf people's village is a nomadic settlement, made to move where the hunting is best. The homes are little more than circular, tentlike yurts with tanned hides stretched across collapsible lattice frames. In fact, the only things in sight not transportable are the stone-piled cooking ovens and the giant ebony statue of a wolf sitting in the center of the village.

"A statue?" you blurt out.

"That is our sacred altar to the Wolf God, Lar-Tal-Bot," explains Lupus. "We make a pilgrimage here each year to give thanks for a plentiful hunt."

"Feral," Kuda whispers. "Look at its chest!"

Your jaw goes slack. There, embedded in the chest of the statue, is a stone whose rainbow colors dazzle the eyes and mind. It doesn't just glow; it pulsates rhythmically, like something alive.

Like a heart—the heart of a wolf.

The entire village of wolf people turns out to greet you and congratulate you, and they even muster a smile or two for Kuda. You are fed again and again, and then ale is broken out, but you cannot seem to enjoy the festivities. Your thoughts remain on the statue.

As the day wanes, most of the remaining wolf people



busy themselves with cleaning up. Others have passed out from too much ale. You confer with Kuda. "We must have the Heart of the Wolf," you whisper, "even if we have to steal it! Time is growing short!"

"Isn't there some other way?" he wonders aloud. "Why don't you just ask for it? You're a hero to these people. Surely they will help."

"Maybe," you say, "but most people are fussy where their gods are concerned."

If you choose to ask for the stone, turn to **85**. If you decide to steal it, turn to **210**.

208

The sentries are expecting trouble, but they're not prepared for your maniacal attack. By the time Kuda joins the fracas, two of them are already down, and the others are fighting desperately to defend themselves.

Your nose wrinkles with the scent of blood, and suddenly you hear a great roaring in your ears. "No, not now!" The wolf is coming, flooding through you.

"No! I mustn't let it happen!" You try to fight it back, but it is just too strong. "No," you mutter, sinking to your knees as your voice becomes a growl.

Thud! Something hard slams into the back of your head, driving you to the ground, dizzying you but at the same time clearing the wolf from your mind. You look up to see Kuda, with two soldiers clinging to his middle and hauling him to the ground. Then the unseen object slams down on your head again and the world blackens.

Subtract 3 points from your hit point total.

You can still hear voices, speaking as if from miles away. "I say we kill them, especially this monster."

"No . . . the king will want to see them—alive. The arena, remember?"

You feel yourself lifted and dragged off toward the palace.

Subtract 1 experience point and turn to **159**.

209

You move toward the ankheg with the staff, feinting toward its head, but the insectlike creature doesn't move.

You feint again, this time for its abdomen, but there's still no response.

Wait a minute, you say to yourself. I'm presuming that this creature isn't intelligent. What if it is? What if it's planning to lure me into its embrace by not responding to my attacks? I'll have to be even more careful.

You circle the creature silently. Though its eyes follow you, their movement is not independent; they swivel only as the rest of the head moves. It's the creature's antennae that follow you the closest. That is how it watches you. The multilensed eyes can see, but their depth perception must be limited. The antennae are the creature's real advantage.

And its weakness, you decide.

You move in with your staff, striking repeatedly at the ankheg's head until you are so close that the creature has to move in self-defense. But at the last moment, you reverse your swing and sweep your staff hard against its multi-jointed legs. The creature screams eerily and scrambles to regain its balance. As it does, you move in close and, almost gently, rap its antennae with your staff.

The ankheg staggers sideways into the arena wall. You almost feel sympathy for the creature as it falls once more, then reaches up to preen its damaged feelers. You raise the staff over it but withhold the final death blow.

Vlachos comes to the platform rail. "Kill it!" he screams. You turn toward him, smile in triumph, and throw down your staff. The wizard scowls and signals the guards to drag the huge insect from the arena. "Bring on the next opponent!" he proclaims.

Add 1 point to either your experience point or hit point total for your victory. Now you must make a choice. You may remain and fight again in hopes of gaining additional points (123), or you can seize the opportunity to attack the platform (62).

210

You wait until almost dusk, when the shadows of night are just seeping into the village. It is a cloudy night, and the moon is not out.

You slip from the yurt and move like a shadow toward the statue and its pulsing heart. There is no one else around. *You must be quick, Feral, you tell yourself. Climb the statue, get the stone, and flee before they find out.*

For some reason, you think of Keela. You wonder how she will feel when she learns of your treachery. You shrug; it can't be helped. They would never let you have it willingly.

You climb up onto the ebon stone, skitter up its back and onto one rounded shoulder, then lean over to reach the glowing stone. *Hurry, you urge yourself, before someone comes!*

"Feral!" someone whispers urgently. "Feral, don't! You know not what you do!" It's Keela, staring wide-eyed at you from the base of the altar.

"I'm sorry, Keela," you tell her, "but I must have it!" You reach for the stone, and using your talons, you wrench it from its niche.

There is an instant tremor and the sound of grating rock fills your ears. You lose your grip and plummet to the ground. The grating does not stop, and this time it is mingled with Keela's screams. You look up to see the statue of Lar-Tal-Bot suddenly alive and moving toward you, its stone limbs creaking and jarring loose pebbles from its shoulders. You are so stunned that you cannot even move as a two-thousand-pound foot comes crashing down on you. ✕



The wolf is struggling within you, yearning to be free—now, immediately! Your lupine side tells you the window is your only choice.

You go to the window and peer outside. You are on the third floor of the building, but there's a ledge just below the window. You can follow it to the lower roofs of the palace itself!

In your eagerness, you rip the thin bars from the window and slip out onto the ledge, not realizing it is in the direct light of the moon. A blinding fire shoots through you as you stare up into the blazing lunar face.

You must make a saving throw against moonlight. Roll two dice and add the result to your remaining experience points. If the total is 12 or more, turn to **26**. If it's less, turn to **153**.

"Come on, then!" you taunt the troll. "Let's see what you can do!"

One of the heads snarls and the other chuckles. Both act in unison as they stalk you about the arena. It's like fighting two people, since each head controls a separate weapon. Whatever movement one doesn't see, the other does. You find that it's almost impossible to surprise them.

The club comes singing down, and you spring out of its way, but the net follows right behind it. You are scooped up and then slammed against the ground time after time. All of the fight leaves you. You can only hang there in your knotted prison as you are raised up to their fanged mouths. You're so numb from the beating that you barely feel their deadly bites. ✕

You are a warrior, and your teacher, your own father, was a legend among such men. Surely Agnor's instruction should enable you to deal with these devils.

You drop into a defensive stance that mimics the monks' own. You learn quickly. . . .

But the lessons are just beginning!

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score as the man-wolf. If the total is 23 or more, turn to **160**. If it's less, turn to **122**.

214

"I want Vlachos!" you say, trembling in anger. "I can feel myself slipping away to the wolf inside. I must stop him before it is too late!"

Turn to **176**.

215

You reach the gate at a run and don't pause to climb. Instead, you grab Kuda by the back of his collar and use your momentum to run right up the side of the gate! By the time gravity slows your ascent, you are already at the top. You drop to the other side as arrows whistle harmlessly overhead.

You turn to the crossbolt mechanism on the gate and, grabbing it with one hand, shear the pins from the heavy bolt. "That should hold them for a few minutes!" you say, even as the general alarm starts to sound.

"That does it!" Kuda moans. "We'll never reach the front gate now. They'll have every soldier in the garrison waiting for us!"

"Who said anything about the gate?" you say, pulling him toward the palace itself. "We're going to the dungeon!"

Kuda drags his heels. "Are you mad, Feral? That's exactly where they want us!"

"Ah, but the last place they would look. Besides, where better to find potential allies—perhaps even a sorcerer or two."

"Huh?"

"Surely Vlachos has had competitors. The dungeon is exactly where I'd expect to find them."

Kuda's face brightens with understanding. "And maybe one of these sorcerers can cure your affliction. It's a slim chance, Feral, but better than nothing at all. I'm with you."

You circle the palace, concealing yourselves in the topiary shrubs until you see an open window. Unfortunately the only one you find is three floors up.

“How do we manage that?” your friend sighs.

You move to the wall and check the stone, brushing back the soft mortar to give your talons better purchase. “Grab my neck and hang on!”

Kuda does so grudgingly. “I hope you know what you’re doing, Feral.” He buries his face in your shoulder.

Like a hairy spider, you scale the wall, panting from the warrior’s weight and the strain on your fingertips but not daring to stop. Twice sentries walk directly beneath you—you can feel their presence—but they don’t look up. *Hurry!* you urge yourself. This luck cannot hold out forever!

You reach the open window and cautiously peer over the sill. There’s no one there—just an empty hallway. You pull yourself in, and only after your feet are firmly on the floor does Kuda open his eyes. “That wasn’t so bad,” he says with a laugh.

“You want to do it again?”

His laugh turns to a frown and he starts down the corridor. “Come on, Feral. We’ve got work to do.”

Turn to 5.

216

The wolf’s fury washes over you like a red wave, coloring your vision till Hester is no longer Hester in your eyes. She is only a threat. An enemy.

The next time the hissing snake-girl comes in range, you evade the halberd’s blade and slash out. Your talons are efficient. Hester gasps, and in that instant the snake fades from her features and her eyes. Hester is in control again—though it may well be too late, thanks to you.

“Vlachos! He is responsible for this, for making me a monster! He must pay!” she cries.

The wolf’s fury is growing to a fever pitch as you turn and spy the platform and the villains seated upon it. You howl like the maddened animal you have become and charge toward the structure. Turn to 143.

217

You can’t burn the book. The wizard will place a curse on you or burn you down immediately, and he might still sal-

vage some of its pages. You must get it away from here, where it can be destroyed once and for all. With a desperate leap, you hurtle it over the wizard's head, landing amidst the black pews. "Kuda!" you call to your friend near the door, tossing the book to him. "Get it out of here and destroy it! I'll hold these two off!" You draw the Millennium Blade from its scabbard. "Get moving!"

Kuda reluctantly turns to do as you say, followed by Gieryn and Lupus. But Keela remains behind. She stands there at your side, hiding her fear.

"Fools!" Vlachos spits. "Do you think yourselves a threat to me? I could burn you down on the spot or have Regis rend you limb from limb. But why go to such trouble when I can simply take away what has been given?"

He waves a hand, and both you and Keela crumple to your knees. Fire races through your blood, just as it did before. You can feel your shape altering, the hair sprouting from your flesh. The wizard and his servant cast you pitiful glances as they head for the door. "We will find your friends," he says, "and we will not be so merciful with them!"

"You won't have to look far," comes a familiar voice from the doorway. Kuda has returned and stands there with the wolf brothers, holding the book. "You want this, Vlachos? Then come and get it!"

But even before the wizard can take a step, more figures fill the doorway beside Kuda. Too numerous to count, they are gross and misshapen, the denizens of the dungeon row, all freed by Kuda. They file into the room like the roll call of a nightmare, neotyughs and night hags, wyverns and quasits and slithering trackers, and the results of every other evil experiment Vlachos has carried out since he found the Tome of Time. And they all have vengeance in their eyes.

"Stay away from me!" Vlachos warns as he and Regis retreat, but the creatures take no heed and surround him.

"Leave the book with us," comes a familiar voice. You turn to see a human-headed manticores standing next to Kuda. It smiles tragically, showing multiple rows of teeth, and holds out one massive lion paw. "So no one else may



find it." Kuda nods and places the book on its padded palm.

You turn and flee down the tunnel, all the way to the Mount of Lies.

Turn to 220.

218

Quickly Vlachos scans a brief passage from his open book, and when he looks up, beams of light suddenly leap from his eyes. Your sword comes up in defense, its glittering blade deflecting the beams, but such luck can't last long. *Strike now!* you urge, and even the wolf echoes your decision. *Strike now!*

You lunge with a piercing war cry, putting all of your power behind one slash. Vlachos holds up his book in an attempt to defend himself, and your blade slices through it cleanly. Can you recover in time for a second chance?

To your surprise, no death beam seeks you out. In fact, nothing happens. There is complete silence. You turn toward Vlachos, expecting the worst, and find him staring at the two separate pieces of book in his hands. The ragged, sliced ends are sputtering and sparking like live wires, and their glow is growing ever brighter! "No!" the wizard stammers as the book's rampant energy spreads to halves and then his hands and starts up his arms. "Help me! Save me!" The glow is racing now, up over his shoulders and down his legs, wrapping him in eye-searing brightness.

"You sought the power of the book," Mot Zaret says, standing uncertainly by your elbow. "Now you have it!"

Vlachos gives one final scream, then the glow, the book, and the wizard all disappear from view.

Turn to 18.

219

Sonder continues to change form at a dizzying rate, from su monster to wyvern to hellhound, but you manage to match him with raw savagery. It's a stalemate.

I can change that, you think. We are one, the werewolf and I. We should be able to fight as one, if only for a moment. You concentrate mightily, and slowly you begin to make contact with your wolf self. The next time Sonder attacks, you

evade his giant pincers and crocodilian tail and, putting all of the wolf's might into one clenched fist, hit him right between the eyes. The shape-shifter drops in its tracks and begins to change back to its human form.

To keep the wolf from finishing off Sonder, you transform yourself back to the man-wolf. Subtract 1 experience point for the strain of changing.

"All right, Sonder," you snarl, lifting him off the ground by the throat. "Where is your master?"

The changeling spits in your face. "Go chase a wagon, pooch!"

You tighten your grip. "I can always bring the wolf back, Sonder," you tell him. "The wolf would like that—very much." You let a fraction of your control slip, just enough for your muzzle to extend and the fangs to start to grow. "Unnerving, isn't it?"

"All right, you win," the shape-shifter cries. "I'll talk . . . whatever you want. Just keep that beast away from me!"

You are prepared to listen when the doors suddenly swing open. You turn to see the barkeep and a number of other men, a small mob, armed with axes and clubs. Before you can say a word, the barkeep cuts you off. "Drop that girl, monster!" he orders gruffly.

Girl? You whirl around. Sonder has changed once more, and you now hold the beaten and bruised serving girl dangling above the floor. "Wait! You're making a mistake!" you stammer. "This is no girl. . . ."

"Hang the beast!" someone screams. The knot of men surges forward.

You scramble for a side window, but a bottle whistles through the air and crashes into your skull. You fall, and the men are on you in a second, binding your hands and dragging you into the street. When your head finally clears, you find yourself perched on a nail keg outside the livery stable with a noose around your neck.

"Enough!" comes a booming voice from just up the street. All eyes turn to see a huge, dark warrior sitting astride a snorting charger. "Release him now," he warns, hefting his great double-headed ax, "or I will be very, very angry."

The mob murmurs among themselves, no one wanting to

face the burly warrior and that great ax. But you know there is a fight coming. You can smell it.

You wince. You can also smell Sonder. He's in the crowd!

Your eyes sweep the crowd, but you do not see the serving girl—he must have changed shape again. If only you could free yourself and find him, expose him for what he is

As before, the stink is too overpowering to depend on your nose. You will have to trust your sixth sense, the same one that warned you before. Maybe it can do so again . . . before it's too late!

Roll two dice and add the result to your sensory skill score as the wolf-man. If the total is 19 or more, turn to 111. If it is less, turn to 93.



220

Your man-wolf form finds its way back through the tunnels through clouds of dust, but the burden you bear is heavy indeed.

“Cheer up,” Kuda tells you as you climb the ladder to Vlachos’s cabin. “You have accomplished great things, Feral. You have destroyed the evil wizard and his puppet tyrant. You have saved the country.”

“But not myself!” you remind him. “I am still the wolf. I have failed.”

“Have you really?” Keela asks, waiting for you above. “You have friends here, Feral. Family. You are welcome to stay with us and learn to control the wolf.”

You look to Kuda, and he nods. “The quest is over, Feral. You must live your life now. You belong with Keela. Go, live long, and have many—” he laughs—“cubs?”

When you come out of the cabin, you find the sun shining brightly. It is a new day, a fresh beginning. You bid your old friend farewell and leave with Keela and her brothers, into the southern hills, where your new life awaits. ✕

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