

AGGERON'S HAMMER

A gamebook adventure in two pages.
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Introduction

In the long years that Aggeron the Great ruled the vast Empire of the Suns he never once gave pause to consider the loyalty of his slaves. In their multitudes they laboured, their lives spent in toil and privation, their obedience assured by the Word of Command that enslaved them to his will. For his fellow Trell'sara however, there was no such comfortable loyalty. Deceit and treachery were the coin of his dominion, murder and betrayal the tools that assured advancement within the great Empire that Aggeron had created for himself. To counter the ruthless ambition of his fellow Masters, Aggeron gathered to himself a Hammer Guard, a unit of highly trained soldiers with which he rooted out his enemies and destroyed them. Feared by all who might oppose him they came, in time, to be known as Aggeron's Hammer.

Game Objective:

You are a Jotun of House Oldemai, chosen to attempt the Gauntlet, a trial of skill, strength and cunning that, if successful, will elevate you to service within the Hammer Guard of Aggeron the Great. Such an honour is bestowed upon only a few slaves in any given year and you have accepted the challenge. To survive will see you earn great prestige for your House and its Masters, to fail will see you dead. This is your mission. Complete the Gauntlet and find favour for your House or die in the attempt.

Character Generation:

The following character attributes are yours to determine. Spread 35 character points between the four Strength, Agility, Luck and Endurance attributes listed below, but keep those points within the ranges given in brackets. Strength plus Agility equals your Combat Value. Record these values below.

Strength (5 – 11): _____ Endurance (10 – 20): _____
 Agility (3 – 5): _____ Combat Value = _____
 Luck (2 – 5): _____ Primary Weapon: Warhammer

(These character attributes and equipment should be recorded on a separate sheet, along with any items found and any record you might keep regarding combat resolution.)

Combat Resolution:

If you are required to fight the following rules apply;

- Record the name, combat value and endurance of your opponent on a separate sheet of paper.
- Roll 2d6 and add your combat value recorded above to the number you have thrown. This is your combat strength for the round.
- Throw 2d6 and add the number rolled to your opponent's combat value. This is your adversary's combat strength for the round.
- Compare both combat strengths. The higher combat strength wins the round and an amount of endurance points must then be taken from the loser's total endurance points. If the winner of the round has a combat strength four or more points higher than his opponent then he has struck a heavy blow and four endurance points must be taken. If the winner of the round wins by three points or less, he has struck a minor blow and only one endurance point need be deducted from the loser's endurance points.
- Repeat this combat process until either yourself or your opponent's endurance points fall to zero. At that time the combat has been resolved and one of you will be dead.

Testing Attributes:

A character's attributes can be tested with a throw of dice. For all attributes except Strength a 1d6 should be rolled and the number compared to the value of that attribute. If the number thrown is equal to or less than the attribute's value the test has been successful. Please note that Strength tests require a 2d6 throw.

Restoring Endurance:

During this adventure you will be exposed to violent combat and the inevitable injury that follows such encounters. Within this mission you will find items that will restore health to your character if needed. The text will explain everything you need to know at the time of their acquisition.

Using Colour-Coded Doors

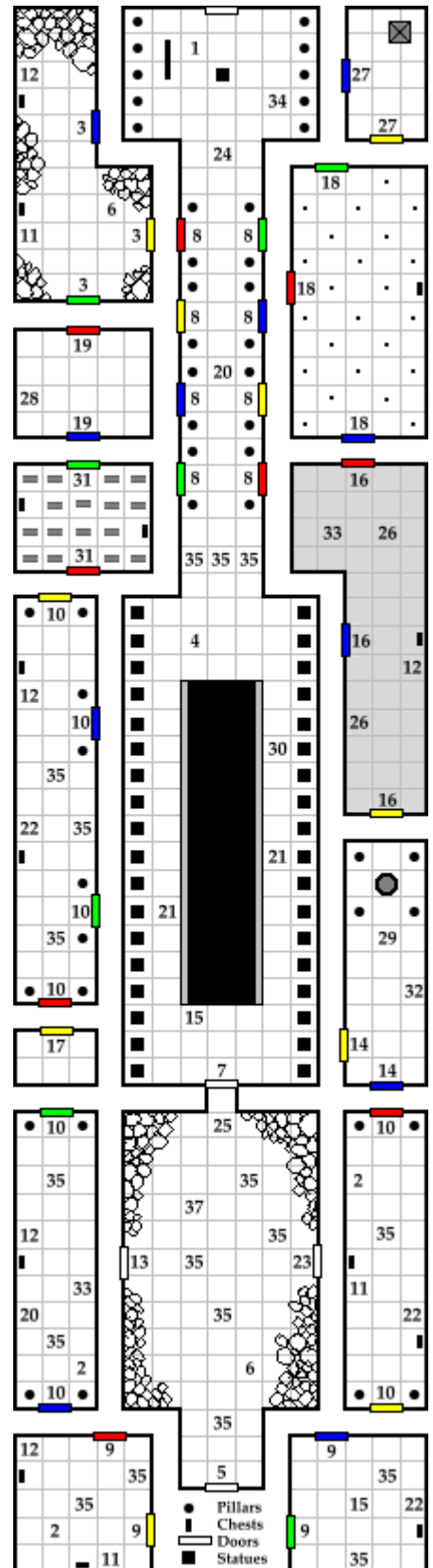
Each chamber within the Gauntlet has a number of exits that can be accessed to move between areas. Unlike a normal network of rooms the doorways within the Gauntlet do not connect directly, each is in fact a portal that connects only to other portals coded with the same colour. As an example, a blue doorway only connects to other blue doors and a player may choose which of those doors they wish to access. It should be noted however, that each door in the Gauntlet can only be used once.

Playing Aggeron's Hammer

This micro-gamebook utilises a game mechanism combining the map shown on this page with the section references provided on the second page. You begin your mission upon the grid numbered 1 and your attempt at the Gauntlet progresses from that point forward. The game is divided into turns, each turn allowing you to move a maximum of 10 grid spaces per turn in any direction, including diagonally, but you must end each turn on another numbered grid. Each numbered grid is a reference to a section given on the second page of this adventure and you must then act upon whatever that section requires. It may describe something you find, a combat encounter or possibly nothing at all. You will not know however, until you end your movement on that grid and read the associated section reference. Your adventure will end when you have completed the Gauntlet and survived to earn your position amongst the soldiers of Aggeron's Hammer Guard.

THE GAUNTLET

This adventure starts upon grid number 1.



It should be noted that doors used within the Gauntlet will deactivate once passed through. This applies to both exit and entry doors upon any movement between chambers. It may prove useful to mark each door used as you proceed.

Sections

Using these Section References:

These section references correspond to numbered grid squares found upon the map provided on the first page of this adventure, and in most cases need only be read once. The exception are section numbers enclosed within brackets (). These sections must be actioned no matter how many times they are landed upon. All of the numbered grids can however, be used as end of turn way-points as many times as is necessary. It should be noted that if a numbered grid blocks the way forward the player must land on that grid before continuing.

1: Standing quietly within this large chamber you survey the hall about you and consider what is to come. The room you wait within is a wide hallway, lined upon its eastern and western walls with immense stone pillars and possessing at its centre a huge statue of a Jotun, dressed as one of the Hammer Guard. A long table stands at your right hand upon which is a collection of items. None of these you touch for you have been given no permission to do so. There is a silence within the space that demands quiet and you do nothing to disturb it. It is only when the silence is absolute that the Jotun moves, its enormous form stepping from its pedestal and moving with purpose towards you. With nowhere to run you stand your ground. "These are your Orders, Jotun," the automaton says quietly. "Before you is the Gauntlet. Within its halls and chambers are hidden six crystal keys. Find them and then make for the white doors at the southern end of this chamber. There you shall find a way out, and your first day of service within the Hammer Guard." The Jotun then chooses a hammer from the table, as well as 2 vials of *uulaal'nahla*, a powerful regenerative potion. These you take from him. Without another word the stone Jotun steps back upon its platform, its arm extending towards the south. Taking the hammer in hand, and with the vials (+6 to endurance when each are drunk) in a small bag you begin the Gauntlet.

(2:) Before your eyes a **Stone Reaver** (CV-14, EP-8) dislodges from the wall and moves towards you. The huge scorpion-like monster has only one deadly purpose. If you survive the encounter move on quickly. If not your challenge ends here.

3: You emerge from the doorway and find yourself in a Forest Room, a perfectly carved representation of a forest scene wrought in grey stone about its walls. Within the forest's deep shadows you can hear movement and feel eyes watching you.

4: This is the Power Room, a Dark Water generator running down its centre, lines of huge statues standing guard upon both sides of its long reach.

5: The white door here stands within a frame of pure Azuril, an ornate sword carved into its surface. If you believe this door is the exit from the Gauntlet you seek turn to section 40. If not, move to one of the other doors.

(6:) From out of the trees there moves a dark shadow, one that emerges into the light as a **Stone Voor'cat** (CV-14, EP-8). Seeing you the huge predatory cat growls, its claws dragging along the floor. Standing your ground you wait for its attack.

(7:) Here you find a white doorway. It has no markings upon it, but at its side is a metal escutcheon with places for six crystal keys. If you have these keys the door will open. If you do not you will have to go and find them.

(8:) Before you is a colour-coded portal. If you wish to exit the hall using this door find another of the same colour and move directly to it.

(9:) You have found your way into a small chamber with two colour-coded exits. It is dark here and in the shadows you can hear something moving.

10: Before you is a long corridor, the walls covered in richly carved forest murals.

(11:) You have found here a stone chest. Carefully you lift the lid and find within a vial of *uulaal'nahla*. This vial can be drunk at any time and will restore +6 points to your endurance. Record this acquisition and move on.

(12:) Against the wall is an ornately decorated stone chest. Within its dark recesses is a glimmering crystal key. Record this acquisition and continue.

13: Before you is a white door framed within a border of pure Azuril, its surface engraved with a representation of a shield. If you believe this door is the exit from the Gauntlet you seek turn to section 39. If not, move to one of the other doors.

14: You have found here a Well Room, at its far end a device of great power and even greater mystery. If you wish to move forward do so carefully.

15: Out of the shadows a **Stone Sentinel** (CV-15, EP-6) lumbers forward. It is a huge robed warrior wielding a long iron sword and in its eyes you can sense nothing but a ruthless need to kill. If you survive this encounter continue with your mission.

16: Before you is a shallow flight of steps leading into a chamber waist deep in water. This Flooded Ground must be traversed if you are to continue.

17: Carefully you move into a small chamber that appears empty. A quick survey shows no other exit and immediately you realise that this is an oubliette. You have stumbled into a room with no way out. In this life your mission is over.

18: Before you reaches a large Chain Room, a chamber from which a multitude of chains hang from the roof above. The floor is mined so that any footfall will lead to a quick but brutal death and the only way of getting through is by swinging from chain to chain. You notice that there is a chest against the eastern wall though it would require a detour to investigate. Each dot on the map is a chain. To move from one to the next test your Strength and Agility attributes. If you are successful you swing to the next chain. If you fail both of these tests you slip from the chain

and you must then test your Luck. If you are lucky your foot does not touch one of the hidden touch-plates and you can pull yourself off the floor and continue. In this manner you can move from chain to chain to another exit or investigate the chest before leaving. If you reach the chest turn to section 12. If you fail you will die here.

19: The chamber before you is completely dark and there is something within.

20: On the ground at your feet you find the desiccated remains of a warrior who did not finish the Gauntlet. You resolve that you shall not meet the same end.

21: Running down the centre of the chamber is a Dark Water pool, a generator that must power the Gauntlet. You run your fingers above the surface of its black liquid and feel the power it holds. You are smart enough however, not to touch it.

22: Against the wall you discover a stone chest. Prising it open you find it empty.

23: Inset into the wall is a white door, framed in blue Azuril and engraved with an ornate hammer upon its surface. If you believe this door is the exit from the Gauntlet you seek turn to section 36. If not, move to one of the other doors.

24: Before you is a long corridor running south. Along both walls you can see colour-coded doors set between pure-white pillars. Quickly you move forward.

25: The white door opens and you find beyond a short corridor then a large chamber with three other white-coded exits beyond. One of these three doors is the true exit, the other two portals to less honourable fates. Clues have been given within the Gauntlet regarding which is the correct exit. Hopefully you will be cunning enough to know which it is.

26: From out of the black waters a **QuagWyrn** (CV-16, EP-14) rises, its eel-like body arching towards you, its mouth filled with vicious razor-sharp teeth. In this watery chamber you must fight for your life. If you fail here your mission will be over.

27: Quickly you move into a small chamber and immediately feel the presence of a Dark Obelisk. Caught within its life-sapping aura you can gather enough strength only to stagger for the other exit. Roll 2d6 and take the total from your endurance before moving on. If the reduction is enough to kill you then you will die here.

28: From the darkness a **Dreyadim Hresh** (CV-14, EP-8) charges towards you. The spectral creature holds an iron scimitar in its hand and it gives you no time to prepare for combat. If you kill this Hresh continue on. If not you will die here.

29: At the far end of the hall you find a Well of Infinite Possibility. As you approach the Well energises, throwing images of all your possible futures about the chamber. Carefully you watch the flickering images and see within their frantic passage all the chambers within the Gauntlet, and all the possible ways you might die within them. For a short time you watch, then turn for a way out.

30: For a moment you pause and look at one of the statues. They are all the same and you recognise them as images of the Emperor, Aggeron. On the bases of each you see a simple inscription; "I am watching."

31: As soon as you pass the threshold you recognise this chamber. It is a Shrapnel Room and the entire space is one lethal trap. Set into the floor is an array of touch-plates, each spaced a bare boot-width apart from the next. Touch any of them and the room will detonate. You notice also that there are two chests against the far walls, one to the east, the other to the west. To move through this room you must avoid the touch-plates. With each grid square test your Agility. If you are successful you can move onto the next square. If you are not you will detonate the room and your mission will be over. If this is your fate turn to section 38. You have a choice here to get out of the room quickly, or try for one of the chests before leaving. If you try for one of the chests and are successful turn to section 35 before continuing.

32: You have found a Shield. If you take it add +1 to your combat value.

33: You have found a Helm. If you take it add +1 to your combat value.

34: As you move forward you notice a series of large murals upon the walls, partially hidden from view by the line of pillars. You recognise the central image as the sigil of House Delving, the Royal House of Aggeron the Great. It is an ornate hammer wrapped in vines and surmounted by the twin suns of the world. You consider what you have found for a short time then move on.

(35:) Your boot touches the floor and instantly there comes a sharp expulsion of air and dust from the wall. Instinctively you leap aside, a Dart Trap shooting a single razor-sharp projectile towards you. Test both your Agility and Luck attributes for you will need a good measure of both here. If you pass both tests the dart misses. If you fail either roll 1d6 and take the result from your endurance before continuing.

36: After much travail you have survived the Gauntlet and proved yourself both skilled and cunning. The door of Aggeron the Great opens and beyond you find a Jotun waiting for you, his garb that of the Hammer Guard. You have earned great honour for your House and its Masters. May you serve Aggeron well. The End.

37: From out of the floor before you a **Stone Jotun** (CV-17, EP-14) rises, its hands gripping a giant warhammer, its dead eyes glowing blue in the half-light. Without warning or spoken word the automaton attacks.

38: Carefully you move across the floor of the Shrapnel Room but you are not careful enough. Your boot brushes one of the touch-plates and it is the last thing you ever do. In an eruption of shredding metal the room detonates and your Gauntlet is over.

39: Carefully you open the door and are immediately engulfed in a blue light. In a blinding explosion of light you find yourself transported back to the beginning of the Gauntlet. You have chosen the wrong door and now you must start again.

40: You make your choice and open the door. In a blinding flash of light the white portal transports you back to the beginning of the Gauntlet. You chose the wrong door and if you are to be a Hammer Guard you must now start again.