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# GOLEM GAUNTLET

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Short Gamebook Fiction

## RULES

You are the arch-rival of the corrupt alchemist Dalen Tey. Using your brilliant intellect for the purposes of pure research and helping your fellow man, you have been a thorn in his side for many years. Unfortunately, you have now found yourself the unwilling subject of his latest experiment. Trapped in a rapidly deteriorating form, you must locate each of Tey's hidden laboratories in order to survive.

Once the Rules have been read, proceed to the Background. Then read the first paragraph, marked **1**. From there, you may make choices as to how the adventure will proceed by choosing numbered options. The goal is to finish the adventure successfully at entry **100**.

### Traits

Although you will fast learn that avoiding combat is preferable, it will at times be unavoidable. Whilst seeking the laboratories, you will on occasion be forced to defend yourself and as such must rely on three important personal traits. These are MOVEMENT, OFFENCE and INTEGRITY respectively. A fourth trait – SANITY – will be used occasionally.

MOVEMENT is a score determined in combat at the beginning of *every Attack Round* by rolling **1D6**. This trait determines whether or not you were able to take action against a foe before they attacked you. Note that this trait can also be affected by bonuses and penalties depending on your current form and situation.

OFFENCE is a measure of how effective your attacks against a foe will be. Attacks will fall into one of three categories: *light*, *medium* and *heavy*. Your current form and situation will determine which of these categories is appropriate, and once again bonuses and penalties can apply.

INTEGRITY reflects your overall endurance. This determines how much damage your form can sustain before being *destroyed*, which results in instant death. Your current form and situation will determine your level of INTEGRITY.

SANITY is a measure of your mental tolerance. Dalen Tey's experiment would test even the strongest of minds, and as such you will at times teeter on the brink of madness. Your SANITY score begins at 6. On occasion a game passage will advise you to deduct 1 point from your SANITY. If at any time your SANITY score reaches 0, then you have gone insane and lose control of your form, resulting in death and the game is over.

### Combat

Combat conditions will vary on your ever-changing form. A typical passage entry will read like the following:

*(Body type) Status*

MOVEMENT	Reaction time: this will be determined by rolling a <b>1D6</b> , but if there are any penalties or bonuses, they will be mentioned here and affect the die roll.
OFFENSIVE	This will be determined by your current form. Attacks will do the following amount of damage: <i>Light:</i> <b>2 points of damage</b> <i>Medium:</i> <b>4 points of damage</b> <i>Heavy:</i> <b>6 points of damage</b>
INTEGRITY	This will be a figure from which damage is deducted. If this figure reaches 0, your form is <i>destroyed</i> , which results in instant death.

*Opponent*

MOVEMENT	Your opponent's reaction time, again determined by rolling a <b>1D6</b> .
OFFENSIVE	A measure of how much damage a foe's attack inflicts. Obviously, the larger and more powerful the foe, the greater the damage. This will be indicated in the entry at the time.
ENDURANCE	Your opponent's overall stamina. Once this reaches 0, your opponent been killed.

Combat Example

The following is an example of the combat structure, but again note that each encounter is different *depending on your current form*.

1.

You are currently in a **LEAD** form and encounter an ORC, which attacks you. Commence the Attack Round by rolling **1D6** for MOVEMENT for both the ORC and yourself. As you are in a very heavy, slow form, your MOVEMENT penalty is **-2**. If your MOVEMENT is still *higher* than the ORC, go to 2. If the ORC's MOVEMENT is *higher*, go to 3. If your rolls are *equal*, then both attacks were successfully blocked and you must commence another Attack Round.

2.

You reacted first and attack. As you are currently in a Lead form, you perform a **Heavy** attack and inflict **6** points of damage to the ORC's ENDURANCE. Now go to 4.

3.

The ORC reacts first and attacks with a mace. This inflicts 2 points of damage and reduces your INTEGRITY by the same amount. Due to your Lead form, however, your initial INTEGRITY is 18, so this is relatively minor damage. Now go to 4.

4.

The Attack Round is over and another roll for MOVEMENT is necessary. Combat continues until your INTEGRITY or your foe's ENDURANCE reaches 0.

Note that lost INTEGRITY is not restored: the only way to alleviate damage is to shift into another form.

## BACKGROUND

You awaken slowly. You feel sluggish...and cannot seem to focus. Your eyes do not seem to adjust and sounds are faint. You try to move your body, but it feels...*wrong*. Awkward. What has happened? You think back. You were having a dream...a strange dream. You remember working in your laboratory, and suddenly felt a stinging sensation in your neck. You became dizzy and everything faded to black.

Then you woke up, but why do you feel this way? Suddenly, you hear a voice nearby. "Will this work?" it asks, in deep but slightly anxious tones. There is a pause and then another voice answers, one which you recognize almost immediately. "Possibly. But you must remember that this process is unrefined, and must be perfected. It will take time. If we lose a few subjects – particularly this one – then that is no loss."

Daren Tey. There was no mistaking that arrogant voice. You remain motionless and think. A talented but greedy alchemist who sells his services to the highest bidder and hang the consequences. You, however, have always been mindful of the consequences, having had to use your own abilities – acknowledged by all to be greater than Tey's – to counter his rash actions. The attempted pillaging of a mountain village by zombies, the poisoning of Lake Gunn and the creation of the lightning storms above King Antek's forces: all his doing. Fortunately, you were able to undo all these acts and become a hero of the realm, being showered with riches which enabled you continue your research and help your fellow man.

Now, however, you appear to be in a very compromising position. You are at the mercy of a man who has sworn time and again to destroy you. You then realize that what you thought was a dream was in fact real. You have been captured, and to judge by Tey's words are to be used in some kind of horrid experiment. You decide that the best course of action is to lie still and listen, and learn as much as possible about your current predicament. Your hopes, however, are dashed immediately.

"Confused, dear rival? Oh, I know you are awake, so there's no need to pretend. As to what has happened, let me explain. You see, the good Baron here has been funding my Golem research, as he is going to need a few reliable soldiers if he is to usurp the King. Preferably totally obedient, invincible soldiers. But, I've found that the creatures are simply not capable of anything more than rudimentary action. Then, it came to me. Why not use a human mind? The Golems could then be so much more, able to not only fight but *anticipate*. At first I tried simply grafting living brains and nervous systems onto the host forms, but the peasants always died within moments."

You gurgle angrily at the casual disregard Tey has for human life. He notes this and snickers, patting you on the cheek. You realize you can barely feel his touch and have a horrible suspicion as to what has happened. Tey continues.

"I see you begin to understand. I then decided to abandon vivisection, and adopt more abstract procedures. With some further...experimentation...I found that courtesy of my devices I was capable of transferring the human consciousness directly into another form. Which brings us to you. I needed a subject – someone with a strong mind I could use to trial the procedure. I need to know how much you can mentally endure before becoming insane. This will in turn determine how quickly I need to...acquire...more subjects. In the process I also manage to rid myself of a serial nuisance. With you out of the way, I will now be able to live in the lifestyle I deserve."

You listen to these words and inwardly seethe with rage. With great difficulty, you reach for Tey but pause as you see your outstretched arms. Your limbs, and apparently the rest of your body, now seem to be composed of clay. *Imprisoned in a Clay Golem!* You utter a few guttural sounds and watch as several soldiers enter the room, which you can now see is a laboratory. Tey speaks again.

"The Baron's men will now take you into the valley, where we will see what you are capable of. I can't say it's been a pleasure, but I will enjoy watching you slowly die." Tey taunts you one last time as you are carried from the room: "I don't believe that the other subjects will last more than a week or so, but this will be long enough for them to complete their task for the Baron. I imagine that they will be

willing to do near anything if it means being restored to human form. A lie, of course, but the means justifies the end.”

You are dropped unceremoniously on the ground. You finally gain some control of your form and sit up slowly, and study what appears to be a huge valley. The wind is picking up slightly and the sky is darkening. It seems a storm is coming. What can you do? Where will you go? Your mind races and you struggle desperately not to give into despair. You glance back at a now shut iron door and hear bolts sliding into place. Attempting re-entry would not seem to be an option. If only you could see the machine Tey used to affect the change, you could possibly reverse the process...

As you scan the northern horizon, you suddenly notice *another* iron door in the distance! It is barely discernible but seems to be set into the side of a cliff. Obviously, Tey's underground complex is larger than expected. If you could reach that door and somehow enter...there may yet be hope! You must find a way to return to human form and stop Tey's foul experiments. You stand, and after several minutes adjust to your new form. Time to move.

**NOW TURN OVER TO PLAY GOLEM GAUNTLET**

## 1

You walk awkwardly down the hillock and almost fall more than once. By your own estimates you are now six feet tall - two inches less than your true height - but much broader and heavier. As you walk you note stones and strands of grass stick to your feet, although you cannot feel anything except the dull thump of your footsteps. How to describe the sensation? It was like being totally encased in amber and perceiving everything through a thick brown, viscous veil. It all seems surreal, like observing events unfold in a dream. You are also disturbed at how close you are to panic at the simple loss of speech. As you reach the floor of the valley you pause by a small boulder and steady yourself. Being in this form may one advantage - you are now in all likelihood immune to pain. That said, it was a theory you would prefer not to test. You suddenly note a dragonfly has landed on your right forearm, and is now stuck fast, despite the desperate beating of its wings. Fascinated, you watch the insect struggle, and eventually sink into your arm and expire.

You decide to keep moving: ahead you see a rough goat path leading off to the right, curving away from the distant cliff face that is your target. There is no real path to the left: just thick scrub and a few trees. The trees eventually form thick clumps something like a half mile ahead, and block all view of the terrain beyond. Traveling in this direction would be a more direct route to your goal, but could be heavy going.

Which way?

Right ?      Turn to **62**.

Left ?        Turn to **76**.

## 2

You carefully walk along the left side of the valley, and soon reach the bottom of a cliff. For several minutes you follow the cliff wall, and as it curves around you begin to think that you have chosen the wrong path. Suddenly something flaps by overhead and you instinctively sink into a defensive crouch. Looking up, however, you see it is simply a bat, which disappears into the night sky. It came from the left, out of the cliff wall...wait, *out of the cliff wall?* You pause and study the wall, and then move against it and slowly shuffle across. The wall suddenly ends, and you realize there is in fact a small passageway. It is almost invisible due to the optical illusion created by the background rock, which gives the impression of one continuous wall. Congratulating yourself on your good fortune, you enter the passageway.

Turn to **36**.

## 3

Although victorious, you have no taste for battle and curse Tey for sending these creatures to their deaths. Your attention is drawn to the single, remaining Orc, who is whimpering and backing away. As you approach the Orc, it panics and blurts out in the Common tongue that it will help you if you promise to spare its life. Intrigued, you slowly nod your great stone head. The Orc then claims that over the rise is an underground rail car system that will take you back to where *your body is stored!* The Orc may be lying, but the time for running is over. You indicate for the Orc to lead and follow it over the rise and down a slope to a hidden tunnel. Sure enough, you discover a large cart on a track line that leads south. The Orc climbs into the cart and beckons for you to follow. You awkwardly climb in and tower behind the Orc. The creature then manipulates two levers at the front of the cart, which move it forward and increase speed. For better or worse, you now go to confront your foe.

Turn to **90**.

## 4

As fast as you are, the Golem is faster. It seizes you and instantly snaps your neck. So close to victory. Your adventure is over.

## 5

You attempt to climb the ladder, but it proves near impossible given your ruined form. Unfortunately, your efforts have roused a SOLDIER on watch, who was sleeping out of sight on the platform above. He looks down and recoils in horror, quickly producing a knife and cutting a rope that runs away from the platform to another pine tree. Unfortunately this releases the tree, which is actually cleverly disguised deadfall trap used to stop attackers wishing to seize the platform. Conduct a MOVEMENT check (note you must *deduct 2* from the roll if your left arm has fallen off).

If the roll is 1 - 2, turn to 87.

If the roll is 3 - 6, turn to 59.

## 6

The conflict carries you outside, where you crash through trees and into hillsides. You are knocked to the ground for a moment and watch as the Overlords pause to shred a fleeing ORC. You realize your foes are deadly opponents, and live only for destruction. You cannot afford to lose. You *must* not lose. You thunder forward while your foes are distracted and deliver a flurry of massive blows. The Overlords sink to the ground and you are surprised to hear a woman's sob. You watch as a bloated, feminine face drifts up in a stream of vapor and dissolves. *Water. Now only one remains.*

Turn to 27.

## 7

You move along the path and after passing around a clump of small pine trees pass into a clearing. A small stream runs out of the rocks ahead and down through thick foliage off to your right. The stream *might* be able to be jumped, but you are immediately grateful when you notice a small rock in the water near the stream's origin - you may be able to jump for the rock and cross safely here. You do, however, seem to catch strange glimpses of something where the water empties into the stream. Something moving? You also spy a small cave set into the rock face on the far side of the stream. It should serve as a good place to take shelter from the rain. You begin start to move towards the rock in the stream when *your left arm falls off!* You moan in horror and must now deduct one SANITY point. The rain is becoming heavier and starting to dissolve your form at a rapid rate. Will you:

Attempt to jump the stream? Turn to 32.

Try for the rock? Turn to 85.

## 8

You march into what appears to be a storage room and notice a slight movement above you. Test your MOVEMENT.

If the roll is 1 - 3, turn to 95.

If the roll is 4 - 6, turn to 42.

## 9

It may be possible to move around the far side of the clearing and edge behind the Soldiers. It will take a few minutes but seems to be the only feasible option. Test your MOVEMENT.

If you roll a 1 - 3, turn to 23.

If you roll a 4 - 6,\* turn to 48.

## 10

You open the door slowly and carefully slide in. The small room has two bunks, a table piled with various foods and preservatives, some stools, several piles of hides and a dusty fireplace. You surmise this was the cottage of the two Orcs you encountered: doubtless they were checking their traps when they stumbled into you. It would be near impossible to check the area without a fire. Lighting a fire, however, may bring unwanted attention. Will you:

Risk it and light a fire? Turn to 98.

Return down the hills to the other path? Turn to 25.

## 11

The notebook contains a checklist of maintenance tasks for the transference machine. You about to discard it when you notice some scrawl inside the back cover. It states that a pressure plate must be deactivated prior to entry to the master storage room to avoid a deadfall trap. This is valuable information: if at any time you think you have found a use for this advice, simply add 70 to the reference. If the reference makes sense, you may continue from this point.

Turn to 73.

## 12

You make your way through the cave, which is littered with supplies, weapons, armor and other practical items. The cave eventually ends in a rough passageway, which looks to have been hewn from the very rock. You almost shake with excitement as you notice some very familiar tubes running from a gap in the roof and down along the passage wall. You follow the passage, which finally ends in what appears to be yet another laboratory! You surmise that these chambers must be built near the surface so as to be able to divert the heat and pressure generated by the actual machine. Scanning the room, you find what you are looking for: another Golem. This being stands off to the side, fully six and a half feet tall and made of *stone*. You note the apparatus is exactly the same and move quickly. As you lie back and throw the last switch, there is the familiar hum, the sensation of current flowing through your body and a white flash. You open your eyes and find yourself in the form of a Stone Golem!

The change of form means you can no longer wear any Rings you may have acquired, as they no longer fit your new stone hands. Carrying a Potion for use *later* will also not be possible in this form...

Anticipating that the noise from the apparatus will attract the Soldiers, you move toward the entrance. You cast a final glance at the wood form that served you so well, and as it dissolves you silently promise yourself that you will now confront Tey and force him to undo the process.

Turn to 47.

## 13

The Overlords hover for a moment, and can be heard speaking in soft, lilting tones to one another. Suddenly their form spins at a fantastic speed, and they pass up through a rapidly dissolving ceiling. You hear their laughter and watch as the Overlords burrow straight up to the surface and out into the night sky. Their form flares for a moment, and then is gone. You realize you have made a grave mistake. By allowing the Overlords to escape, they are now free to wreak havoc on the world. Perhaps they can be stopped. Perhaps not. Yes, in your current form you will be unopposed in the search for your own body. You will undoubtedly be able to return to it. But what of the Overlords? What of the slaughter that will now ensue? Yours is a hollow victory.

## THE END

## 14

You remember the brass key you found and carefully insert it into the lock and turn. To your surprise, a cleverly disguised panel set into the stone wall slides silently open. The metal door was obviously a trap. Having no other choice, you enter, and find yourself in a small passage. It leads into a large, open room. To the left is the rear of the iron door, while the room itself appears to be a barracks: weapons racks, piles of armor, a bunk and several tables and benches. You also see three SOLDIERS moving out of the room and down a passage. You wait until their voices can no longer be heard before entering the room proper. Although you have managed to penetrate Tey's underground complex, detection - particularly in this form - is likely and so you must act fast. As you think, you note another passage off to the right, and see some familiar metal tubing running along the walls. You were dragged out along a corridor that looked like that...could it be? You decide to investigate.

Turn to 94.

## 15

The treacherous Orc looks on in horror as you move towards it, and the creature flees up a set of stairs into what appears to be a more lavish part of the complex. The stairs slow you, but you are determined to catch your faithless ally. You round the corner and come face to face with your true foe: *Dalen Tey!* He stands at the end of a long red, carpet and smiles sarcastically. "Well met, old friend. You have led my forces a merry chase and I would not have believed that you could have possibly reached this point. I have clearly underestimated you: a mistake I do not plan to make again." You storm forward, eager to choke the life from Tey. This, however, is clearly what he expected. The ground beneath the red carpet gives way: a *trap!*

Turn to 71.

## 16

You open the pouch, noting much easier it is with narrow, thin fingers. Inside are several copper coins - useless to one such as you.

Turn to 73.

## 17

You deal the Salamander a blow to the head, and it hisses weakly and quickly flees between the bars back into the valve. You then study your outstretched arm and realize it looks different. Your "skin" is now darker, and your entire body feels *harder*. After thinking for a moment, you realize the

Salamander's attack actually baked your form! Having both a strong and dry epidermis could definitely be advantageous.

You continue around the edge of the cliff face for several minutes until you suddenly hear a familiar hiss. Looking up, you see no less than *three* Fire Salamanders sitting on a ledge above you, waiting to pounce! Hearing movement behind you, you turn to see *another* Salamander, blocking your retreat. You cautiously back away, and as the first group drop to block the path ahead, you consider your options. A fight would be risky, as although their flames may not injure you their claws and teeth would still damage your form. You now realize attacking the first Salamander was a mistake as the whole colony has emerged to defend their territory. The Salamanders suddenly advance, forcing you away from the cliff wall and towards to the large dark clump of trees you first saw at the beginning of the valley. Thinking you may be able to lose the creatures in the deep shadows, you step back...and sink into quicksand. As your form is now harder and heavier, you quickly drop to the bottom of the bog. Your form will slowly dissolve over the course of the next few weeks. Your adventure is over.

### 18

Three ORCS immediately attack with crossbows. You shrug off the bolts and stalk forward, tired of the constant assaults against you. You hear Tey cry out "Fools! He's made of stone!", but it comes too late. You bring together the heads of two of the ORCS with bone-crushing force. As they drop, the third ORC attempts to draw a mace, but you simply reach across and snap the creature's neck. You turn to Tey, who looks furious. "Damn you! Damn your interference! Now you leave me no choice!" Tey runs from the room into a larger chamber. You follow immediately. You *will* catch your foe, and he *will* answer for what he has done!

Turn to **86**.

### 19

Try as you might, you cannot evade a skilled archer - especially in this form. The arrow hits home and the flame ignites the naphtha. You instantly become a blazing torch and within moments are reduced to charred remains. Your adventure is over.

### 20

You watch as Tey's form now begins to shift and change above you. The transformation will soon be complete. What to do? Your eyes fall on the prone body on the ground. There is no apparatus to affect a change, but your mind is strong...would it be possible to project your mind into it through sheer force of will?

If your SANITY score is more than 3, turn to **52**.

If your SANITY score is 3 or less, turn to **67**.

### 21

A small MAN-ORC dressed in a long smock and leather apron enters. The Man-Orc is rubbing his hands on a cloth and has a quizzical look on his face. This creature obviously services the machine and has heard the noise. His eyes widen on seeing you, and he drops the cloth, pulling a knife from his belt. You immediately attack to prevent him from raising the alarm.

*Wood Status:*

MOVEMENT	+ 2
OFFENSIVE	<b>Light</b>
INTEGRITY	8

**MAN-ORC:**

MOVEMENT	<b>Normal</b>
DAMAGE	2
ENDURANCE	6

If you win, turn to **63**.

**22**

On closer inspection it appears to be a rotting corpse: a humanoid. To judge by the state of decay and the number of insects present, the being has been dead for some time. Will you attempt to investigate further by brushing away the insects or take the path instead?

Investigate? Turn to **97**.

Take the path? Turn to **45**.

**23**

You slowly make your way around the clearing, and are close to the Soldiers when the wind suddenly picks up. They look up and scowl, and one of them notices you almost immediately. You run for the cave entrance but are stopped mid-flight by a flung battleaxe that knocks you off your feet. You roll on the ground clutching a ruined mid-section as the Soldiers advance and surround you. Within moments your form is hacked to pieces. Your adventure is over.

**24**

You walk around the clump of trees, which is actually larger than you first thought. After several minutes you are eventually able to pass them, but now see that a toppled tree with thick branches now blocks the way to the left. You decide to try for the goat path instead, and although there is now a slope up to the path, the grass is thin and with care you will be able to climb up and continue. As the rain may become heavier at any moment, you decide this is the best option.

Turn to **62**.

**25**

You move along the left path, noting that it has begun to rain again. Within moments the rain is torrential, which you hope should throw off any immediate pursuit. You stop and glance back but can see nothing but blackness beyond the sheets of rain pouring down. The path leads to the valley floor, which is dotted with clumps of small, spiky trees. As you walk, you are suddenly aware of the fact that water is seeping into your form. Although not critical, it is making your form heavy and slows you - note that your movement bonus (+ 2) is now *gone* (unless lost already).

Turn to **51**.

## 26

You climb for several minutes before reaching a rocky plateau. You step up on the plateau with one large stride and stand in a small grove of trees as you survey the area. Hearing a shuffling sound, you wait and soon behold a FORMORIAN GIANT - a huge misshapen creature clad in iron and leather. It moves to the edge of the plateau and looks around and sniffs before returning to a large cave. The creature is obviously a sentry, but could not detect you in your new wooden form. You quietly move around the edge of the plateau and seeing a large winding path leading down on the other side to the north, decide to follow it.

Turn to 45.

## 27

The last Overlord levitates to its feet, and with the exception of a pearl-white face and sky-blue eyes now looks very human. Much of the grandeur and the power are gone - this is weakened Elemental being lacking the aid of its siblings. It speaks to you in halting tones: "Damn you...human...you have almost undone me...but there is hope yet. Since that metal shell gives you your power...that is what I shall take!"

The Overlord's eyes crackle with latent energy, and before you can react there is a blinding flash. You then feel as though you are falling...falling...down through soft, warm whiteness. This sensation suddenly ends as you open your eyes and look around. Where are you?

Turn to 75.

## 28

You stand in a grove of trees and remain motionless as the Orcs pass. They fail to see you in the rain and gloom. You wait for several minutes, and when convinced they have gone you quickly move in the other direction.

Turn to 92.

## 29

Unfortunately, you have been hit squarely in the shoulders by a heavy spear. Deduct 4 points from INTEGRITY. You remove the spear, but notice your form is now splintering badly. From now on, you must test MOVEMENT normally, with the + 2 bonus lost due to your damaged form. This also wears on your mind and you must deduct one SANITY point.

Turn to 66.

## 30

You realize the Overlords cannot be allowed to escape, and while their attention is focused on the destruction of your former form you attack. You quickly sit up and bring two massive black fists together into the sides of the Overlords' form. You watch as one of the faces - that of a Nubian man decorated with gold runes - screams and fades into the ether. You also note that one pair of the being's arms have dissolved into nothingness. *Earth*, you think. So, the Overlords connection to this plane is still tenuous and can be broken! The Overlords float awkwardly to the far corner of the room, and turn and regard you.

"So. Like us, you can take other forms. A clever stratagem, mortal man, but that metal shell will not protect you from our wrath." The Overlords lift their arms and prepare for combat. Fight:

*Steel Status:*

MOVEMENT      **Normal**

OFFENSIVE      **Heavy**

INTEGRITY      **40**

**ELEMENTAL OVERLORDS:**

MOVEMENT      **+ 2**

DAMAGE      When the Overlords win an Attack Round, roll **1D6** to determine the nature of the attack:

1 -2	5	<i>Glacier</i>
3-4	10	<i>Lava jet</i>
5-6	15	<i>Gravity Storm</i>

DURABILITY      If at any time you win *two successive* Attack Rounds, turn to **79**.

**31**

Without hesitation you drive the Sword of Disruption up into the Golem's neck to the hilt. It rears back and you dive to the side. The Golem now trembles and walks awkwardly. The Sword has worked perfectly; it is a weapon that severs a foreign entity's control over another subject. You, must, however, be ready to contain that entity when it emerges...You run for the shelf and snatch up the largest crystal.

Turn to **88**.

**32**

You attempt to jump the stream but given your size and weight it is near impossible. You land heavily and topple over. You try to stand but suddenly find yourself being held down. You suddenly see the water converging into what appears to be the outline of a female humanoid - it is a WATER WEIRD. You are gently but firmly pushed down into the stream, with the creature embracing you as your form dissolves. Your adventure is over.

**33**

Although partially successful, the Overlords realize your intent and waste no time in dispatching you. A combined water spout and gravity column pushes the glacier containing your form up, high into the heavens. Such is the strength of the assault that you have been thrown into orbit above your world. Now you float helplessly above it, with even more ice forming about your form due to the intense cold. Here you will remain, trapped in a floating prison of ice until your mind eventually relinquishes control of your current form. Your adventure is over.

## 34

Breaking free, you step to the other side of the stream and back away cautiously, although the creature seems to have lost interest now you are on dry land. You decide to investigate the cave, and moving in and around a bend, are surprised to see a small torch set into a bracket. It illuminates a large iron door with a handle, which seems to have been set into the very rock of the cliff. You also note that there is a small keyhole set into an iron fitting on the side of the cave. It appears as though a key must first be used before attempting entry. You, however, do not possess a key. What will you do?

Try the handle? Turn to 44.

Turn back? Turn to 81.

## 35

You follow the path up into the hills, and it eventually disappears in a thick grove of pines. Coming out on the other side, you are careful to avoid tripping on the occasional small ridge of stone. You are considering turning back when you suddenly see a small cottage. Although there are signs of life: several animal skins hung along a makeshift clothesline, a pile of chopped wood and some mining equipment, it at present appears to be unoccupied. What will you do?

Investigate? Turn to 10.

Return down the hills and take the other path? Turn to 25.

## 36

You walk down the passageway, which is very rocky and on occasion narrows due to the uneven nature of the cliff face. It eventually opens up into a large clearing, and you pause and carefully peer in. The clearing itself is covered with dirt and pebbles and there is what appears to be a well-used road which slopes up and over a large hill out of sight. To your right is a small cave opening, and sitting outside the mouth of the cave are two SOLDIERS. One is currently seated and whittling on a piece of wood, while the other plays with dice. Although Tey's men are obviously not on high alert in this location, they must still be circumnavigated if you are to have access to the cave. What will you do?

Throw a pebble to the far side of the clearing to attract their attention? Turn to 77.

Try and sneak past? Turn to 9.

Fight? Turn to 93.

## 37

The Sword of Disruption clatters harmlessly off the Steel Golem. It is a short sword, and as such is a *thrusting* weapon to be used at *close range*. The Golem seizes you and instantly snaps your neck. So close to victory. Your adventure is over.

## 38

The Salamander senses your hostility and arches its back in preparation for your attack.

*Clay Status:*

MOVEMENT	-1
OFFENSIVE	<b>Medium</b>
INTEGRITY	8

**SALAMANDER:**

MOVEMENT	+ 2
DAMAGE	1

Once you have hit the Salamander twice, turn to 17.

**39**

You examine the cupboard, but the glass tubes seem to contain nothing other than standard chemicals. You are about to turn away when you notice a flash of gold. Peering closely, you find a red-gold ring in a small crevice behind the glass tubes. You remove it and after studying its intricate patterns for a moment congratulate yourself on your good fortune: it is a *Ring of Fire Protection*, something that will certainly be useful in your current form. If at any time you think you require the protection of the Ring, simply add 42 to that reference. If you are correct, the passage will make sense and you may continue from that entry.

You slide the ring on a knobbed finger...and pause and inspect your hand. It is coarse and chipped, and shows signs of wear. Did some poor peasant wear this form before you? Did they die instantly? The gravity of the situation strikes you again and you must deduct one SANITY point. You then move quickly from the laboratory.

Turn to 73.

**40**

You decide to search the soldier, although your efforts are clumsy. All you can find of any interest is a small brass key. You press it into your right leg for safekeeping. If at any time you think you have found a use for this key, deduct 20 from the current entry. If the paragraph makes sense, you may continue from that entry. Will you:

Continue up the side of the valley?

Turn to 72.

Return the other way and investigate the other path?

Turn to 7.

**41**

A glacier suddenly forms around you, holding you fast. You can see one of the Overlords' faces clearly now, that of a beautiful but bloated woman with blue runes etched on her forehead. She laughs and admires her handiwork. Although trapped, all may not be lost. You are aware of the spines on your arms and legs, and instinctively realize these are weapons. Perhaps you can fire enough of these

projectiles to break the ice? Test your MOVEMENT.

If the roll is 1 - 2, turn to **33**.

If the roll is 3 - 6, turn to **65**.

**42**

You try to step back just as a stone deadfall plummets to the ground, and are partially successful. It strikes your left shoulder and you sustain 5 points of damage to your INTEGRITY.

Turn to **18**.

**43**

Try as you might, you cannot avoid the onslaught of rock and your form is shattered by a large boulder. Your adventure is over.

**44**

You try the handle, but the door will not budge so much as an inch. You have no choice but to turn back.

Turn to **81**.

**45**

You make your way down the undulating path, which rims the edge of the valley and eventually slopes down to end at a fork. The path to the right continues on, while the path to the left wends down to the floor of the valley. Which path will you take?

Right?      Turn to **74**.

Left?      Turn to **25**.

**46**

You approach the valve with caution and study it from a distance. It is at least four feet across and radiating a significant amount of heat. Obviously it services Tey's laboratory, although given the distance from where you were first ejected, it must a huge underground complex. This reminds you that you must continue to your destination. You turn and suddenly come face to face with a FIRE SALAMANDER. The fiery red lizard is surrounded by an aura of orange flames, and glares at you with what you discern to be intelligence. The Salamander suddenly rears up, and standing on its hind legs flares with bright, blistering heat. You instinctively cover your eyes, and when you are lower your arm are surprised to see that you are unaffected. The Salamander backs away cautiously, moving towards the valve that is obviously its home. Will you:

Attack it?      Turn to **38**.

Ignore it and press on?      Turn to **91**.

## 47

You lumber out into the cave proper, and immediately see three SOLDIERS who have come to investigate. Unfortunately for them, they only carry edged weapons - which are useless against your stone form. Moments later you step over the three corpses and out of the cave into the clearing. Your attention is drawn to movement on the rise, and you watch as an ORC patrol - ten strong - return from what was obviously a hunt for you. Their wish has been granted. You note that all carry maces in addition to swords and bows: this is a well-armed troop. They shout in surprise at seeing you, and then draw weapons and move towards you. By staying in the mouth of the cave, they can only attack you in small groups, possibly three at a time.

Fight the groups one at a time, and note that you must roll for *each* ORC in the group on *every* Attack Round. Damage you inflict is against *individual* Orcs. If you defeat the first group, the second will close in and repeat the process, then the third.

*Stone Status:*

MOVEMENT	- 2
OFFENSIVE	<b>Heavy</b>
INTEGRITY	<b>20</b>

**FIRST ORC GROUP (x 3):**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	6, 5, 6
DAMAGE	3

**SECOND ORC GROUP (x 3):**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	6, 7, 5
DAMAGE	3

**THIRD ORC GROUP (x 3):**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	5, 5, 7
DAMAGE	3

If you defeat them all, turn to 3.

## 48

Success! You manage to elude the Soldiers and silently enter the cave.

Turn to 12.

## 49

You return to the pine tree with the observation platform, noting that the remains of the trap and the body of the soldier are still nearby. In your wood form, you are able to easily climb the ladder, and reach a small area where the cable you previously saw is connected at head-height to a massive iron ring set into the tree itself. Hearing shouts in the distance, you move up onto a step, and place your hands inside the metal handholds attached to the cable. You then hurl yourself out away from the tree, your momentum carrying you along the line and across the valley at a rapid pace. Below you catch glimpses of trees, and then look up to see the cable has carried you down into a small tunnel of logs, where you are able to drop off into a thick carpet of moss. Obviously, this device is used by the soldiers to cross the valley in quick fashion. You turn and see the iron door, first seen at the start of your adventure, only yards away. It appears to be slightly ajar. Will you:

Open the door? Turn to 55.

Look for another way forward? Turn to 83.

## 50

You study the red carpet and remember the advice on the scroll. As there is room enough to walk around the carpet, you cling to the wall and shuffle across to Tey. He snarls in frustration and runs back through a large iron door. As you reach the other side, you pull back the carpet to reveal a deep pit filled with GREEN SLIME. You also see a clawed hand projecting from the slime, weakly scraping against a stone wall. After a moment it sinks into the slime and is gone. You now know what became of the treacherous ORC. You turn and approach the door, kicking it in with one mighty strike.

Turn to 8.

## 51

You walk towards the north end of the valley for almost an hour, with the rain becoming a fine drizzle. As you negotiate your way through the trees, you suddenly hear two guttural voices off to your left. You crouch and watch, and eventually two figures come into view - ORCS. They seem to be arguing, and from what you understand of the Orcish tongue it seems that everyone but Tey is convinced that you were killed by the Formorian Giant. Tey, however, has apparently insisted on a thorough search until your body is found, irrespective of the poor weather. Cursing your misfortune, you decide to wait until they pass and then hurry forward. You are surprised, however, to suddenly see *more* Orcs emerging from the trees - at least ten, all moving towards you in a rough, line.

You quickly consider your options. Running will only alert them your presence, but there might a chance with the darkness and inclement weather that you can camouflage yourself amongst the trees. You have to try as the Ors are fast approaching.

Test your MOVEMENT.

If you roll a 1 - 3, turn to 64.

If you roll a 4 - 6,\* turn to 28.

## 52

Your mind is still strong, strong enough to leap from one form to another. You imagine yourself in that huge form, how you would see the world, the feel of the limbs, how it would move...and suddenly you find yourself in the form of a STEEL GOLEM. Caution prompts you to lie still, as your opponent above you does not seem to be aware that you have changed form. Tey has been transformed into an eight-armed being with four rotating faces, its body wreathed in wisps of air, earth, water and fire. "Look upon your doom, man of stone. We are the ELEMENTAL OVERLORDS, and we return to the world we created. Let the end begin now."

With that, the being gestures at the Stone Golem. The combined elemental assault - a summoned gravity storm, meteor, glacier and lava burst - completely destroys it. Will you now attack the Overlords, or watch to see what they do next?

Attack? Turn to 30.

Watch? Turn to 13.

## 53

You walk over the rise and survey the land before you. The goat path has disappeared and you are now on elevated terrain, noting that there is rather large drop off your left and some stunted pines off your right. You can now see the iron door in the cliff face clearly, although it is now on the opposite side of the valley. The route through the pines appears to lead away, up and almost out of the valley itself. You move with some hesitation in this direction when *your left arm falls off!* You moan in horror and must now deduct one SANITY point.

What will you do?

Continue into the pines? Turn to 68.

Turn back and try the other path? Turn to 7.

## 54

The Golem has its back turned! All you have done is create a loud flash that attracts its attention. You hesitate as you realize your mistake. Unfortunately, there is no such hesitation from the Golem as it seizes you and instantly snaps your neck. So close to victory. Your adventure is over.

## 55

As soon as your hand closes around the handle, electrical current rips through your form. *A trap!* You are unable to release the handle, and within moments burst into flame before exploding due to the tremendous pressure placed on your form. Your adventure is over.

## 56

You hurl the vapors directly at the Golem's face, and the resulting explosion dazzles its senses. The Golem clasps his hands to its eyes and staggers back. Although the Overlord is in control of the Golem, whilst doing so it relies on perceiving reality *through* the Golem, a fact you have just exploited. You only have seconds to act. Will you:

Use the short sword? Turn to 31.

Run for the crystal? Turn to 4.

## 57

You decide to walk to the right, and after a fruitless search of the grassland, climb the last of the ridges. Perhaps an elevated view of the area might help your search. You are about halfway up the ridge when a sphere of clay strikes your form. Looking down, you appear to have been covered in a filmy, sticky substance. You immediately recognize it as *naphtha*, a highly flammable substance! Looking up in the direction the missile originated from, you spy two SOLDIERS. One is carrying a sling and obviously just hurled the naphtha ball. Your attention, however, is focused on the other, as this Soldier carries a bow with a strung arrow - an arrow with a flaming end! You instantly realize the enormity of your error - of course they would place guards as lookouts at the top of the valley. You turn and run back down the ridge as the Soldier releases the arrow...

Test your MOVEMENT.

If the roll is 1 - 5, turn to **19**.

If the roll is 6, turn to **84**.

## 58

The Overlords now seem more desperate and eager to finish this conflict.

**ELEMENTAL OVERLORDS:**

MOVEMENT + 2

DAMAGE When the Overlords win an Attack Round, roll **1D6** to determine the nature of the attack:

1 - 3            10      *Glacier*

4 - 6            15      *Gravity Storm*

If the Overlords successfully inflict *Glacier* damage, turn to **41**.

DURABILITY If at any time you win *two successive* Attack Rounds, turn to **6**.

## 59

You lean back just in time and avoid the falling pine tree. As it rolls away, the SOLDIER curses and descends the ladder. He leaps away before reaching the last few rungs, and with a roll on the ground springs upright, a small short sword in his hand. Having no choice, you must fight:

*Clay Status:*

MOVEMENT -1 (-2 if lacking left arm)

OFFENSIVE **Medium**

INTEGRITY **10**

**SOLDIER:**MOVEMENT      **Normal**DAMAGE            **2**ENDURANCE        **6**If you win, turn to **40**.**60**

Walking from the chamber, you pass through another room of apparatus and notice a ruined door in the corner. It looks to have been securely locked but must have been damaged in your battle with the Overlords. You peer inside and your hopes rise - this looks like a storage room for many of Tey's treasures, including a range of elixirs and potions. You have an idea...

You go to work and carefully concoct a potent acid which you store in a lead lined tube and seal with a stopper. You also notice some explosive vapors wrapped in a small satchel - a good tool for temporarily blinding a foe. In a weapons chest you also find a gold short sword with runes carved along its blade. You recognize the runes and realize this is a *Blade of Disruption*, which can be a lethal weapon if used correctly. Tey's planning will now work your benefit.

All you require now is a crystal...and you suddenly remember you saw several in the Summoning chamber. By following the structural damage, you eventually rediscover the chamber. Negotiating corpses and rubble, you sneak inside.

Turn to **80**.**61**

You calmly wander up through the ruined complex, and suddenly realize that Tey is still unaccounted for. Wandering out into the open grassland, you find your foe standing and looking around in confusion. Several SOLDIERS, ORCS and the FORMORIAN GIANT have approached, sensing the danger is over. Tey sees you, and in tired tones points at you weakly and orders his minions to kill you. They, however, slowly move and stand behind you, their new master. You have defeated the Elemental Overlords and saved all their lives. As such, they now obey you. You confront a now frightened and confused Tey, stating that he must answer for his crimes.

Unfortunately, you have underestimated the craven nature of your foe. Tey snarls and produces a poisoned dagger, and attempts to slash your throat. Test your MOVEMENT.

If the roll is 1 - 2, turn to **82**.If the roll is 3 - 6, turn to **100**.**62**

The goat path slopes upwards slightly and takes you away from the trees to the left. You walk for several minutes and then note that the ground is becoming wet. *It has begun to rain and you are made of clay!* You look up and note that it for now is just spattering: the real storm is still some minutes away.

You need to find shelter, and fast. Turning back now would waste too much time, and you would certainly be caught out in the open. The ground has now also sloped upwards to the point where the goat path now runs parallel to a small cliff, and sliding down and trying for the distant trees would be hazardous. You decide to press on, noting your arms are becoming very slick and moist. Eventually the path splits. To the right you can hear lightly rushing water. Off to the left the path becomes gravelly and continues over a small rise.

Which way?

Right? Turn to **7**.

Left? Turn to **53**.

### 63

Outside, you can hear faint voices raised, as if in question. The soldiers are returning! You quickly scan the room and see a cupboard filled with glass tubes, a small pouch on a table and a notebook. You only have time to inspect one item before leaving. Which will you choose?

The cupboard? Turn to **39**.

The pouch? Turn to **16**.

The notebook? Turn to **11**.

### 64

You crouch in a grove of trees and remain motionless as the Orcs pass. Unfortunately, one conscientious Orc has decided to use his pike to prod the very area you now occupy. The push from the weapon topples you, and the movement is detected by the Orc who cries out in alarm. Within moments you are surrounded and hacked to pieces by over a dozen axe-wielding Orcs. Your adventure is over.

### 65

You fire multiple projectiles and are successful in shattering the ice. The Overlords are shocked and back away as you advance again, ready to continue the battle.

Turn back to **58** and from now on ignore the instruction to turn to **41**.

### 66

You plunge into the scrub. The path is very narrow and at times almost disappears, being blocked by heavy foliage. You, however, ignore this in your effort to escape the soldiers. The scrub provides excellent cover and you eventually emerge on the other side of the valley. As you gain altitude once again, the pines begin to reappear. You then notice a pine leaking heavy amounts of sap. Inspired, you use the sap to fill cuts and holes in your form. The sap restores **4** points to INTEGRITY and acts a protective coating: when next in combat you may add another **2** points to your remaining INTEGRITY. This, however, may only be done *once*.

You are about to move on when you notice a small black mound near the base of a tree. Will you investigate or take a path sloping down towards the north end of the valley floor?

Investigate the mound? Turn to **22**.

Take the path? Turn to **45**.

## 67

Try as you might attempting to control the prone figure proves futile. You then hear a triumphant laugh and look up to see an eight-armed being with four rotating faces, its body wreathed in wisps of air, earth, water and fire.

"Look upon your doom, man of stone. We are the ELEMENTAL OVERLORDS, and we return to the world we created. Let the end begin now."

With that, the being raises its hands and gestures at you. The combined elemental assault - a summoned gravity storm, meteor, glacier and lava burst - completely destroys your form. Not even ash is left. Your adventure is over.

## 68

You reach the safety of the pines as the storm finally breaks. Fortunately the trees offer protection from the rain, although this is small comfort in light of your predicament. Gods, what a nightmare! You lumber through a thick carpet of pine needles and move to the edge of the tree canopy, now slightly off balance due to the loss of your left arm. You look up at the tallest, thickest pine, and are surprised to see an almost invisible cable with hand grips attached, which runs all the way over the opposing cliff face, *where the iron door is located!* You take heart at this stroke of luck. Looking back at the pine tree you see a small platform where the cable is secured, with a sturdy ladder running down the side of the tree. The rain also seems to be subsiding.

Will you attempt to climb the ladder - Turn to 5.

Turn back and investigate the other path - Turn to 7.

Continue up the side of the valley - Turn to 72.

## 69

You hurl the acid, which strikes the Golem fully in the back. It rears up immediately, moaning in the voice of the Overlord as the liquid begins to spread and consume the metal shell. It whirls clumsily, and seems to recognize you, despite your change of form. It then lumbers towards you. Will you:

Hurl the vapors? Turn to 56.

Hurl the sword? Turn to 37.

Run for the crystal? Turn to 4.

## 70

You leave the cottage. all the while congratulating yourself on your good fortune. Suddenly there is a huge bellow and you look up - the FORMORIAN GIANT! It has undoubtedly seen the light from the fireplace and come to investigate. As you are clearly not an Orc, you are now in deadly peril! The creature snarls and smashes the hillside several times with its club, which dislodges dozens of boulders and stone fragments that now in turn tumble down towards you. An avalanche! Test your MOVEMENT.

If the adjusted score less than 5, turn to 43.

If the adjusted score is 5 or more, turn to 89.

## 71

You fall a short distance into a pit filled with a green, viscous substance. You suddenly realize you are sinking into a large pool of GREEN SLIME. You catch a glimpse of a clawed hand also sinking into the Slime: you now know what fate befell the treacherous ORC. This, however, is of no comfort to you, as your stone form sinks several feet into the Slime. Although impervious to the acidic effect, you are effectively trapped - a fact not lost on Tey. He stands above the pit and gloats. "And so it ends. Although the Slime can't hurt you, the pit will hold you. Long enough for me to have the guards drop enough rocks to shatter your form. I thank you for your efforts: the knowledge gathered about Golem capabilities will be of great help in assisting me to control the peasants I enslave." Tey's laughter is the last thing you hear before the floor above closes. Your adventure is over.

## 72

The rain finally stops and you decide to brave the open once more. You climb for several minutes before reaching a rocky plateau. You stumble on small rocks several times, and are forced to hold onto small trees to upright yourself. Unfortunately, your efforts seem to have attracted attention as you hear a loud guttural cry ahead of you. You look up and behold a FORMORIAN GIANT - a huge misshapen creature clad in iron and leather. It takes note of you with its one good eye and raises one partially crippled hand, which holds a massive black iron club. You watch in fascination as the Giant brings the club down on your clay form, squashing it completely. For a brief moment there is a feeling of floating, and being disembodied, then nothing. Your adventure is over.

## 73

You stride quickly from the room, your tall, spindly form allowing for ridiculously long steps. You run back down the passage and out the door in the stone wall just as the soldiers return to the main room. You silently curse - had there been more time you may have been able to equip at least some armor and take a weapon. As you leave the cave, an alarm sounds almost immediately. You run out into the grove and with a flying leap easily jump the stream, and decide to run up and over the gravelly rise into the pine forest. As you move further in, you are presented with two options: now return to the platform and try to use the cable, or move up the side of the valley. Will you:

Return to the platform?                      Turn to **49**.

Climb up the side of the valley?            Turn to **26**.

## 74

You decide to take the right path, which wends its way through the pines. Although now twilight, you are making good progress when you suddenly round a corner and come face to face with two ORCS. The two creatures are evidently returning from a hunt, as they are equipped with knives and axes and carry several dead rabbits. They seem just as surprised as you.

Test your MOVEMENT (noting any Bonuses) against the ORCS. If you roll higher, you have scored a free attack against one of the Orcs. If you roll lower, then the ORCS have scored a free attack against you. If your rolls are *equal*, then neither party acted immediately and normal combat occurs. Note that you must treat each ORC as a separate creature, so in this case you must roll for *both* ORCS *each* Attack Round.

**ORCS:**MOVEMENT      **Normal**

DAMAGE          2

ENDURANCE      6

If you win, turn to **96**.**75**

You sit up and examine your surroundings. You are lying in a long glass case, filled with soft, pink gas. You recognize the gas immediately - you have used it yourself in the past to preserve bodies, and...wait! You look down and study your hands. You are back in your *own* body! How did this happen? You suddenly remember. The Overlord! It must have assumed control of the Steel Golem, which in turn pushed your mind back to your body...

Although pleased to be back in your own body, there is still the matter of the final Overlord. You gently open the case and walk gingerly across the room, taking time to readjust to normal human perceptions. In the distance you can hear a familiar tread: the Overlord is returning, no doubt eager to summon its brethren back to this plane.

You must stop it, but how?

Turn to **60**.**76**

Given your current predicament, you decide to try and reach your objective as quickly as possible. Turning left you walk through thick grass that at times reaches your upper thighs. More than once you almost fall but manage to right yourself at the last moment. You soon near the side of the cliff wall, and looking ahead can see what appears to a steam valve set into the rock face? It may bear investigating, but then it may also be guarded and time is short. The other option is avoid the valve by wending your way right around the first clump of trees and possibly walk past without being seen. Will you:

Investigate the steam valve?      Turn to **46**.Avoid it and go right around the trees?      Turn to **24**.**77**

You pick up a good-sized pebble and throw it. You risk a quick glance at the Soldiers, and although they look up it is in fact a *third* Soldier, previously hidden from your view by a rock column, that moves over to investigate. After waiting a full minute, the Soldier decides it is nothing and moves back to the group. You decide that there are now too many Soldiers to attempt to fight, and so you must try and sneak past them if possible.

Turn to **9**.

78

Remembering the scrawled advice, you step back and narrowly avoid a stone deadfall that plummets to the ground. You hear Tey curse.

Turn to 18.

79

The battle is ferocious, and takes you from room to room of the complex. Tey's minions scurry and flee from the conflict, although a few unfortunate creatures are struck by stray elemental blasts or simply crushed by your rolling metal form as you crash through walls. Dodging a blast, you reach and grab your opponent's form and plunge it head first into the ground. You watch as another Overlord - a cruel red-faced woman - fades away, her tongue of flame lashing the air in protest. *Fire. Two more*, you think. The remaining Overlords break free and the battle continues.

Now turn to 58.

80

The Steel Golem is already in the room, stooped over on the ground with its back to you. The Golem's large powerful hands are carefully placing items around the diamond and etching symbols into the floor. Over its shoulder you notice several crystals sitting on a shelf! You curse but realize that you must obtain a crystal, which will be required for you to complete your task. What will you do?

Hurl the acid? Turn to 69.

The vapors? Turn to 54.

The sword? Turn to 37.

Run for the crystal? Turn to 4.

81

You turn back, now reflecting on your next course of action. Suddenly the iron door behind you opens! It swings back with a clang to reveal three SOLDIERS, who stand at the ready with maces and shields. A tall, thick-set man in the lead points his mace at you and speaks. "There it is! Remember the orders!" The three advance quickly and surround you: obviously their orders are to destroy you. Although you do your best to ward off individual blows, it leaves you exposed to other blows from behind. Your foes are also able to block your own feeble efforts with their shields. Within moments your form is destroyed and your adventure is over.

82

Tey cuts your throat open and giggles hysterically for a moment - a moment being all he has before being crushed by the Formorian Giant. You sink your knees, and then fall to the side. Your last view of the world is an ant crawling over a blade of grass. Your last thought is that you have won, but at the cost of your life.

**THE END**

## 83

A sixth sense warns you about the door, and instead you decide to follow a narrow path that leads away from the cliff face, eventually wending its way down to the valley floor through thick scrub. As you approach the scrub, a spear suddenly strikes the ground in front of you! You turn to see three SPEAR MEN: the first now cursing for missing you. The two remaining soldiers immediately cast their spears as you dive for the scrub. Test your MOVEMENT (with + 2 bonus).

If the roll is 3 - 5, turn to **29**.

If the roll is 6 - 8, turn to **66**.

## 84

You dive at the last moment and the arrow narrowly misses you! You don't wait for the archer to draw another arrow, running and tumbling down the ridge as fast as is possible. On more than one occasion you fall and roll madly, but you continue as you are desperate to get as far as possible from the Soldiers. You reach the bottom of the ridge and race across the grassland for the cliff wall on the far side. One advantage to the Golem form is that you don't tire as a human would and so you are able to almost make it to the far side of the valley before deciding to look back. Halfway up the ridge you can see a small light - a torch or lantern - slowly descending. The Soldiers are obviously taking their time, as even a slide down the ridge could be harmful. It also occurs to you that at present the Soldiers have no one to alert: most of the Tey's forces are located at the southern end of the valley, considering it inconceivable that you would have penetrated this far into their territory. There may yet be hope.

Turn to **2**.

## 85

You attempt to jump for the rock, and actually find it nearer than you first thought. You land awkwardly and are about to step onto the other side when you find yourself unable to move. Looking down, you see two hands, composed entirely of water, holding your ankles. You are in the grip of a WATER WEIRD. Conduct a MOVEMENT check.

If you roll a 1-3, the creature's grip has damaged your form and you must deduct 2 from your INTEGRITY. If you roll a 4-6, you are able to break free and step to the other side of the stream. Note that you must *continue* to conduct MOVEMENT checks until you break free or your INTEGRITY reaches 0, when your form is completely eroded and the adventure is over.

If you break free, turn to **34**.

## 86

You enter a smaller chamber, and immediately divine its purpose. The incense, the bowls sitting on the four points of a diamond, the glyphs inscribed on the floor: this is a Summoning Room. At the centre of the diamond, Tey stands over a massive metallic figure that lies prone on the ground. Its sheer size dwarfs even your stone form. Tey is uttering several phrases from a language you recognize from your own research, a dead language last used by Atlantean priests over two thousand years ago...

You move forward to stop Tey, but it is too late. Even in your Golem form, everything suddenly feels *wrong*, as though it had been turned inside out. Tey cackles madly as a ball of energy, pulsing

with a color you cannot even begin to describe, materializes above the metallic form. "Yes, yes! Lords and Masters of the Planes, I call you now! Take this form! Let it be your body, your will! I ask just one thing: destroy my foe!" The ball floats for a moment, as if considering Tey's proposal. Without warning it expands and envelops Tey. "No! Not me, my masters! I am a loyal servant!" Tey begins to scream as the sphere lifts him into the air, but stops as the sphere contracts and plunges into his chest. His limp body then falls to the ground. You move forward cautiously and study the contents of the four bowls - dirt, a burning candle, a small rune depicting the symbol of air and oil. You realize who Tey has summoned as his body now rises above you, eyes blazing with a power not his own...

Turn to **20**.

### 87

The rapidly descending pine completely squashes your clay form. For a brief moment there is a feeling of floating, and being disembodied, then nothing. Your adventure is over.

### 88

The Golem sags and collapses to the ground. You watch carefully. *There!* Electrical current flows from the Golem, and dances in the air, sporadically forming a humanoid shape. You immediately hold the crystal in front of you, and utter syllables not spoken in millennia. There is a faint scream in the air as the current flows directly into the crystal.

You then hold it up, and peering closely can see flashes of electricity from time to time. The last Overlord has been contained, and can be sent back to its home plane at your leisure.

Turn to **61**.

### 89

You narrowly avoid several boulders and reach the safety of the pines, which bear the brunt of the avalanche. It is almost more than you can endure, being so close to death yet again. Deduct one SANITY point. Being night, the Formorian Giant is having trouble determining if you were killed, and you take advantage of its confusion to slip back down through the hills to the other path.

Turn to **25**.

### 90

The cart moves along for almost ten minutes, and you marvel at the amount of excavation that would have been required to create such a system. You pass several small platforms but all appear to be deserted. The Orc finally slows the cart, and it eventually stops at a large platform. The creature beckons for you to follow, and you cautiously trail behind, watching for the first sign of treachery. As you round a corner and lose sight of the Orc for a moment, it suddenly runs ahead, screeching loudly.

You curse and move forward, following it down into what appears to be a well-used corridor. The corridor ends in a large room: a barracks! Several foes pour into the room, and there is now no choice but to fight them all.

Fight in this order, as per previous rules:

**SOLDIERS (x 2):**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	8, 8
DAMAGE	3

**ETTINS (x 2):**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	10, 10
DAMAGE	4

**ORC CHAMPION:**

MOVEMENT	Normal
DURABILITY	8
DAMAGE	4

If you win, turn to **15**.

**91**

Deciding to show mercy, you continue on. You also note your form feels different: your "skin" is now darker, and your entire body feels *harder*. After thinking for a moment, you realize the Salamander's attack actually baked your form! Having both a strong and dry epidermis could definitely be advantageous. If at any point from now on you receive instructions regarding *rain-induced* damage to your clay form or deductions from your SANITY, you may *ignore it* on account of your new state. If in combat whilst in *clay* form, your new INTEGRITY score will *initially* be **14**, and *not* the indicated score in the entry.

You walk for several minutes before hearing a strange voice above you. You look up and see a four foot tall man with a thick black beard whose body from the waist down is that of a reptile. The "man" is also bright red and wreathed in flames, and holds a small pike that seems to be composed entirely of flame. You instantly recognize this to be a FIRE SALAMANDER in its true form - a rare sight. You back away cautiously, but the Salamander raises a hand in placation. It then speaks in a light, crackling tone. "All be well, man of clay. You spared our brother. Shown kindness. Repay favor twice over. First, advice. Avoid door on cliff. Trap. Second, show you true way. Come." The Salamander then crawls down the cliff face and beckons for you to follow.

You carefully trace the track of the creature as it wends its way through a bog of what appears to be quicksand and around the large clump of trees first seen from a distance. You zigzag back and forth up an almost invisible path until at the top of a small cliff and onto the goat path that started at the other end of the valley. You wave in appreciation and the creature nods and scuttles away quickly. You

look over at the distant iron door and think that if you could smile now you would: you have avoided a trap and have also been placed on the correct path. You may yet have the last laugh on Tey. The gentle patter of rain reminds you to continue.

Turn to **62**.

## 92

You move ahead, looking warily for signs of more Orcs but all is quiet. The rain stops as you reluctantly leave the safety of the trees and are now walking through small, undulating gulleys filled with rain water as you near the far end of the valley.

The last gully gives way to open grassland dotted with the occasional tree. You realize this will be a problem as you effectively losing the last of your ground cover. The sides of the valley also narrow and converge about a mile ahead.

Although the left side of the valley abruptly ends in the bottom of a cliff wall, the right side is marked by stone ridges that gradually rise up to form a rocky plateau. You reason there must be another entrance to Tey's underground complex nearby as those Orcs must have come from *somewhere*. Which side of the valley will you investigate?

The left?                      Turn to **2**.

The right?                     Turn to **57**.

## 93

You decide on boldness. Waiting for what you consider to be the best possible moment, you suddenly run at the Soldiers, and are almost on top of them before they can react. You strike the Soldier whittling first, and turn to see the second looking up from his dice in shock. You are about to kick him full in the face when a battleaxe plunges down into your right shoulder and splits your form open. You immediately sag to the ground and turn to see a *third* Soldier, who was hidden from your sight by a column of rock. A fatal mistake, as the second blow takes your head off. Your adventure is over.

## 94

You enter and see a familiar sight - *another laboratory!* Set into the ceiling is a large steel box, with glass tubes running off it into the sides of the wall. This, you surmise, is some kind of cooling system. Metal coils also run in two directions from the box, and appear to be connected to a pair of skull caps. One cap lies loose on an empty bench, while the second rests on the head of a prone figure that seems to be composed entirely of wood. Of course, a *Wood Golem!* You study the device for several minutes and determine how it is operated. Although not your true form, it appears possible to transfer your consciousness into the form of the Wood Golem. Although the Golem's form is rather spindly, it would be lighter and therefore faster. Water would also be far less of an issue in this form. Although still not sure as to what to do after attempting transference, this is a start. Noting there is no door to lock, you proceed.

Preparing the equipment, you watch as the glass tubes heat up and electrical current flows across the metal box. Lying down on the empty bench, you place the skull cap on your brow. With one outstretched hand you pull the necessary lever and activate the device. There is a loud hum, the sensation of current flowing through your body and a white flash. You open your eyes and note that

everything seems very grainy, although your hearing has improved exponentially. You sit up and realize you have succeeded! You carefully stand and study your previous clay form, which is now smoking and degrading. The Golem's form obviously deteriorate once used and abandoned. Seeing your "body" in this state is almost too much for you: deduct one SANITY point.

Turn to **21**.

#### 95

You have been struck by a stone deadfall: another of Tey's traps. It severely cracks your form and you sustain 10 points of damage to your INTEGRITY. Seeing your now ruined form takes its toll and you must also deduct one SANITY point.

Turn to **18**.

#### 96

You have won, but this form is clearly not built for extended combat. You stoop to inspect their corpses and find one Orc has a serviceable belt and pouch which fits your warped waist. This may be of use if you can find serviceable items. The other Orc carries nothing of interest. You now pause and consider your options. The stars have come out, and standing under them with a weapon you feel confident, almost...human. Again, if you could smile you would.

The quiet of the night is suddenly underscored by faint voices, far off but still audible. You are still being pursued - by now Tey will have been notified and has no doubt taken exception to your unauthorized use of the laboratory. There are two options: the path continues off at an angle into the gloom of the hills, and also slopes down to the left, leading to the floor of the valley.

Which way?

Left? Turn to **25**.

Right? Turn to **35**.

#### 97

As you wave your hand over the corpse the insects fly away angrily, but they can do little to a wooden man. The corpse itself wears the remnants of a soldier's uniform, and you find clutched in one hand a rotten scroll. The scroll itself appears to have been waterproofed which has helped it survive in part. There is some barely legible writing regarding Tey's underground complex, and his affinity for traps, particularly pits hidden in floors. You mentally note this; as if you are able to penetrate the complex once again it may save your life. If at any time you think you have found a way to use this advice, simply add **35** to that paragraph entry. If the entry makes sense, you may continue from that point.

You now decide to take the path to the north. Turn to **45**.

#### 98

Trying to ignore the irony of a wooden man lighting a fire, you carefully do so and then rise to inspect the room. A thorough search, however, reveals nothing. Dejected, you return to the fireplace to douse the fire, but then notice a small stone at the rear of the fireplace juts out more than the others. Carefully extinguishing the fire, you reach in and remove the stone. Behind it is a small pouch, which

you discover contains two potions. Given your skill with alchemy, you immediately recognize them: the first is a *Potion of Haste*, and the second a *Potion of Invisibility*. How did the Orcs obtain such valuable items? Doubtless they looted Tey's private stock in a quiet moment. For this you are grateful, as both will invaluable.

If at any time you wish to use the *Potion of Haste*, you must note that paragraph entry. For *five more consecutive paragraphs* your MOVEMENT rate will carry a + 5 bonus, after which time the Potion will have worn off. The bonus will apply even when coming to a paragraph *with* combat instructions, but note that you must have used the Potion *prior* to such a paragraph - you may not use the Potion *at* that entry.

To use the *Potion of Invisibility*, look for an asterisk (\*) placed next to a *number entry*. This is a cue that will allow you to bypass the danger described in that paragraph and move to the next entry. Note that you may only use the Potion *once*. Also remember that you do not have to use the Potion, and may chose instead to risk combat or a MOVEMENT check.

You now decide to leave the cottage. Turn to **70**.

## 99

The arrow strikes home, and although your form bursts into flame you feel nothing. In fact, your form isn't so much as singed thanks to the Ring of Fire Protection. You suddenly decide to turn the situation to your advantage and advance on your foes, waving your arms in a menacing fashion. The effect is immediate: although seasoned Soldiers, the pair balk at the sight of a flaming Golem who appears to be invulnerable and strides towards them with deadly intent. The pair glance at one another and then turn and run. It has, however, a disturbing effect on your psyche: deduct one SANITY point. You decide to take advantage of their fear and return to the valley floor as quickly as possible.

As you descend it occurs to you that at present the Soldiers have no one to alert: most of the Tey's forces are located at the other end of the valley, considering it inconceivable that you would have penetrated this far into their territory. There may yet be hope. The last of the flames flicker out and die as you reach the bottom and start to stride across the grassland.

Turn to **2**.

## 100

You dodge Tey's blade and step back, just as the Formorian Giant's club reduces Tey to pulp. His threat is finally over. Together with your new servants, you rebuild the complex, minus its deadly traps. In the valley, you order the clearing of much of the dead scrub and have the bogs filled. Paths are paved, lantern poles installed, way stations and wells built. Crops are planted and a small market is established. You also erect a hospital and use your alchemy for the benefit of all. You even correct many of the deformities of your Giant servant and eradicate the constant pain his kind endure. Your coffers also swell once a grateful King is made aware of the plans of a certain former Baron. Under your wise and gentle leadership, the valley becomes the centre of a thriving and plentiful kingdom, the *zeitgeist* of a new Golden Age.

**THE END**