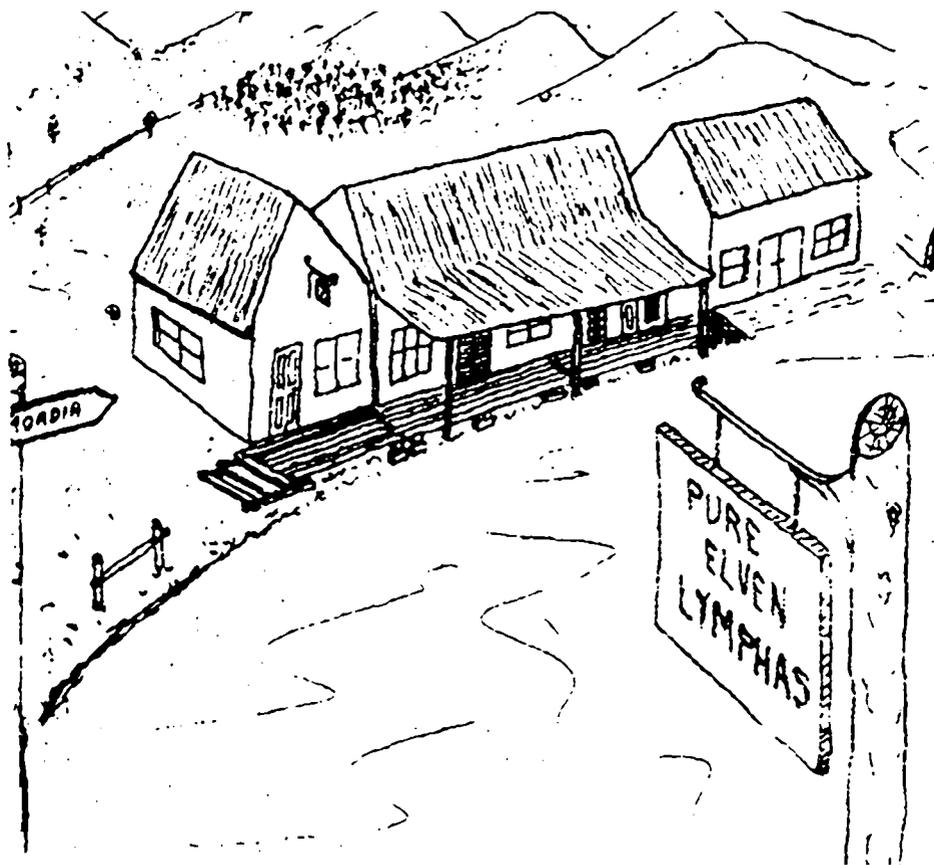


# THE CAVERNS OF MORDIA

A Manual

by

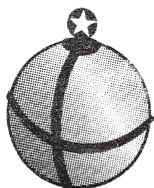
H. G. L. Coster and A. L. d'Assumpcao

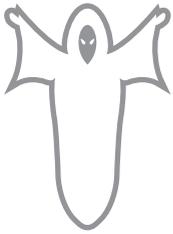


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# Preface to the 2016 Re-release

This version of the game was developed following feedback from gamers in the 1980's but was never released for sale.

Over the years since I first wrote and released it, and long after the Apple ][ was no longer on the market, the Caverns of Mordia has been the subject of many blogs. It was also pirated and both the game and scans of the manual have been put on the Internet.

However, the original manual was deliberately printed on orange coloured paper to make it difficult to photocopy and this also made it difficult to produce good quality scans.

Further, the software contained copy protection that made it very difficult to copy the game. The versions on the Internet had some of that copy protection removed, but some elements of the protection remained that ensured that the software would frequently "bomb out".

The copy protection in this new version has been completely removed\*.

After I was contacted by Neville Ridley-Smith, I was inspired to resurrect the game and my grandsons and their friends have played the game extensively; my grandson Sebastiaan re-typed the manual into Word. Sean McNamara inspired me to release the de-protected version of the game for a special release at WOzFest 5¼" this year and produced this splendid new manual and game disks.

*Hans "Sharnoscet" Coster  
November 2016*

\*The copy protection had several layers. Basically, the DOS on the disk was modified so that the File Allocation Table (FAT) was on a different track than normal DOS. So if the diskette was inserted after the computer had been booted, the FAT was not accessible, although a CATALOG would list some other files but not the game program. If the Caverns of Mordia diskette was booted, the modified DOS would be loaded and this would allow location of the program and load it automatically via a special HELLO program that also contained machine code that further modified the DOS. However, the modified DOS had the SAVE function removed so the program could not be saved onto another diskette. To save the Caving Stats for an interrupted game a special WRITE routing was activated via CALLS to machine code that was POKED into DOS in the program itself. Scattered through the program were PEEKs to ascertain whether or not the DOS was the modified or normal DOS and the game would "bomb out" if it was the latter.

This 2016 re-release of Caverns of Mordia is a collaboration between Hans Coster (the original author of the game) and me (bringing my modest desktop publishing skills).

At OzKFest 2015, and then as host of the Apple ][ WOzFest gatherings in Sydney, Australia, I've gotten to meet some interesting Apple ][ enthusiasts from around the country (and beyond).

I hadn't heard of Caverns of Mordia until WOzFest /// (April, 2016), when Hans brought an original disk in the hopes of having it imaged. While an EDD disk image was not produced, a still-protected .dsk image was able to be provided to Hans for deprotection (see page 4).

After a request from a reader of my apple2.europlus.zone blog for a download link for the game (which was mentioned in the WOzFest /// Recap post), I began to think about working with Hans to release disk images at WOzFest 5¼", a celebration of the 5¼" diskette.

In the interim, Hans had been working on deprotecting the game and adding features for which he had notes from the 1980's, so an upgraded program and manual seemed the natural path to take.

And so the 2016 re-release of Caverns of Mordia was born!

Attendees and participants at WOzFest 5¼" received a physical copy of the disk and this manual as a memento of their attendance.

Despite the fact this is 2016 and PDFs have fancy internal and external links, I have kept the manual as simple as possible for several reasons: keeping it more in line with the original; so that recipients of the physical copies at WOzFest 5¼" don't miss out on any functionality; and (perhaps most importantly) because I had a tight deadline to get the manual prepared after my first Retrochallenge entry in the 2016/10 edition of that competition.

I hope you enjoy the updated game and new manual as much as I've enjoyed helping Hans to release them!



*Sean "europlus" McNamara  
November 2016*

# Foreword

The general aim of this game is to have fun. The challenge is to fulfil the task required of you by Pallandoin, the mightiest of the few remaining Wizards. You are to deliver the Orb of Power, an artefact of inestimable value, to the beautiful Lady Elleda who dwells in the mystical land of Locklorien.

The Forces of the Night, under the Evil Spirit Sharnoscet, have besieged Locklorien, which will soon fall unless the Orb of Power is brought there.

To deliver the Orb to the Lady Elleda you must penetrate the very realms of Sharnoscet by going through the Caverns of Mordia, the only route that he would not expect aid to come by. Surviving the many hazards to be found in the murky depths of Mordia will be an achievement in itself.

The Gate to Locklorien out of the Caverns of Mordia exists somewhere on Level 25 of the caverns. At the start of the game, you may create a second gate on Level 35 if you wish (a deeper exit may be useful if you descend, perhaps unplanned, to levels below 25)

To aid you in your journey, Pallandoin has given you several items, some of which are normal weapons, the rest having some magical properties. These items will form your basic equipment.

In addition, other items may be obtained which will be invaluable to your success. Detailed descriptions of these items and their uses are given in this manual.

# THE GAME

## Part 1

*Essential Instructions and General Overview of the Game*

# Loading and Running The Caverns of Mordia

To run the game on the computer, you should insert the Caverns of Mordia disk into the disk drive and “boot” the disk.\*

The Caverns of Mordia program will then be loaded automatically into the computer.



## **Notes:**

- You should not “run” or “load” the Caverns of Mordia program into the computer in any other way.
- If the game is interrupted, your vital statistics and position can be recorded on disk (see under Interrupting a Game). For this purpose you will need to insert into the disk drive a properly “initialised” disk (without a “write-protect” tab in place).
- You can record your statistics on the Caverns of Mordia disk – however, if saving statistics for more than one player, it is advisable to use a separate disk to avoid running out of space on the disk.

\*If your Apple ][ has the Autostart ROM, the disk will be “booted” automatically when you switch the computer on. Alternatively, you can “boot” the disk in the usual way by typing PR#6 (RETURN). (This assumes your disk controller is plugged into slot 6 of the Apple ][; if not type PR#n, where n is the number of the slot where the disk controller is plugged in.)

# Valid Command Codes

## PART 1

ROOM 1: In this room special rules apply

- 0 Teleport to the surface or emerge
- 27 Exchange experience for agility and/or strength
- 31 Buy Lymphas – possible only on Level 1

## PART 2

### ALL OTHER ROOMS

- 1 Descend to the next level
- 21 Use Araneida's Tunnel to Room 1
- 30 Eat Lymphas – possible only on or below level 3
- 37 Ignite Elven Flare
- 50 Climb up one level
- 55 Use the Wand
- 63 Remove the Gas Mask
- 66 Put on the Gas Mask
- 70 Put on **The One Ring**
- 72 Take off **The One Ring**
- 80 Use the Magic Staff
- 88 Caving Report
- 89 Open the Chest
- 100 List the Command Codes

Numbers 1 to 16 for the required Room

## PART 3

### FIGHTING MONSTERS

- 20 Use the Charm Ring on Monsters
- 22 Attack Orcs
- 33 Draw the Double-handed Sword
- 35 Sheath the Double-handed Sword
- 40 Use the Net to trap Dragons
- 44 Attack the Dragon
- 77 Attack the Giant Vampire Bats
- 90 Attack Trolls
- 99 Attack the Balrog

## Entering Your Moves

At the start of the game, certain messages will be displayed and specific proposals will be put to you. They will require simple “Y” or “N” replies.

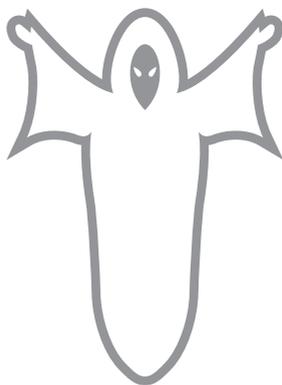
To move to a certain room, to engage a particular monster, or to perform one of the many other tasks, you must type in the Command Code for that operation.

**Note:** This should be done only after the message “YOUR MOVE” appears on the screen.

Should you type in all or part of a Command Code at any other time, the program will request you to “RE-ENTER” the code when it is ready.

**Note:** You must also press the “RETURN” key at the end of each entry.

The exception to this rule is when the message “PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE” appears. It is then enough to press any key *without* following it with a “RETURN”.



# Interrupting a Game

An adventure in the Caverns of Mordia, even an abbreviated one, is likely to take several hours, or even days or weeks.

Provision has been made to interrupt the game and have your position and strength recorded on disk. You can do this at any level by teleporting to the surface. However, teleporting is possible only in Room 1 (on any level). Here you can use the Orb of Power to call on the Wizard Pallandoin to teleport you.

On emerging from the caverns the following message will appear:

```
YOU HAVE TELEPORTED TO THE SURFACE BY USE OF  
THE ORB.
```

```
HAVE YOU SPECIFICALLY SURFACED TO PURCHASE  
EQUIPMENT THEN TO DESCEND AGAIN TO YOUR  
PREVIOUS POSITION (Y/N) N
```

```
WILL THIS GAME BE CONTINUED LATER? (Y/N) Y
```

To interrupt the game you should answer "N" to the first question and "Y" to the second, as shown.

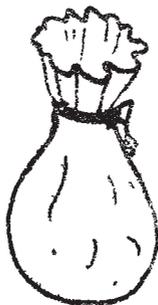
Your vital statistics will then be automatically stored on disk with your name as a file name. At this stage you will be provided with a brief summary and assessment of your performance to date. Sample:

```
DURING YOUR ADVENTURE IN THE CAVERNS:  
* YOU ACQUIRED 1170 PIECES OF GOLD.  
* YOUR ADVENTURE LASTED 11 DAYS AND  
* YOU DESCENDED TO LEVEL 13.  
* YOU KILLED 16 ORCS,  
* KILLED 3 DRAGONS,  
* KILLED 11 VAMPIRE BATS  
* KILLED 2 TROLLS  
* KILLED 0 BALROGS AND  
* WERE CURSED 6 TIMES BY DEMONS.  
* YOU WERE ALSO GASSED 5 TIMES.  
YOU ACQUIRED A CAVING RATING OF  
***** 165 *****  
YOU'VE GOT A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT DUNGEONS
```

## Continuing an Interrupted Adventure

On rerunning the program you will be asked to state your name. If you wish to continue the previous game, you must use the same name. When asked whether this is a new game you should answer "N". The program will then retrieve the statistics of your previous game from the disk and return you to the level from which you last teleported to the surface, with all the Gold, equipment, experience, strength, etc. that you had before.

**Note:** The hazards and monsters and layout of the rooms of that level will be changed since your last visit.



# Resumé of the Cardinal Attributes of the Caverns

What follows is a brief summary of some salient features of the Caverns of Mordia. The details and more subtle features required to perform well or even to survive can be found in the more complete descriptions given in Part 2.

## Caverns

Up to seventeen rooms on each level, interconnected by passages and one-way passages. Ascent Shafts and Drop-offs interconnect different levels. No two levels have the same map, nor do the maps remain fixed after a change of level or a severe earth Tremor.

## Araneida's Tunnels

One leads from every room to Room 1. The Tunnels provide a hazardous passage because Araneida, the Giant Spider, will often sting you.

## Vitality Exchange

Possible only in Room 1.

## Teleporting to the Surface

Possible by using the Orb of Power in Room 1.

## Recuperation

Up to 20% at the end of each day. The Gas Mask is automatically removed during your recuperation if you are wearing it.

## Equipment

At the start you have:

- A Dragon Net
- A Dagger
- The Orb of Power
- The Magic Staff
- The Wand
- A lamp

You can purchase at the Dwarf Trading Centres near the entrance to the caverns:

- A Gas Mask
- The Double-handed Sword
- Lymphas

You'll eventually find:

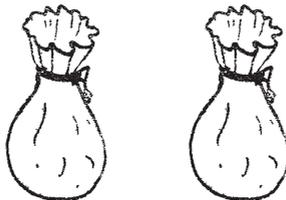
- Elven Flares: only in the Chests
- The Charm Ring
- The Dragon Occular
- The Mithril Armour: you need to kill the Trolls for this
- **The One Ring**

## Caving Reports

Provided on request and automatically at the beginning of a day.

## Treasures

- Gold, for buying equipment. It also builds experience.
- Lymphas
- Elven Flares

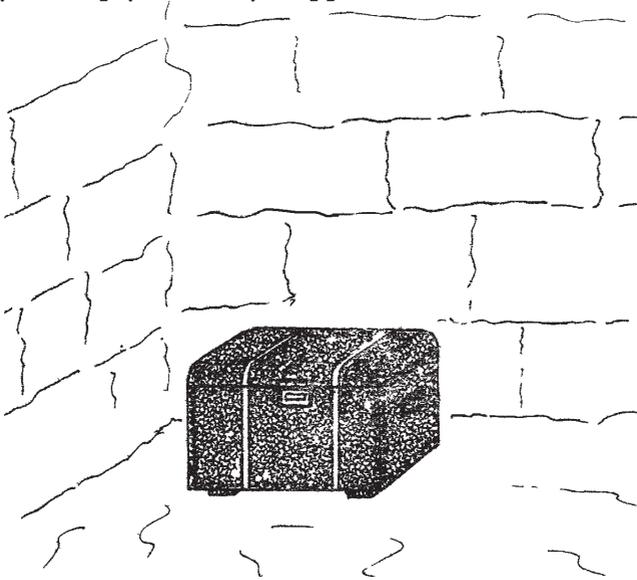


## Chests

Left behind in the caverns by previous adventurers. May contain:

- Gold
- Lymphas
- Elven Flares
- Serpents

or they may be empty or booby trapped.



## Hazards

- **Poisonous Gas:** can sap your strength and your agility
- **Drop-offs** (hidden)
- **Lamps Out:** you cannot see the hazards or monsters because your lamp goes out.
- **Tremors:** change the layout of the rooms.
- **Giant Spider Webs:** if you are trapped in one, you are largely immobilised.

# Monsters

- **Orcs:** are found scattered throughout the caverns.
- **Dragons:** are powerful and can strike and breathe fire. They can be fought with a Dagger, the Double-handed Sword, or a Net. They occur at depths below Level 4.
- **Trolls:** guard the Mithril Armour and occur at depths below Level 9.
- **Giant Vampire Bats:** move around, generally in swarms.
- **Balrogs:** the ultimate Demon monster. They occur at depths below Level 14.
- **Demons:** being cursed by them saps your agility, and to a lesser extent your strength.
- **Araneida:** a Giant Spider. She is found in her Tunnels to Room 1.
- **Goblins:** will steal your Dragon Occular if they can.
- **Serpents:** sometimes make their nests in Chests and will bite you when disturbed.



## Fighting Monsters

Your chance of striking the first blow generally depends on your strength and/or agility and/or experience relative to the monster's. Blinding it with an Elven Flare dramatically increases your chance of striking the first blow.

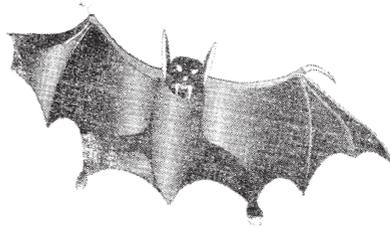
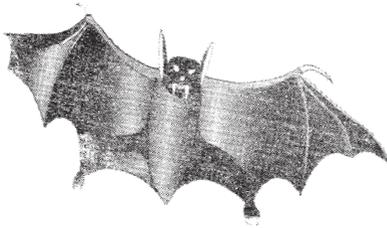
The importance of each attribute varies with the type of monster and the weapon you choose to fight with. The damage you suffer and inflict will depend again on your strength and experience and those of the monster, as well as the type of weapon you use.



## Running From Monsters

In running from monsters, your chance of being struck will depend on your agility in relation to the constitution and agility of the monster. Each monster present will try to attack you on your withdrawal.

**Note:** If you ignite an Elven Flare, the blinding glow will offer you a safe escape from most monsters – including a safe passage through Araneida's tunnels.



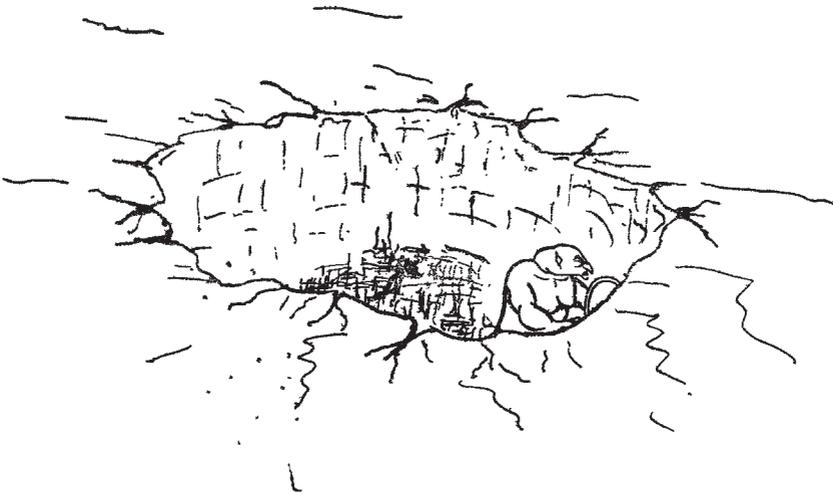
## Sharnoscet - The Evil Spirit

Exerts control over the monsters and some hazards (e.g. Demons). Its influence increases with depth. Sharnoscet can cast a debilitating spell on you. If you have **The One Ring**, Sharnoscet can sense that and the chance of him casting a spell on you increases. The chance of this happening is greatly increased if you are wearing **The One Ring** and increases sharply with additional moves you make whilst wearing **The One Ring**. Once you have worn **The One Ring**, its effect on the attention of Sharnoscet never completely wears off, even if you do not have it on.

## Drop-offs and Ascent Shafts

These are sometimes present and allow you to pass from one level to another. Passing up an Ascent Shaft or dropping down a Drop-off allows you to escape, with complete safety, any monster or hazard. Drop-offs and Ascent Shafts can be created using the Magic Staff and Wand respectively. The Staff, however, should *not* be used in Room 1.

Occasionally, hidden Drop-offs are present and you may fall down to the next level. In the glow of an Elven Flare, however, you can see these and automatically avoid them.



# THE GAME

## Part 2

*The game in detail...*

# Layout of the Caverns

The Caverns of Mordia extend to unimaginable (some say infinite) depths. With increasing depth the hazards and strengths of the monsters increase also, and the omniscient evil grows as Sharnoscet's influence becomes more dominant.

The number of rooms accessible on any given level varies but it is restricted to 17.

Room 1 is a very special room in which you can use the Orb of Power to call on the Wizard Pallandoin (see under Basic Equipment). This room is also free of most hazards and monsters (except Balrogs and Giant Vampire Bats). It is worthwhile therefore to remember (or map out as you go) the interconnected rooms on your current level so that you can most rapidly (or most hazard-free) get back to Room 1 (see also Appendix).

Should you find yourself in a dead-end room (which you must have entered through a one-way passage, a Drop-off, or an Ascent Shaft) or should you have urgent need to get to Room 1, you can consider using one of Araneida's Tunnels. This is hazardous but is sometimes the only viable option (see under Araneida.)

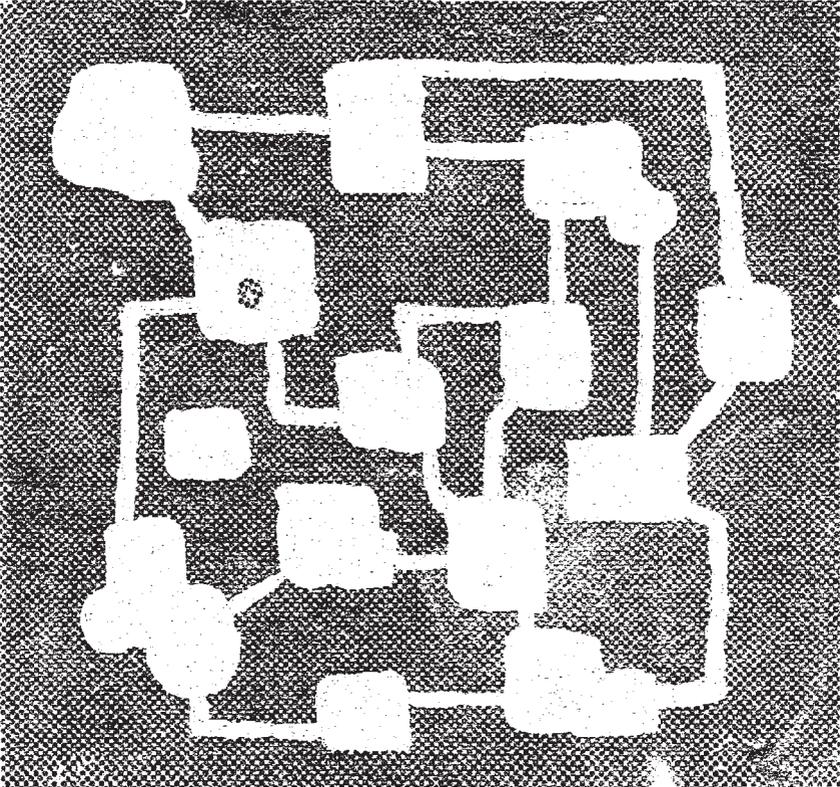
Earth Tremors constantly change the layout, including the rooms themselves and their contents, and the passages between the rooms and the shafts between levels. This makes it impossible to plan a complete retreat from deep down in the caverns.

Once you are on a given level, however, the layout remains fixed unless a Tremor occurs. Some Tremors cause only small changes in the layout, but severe ones can change the layout completely.

Between visits to a given level, the layout of the rooms, the interconnecting passages, Drop-Offs, Ascent Shafts and one-way passages (that do not afford a return pathway) will almost certainly be different. The various monsters, hazards and treasures will then also be different. Once you leave a level, or if a severe Tremor occurs, you can thus almost never find yourself back in that particular layout.



**Note:** You can get a list of all passages (but not one-way passages) that you have already seen (but not necessarily used) in your exploration of the current level. A typical layout of the rooms on one level is shown in here:



## Recuperation

Fighting monsters and moving from room to room accounts for a move. Each day it is possible to make 10 moves. At the end of each day, the circadian recuperation spell prepared for you by Pallandoin takes effect. In this transcendental state, the Orb of Power transforms your personal hyperspace so that it is out of contact with normal space-time reality. You are thereby completely shielded from the hazards and monsters present.

On emerging from your transcendental recuperation, your strength and agility may have improved by up to 20% each.

Your experience is not affected. It is advantageous therefore to exchange your experience for strength and agility just before the end of a day.

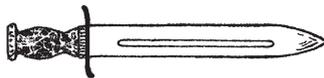
At the beginning of a new day, your ability to use the Charm Ring to charm Demons will be restored so that you can again use it twice during the day.

Similarly, your Wand can once again function successfully, but only once in the coming day.



**Note:** During your recuperation, your Gas Mask, if you have it and are wearing it, will be removed. You must remember to put it back on if you are in a room containing gas.

At the start of a new day, you will automatically be supplied with a Caving Report which will detail your current status and other vital statistics. You can, of course, request a report at any other time; it will also detail the number of moves left in the day.



## Vitality Exchange

Room 1 on each level is of special significance. The influence of the wizard Pallandoin penetrates down to this room at every level.

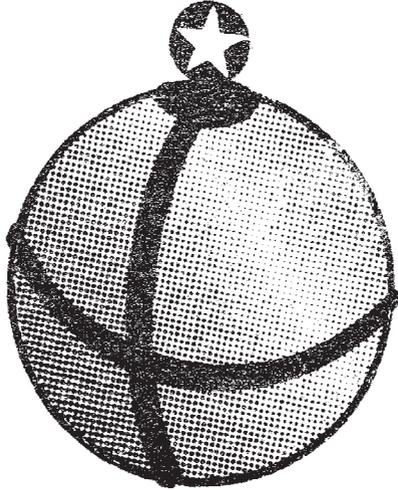
More details of Pallandoin's influence are given, where appropriate, in the descriptions that follow.

But one particularly important aspect of his influence to note at this point is your ability to call on him to exchange your experience for increased strength and/or agility (which can also be exchanged for each other). This allows you to grow in stature to deal more effectively with monsters or prepare yourself to descend further into the caverns.

You cannot perform a vitality exchange in any other room.

The request for exchange requires concentration. Should a Balrog or Vampire Bat be present it might grab the opportunity to attack you.

**Note:** Unexchanged experience can improve your chances of success in fighting some monsters (see under Monsters and Combat).



## Caving Reports

A constant record is kept of your progress. A resumé of your current status and some of the more vital statistics are contained in a Caving Report issued automatically at the beginning of a new day.

You can get such a report on request at any other time. It does not count as a move and can be made even when your lamp is out.

A Caving Report can often be useful to check on how many times you've used the Charm Ring today, whether the Wand has been used successfully, how much Lymphas you have left, whether you have the Gas Mask on or the Double-handed Sword drawn, and how many moves are left in the day.

The report will also give you an overall assessment of your situation.

A sample report, issued to cover Fred, is shown below:

```
*****  
*          CAVING REPORT FOR FRED          *  
*****  
ROOM 1  DEPTH 13          DEPTH REACHED 13
```

```
EXP'NCE: 6948          GOLD: 1170  
AGILITY: 25679        STRENGTH: 15623
```

```
# MOVES LEFT TODAY: 3  #DAYS SO FAR: 21
```

YOU NOW HAVE:-

**THE MITHRIL ARMOUR**

10 PIECE(S) OF LYMPHAS

5 ELVEN FLARE(S)

THE CHARM RING

---AND HAVE USED IT 1 TIME TODAY

A GAS MASK

USED THE WAND (SUCCESSFULLY) TODAY

THE DRAGON OCCULAR

**DOUBLE-HANDED SWORD**

YOU'RE IN GOOD SHAPE

```
*****  
PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE
```



Dwarf

# Dwarf Trading Centres

After their disastrous displacement from the Caverns of Mordia by the Dragons, and later by the Evil Spirit Sharnoscet and its Balrogs, the enterprising Dwarves set up a trading complex not far, but at a safe distance, from the caverns.

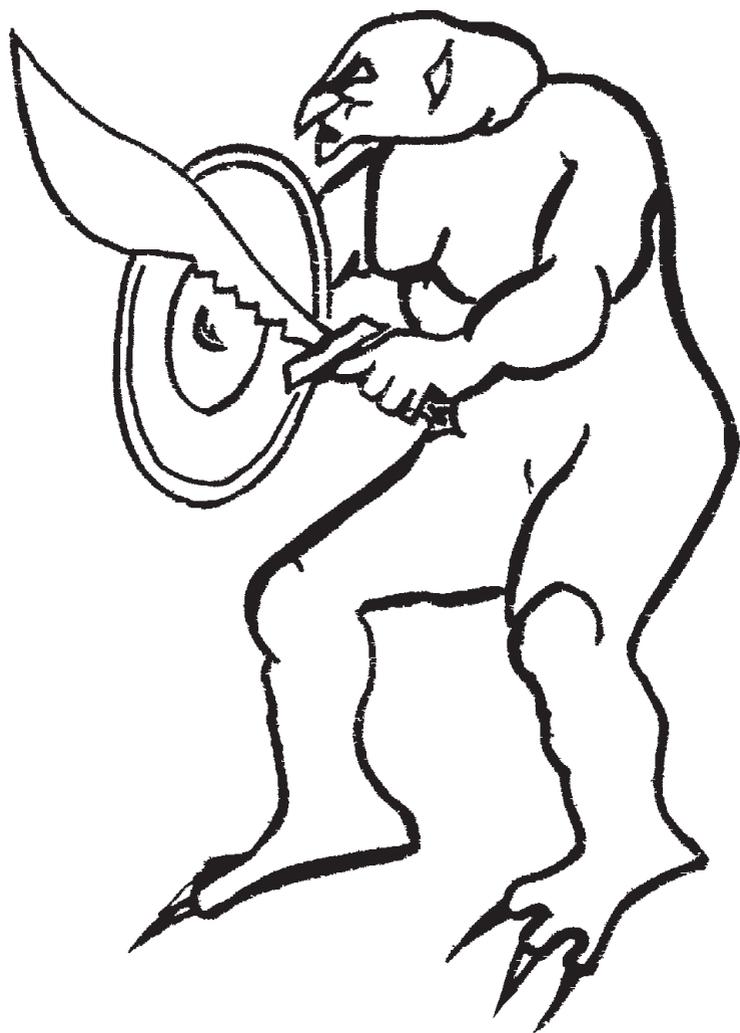
Although trade between the trading complex and Locklorien has been curtailed due to the siege by Sharnoscet, there is still enough traffic between the various trading centres in the complex for the Dwarves to stay in business.

Almost anything can be purchased from the Dwarves, but at a price. Some Dwarf houses still manufacture such items as Swords, Daggers and Gas Masks, but while serviceable; they do not have the beauty and fine craftsmanship of old.

There is also a thriving black market in restricted items such as Lymphas, but since direct trading between Dwarves and Elves no longer occurs, one can only suspect that these products have come via a more sinister route. There are rumours the more unscrupulous Dwarves actually deal with Orcs who have scavenged the bodies of previous adventurers who have perished in the Caverns of Mordia.



# MONSTERS AND COMBAT



©rc

# Orcs

## General Characteristics

These belligerent monsters are widespread in the underground Caverns of Mordia.

There are a number of species and they come in a wide range of sizes. Some are extremely agile but not very strong. Others are hefty but slow.

Once injured in combat, Orcs generally have little staying power. There are exceptions – some are very tenacious. On the other hand, while an Orc injured in battle weakens rapidly, he also recovers rapidly if left unmolested to recuperate.

In the first few levels of the caverns, the Orcs are generally small. The ones found deeper are usually more agile and stronger – the more so the deeper you go.

Orcs do not migrate from room to room; they live (and die) in the territory they have claimed as their own.

In the presence of a Dragon or a Balrog, Orcs always stand on the sideline; they don't exert themselves in combat needlessly, in keeping with their basically cowardly nature.

## Fighting Orcs

The fighting spirit of an Orc is often quickly broken when it is injured. It is advantageous therefore to strike first. Your *chances* of doing this depend on the relative agility of the Orc and you. Orcs are basically lazy, and unless they are more agile than you they generally will not fight, unless perhaps you turn your back and run away.

Using the Double-handed against Orcs is of dubious advantage. Once drawn, its size and unwieldiness will tend to reduce its effectiveness and will only slightly improve the damage you can inflict on the Orc.

More important, drawing the Sword will both delay and slow your attack, so your chances of striking the first blow are reduced.

The Mithril Armour is very effective against injury you might sustain in a fight with an Orc: any injuries will be only half as severe.

In the glow of an Elven Flare, your *chance* of striking the first blow is much enhanced, and while the Orc is blinded in the glow you can carefully aim your blow, thus inflicting maximum damage.

### Running From Orcs

If you turn your back on an Orc, he will nearly always have a go at you. Your chances of escaping unharmed depend on your relative agilities. Sometimes, however, even a slow Orc can put on a burst of speed and deliver a devastating blow as you run away. In the glow of an Elven Flare, however, you can be assured of a safe escape.

While Orcs will not participate in a fight between you and a Dragon or a Balrog, they will attempt to strike you when you try to escape.



Dragon

# Dragons

## General Characteristics

These ferocious creatures are found at depths of Level 5 or greater. While much fewer in number than Orcs, they are a far greater menace to the adventurer; many a caver has met his doom in an encounter with a Dragon.

If you encounter one Dragon in a room on a particular level, more often than not there will be more than one Dragon on that level. Some levels, however, are devoid of Dragons.

In combat the Dragon frequently strikes with his long tail to deliver a first blow. His most frightening feature, however, is his ability to breathe fire when provoked. It is precisely this devastating power of the Dragons that enabled them finally to oust the Dwarves from the Caverns of Mordia. Fighting with their traditional axes, the Dwarves could not cope with the long-reach fire-breathing attacks of the Dragons.

The Dragon's characteristics make it impossible to distinguish between his agility and his strength; it is possible only to refer to his *constitution*. Should you possess the Dragon Occular, you will be given this important Dragon statistic when you meet one. This will greatly assist your decision on a course of action. (see under Acquired Equipment.)

## Fighting Dragons

You can engage a Dragon either with conventional weapons or with a Net. Each has its advantages, and the best strategy depends on the circumstances. You will need experience in fighting Dragons before you can optimise your performance.

The Net was invented long ago by the Dwarves. It was the only way they could engage a Dragon with any chance of success.



## Notes:

- The Net is difficult to throw and good strength is an advantage. It also requires skill, and experience will improve your chance of success.
- A Dragon caught in a Net is severely restricted. Not only will this reduce his fighting capability (although not necessarily his constitution) but if he is sufficiently disturbed the ensuing struggle can kill him by either strangulation or self-inflicted burns.
- A Dragon trapped in a Net will remain trapped while you are on this level, even when you leave the room.
- A Netted Dragon inflicts much-reduced blows but can still breathe fire on you.
- In attacking a Dragon with conventional weapons, your strength relative to his constitution will be the prime factor in the outcome. The greater your agility versus his constitution, however, the better your chance to strike the first blow.
- The Double-handed sword is of great advantage when you fight a Dragon. Remember, however, that you need to draw the Sword first (unless you had already done so before encountering the Dragon). Having to draw the Sword will delay your attack and might give the Dragon a chance to strike first.
- If the Dragon has been previously Netted, your chances in a fight will greatly improve because his movements are then very much restricted.
- Orcs and Vampire Bats (if the latter remain in the room) are invariably intimidated by a fight between you and a Dragon and do not participate in the clash. Similarly, Dragons stand aside if you engage a Balrog.
- If a Dragon breathes fire on you, your agility, in particular, will suffer, although your strength will also be affected. If he strikes you, both your agility and strength will be affected. It is possible that in a fight a Dragon will both strike you and breathe fire on you.
- The Mithril Armour lessens the severity of injury inflicted by a blow from a Dragon, but it will not protect you when he breathes fire on you.

- In the glow of an Elven Flare, your chance of striking the first blow is assured. While immune to the glare of his own fire-breathing, the Dragon is unable to cope with the Elven Flare.

Needless to say, fighting Dragons builds character, and you gain much experience if you survive the encounter.

### Running From Dragons

Dragons are renowned for their courage and will continue to fight even when severely injured or disadvantaged.

Should you run from a Dragon he will always attack you. This may not be very prudent of the Dragon if he is injured, particularly when you have the Double-handed Sword drawn; a jab by you as you run can sometimes kill him.

When Orcs and Vampire Bats are present, they too will often try to attack you if try to escape. Again, the blinding glow of an Elven Flare will afford you a safe retreat.





Troll

# Trolls

## General Characteristics

These monsters are the guardians of the Mithril Armour (see under Acquired Equipment). This priceless Armour can be found somewhere at a depth greater than Level 9.

The Trolls are very courageous, and four of them have been chosen to protect the Armour from scavengers that might wander into the caves. They are completely dedicated, and unless the adventurer attacks they will not molest him; nor do they ever get involved in fights involving other monsters.

To gain the Mithril Armour you must destroy all four Trolls. They are subjects of Sharnoscet, the Evil Spirit. Part of a Troll's courage springs from his knowledge that should he be killed and you then leave this level without the Mithril Armour, Sharnoscet will resurrect him to restore the quad with renewed and often improved constitutions (and with the Mithril Armour, of course) on another level. This intervention by Sharnoscet might also occur should you remain on this level, in which case it is heralded by a severe earth Tremor.

## Fighting Trolls

Each of the four Trolls guards a series of gates you must pass, in turn, to reach the Mithril Armour. Therefore you must engage and kill each Troll in turn, but never more than one at a time.

The Double-handed Sword is very effective in fighting Trolls, even though it delays and slows your attack

Your strength, and to a lesser extent your experience in relation to the Troll's constitution, will determine your chances of success. Your agility compared with his constitution, however, determines your chances of striking the first blow (which is always advantageous).

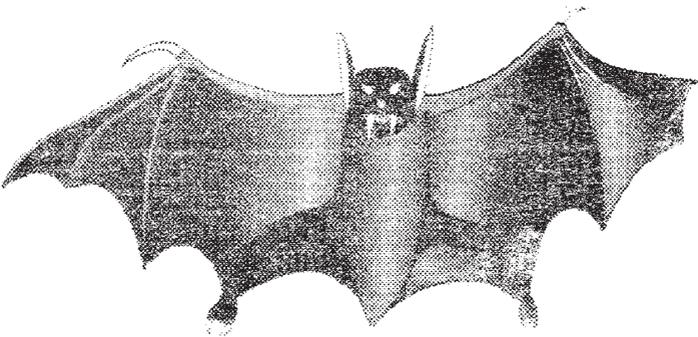
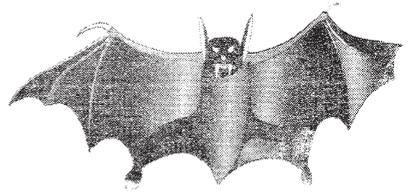


**Note:** Do not use an Elven Flare to try to blind a Troll when you attack. The Flare will draw the attention of the Evil Spirit if you are about to engage a Troll. Sharnoscet will immediately come to the Troll's assistance, and your chance of being victorious will be very slim indeed.

## Running from Trolls

This is in order and can be very prudent at times. Trolls never leave their post and therefore will not attack you when you run. Other monsters present may attack, however, and this should be borne in mind.





# Giant Vampire Bats

## General Characteristics

These monsters are found at depths greater than Level 7. They are exceedingly belligerent and nearly always hunt in swarms. While a caver in reasonably good physical condition is rarely killed in a Vampire Bat attack, he can still suffer a severe injury.

Giant Vampire Bats are very mobile and tend to roam, in swarms, from room to room. They even venture into Room 1, presumably because they feel secure in the fact that they can readily escape to another room should they draw the attention of Pallandoin the Wizard, whose influence permeates Room 1 on every level of the caves.

There are never more than 15 Vampire Bats on any one level, but they divide into swarms of varying numbers. Encounters with Vampire Bats add significant experience.

## Fighting Giant Vampire Bats

They come in many sizes, but it is impossible to assess the individual constitution of one of these monsters, which varies over a wide range. Caution needs to be exercised, particularly if you are not very strong.

Generally, however, the Vampire Bats are easy to kill and can often be wiped out in a single swipe, an encounter so brief as not to expose you to the attack of other monsters or the effects of other hazards. At times, however, you may encounter stronger or more tenacious Bats and the fight will divert your attention long enough for other hazards in the room to have a go at you.

The Double-handed Sword does *not* help in a fight with Vampire Bats. Indeed it reduces your chances of success because it delays and slows down your attack.

Your speed relative to the bats' constitution (impossible to assess by you) determines the *chance* of your striking first. The injury inflicted by a Vampire Bat bite depends again on its constitution.

The Mithril Armour does *not* protect you from Bat bites.

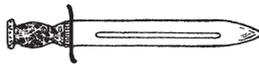
The Giant Vampire Bats are creatures of the dark. In the glow of an

Elven Flare they are stunned, and you will always have the chance to strike first.

When you engage an Orc or Dragon or Balrog in a fight, the Bats nearly always fly away.

### Running From Giant Vampire Bats

When you run from a room containing Vampire Bats, perhaps because you need to escape from a Dragon or an Orc, the Bats will nearly always swoop to attack you (except when you use an Elven Flare to blind your foes). Your chances of escaping a bite then depend on your relative agility. Multiple bites inflicted by a pack of Vampire Bats (even if you escape from the slower ones in the swarm) can cause great injury and have killed many an unwary caver.





Bafrog

# Balrogs

## General Characteristics

This Demon monster is the most powerful foe you can encounter in the Caverns of Mordia. Few cavers survive a battle with a Balrog unless they are very experienced, strong, agile and well-equipped. You could not hope to cope with a Balrog unless you also possessed the Mithril Armour *and* the Double-handed Sword.

Fortunately, Balrogs are found only at depths greater than Level 14. Only one Balrog is to be found on a given level and, luckily, at any one time many levels are free of them. Where they occur, Balrogs reign supreme.

Balrogs can move around freely on any level and will even defy the influence of Palladonin in Room 1 on each level. A Balrog will not hesitate to follow you to Room 1 should you seek refuge there.

Balrogs often choose to fight near deep Chasms. Should one knock you into a Chasm during a fight, he may pursue you down or fall inadvertently into it with you.

When a Balrog is desperate and is about to fall into a Chasm, he is inclined to use his large whip. This may entwine around you and drag you into the Chasm with him.

A sudden drop down a Chasm to a lower level, even if the Balrog should not follow you down, can be disastrous, since you may truly find yourself out of your depth, with strength, agility, and experience inappropriate for that level.



## Fighting a Balrog

In a fight with a Balrog, your agility relative to his constitution will determine your *chance* of striking the first blow. Your strength and experience, however, will bias the likelihood of inflicting injury.

The Double-handed Sword is of special significance in fighting Balrogs. Indeed this Sword was specially forged out of Elven steel to cope with such a Demon monster. The advantage to be gained by using the Sword

in encounters with a Balrog cannot be overemphasised; attempting to engage one without is a sure indicator of suicidal tendencies on your part.

### **Notes:**

- When first drawn, the Double-handed Sword will glow at its tip when a Balrog is present anywhere on that level (even if in another room).
- Drawing the Double-Handed Sword takes time, and the Balrog might grab the opportunity to strike you.
- The use of the Sword in fighting Balrogs will *not* slow you down as it does in encounters with other monster – but, alas, it does delay your attack.
- The glow of an Elven Flare will greatly increase your chance of striking the first blow.

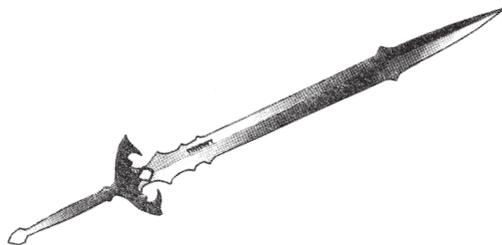
Needless to say, encounters with Balrogs rapidly build up your experience if you survive.

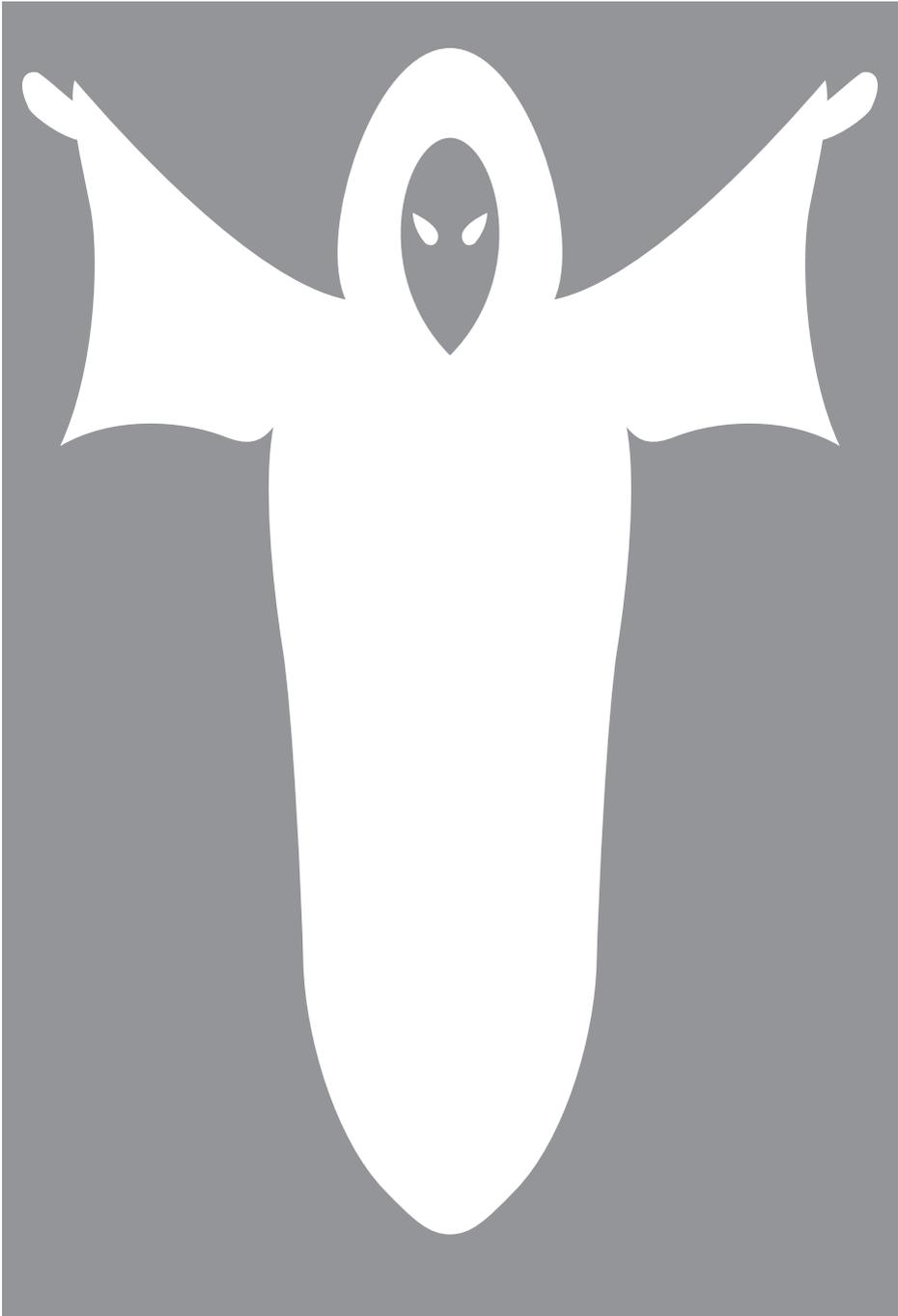
### **Running From Balrogs**

Balrogs are extremely reluctant to let an intruder escape. You can therefore expect to be struck from behind as you try to make your getaway unless you have lit an Elven Flare to blind the Balrog as you retreat.

If you have your Double-Handed sword drawn, you can sometimes give a jab as you leave, although this rarely proves fatal to the Balrog.

The Balrog can also knock you into a Chasm as you are attempting to escape.





Demon

## Demons

These are actually the lesser Demons and do not have the strength or arrogant daring of Balrogs.

They may be found on all levels and in any room except Room 1, where special conditions apply. Fortunately, they do not move about from room to room.

Demons are extremely vindictive and will often spirit away any Gold in a room (though not the Gold you already possess) merely out of spite.

Being in a different dimension, they are not physically present and hence are immune to attack by either conventional or magical weapons. In turn, they cannot attack you directly. However, they can still inflict severe damage by Cursing you, whereby you stand to lose much of your agility and, to a lesser extent, your strength. Each move you make in the presence of Demons (including flight) leaves you vulnerable to the dreaded Demon's Curse.

The only sure means of warding off the Demon's Curse is by invoking the Charm Ring, which can be used up to twice a day. However, it is effective only for one move each time it is used (except when fighting monsters when its effect lasts for two moves – see under Charm Ring).

Alternatively, if the Magic Staff is successfully used, the Dimension Door to Morulneeb (the realm of these Demons), will be destroyed, and any Demons appearing in that room will immediately vanish.

In addition, if either a Drop-off or Ascent Shaft is in that room, the use of these vertical passages will always catch the Demons by surprise so that they fail to Curse you.

Likewise, the glow of an Elven Flare will enthrall them and foil any attempt to Curse you.

## Araneida

This Giant Spider can be found in the many Tunnels that interconnect rooms in the caverns. Her unbelievably strong Giant Webs were spun across many entrances to the rooms. Many of her Webs have been discarded but may nevertheless trap an unwary adventurer, largely immobilising him. The Webs are described under Hazards.

The Tunnel network, made and currently in use by Araneida, is so extensive and intricate that on any level you can get to Room 1 quickly from every other room via these Tunnels forming part of Araneida's lair.

However, should Araneida catch up with you (and this happens three out of four times) she will sting you. Her poison is devastatingly powerful, and your constitution can be knocked down by up to 80%. If you are desperate, however, it may be worth the risk. Thus if you have encountered a foe you cannot cope with and your strength and/or agility are alarmingly low, a rapid move to Room 1 may be essential, even if the Tunnel itself is hazardous.

Once in Room 1 you can use the Orb of Power to call on the influence of Pallandoin to transform any experience you have into strength and agility.

**Note:** If you ignite an Elven Flare, the intense light will blind Araneida and you will gain safe passage through her Tunnel to Room 1.

**Be warned:** If you are entangled in a Giant Spider Web, it is suicidal to attempt to go through one of the Tunnels currently occupied by Araneida. The Web, while an obstacle to you, puts her at a great advantage, and your chances of being stung are 95%. The sting will also be much more severe, knocking your constitution down by up to 90%.

Finally, while it is possible to enter Araneida's Tunnel also from Room 1, it is not a good idea. You will have no idea which room you'll end up in *and* you stand a very good chance of being stung.





Araneida

## Cave Goblins

These rather anaemic creatures are the descendants of the fierce Goblins that were the earliest known inhabitants of the Caverns of Mordia.

When the Dwarves began mining within the caverns in their never-ending quest for Gold and Mithril, the Goblins were driven farther and farther into the caverns. Countless numbers of them were slain by the Dwarves. Many more died from lack of food.

When the lazy but treasure-greedy Dragons arrived and ousted the Dwarves, Gobchtlu, the last (and some say the wisest) of the Goblin kings, used much of his remaining power and all his skill to forge the Dragon Occular. This magical device allows the user to determine the real constitution of any Dragon encountered. This valiant attempt by the Goblins to oust the Dragons failed because those Goblins left were too weak and too few to have any real chance of success.

The few Cave Goblins that remain, their physical and mental strength greatly diminished by generations of harsh conditions and inbreeding, do not pose a direct threat to adventurers in the caverns. However, stealth and furtiveness make up for what they lack in strength. The Cave Goblins are undetectable because they are nearly invisible and capable of moving silently. They also have excellent senses of smell and hearing. Their eyes can see in the infrared, so they can detect others by their body heat; being cold blooded, they are not themselves subject to detection by this means.

They have suction pads on their hands and feet that allow them to scamper freely over caverns walls and ceilings in their search for the fungi on which they live. In addition, their nimble toes and fingers, developed to probe into nooks and crannies, make them master pickpockets.

True to the dying wishes of King Gobchtlu, they will always seek to retrieve and hide the Dragon Occular when it is discovered. They can therefore indirectly hasten the end of an adventurer foolhardy enough to enter the sinister Caverns of Mordia.



Cave Goblin



Serpent

## Serpents

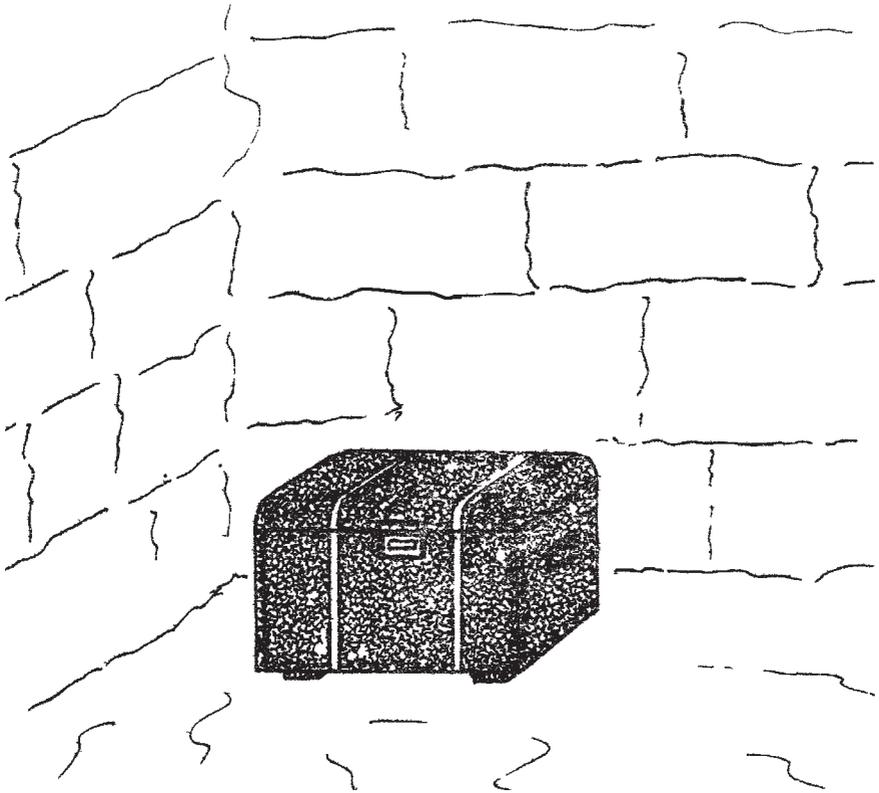
These very poisonous Serpents are found only in Chests.

They have been put under a stasis spell by Sharnoscet and then placed in some of the Chests found throughout the caverns,

If one of these Chests is opened, the stasis spell is broken and the Serpent will lash out and bite you. The speed of attack is very high. There is no defence against Serpent attack.

The bite is very weakening but seldom fatal.

Having performed its task, the years finally catch up with the Serpent, and it immediately dies and rapidly crumbles into dust.



# EQUIPMENT

The equipment available for your adventures is divided into two groups.

### (i) Basic Equipment

These are items which you possess at the start of your adventure.

### (ii) Acquired Equipment

These are the items that can be bought, or won in battle, or found (if you are lucky).

## Basic Equipment

### Dragon Net

This Net is of a type invented long ago by the Dwarves. It is effective only against Dragons; its use against other monsters is useless – a waste of time and energy.

The Dragon Net is light to carry. Its use is tricky and requires considerable strength. Your strength – and to a lesser extent your experience relative to the constitution of the Dragon – will determine your chances of success.

If you trap a Dragon with the Net, his movements are severely restricted, and your chances of being struck by him thereafter are much reduced. Occasionally, particularly with a weaker Dragon, his fury and struggles on being netted may kill him by strangulation, or sometimes he may perish by his own fire breathing.

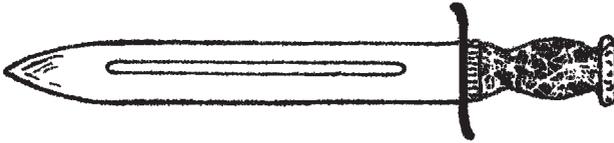
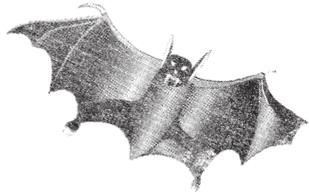
On being netted, the Dragon's awesome capacity to breathe fire is not reduced, so you should bear this in mind when re-attacking or running from a netted Dragon.

Incidentally, using the Net will sap your strength, but the encounter will gain you experience.

Further, a Dragon once netted remains netted, even if you leave the room; so you can finish him off at some future time. You should remember, however, that if you change your level, a completely new situation arises, and all passages, monsters and hazards will generally be different.

## Dagger

This is the normal weapon with which to fight monsters. Its use does not need to be specified – it is automatically assumed that this is what you are going to use unless you elect to do otherwise.



## The Orb of Power

The Orb has many uses, most of which are unknown. It is an ancient magical item of incalculable power. Its history is obscure, but it is believed to have come down from the times when the Great Ones were in power.

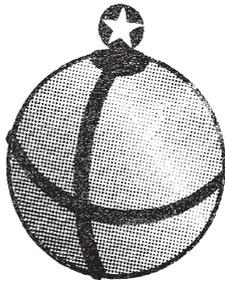
It is capable of teleportation, although its use in this area is limited because the skill needed has largely been lost. The only teleporting spell still known to activate the Orb will teleport you only from Room 1 of the surface and vice versa. It will always return you to Room 1 of the level you teleported from.

Any attempt to use the Orb to teleport you from a room other than Room 1 will have dire consequences because the other rooms are

not under the protective spells of Pallandoin; Sharnoscet will be immediately aware that the Orb is in Mordia and will try to bring about your destruction by casting a horrible strength-and-agility-sapping spell on you.

The Orb will automatically put up a shield around you at the end of each day so that you may recuperate overnight unmolested (see under Recuperation).

You can use the Orb to teleport to the surface whenever you wish to interrupt the game to continue at another time. In this event, your last recorded statistics will be retained. Should you subsequently be killed in the caverns, your recorded statistics will still be available so that you can resurrect your character and resume the game from that point.



## The Wand

This item of minor magic was made by Pallandoin when he was but an apprentice sorcerer. It can be extremely useful, but unfortunately it will not always work when you want it to.

Each attempt to use it will count as a move and leave you open to attack by any or all the monsters or hazards in that room.

If the Wand works, it will create an Ascent Shaft to the next level.

## The Magic Staff

Like the Orb of Power, this is an artefact of the Great Ones. Although it looks to be jet black at first glance, the Staff is not really black as such but more a solid hole into which nothing enters and from which nothing escapes.

Its form was assumed by a Prince of the Night from the days of the Great Ones, but fortunately much of its former power is gone.

Essentially evil, the Staff is also very intelligent. A powerful spell has been put on this Prince of the Night by Pallandoin, so it is forced to aid you against its will. However, it can defy the spell on occasion, and if you invoke its power it may lash out against you, thereby causing you considerable damage. If the spell put on it by Pallandoin holds, however, it will eliminate all hazards and monsters (and Gold) in the room, and at the same time create a Drop-off and a new passage to Room 1. (The presence of this special passage to Room 1 so created is not indicated in the list of accessible rooms.)

While the Staff is also effective if invoked against a Balrog, invariably the Balrog will knock you down a Chasm before it is destroyed by the Staff.

Its use does not attract the attention of Sharnoscet; the Spirit sees it as the work of a fellow Evil Spirit and best left alone.

**Be warned:** If you attempt to use the Staff in any Room 1, its evil power will temporarily upset the protective spells of Pallandoin, and Sharnoscet, ever watchful for just such a weakening of Pallandoin's limited power in Mordia, will immediately cast a terrible, debilitating spell on you.



## Lamp

Your Lamp is one of the earlier models designed by the Dwarves when they were still actively mining in Mordia for Mithril. It is amazingly effective and robust and while very reliable, sudden strong draughts can occasionally extinguish your lamp. This can be very troublesome as you will need to make one move in the dark before it spontaneously relights (see Lamps Out under Hazards).

# Acquired Equipment

## The One Ring

This is a most precious and also the most important item of magic and power. It was originally forged by Sharnoscet to control the ancient kingdoms of Mordia. Some long, long time ago this Ring was lost and Sharnoscet has been looking for it.

This Ring controls and ensnares at the same time. Whoever sees it or holds it is drawn to it, almost beyond understanding. The desire to possess it becomes overwhelmingly strong.

When **The One Ring** is put on a finger, several things happen, almost instantaneously. The first is that the wearer becomes invisible to all around him, including any monsters, including Araneida. This is most useful when fighting a large monster and particularly Balrogs which are otherwise difficult to defeat.

**Note:** The second thing that happens, when the Ring is worn on the finger, is that Sharnoscet becomes aware of this and will attempt to cast a debilitating spell on the Ring bearer. It is therefore not wise to keep the Ring on for long as the chances of Sharnoscet detecting your presence increases rapidly. When you remove **The One Ring**, your anonymity is restored, but not entirely. Once it has been worn on the finger, things are never the same again; the after effects are small but cumulative and the chances that Sharnoscet will cast a spell on you will increase and the more so with length of time and number of times you have put the Ring on.

When you have reached sufficiently deep into the Caverns you might find **The One Ring**.



## Gas Mask

Some parts of the caverns contain poisonous gases. You can protect yourself against these gases with a special Gas Mask developed by early cave explorers to deal with the unique gases found in the caverns.

The Gas Mask can be purchased from the Dwarf Trading Centres

near the entrance to the caverns. It costs 500 Gold pieces – which is very cheap. To obtain the Gold you will need to forage around in the caverns, but you need not descend too deep to find this amount of Gold in a reasonable time. You really cannot go too deep without the Gas Mask because – given the plethora of other hazards farther down – you just cannot afford to get gassed.

When you have acquired enough Gold to buy the Gas Mask, you can teleport to the surface using the Orb of Power in Room 1. You'll find notices about the Gas Mask as you are about to re-enter the caverns.

**Note:** Wearing the Gas Mask makes normal breathing more difficult, and it tends to sap your strength by 10% and your agility by 5% every move you make. You should therefore remove the Gas Mask when it is not needed.

At the end of a day, after you have been issued with a Caving Report, the Gas Mask is automatically removed during the recuperation period.

If you have forgotten whether or not you are wearing the Gas Mask, you can request a Caving Report which will give this information. You can also simply try to remove the Mask and see if you have it on to take off.



## Lymphas

This energy-giving food comes under the category of para-magic. It is a formulation of various herbs, seeds and honey, sealed and wrapped in the golden leaves of the Giant Mallorien Tree. Put together by the Elves to aid them on long journeys, its magical properties mean that its effectiveness rapidly increases with depth

However, it is such a concentrated energy source, that it unpalatable on levels 1 and 2 where it is too close to its source.

It can be eaten at any time and in any room from level 3 downwards, and will often prove to be a life-saver after a savage encounter with one of the many terrors to be found in the Caverns of Mordia.

Lymphas can be bought quite cheaply at 10 Gold pieces each (limit of 10) from the friendly Elf that occupies Room 1, Level 1 or at a greatly inflated price at the Dwarf Trading Centres on the surface.

It is also sometimes found in Chests, where previous cavers may have placed their emergency supplies for safekeeping.



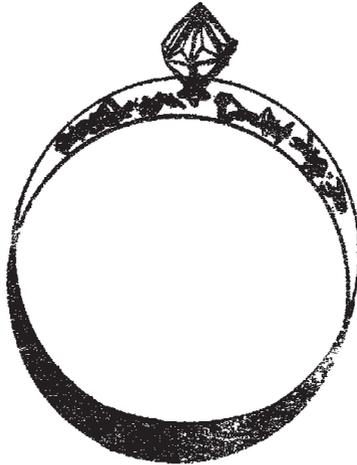
## The Charm Ring

This is another strange artefact from the past. How it found its way into the Caverns of Mordia is obscure, but it is believed to have belonged originally to Darncel, a dashing hero who was beloved by all (especially women).

No coward, he nonetheless preferred to use his magnetic personality to win over his enemies rather than using arms. After the death of his close friend Elmrod in the Battle of the Ways, he quietly slipped away and was never heard of again.

The Charm Ring when invoked has the ability to hold Demons spellbound for one move (two moves if engaging a monster in combat), therefore allowing you to fight or make good your escape without being Cursed.

The Charm Ring can be invoked up to twice a day.

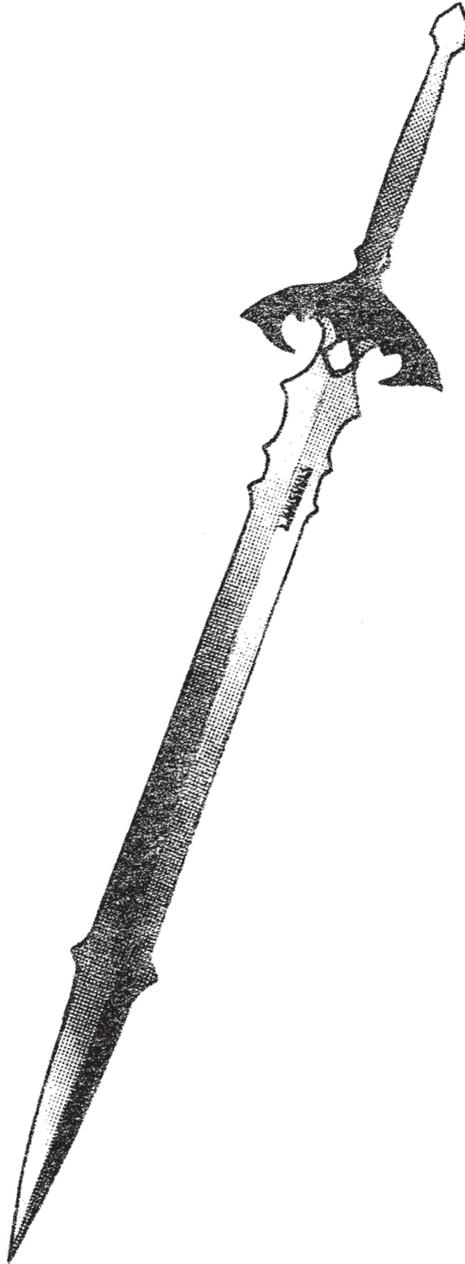


## The Dragon Occular

Ingeniously conceived and constructed by the Goblin king Gobchthlu, this small object allows the constitution of a Dragon to be determined – in the dim light of the Caverns all Dragons look the same (see under Cave Goblins).

The Dragon Occular may be accidentally stumbled upon from Level 5 downwards, at which level encounters with Dragons also commence.





Starshaft, the Double-handed Sword

## The Double-handed Sword

The Double-handed Sword is a powerful weapon, made in ancient times when the skill and magic needed were still known. Almost as long as a Dwarf is tall, it is heavy and cumbersome.

Its unwieldiness makes it of little value against smaller monsters such as Orcs and Giant Vampire Bats. However, if the user has enough psychic power (determined by the totality of experience – previously exchanged and un-exchanged), it can be turned into a mighty weapon to fight Dragons and especially Balrogs.

Named Galborgdaron (Devourer of Darkness, or Night-eater) by its enemies, it was originally called Starshaft and once belonged to the mighty hero Elmrod before it was lost in the Battle of the Ways, in which Elmrod was slain – but not before his enemies were routed.

The Sword may be bought for a mere 3,000 gold pieces from the Dwarf Trading Centres on the surface. (The Dwarves realise that it is a relic from the past, but as they favour war-hammers for weapons they do not suspect the real value of this Sword).

As well as giving the user much greater striking power against Dragons and Balrogs, the Sword Starshaft will pulse with light, when drawn, if a Balrog is present anywhere on the same level.

**Note:** Starshaft, is normally sheathed; the drawing of this Sword counts as a move and therefore leaves you open to attack by all monsters present. While drawn, it will sap your strength every time you make your move. If used against anything other than a Balrog, its unwieldiness will **reduce** the probability of your striking first.



## The Mithril Armour

Mithril – the most precious of all metals. No samples of this rare element can be found today, but it is thought that it is a very pure form of platinum crystals which only the Elves knew how to work into items of incredible lightness and strength.

Although never to be found in abundance, there were enough deposits of Mithril in the Caverns of Mordia to entice the greedy Dwarves into mining them. Indeed Mithril and Gold mining were the mainstay of the economy during the prosperous, if brief, dynasty of the Dwarves.

Any Mithril found was sent (under heavy Dwarf escort) to Locklorien, where the skilled Elven craftsmen reworked it, usually into weapons and armour but sometimes into jewellery or goblets for the Dwarf kings (at this time the Dwarves and the Elves coexisted peacefully, though this was soon to change).

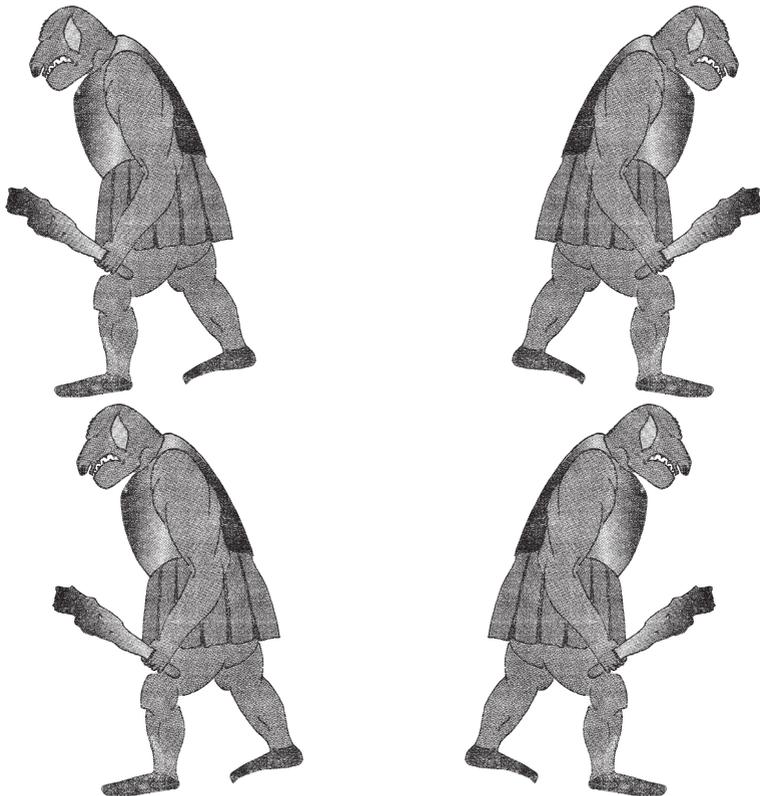
Only three suits of Mithril Armour are known to have been made. The first was made for the Elf King, Ildatam and is now in the possession of the beautiful Lade Elleda in Locklorien. The second suit was made for the Dwarf King Barafar and is still worn for certain ceremonial occasions by Resfarab, who claims to be the great-great-great-great-grandnephew of Barafar (Resfarab also operates one of the larger Dwarf stores in the Trading Centres). The third suit was given to the hero Elmrod, but after he was slain in the Battle of the Ways, it was captured by the minions of Sharnoscet, who were looting the battle field.

Unable to either use or destroy this Elven Armour, Sharnoscet assigned four Trolls to guard it. To gain the Armour, you must destroy serially each of the four Trolls that guard the gates leading to the entombment holding the Mithril.

The Trolls are under the direct command and protection of Sharnoscet, and if you fail to kill all four of them before leaving the level on which you encounter them, the Trolls as a complete quad, together with the Mithril Armour, will be translocated by Sharnoscet to another level.

Even if you remain on the level of the encounter, Sharnoscet will intervene in this way at times. Such intervention disturbs the physical balance and also produces severe earth Tremors.

The Mithril Armour confers on the wearer considerable protection from all monster attacks other than bites from Giant Vampire Bats, Dragon fire breath and the various abounding poison gases, bites and stings.



## Elven Flares

These are found, sometimes, in the Chests. When ignited the Flares emit an intense, almost sinister glow that will blind any foe in the room. The Flare will glow for one move, and during that time you can safely escape to another room (even through Araneida's Tunnel).

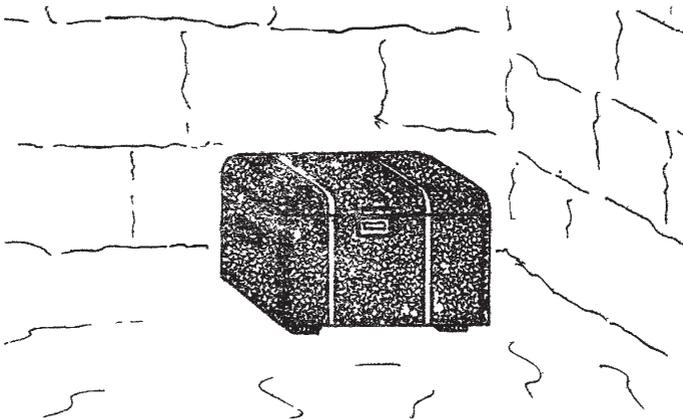
Should you attack a monster after you have ignited a Flare, your chance of striking the first blow is much enhanced, and in many cases you will deal out more accurate and punishing blows.

**Note:** Do not ignite an Elven Flare if you intend to engage a Troll. These monsters are under the direct influence of Sharnoscet, and the glow of the Elven Flare will alert the Evil Spirit and reduce your chance of striking first.



The glow of the Flare will also:

- prevent you from falling accidentally through a hidden Drop-off to the next level;
- stop you from running into Giant Spider Webs;
- allow you to see the monsters in the room and the passages to other rooms when your normal lamp has been blown out. The latter can be re-lit, but only after you make a move – which, without knowledge of the hazard, might be disastrous;
- confuse any Demons present, so you need not fear their Curse. Nevertheless, the Demons may still rob you of any Gold you might pick up in that particular room.



## Gold

During their reign over the Caverns of Mordia, the Goblins minted Gold currency from the bullion they obtained from the Caverns. It is thought that reserves of Gold were established by each Goblin King.

Much of this huge stockpile of Gold fell into the hands of the Dwarves as they pushed the Goblins deeper into the Caverns and began their own mining operations. The Dragons continued the wholesale looting when finally they ousted the Dwarves and became masters of the Caverns.

Nevertheless, a great deal of Gold remains. Only small amounts of it can be found on the first few levels, however, because they have been picked over by countless treasure hunters. But deeper down, huge quantities await discovery.

All the Goblin bullion was minted into coins weighing 10 lities (which became the universal Goblin measure of weight during the illustrious, though brief, reign of Phesianet, the only known Goblin Queen).

In each room you are given an indication of the amount of Gold present, but you may find only part of it.

To collect Gold you must make a move. But you will need to kill any monsters in the room before you can hope to get any of it. When a Demon is present, it may grab all the Gold even if you hold the Demon under the Charm of the Ring.

Collecting Gold increases your experience. Further, the Gold you accumulate is readily negotiable at the Dwarf Trading Centres, where it can be used to buy many useful items (see under Dwarf Trading Centres and Acquired Equipment).

# HAZARDS

# Hazards

The Caverns of Mordia contain a number of hazards other than monsters. Depending on the type of hazard and/or circumstances, these hazards can greatly affect your performance, rapidly lead to your demise, or be simply a nuisance.

## Poisonous Gas

Many caverns are filled with a Poisonous Gas that seeps out through cracks from the depths of Mordia. Fortunately, the gas never fills each room completely. The cloud wafts about, and your chance of being gassed is about 40%.

Fortunately, also, the Gas has a peculiar odour, so you will be warned of its presence.

Even if you are gassed, it does not kill you outright; however, your strength is sapped by 50% and your agility by about 10%.

**Counter measure:** If you have the Gas Mask and use it, it will give absolute protection against being gassed.



**Note:** Wearing the Gas Mask is debilitating; it saps your strength and agility by 10% and 5% respectively on every move (see details under Gas Mask).

## Drop-offs (hidden)

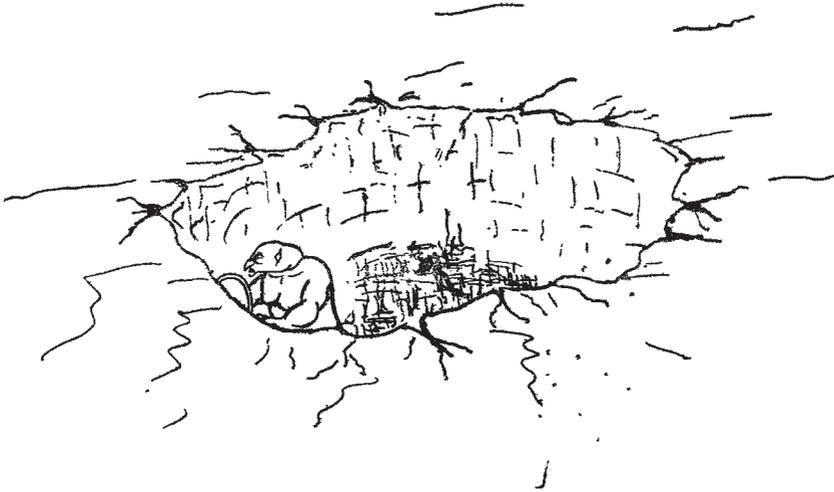
Some Drop-offs are clearly visible and are listed among the passages and Ascent Shafts (if any) present in a room.

However, some Drop-offs are difficult to see in the subdued light provided by your lamp. It happens, sometimes, that you inadvertently fall through a Drop-off to the next level. This can be annoying because you may be returning to finish off a previously netted Dragon, for instance, or to finish a fight with Trolls to gain the Mithril Armour.

Being dropped to the next level may also suddenly expose you to new dangers for which your constitution is inappropriate. Dragons,

Vampire Bats and Balrogs are found only below certain depths, and you might find yourself unhappily plopped into their lairs inadequately fortified.

**Counter measures:** None, but if you make a move just after igniting an Elven Flare, its glow will reveal any hidden Drop-offs and they are no longer a hazard.



## Tremors

Earth Tremors occur from time to time. The result is that some passages close, others open and sometimes new Drop-offs and/or Ascent Shafts are created.

There are two kinds of Tremors:

- Light Tremors that change only some passages;
- Severe Tremors that change many or all passages.

You can always determine how much the map of the rooms on your current level has changed by requesting a tabulation of the rooms (with passages) you have been to. All passages that have changed will no longer be listed.

Severe Tremors can also occur when you are fighting the Trolls that guard the Mithril Armour. The Evil Spirit, Sharnoscet, sometimes intervenes in such a fight, in which case all the Trolls already killed by you are resurrected and all four of them (together with the Mithril

Armour) are relocated in another room or even on another level. Once you have the Mithril Armour, however, this problem will not occur again.

**Counter measures:** None – just remember that passages might have changed as a result of the Tremors.

## Giant Spider Webs

These are found in various entrances to rooms throughout the caverns. They are the discarded Webs of the Giant Spider Araneida. Her Webs are exceedingly strong, and if you are caught in one, it will almost completely immobilise you.

You'll need to make a move in order to free yourself from the Web – whereupon your agility will be restored.

While you are in the Web, you are at high risk if one or more monsters are present. They will almost certainly attack you if you attempt to move. Should you elect to attack first, even though you are largely immobilised, your chances of striking the first blow are slim.



**Note:** If you are entangled in a Spider Web, it is hazardous and foolhardy to attempt to go through one of the Tunnels to Room 1 that are currently used by Araneida. Your chances of being stung are 95% (see under Araneida).

**Counter measures:** No specific counter-measures are available, but when you have lit an Elven Flare the silvery Webs are clearly visible and you won't accidentally walk into one of them.

**Remember:** When caught in a Web, it is best to make a move to another room to get free of the Web. Do not go through Araneida's Tunnel.



## Lamps Out

Strong draughts sometimes blow out your lamp, so you cannot see any passage, hazards or monsters in the room. You can still get some indication of the kind of monsters present from the characteristic sounds accompanying their presence.

If you make a false move – for instance, attempt to take a non-existent passage – this will waste time, and the monsters, if present, will almost certainly have a go at you. You may also expose yourself to any other hazards present. If you run into a wall, you can also do yourself an injury.

**Counter measures:** If you have an Elven Flare, you can light it. The intense glow will reveal all the passages and hazards to you. Further, the glow will enchant all monsters and Demons (and even Araneida – but not Trolls) and so provide you with a safe move through any passage. Alternatively, it will increase the probability of your striking the first blow, should you elect to fight any of the monsters.

If you do not have any Elven Flares and you have forgotten what room you are in or your other vital statistics, you can request a Caving Report, which may be of some help.

**Note:** The lamp spontaneously re-lights after such a lapse of function, but you will have to make one move in the dark.



# Appendix

## Keeping Track of the Game

It is extremely useful for your survival and growth in stature, to make a map of the inter-connecting rooms (and their contents) as you discover them.

**Note:** When you change levels, the map is no longer valid, even if you return to that level later (see under Layout of the Caverns).

An example of a map and a suggested legend for room contents are shown below.

### Legend:

- |    |                     |   |           |
|----|---------------------|---|-----------|
| g  | Poisonous Gas       | d | Demons    |
| \$ | Gold (or much Gold) | C | Chest     |
| O  | Orc                 | D | Dragon(s) |
| +  | Ascent Shaft        | - | Drop-off  |
| ➔  | One way passage     |   |           |

Balrogs and Giant Vampire Bats move from room to room and so cannot be pinpointed.

