

Vancian Magic

SUPPLEMENT



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This humble book of magical lore is hereby dedicated to
BLAIR OF ALGOL, DAVID MACAULY and MATT SCHMEER
and all the other OSR gurus who cast green fireballs on my imagination.

FIGHT ON!



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TURJAN OF MIIR

by JACK VANCE

TURJAN SAT IN HIS WORKROOM, legs sprawled out from the stool, back against and elbows on the bench. Across the room was a cage; into this Turjan gazed with rueful vexation. The creature in the cage returned the scrutiny with emotions beyond conjecture.

It was a thing to arouse pity—a great head on a small spindly body, with weak rheumy eyes and a flabby button of a nose. The mouth hung slackly wet, the skin glistened waxy pink. In spite of its manifest imperfection, it was to date the most successful product of Turjan's vats.

Turjan stood up, found a bowl of pap. With a long-handled spoon he held food to the creature's mouth. But the mouth refused the spoon and mush trickled down the glazed skin to fall on the rickety frame.

Turjan put down the bowl, stood back and slowly returned to his stool. For a week now it had refused to eat. Did the idiotic visage conceal perception, a will to extinction? As Turjan watched, the white-blue eyes closed, the great head slumped and bumped to the floor of the cage. The limbs relaxed: the creature was dead.

Turjan sighed and left the room. He mounted winding stone stairs and at last came out on the roof of his castle Miir, high above the river Derna. In the west the sun hung close to old earth; ruby shafts, heavy and rich as wine, slanted past the gnarled boles of the archaic forest to lay on the turfed forest floor. The sun sank in accordance with the old ritual; latter-day night fell across the forest, a soft, warm darkness came swiftly, and Turjan stood pondering the death of his latest creature.

He considered its many precursors: the thing all eyes, the boneless creature with the pulsing surface of its brain exposed, the beautiful female body whose intestines trailed out into the nutrient solution like seeking fibrils, the inverted inside-out creatures ... Turjan sighed bleakly. His methods were at fault; a fundamental element was, lacking from his synthesis, a matrix ordering the components of the pattern.

As he sat gazing across the darkening land, memory took Turjan to a night of years before, when the Sage had stood beside him.

"In ages gone," the Sage had said, his eyes fixed on a low star, "a thousand spells were known to sorcery and the wizards effected their wills.

Today, as Earth dies, a hundred spells remain to man's knowledge, and these have come to us through the ancient books¹ ... But there is one called Pandelume, who knows all the spells, all the incantations, cantraps, runes, and thaumaturgies that have ever wrenched and molded space ..." He had fallen silent, lost in his thoughts.

"Where is this Pandelume?" Turjan had asked presently.

"He dwells in the land of Embelyon," the Sage had replied, "but where this land lies, no one knows."

"How does one find Pandelume, then?"

The Sage had smiled faintly. "If it were ever necessary, a spell exists to take one there."

Both had been silent a moment; then the Sage had spoken, staring out over the forest.

"One may ask anything of Pandelume, and Pandelume will answer—provided that the seeker performs the service Pandelume requires. And Pandelume drives a hard bargain."

Then the Sage had shown Turjan the spell in question, which he had discovered in an ancient portfolio, and kept secret from all the world.

Turjan, remembering this conversation, descended to his study, a long low hall with stone walls and a stone floor deadened by a thick russet rug. The tomes which held Turjan's sorcery lay on the long table of black steel or were thrust helter-skelter into shelves. These were volumes compiled by many wizards of the past, untidy folios collected by the Sage, leather-bound librams setting forth the syllables of a hundred powerful spells, so cogent that Turjan's brain could know but four at a time.²

Turjan found a musty portfolio, turned the heavy pages to the spell the Sage had shown him, the Call to the Violent Cloud.³ He stared down at the characters and they burned with an urgent power, pressing off the page as if frantic to leave the dark solitude of the book.⁴

Turjan closed the book, forcing the spell back into oblivion. He robed

¹ Compare these numbers to the total numbers of arcane spells found in various editions of *Dungeons & Dragons*: **70** (white box OD&D); **194** (1st Ed. AD&D Players Handbook); **316** (2nd Ed. AD&D Player's Handbook).

² "...so cogent that Turjan's brain could know but four at a time." Varying degrees of cogency suggest that spells could be organized by their complexity or (to put it in another way) their relative difficulty to memorize. Is this the seed for spell levels in *Dungeons & Dragons*?

³ *Call to the Violent Cloud* appears to be a type of teleportation spell that is also a summoning. In this story its action is inter-planar.

⁴ "...frantic to leave the dark solitude of the book." Here is Vance's first suggestion that spells are alive in some way and very eager to be inside the minds of magic-users.

himself with a short blue cape, tucked a blade into his belt, fitted the amulet holding Laccodel's Rune⁵ to his wrist. Then he sat down and from a journal chose the spells he would take with him. What dangers he might meet he could not know, so he selected three spells of general application: the Excellent Prismatic Spray⁶, Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth⁷, and the Spell of the Slow Hour.⁸

He climbed the parapets of his castle and stood under the far stars, breathing the air of ancient Earth . . . How many times had this air been breathed before him? What cries of pain had this air experienced, what sighs, laughs, war shouts, cries of exultation, gasps...

The night was wearing on. A blue light wavered in the forest. Turjan watched a moment, then at last squared himself and uttered the Call to the Violent Cloud.

All was quiet; then came a whisper of movement swelling to the roar of great winds. A wisp of white appeared and waxed to a pillar of boiling black smoke. A voice deep and harsh issued from the turbulence.

"At your disturbing power is this instrument come; whence will you go?"

"Four Directions, then One," said Turjan. "Alive must I be brought to Embelyon."

The cloud whirled down; far up and away he was snatched, flung head over heels into incalculable distance. Four directions was he thrust, then one, and at last a great blow hurled him from the cloud, sprawled him into Embelyon.

Turjan gained his feet and tottered a moment, half-dazed. His senses steadied; he looked about him.

He stood on the bank of a limpid pool. Blue flowers grew, about his ankles and at his back reared a grove of tall blue-green trees, the leaves blurring on high into mist. Was Embelyon of Earth? The trees were Earth-like, the flowers were of familiar form, the air was of the same texture . . . But there was an odd lack to this land and it was difficult to determine. Perhaps it came of the horizon's curious vagueness, perhaps from the blurring quality of the air, lucent and uncertain as water. Most strange, however, was the sky, a mesh of vast ripples and cross-ripples, and these refracted a thousand shafts of colored

⁵ *Laccodel's Rune* is a magical item (perhaps an artifact?) that projects a magic-cancelling field.

⁶ Unlike the *Prismatic Spray* spell found in most versions of D&D, Vance's version deals a terrific amount of damage to its target.

⁷ *Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth* is a spell that renders its caster invisible.

⁸ *Spell of the Slow Hour* is possibly the inspiration for D&D's *Haste* spell. Time flows more slowly for the caster, while to everyone else the caster appears to be moving at astonishing speed.

light, rays which in mid-air wove wondrous laces, rainbow nets, in all the jewel hues. So as Turjan watched, there swept over him beams of claret, topaz, rich violet, radiant green. He now perceived that the colors of the flowers and the trees were but fleeting functions of the sky, for now the flowers were of salmon tint, and the trees a dreaming purple. The flowers deepened to copper, then with a suffusion of crimson, warmed through maroon to scarlet, and the trees had become sea-blue.

"The Land None Knows Where," said Turjan to himself. "Have I been brought high, low, into a pre-existence or into the after-world?" He looked toward the horizon and thought to see a black curtain rising high into the murk, and this curtain encircled the land in all directions.

The sound of galloping hooves approached; he turned to find a black horse lunging break-neck along the bank of the pool. The rider was a young woman with black hair streaming wildly. She wore loose white breeches to the knee and a yellow cape flapping in the wind. One hand clutched the reins, the other flourished a sword.

Turjan warily stepped aside, for her mouth was tight and white as if in anger, and her eyes glowed with a peculiar frenzy. The woman hauled back on the reins, wheeled her horse high around, charged Turjan, and struck out at him with her sword.

Turjan jumped back and whipped free his own blade. When she lunged at him again, he fended off the blow and leaning forward, touched the point to her arm and brought a drop of blood. She drew back startled; then up from her saddle she snatched a bow and flicked an arrow to the string. Turjan sprang forward, dodging the wild sweep of her sword, seized her around the waist, and dragged her to the ground.

She fought with a crazy violence. He had no wish to kill her, and so struggled in a manner not entirely dignified. Finally he held her helpless, her arms pinioned behind her back.

"Quiet, vixen!" said Turjan, "lest I lose patience and stun you!"

"Do as you please," the girl gasped. "Life and death are brothers."

"Why do you seek to harm me?" demanded Turjan. "I have given you no offense."

"You are evil, like all existence." Emotion ground the delicate fibers of her throat. "If power were mine, I would crush the universe to bloody gravel, and stamp it into the ultimate muck."

Turjan in surprise relaxed his grip, and she nearly broke loose. But he caught her again,

"Tell me, where may I find Pandelume?"

The girl stilled her exertion, twisted her head to stare at Turjan. Then: "Search all Embelyon. I will assist you not at all."

If she were more amiable, thought Turjan, she would be a creature of remarkable beauty.

"Tell me where I may find Pandelume," said Turjan, "else I find other uses for you."

She was silent for a moment, her eyes blazing with madness. Then she spoke in a vibrant voice.

"Pandelume dwells beside the stream only a few paces distant."

Turjan released her, but he took her sword and bow.

"If I return these to you, will you go your way in peace?"

For a moment she glared; then without words she mounted her horse and rode off through the trees.

Turjan watched her disappear through the shafts of jewel colors, then went in the direction she had indicated. Soon he came to a long low manse of red stone backed by dark trees. As he approached the door swung open. Turjan halted in mid-stride.

"Enter!" came a voice. "Enter, Turjan of Miir!" So Turjan wonderingly entered the manse of Pandelume. He found himself in a tapestried chamber, bare of furnishing save a single settee. No one came to greet him. A closed door stood at the opposite wall, and Turjan went to pass through, thinking perhaps it was expected of him.

"Halt, Turjan," spoke the voice. "No one may gaze on Pandelume. It is the law."⁹

Turjan, standing in the middle of the room, spoke to his unseen host.

"This is my mission, Pandelume," he said. "For some time I have been striving to create humanity in my vats. Yet always I fail, from ignorance of the agent that binds and orders the patterns. This master-matrix must be known to you; therefore I come to you for guidance."

"Willingly will I aid you," said Pandelume. "There is, however, another aspect involved. The universe is methodized by symmetry and balance; in every aspect of existence is this equipoise observed. Consequently, even in the trivial scope of our dealings, this equivalence must be maintained, thus and thus. I agree to assist you; in return, you perform a service of equal value for me. When you have completed this small work, I will instruct and guide you to your complete satisfaction."

⁹ "No one may gaze on Pandelume." Provided that Pandelume is telling the truth here, it would seem that his visage produces a kind of gaze attack/effect.

"What may this service be?" inquired Turjan.

"A man lives in the land of Ascolais, not far from your Castle Miir. About his neck hangs an amulet of carved blue stone. This you must take from him and bring to me."¹⁰

Turjan considered a moment.

"Very well," he said. "I will do what I can. Who is the man?"

Pandelume answered in a soft voice.

"Prince Kandive the Golden."

"Ah," exclaimed Turjan ruefully, "you have gone to no pains to make my task a pleasant one . . . But I will fulfill your requirement as best I can."

"Good," said Pandelume. "Now I must instruct you. Kandive wears this amulet hidden below his singlet. When an enemy appears, he takes it out to display on his chest, such is the potency of the charm. No matter what else, do not gaze on this amulet, either before or after you take it, on pain of most hideous consequence."

"I understand," said Turjan. "I will obey. Now there is a question I would ask—providing the answer will not involve me in an undertaking to bring the Moon back to Earth, or recover an elixir you inadvertently spilled in the sea."

Pandelume laughed loud. "Ask on," he responded, "and I will answer."

Turjan put his question.

"As I approached your dwelling, a woman of insane fury wished to kill me. This I would not permit and she departed in rage. Who is this woman and why is she thus?"

Pandelume's voice was amused. "I, too," he replied, "have vats where I mold life into varied forms. This girl T'sais I created, but I wrought carelessly, with a flaw in the synthesis. So she climbed from the vat with a warp in her brain, in this manner: what we hold to be beautiful seems to her loathsome and ugly, and what we find ugly is to her intolerably vile, in a degree that you and I cannot understand. She finds the world a bitter place, people with shapes of direst malevolence."

"So this is the answer," Turjan murmured. "Pitiable wretch!"

"Now," said Pandelume, "you must be on your way to Kaiin; the auspices are good ... In a moment open this door, enter, and move to the pattern of runes on the floor."

Turjan performed as he was bid. He found the next room to be circular and high-domed, with the varying lights of Embelyon pouring down through

¹⁰ "Go get magic item *x* and bring it to me as part of our bargain." Classic D&D adventure set-up.

sky-transparencies. When he stood upon the pattern in the floor, Pandelume spoke again.

"Now close your eyes, for I must enter and touch you. Heed well, do not try to glimpse me!"

Turjan closed his eyes. Presently a step sounded behind him. "Extend your hand," said the voice. Turjan did so, and felt a hard object placed therein. "When your mission is accomplished, crush this crystal and at once you will find yourself in this room."¹¹ A cold hand was laid on his shoulder.

"An instant you will sleep," said Pandelume. "When you awake you will be in the city Kaiin."

The hand departed. A dimness came over Turjan as he stood awaiting the passage. The air had suddenly become full of sound: clattering, a tinkling of many small bells, music, voices. Turjan frowned, pursed his lips: A strange tumult for the austere home of Pandelume!

A woman's voice sounded close by.

"Look, O Santanil, see the man-owl who closes his eyes to merriment!"

There was a man's laughter, suddenly hushed. "Come. The fellow is bereft and possibly violent. Come."

Turjan hesitated, then opened his eyes. It was night in white-walled Kaiin, and festival time. Orange lanterns floated in the air, moving as the breeze took them. From the balconies dangled flower chains and cages of blue fireflies. The streets surged with the wine-flushed populace, costumed in a multitude of bizarre modes. Here was a Melantine bargeman, here a warrior of Valdaran's Green Legion, here another of ancient times wearing one of the old helmets. In a little cleared space a garlanded courtesan of the Kauchique littoral danced the Dance of the Fourteen Silken Movements to the music of flutes. In the shadow of a balcony a girl barbarian of East Almerly embraced a man blackened and in leather harness as a Deodand of the forest. They were gay, these people of waning Earth, feverishly merry, for infinite night was close at hand, when the red sun should finally flicker and go black.

Turjan melted into the throng. At a tavern he refreshed himself with biscuits and wine; then he made for the palace of Kandive the Golden.

The palace loomed before him, every window and balcony aglow with light. Among the lords of the city there was feasting and revelry. If Prince Kandive were flushed with drink and unwary, reflected Turjan, the task should not be too difficult. Yet, entering boldly, he might be recognized, for he was

¹¹ Another form of teleportation between planes, this time with a crystal as a material component and spell trigger. The instant of sleep is an interesting side-effect (perhaps requirement).

known to many in Kaiin. So, uttering Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth, he faded from the sight of all men.

Through the arcade he slipped, into the grand salon, where the lords of Kaiin made merry like the throngs of the street. Turjan threaded the rainbow of silk, velour, sateen, watching the play with amusement. On a terrace some stood looking into a sunken pool where a pair of captured Deodands, their skins like oiled jet, paddled and glared; others tossed darts at the spread-eagled body of a young Cobalt Mountain witch. In alcoves beflowered girls offered synthetic love¹² to wheezing old men, and elsewhere others lay stupefied by dream-powders.¹³ Nowhere did Turjan find Prince Kandive. Through the palace he wandered, room after room, until at last in an upper chamber he came upon the tall golden-bearded prince, lolling on a couch with a masked girl-child who had green eyes and hair dyed pale green.

Some intuition or perhaps a charm warned Kandive when Turjan slipped through the purple hangings. Kandive leapt to his feet.

"Go!" he ordered the girl. "Out of the room quickly! Mischief moves somewhere near and I must blast it with magic!"

The girl ran hastily from the chamber. Kandive's hand stole to his throat and pulled forth the hidden amulet. But Turjan shielded his gaze with his hand.¹⁴

Kandive uttered a powerful charm which loosened space free of all warp. So Turjan's spell was void and he became visible.¹⁵

"Turjan of Miir skulks through my palace!" snarled Kandive.

"With ready death on my lips," spoke Turjan. "Turn your back, Kandive, or I speak a spell and run you through with my sword."

Kandive made as if to obey, but instead shouted the syllables bringing the Omnipotent Sphere¹⁶ about him.

"Now I call my guards, Turjan," announced Kandive contemptuously, "and you shall be cast to the Deodands in the tank."

Kandive did not know the engraved band Turjan wore on his wrist, a most powerful rune, maintaining a field solvent of all magic. Still guarding his vision against the amulet, Turjan stepped through the Sphere. Kandive's great blue eyes bulged.

¹² "...gifts of synethetic love..." These gifts are very ambiguous. A magical charm, perhaps, to make old men feel loved again, either romantically or sexually. Maybe both.

¹³ *Dream-powders* are obviously a type of narcotic.

¹⁴ This magical item produces the second form of gaze attack/effect found in this story.

¹⁵ An interesting description for what is effectively an example of *Dispel Magic*. Turjan's invisibility spell must have "warped" the space around him to achieve its effect.

¹⁶ *Omnipotent Sphere* would appear to be a particularly powerful type of protection circle.

"Call the guards," said Turjan. "They will find your body riddled by lines of fire."¹⁷

"*Your* body, Turjan!" cried the prince, babbling the spell. Instantly the blazing wires of the Excellent Prismatic Spray lashed from all directions at Turjan. Kandive watched the furious rain with a wolfish grin, but his expression changed quickly to consternation. A finger's breath from Turjan's skin the fire-darts dissolved into a thousand gray puffs of smoke.

"Turn your back, Kandive," Turjan ordered. "Your magic is useless against Laccodel's Rune." But Kandive took a step toward a spring in the wall.

"Halt!" cried Turjan. "One more step and the Spray splits you thousandfold!"

Kandive stopped short. In helpless rage he turned his back and Turjan, stepping forward quickly, reached over Kandive's neck, seized the amulet and raised it free. It crawled in his hand and through the fingers there passed a glimpse of blue. A daze shook his brain, and for an instant he heard a murmur of avid voices . . . His vision cleared. He backed away from Kandive, stuffing the amulet in his pouch.¹⁸ Kandive asked, "May I now turn about in safety?"

"When you wish," responded Turjan, clasping his pouch. Kandive, seeing Turjan occupied, negligently stepped to the wall and placed his hand on a spring.

"Turjan," he said, "*you* are lost. Before you may utter a syllable, I will open the floor and drop you a great dark distance. Can your charms avail against this?"

Turjan halted in mid-motion, fixed his eyes upon Kandive's red and gold face. Then he dropped his eyes sheepishly. "Ah, Kandive," he fretted, "you have outwitted me. If I return you the amulet, may I go free?"

"Toss the amulet at my feet," said Kandive, gloating. "Also Laccodel's Rune. Then I shall decide what mercy to grant you."

"Even the Rune?" Turjan asked, forcing a piteous note to his voice.

"Or your life."

Turjan reached into his pouch and grasped the crystal Pandelume had given him. He pulled it forth and held it against the pommel of his sword.

"Ho, Kandive," he said, "I have discerned your trick. You merely wish to frighten me into surrender. I defy you!"

Kandive shrugged. "Die then." He pushed the spring. The floor jerked open, and Turjan disappeared into the gulf.¹⁹ But when Kandive raced below

¹⁷ "...*your body riddled by lines of fire.*" A reference to the effects of the *Excellent Prismatic Spray*.

¹⁸ Note that *Laccodel's Rune* does not protect Turjan from the effects of Kandive's amulet.

¹⁹ Vance breaks out his spring-loaded trap. Another classic D&D trope.

to claim Turjan's body, he found no trace, and he spent the rest of the night in temper, brooding over wine.

Turjan found himself in the circular room of Pandelume's manse. Embelyon's many-colored lights streamed through the sky-windows upon his shoulder—sapphire blue, the yellow of marigolds, blood red. There was silence through the house. Turjan moved away from the rune in the floor, glancing uneasily to the door, fearful lest Pandelume, unaware of his presence, enter the room.

"Pandelume!" he called. "I have returned!"

There was no response. Deep quiet held the house. Turjan wished he were in the open air where the odor of sorcery was less strong.²⁰ He looked at the doors; one led to the entrance hall, the other he knew not where. The door on the right hand must lead outside; he laid his hand on the latch to pull it open. But he paused. Suppose he were mistaken, and Pandelume's form were revealed? Would it be wiser to wait here?

A solution occurred to him. His back to the door, he swung it open.

"Pandelume!" he called.

A soft intermittent sound came to his ears from behind, and he seemed to hear a labored breath. Suddenly frightened, Turjan stepped back into the circular room and closed the door.

He resigned himself to patience and sat on the floor.

A gasping cry came from the next room. Turjan leapt to his feet.

"Turjan? You are there?"

"Yes; I have returned with the amulet."

"Do this quickly," panted the voice. "Guarding your sight, hang the amulet over your neck and enter."

Turjan, spurred by the urgency of the voice, closed his eyes and arranged the amulet on his chest. He groped to the door and flung it wide.

Silence of a shocked intensity held an instant; then came an appalling screech, so wild and demoniac that Turjan's brain sang. Mighty pinions buffeted the air, there was a hiss and the scrape of metal. Then, amidst muffled roaring, an icy wind bit Turjan's face. Another hiss—and all was quiet.²¹

"My gratitude is yours," said the calm voice of Pandelume. "Few times have I experienced such dire stress, and without your aid might not have repulsed that creature of hell."

²⁰ "...odor of sorcery..." It would seem that Vancian magic has an olfactory aspect.

²¹ What is Vance suggesting here? Is there some sort of winged mechanical creature landing as Turjan enters Pandelume's quarters?

A hand lifted the amulet from Turjan's neck. After a moment of silence Pandelume's voice sounded again from a distance.

"You may open your eyes."

Turjan did so. He was in Pandelume's workroom; amidst much else, he saw vats like his own.

"I will not thank you," said Pandelume. "But in order that a fitting symmetry be maintained, I perform a service for a service. I will not only guide your hands as you work among the vats, but also will I teach you other matters of value."

In this fashion did Turjan enter his apprenticeship to Pandelume. Day and far into the opalescent Embelyon night he worked under Pandelume's unseen tutelage. He learned the secret of renewed youth, many spells of the ancients, and a strange abstract lore that Pandelume termed "Mathematics."

"Within this instrument," said Pandelume, "resides the Universe. Passive in itself and not of sorcery, it elucidates every problem, each phase of existence, all the secrets of time and space. Your spells and runes are built upon its power and codified according to a great underlying mosaic of magic.²² The design of this mosaic we cannot surmise; our knowledge is didactic, empirical, arbitrary. Phandaal glimpsed the pattern and so was able to formulate many of the spells which bear his name. I have endeavored through the ages to break the clouded glass, but so far my research has failed. He who discovers the pattern will know all of sorcery and be a man powerful beyond comprehension."

So Turjan applied himself to the study and learned many of the simpler routines.

"I find herein a wonderful beauty," he told Pandelume. "This is no science, this is art, where equations fall away to elements like resolving chords, and where always prevails a symmetry either explicit or multiplex, but always of a crystalline serenity."

In spite of these other studies, Turjan spent most of his time at the vats, and under Pandelume's guidance achieved the mastery he sought. As a recreation he formed a girl of exotic design, whom he named Floriel. The hair of the girl he had found with Kandive on the night of the festival had fixed in his mind, and he gave his creature pale green hair. She had skin of creamy tan and wide emerald eyes. Turjan was intoxicated with delight when he brought her wet and perfect from the vat. She learned quickly and soon knew

²² Vance is basically saying that magic works in the universe of the Dying Earth because it has a mathematical basis. Mathematics being the magical language that describes space and time.

how to speak with Turjan. She was one of dreamy and wistful habit, caring for little but wandering among the flowers of the meadow, or sitting silently by the river; yet she was a pleasant creature and her gentle manners amused Turjan.

But one day the black-haired T'sais came riding past on her horse, steely-eyed, slashing at flowers with her sword. The innocent Floriel wandered by and T'sais, exclaiming "Green-eyed woman—your aspect horrifies me, it is death for you!" cut her down as she had the flowers in her path.

Turjan, hearing the hooves, came from the workroom in time to witness the sword-play. He paled in rage and a spell of twisting torment rose to his lips. Then T'sais looked at him and cursed him, and in the pale face and dark eyes he saw her misery and the spirit that caused her to defy her fate and hold to her life. Many emotions fought in him, but at last he permitted T'sais to ride on. He buried Floriel by the river-bank and tried to forget her in intense study.

A few days later he raised his head from his work.

"Pandelume! Are you near?"

"What do you wish, Turjan?"

"You mentioned that when you made T'sais, a flaw warped her brain. Now I would create one like her, of the same intensity, yet sound of mind and spirit."

"As you will," replied Pandelume indifferently, and gave Turjan the pattern.

So Turjan built a sister to T'sais, and day by day watched the same slender body, the same proud features take form.

When her time came, and she sat up in her vat, eyes glowing with joyful life, Turjan was breathless in haste to help her forth.

She stood before him wet and naked, a twin to T'sais, but where the face of T'sais was racked by hate, here dwelt peace and merriment; where the eyes of T'sais glowed with fury, here shone the stars of imagination.

Turjan stood wondering at the perfection of his own creation. "Your name shall be T'sain," said he, "and already I know that you will be part of my life."

He abandoned all else to teach T'sain, and she learned with marvelous speed.

"Presently we return to Earth," he told her, "to my home beside a great river in the green land of Ascolais."

"Is the sky of Earth filled with colors?" she inquired.

"No," he replied. "The sky of Earth is a fathomless dark blue, and an ancient red sun rides across the sky. When night falls the stars appear in patterns that I will teach you. Embelyon is beautiful, but Earth is wide, and the

horizons extend far off into mystery. As soon as Pandelume wills, we return to Earth."

T'sain loved to swim in the river, and sometimes Turjan came down to splash her and toss rocks in the water while he dreamed. Against T'sais he had warned her, and she had promised to be wary.

But one day, as Turjan made preparations for departure, she wandered far afield through the meadows, mindful only of the colors at play in the sky, the majesty of the tall blurred trees, the changing flowers at her feet; she looked on the world with a wonder that is only for those new from the vats. Across several low hills she wandered, and through a dark forest where she found a cold brook. She drank and sauntered along the bank, and presently came upon a small dwelling.

The door being open, T'sain looked to see who might live here. But the house was vacant, and the only furnishings were a neat pallet of grass, a table with a basket of nuts, a shelf with a few articles of wood and pewter.

T'sain turned to go on her way, but at this moment she heard the ominous thud of hooves, sweeping close like fate. The black horse slid to a stop before her. T'sain shrank back in the doorway, all Turjan's warnings returning to her mind. But T'sais had dismounted and came forward with her sword ready. As she raised to strike, their eyes met, and T'sais halted in wonder.

It was a sight to excite the brain, the beautiful twins wearing the same white waist-high breeches, with the same intense eyes and careless hair, the same slim pale bodies, the one wearing on her face hate for every atom of the universe, the other a gay exuberance.

T'sais found her voice.

"How is this, witch? You bear my semblance, yet you are not me. Or has the boon of madness come at last to dim my sight of the world?"

T'sain shook her head. "I am T'sain. You are my twin, T'sais, my sister. For this I must love you and you must love me."

"Love? I love nothing! I will kill you and so make the world better by one less evil." She raised her sword again.

"No!" cried T'sain in anguish. "Why do you wish to harm me? I have done no wrong!"

"You do wrong by existing, and you offend me by coming to mock my own hideous mold."

T'sain laughed, "Hideous? No. I am beautiful, for Turjan says so. Therefore you are beautiful, too."

T'sais' face was like marble.

"You make sport of me."

"Never. You are indeed very beautiful."

T'sais dropped the point of her sword to the ground. Her face relaxed into thought.

"Beauty! What is beauty? Can it be that I am blind, that a fiend distorts my vision? Tell me, how does one see beauty?"

"I don't know," said T'sain. "It seems very plain to me. Is not the play of colors across the sky beautiful?"

T'sais looked up in astonishment. "The harsh glarings? They are either angry or dreary, in either case detestable."

"See how delicate are the flowers, fragile and charming."

"They are parasites, they smell vilely."

T'sain was puzzled. "I do not know how to explain beauty. You seem to find joy in nothing. Does nothing give you satisfaction?"

"Only killing and destruction. So then these must be beautiful."

T'sain frowned. "I would term these evil concepts."

"Do you believe so?"

"I am sure of it."

T'sais considered. "How can I know how to act? I have been certain, and now you tell me that I do evil!"

T'sain shrugged. "I have lived little, and I am not wise. Yet I know that everyone is entitled to life. Turjan could explain to you easily."

"Who is Turjan?" inquired T'sais.

"He is a very good man," replied T'sain, "and I love him greatly. Soon we go to Earth, where the sky is vast and deep and of dark blue."

"Earth. ... If I went to Earth, could I also find beauty and love?"

"That may be, for you have a brain to understand beauty, and beauty of your own to attract love."

"Then I kill no more, regardless of what wickedness I see. I will ask Pandelume to send me to Earth."

T'sain stepped forward, put her arms around T'sais, and kissed her.

"You are my sister and I will love you."

T'sais' face froze. Rend, stab, bite, said her brain, but a deeper surge welled up from her flowing blood, from every cell of her body, to suffuse her



with a sudden flush of pleasure. She smiled.

"Then—I love you, my sister. I kill no more, and I will find and know beauty on Earth or die."

T'sais mounted her horse and set out for Earth, seeking love and beauty.

T'sain stood in the doorway, watching her sister ride off through the colors. Behind her came a shout, and Turjan approached.

"T'sain! Has that frenzied witch harmed you?" He did not wait for a reply. "Enough! I kill her with a spell, that she may wreak no more pain."

He turned to voice a terrible charm of fire, but T'sain put her hand to his mouth.

"No, Turjan, you must not. She has promised to kill no more. She goes to Earth seeking what she may not find in Embelyon."

So Turjan and T'sain watched T'sais disappear across the many-colored meadow.

"Turjan," spoke T'sain.

"What is your wish?"

"When we come to Earth, will you find me a black horse like that of T'sais?"

"Indeed," said Turjan, laughing, as they started back to the house of Pandelume.

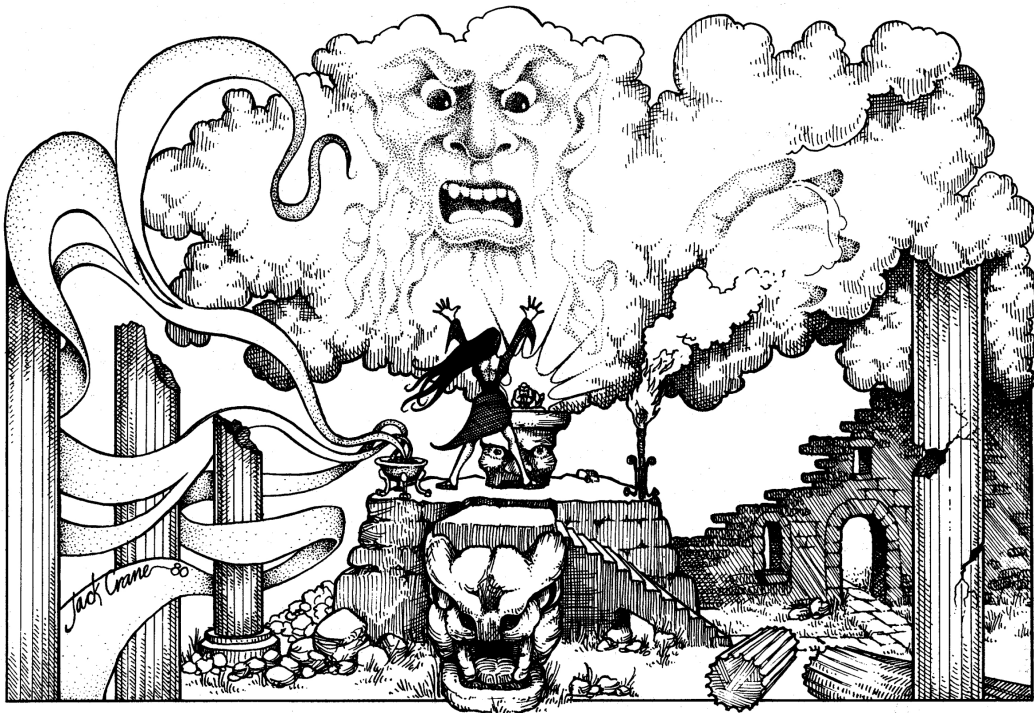


ILLUSTRATION BY JACK CRANE

MAZIRIAN THE MAGE

by JACK VANCE

DEEP IN THOUGHT, Mazirian the Magician walked his garden. Trees fruited with many intoxications overhung his path, and flowers bowed obsequiously as he passed. An inch above the ground, dull as agates, the eyes of mandrakes followed the tread of his black-slipped feet. Such was Mazirian's garden—three terraces growing with strange and wonderful vegetations. Certain plants swam with changing iridescences; others held up blooms pulsing like sea-anemones, purple, green, lilac, pink, yellow. Here grew trees like feather parasols, trees with transparent trunks threaded with red and yellow veins, trees with foliage like metal foil, each leaf a different metal—copper, silver, blue tantalum, bronze, green indium. Here blooms like bubbles tugged gently upward from glazed green leaves, there a shrub bore a thousand pipe-shaped blossoms, each whistling softly to make music of the ancient Earth, of the ruby-red sunlight, water seeping through black soil, the languid winds. And beyond the roqual hedge the trees of the forest made a tall wall of mystery. In this waning hour of Earth's life no man could count himself familiar with the glens, the glades, the dells and deeps, the secluded clearings, the ruined pavilions, the sun-dappled pleasaunces, the gullys and heights, the various brooks, freshets, ponds, the meadows, thickets, brakes and rocky outcrops.

Mazirian paced his garden with a brow frowning in thought. His step was slow and his arms were clenched behind his back. There was one who had brought him puzzlement, doubt, and a great desire: a delightful woman-creature who dwelt in the woods. She came to his garden half-laughing and always wary, riding a black horse with eyes like golden crystals. Many times had Mazirian tried to take her; always her horse had borne her from his varied enticements, threats, and subterfuges.

Agonized screaming jarred the garden. Mazirian, hastening his step, found a mole chewing the stalk of a plant-animal hybrid. He killed the marauder, and the screams subsided to a dull gasping. Mazirian stroked a furry leaf and the red mouth hissed in pleasure.

Then: "K-k-k-k-k-k," spoke the plant. Mazirian stooped, held the rodent to the red mouth. The mouth sucked, the small body slid into the stomach-bladder underground. The plant gurgled, eructated, and Mazirian watched with satisfaction.

The sun had swung low in the sky, so dim and red that the stars could be seen. And now Mazirian felt a watching presence. It would be the woman of the forest, for thus had she disturbed him before. He paused in his stride, feeling for the direction of the gaze.

He shouted a spell of immobilization.¹ Behind him the plant-animal froze to rigidity and a great green moth wafted to the ground. He whirled around. There she was, at the edge of the forest, closer than ever she had approached before. Nor did she move as he advanced. Mazirian's young-old eyes shone. He would take her to his manse and keep her in a prison of green glass. He would test her brain with fire, with cold, with pain and with joy. She should serve him with wine and make the eighteen motions of allurement by yellow lamp-light. Perhaps she was spying on him; if so, the Magician would discover immediately, for he could call no man friend and had forever to guard his garden.

She was but twenty paces distant—then there was a thud and pound of black hooves as she wheeled her mount and fled into the forest.

The Magician flung down his cloak in rage. She held a guard—a counter-spell, a rune of protection²—and always she came when he was ill-prepared to follow. He peered into the murky depths, glimpsed the wanness of her body flitting through a shaft of red light, then black shade and she was gone . . . Was she a witch? Did she come of her own volition, or—more likely—had an enemy sent her to deal him inquietude?

If so, who might be guiding her? There was Prince Kandive the Golden, of Kaiin, whom Mazirian had bilked of his secret of renewed youth. There was Azvan the Astronomer, there was Turjan—hardly Turjan, and here Mazirian's face lit in a pleasing recollection . . . He put the thought aside. Azvan, at least, he could test. He turned his steps to his workshop, went to a table where rested a cube of clear crystal, shimmering with a red and blue aureole. From a

¹ Quick incantations like this one that instantly paralyze targets make several appearances in Vance's *Dying Earth*. It is a particularly useful type of magic.

² *Counter-spells* and *runes of protection* are antipodal categories of defensive magic. On the reactive side, counter-spells are a type of casting used to permanently annihilate or temporarily suppress other magics. On the proactive side, runes of protection provide an occult barrier around a magic-user that shields him not only from perceived harm (i.e. monster attack) but from unperceived environment-wide threats as well.

cabinet he brought a bronze gong and a silver hammer. He tapped on the gong and the mellow tone sang through the room and out, away and beyond.

He tapped again and again. Suddenly Azvan's face shone from the crystal, beaded with pain and great terror.

"Stay the strokes, Mazirian!" cried Azvan. "Strike no more on the gong of my life!"

Mazirian paused, his hand poised over the gong. "Do you spy on me, Azvan? Do you send a woman to regain the gong?"

"Not I, Master, not I. I fear you too well."

"You must deliver me the woman, Azvan; I insist."

"Impossible, Master! I know not who or what she is!" Mazirian made as if to strike. Azvan poured forth such a torrent of supplication that Mazirian with a gesture of disgust threw down the hammer and restored the gong to its place. Azvan's face drifted slowly away, and the fine cube of crystal shone blank as before.

Mazirian stroked his chin. Apparently he must capture the girl himself. Later, when black night lay across the forest, he would seek through his books for spells to guard him through the unpredictable glades. They would be poignant corrosive spells, of such a nature that one would daunt the brain of an ordinary man and two render him mad. Mazirian, by dint of stringent exercise, could encompass four of the most formidable, or six of the lesser spells.³

He put the project from his mind and went to a long vat bathed in a flood of green light. Under a wash of clear fluid lay the body of a man, ghastly below the green glare, but of great physical beauty. His torso tapered from wide shoulders through lean flanks to long strong legs and arched feet; his face was clean and cold with hard flat features. Dusty golden hair clung about his head.

Mazirian stared at the thing, which he had cultivated from a single cell. It needed only intelligence, and this he knew not how to provide. Turjan of Miir held the knowledge, and Turjan—Mazirian glanced with a grim narrowing of the eyes at a trap in the floor—refused to part with his secret.

Mazirian pondered the creature in the vat. It was a perfect body; therefore might not the brain be ordered and pliant? He would discover. He

³ There are multiple points we can take from this paragraph: Spells are being divided into two groups on the basis of their formidability. If six lesser spells are equivalent to four greater spells, then a lesser spell occupies about two-thirds the memory space of a greater spell. "Corrosive" magic, as I imagine it, would be magic that was particularly invasive and difficult to dispel. It might have some self-replicating quality to vastly improve its sustainability.

set in motion a device to draw off the liquid and presently the body lay stark to the direct rays. Mazirian injected a minim of drug into the neck. The body twitched. The eyes opened, winced in the glare. Mazirian turned away the projector.

Feebly the creature in the vat moved its arms and feet, as if unaware of their use. Mazirian watched intently; perhaps he had stumbled on the right synthesis for the brain.

"Sit up!" commanded the Magician.

The creature fixed its eyes upon him, and reflexes joined muscle to muscle. It gave a throaty roar and sprang from the vat at Mazirian's throat. In spite of Mazirian's strength it caught him and shook him like a doll.

For all Mazirian's magic he was helpless. The mesmeric spell had been expended, and he had none other in his brain. In any event he could not have uttered the space-twisting syllables with that mindless clutch at his throat.

His hand closed on the neck of a leaden carboy. He swung and struck the head of his creature, which slumped to the floor.

Mazirian, not entirely dissatisfied, studied the glistening body at his feet. The spinal coordination had functioned well. At his table he mixed a white potion, and, lifting the golden head, poured the fluid into the lax mouth. The creature stirred, opened its eyes, propped itself on its elbows. The madness had left its face—but Mazirian sought in vain for the glimmer of intelligence. The eyes were as vacant as those of a lizard.

The Magician shook his head in annoyance. He went to the window and his brooding profile was cut black against the oval panes... Turjan once more? Under, the most dire inquiry Turjan had kept his secret close. Mazirian's thin mouth curved wryly. Perhaps if he inserted another angle in the passage...

The sun had gone from the sky and there was dimness in Mazirian's garden. His white night-blossoms opened and their captive gray moths fluttered from bloom to bloom. Mazirian pulled open the trap in the floor and descended stone stairs. Down, down, down ... At last a passage intercepted at right angles, lit with the yellow light of eternal lamps. To the left were his fungus beds, to the right a stout oak and iron door, locked with three locks. Down and ahead the stone steps continued, dropping into blackness.

Mazirian unlocked the three locks, flung wide the door. The room within was bare except for a stone pedestal supporting a glass-topped box. The box measured a yard on a side and was four or five inches high. Within the box— actually a squared passageway, a run with four right angles— moved two small creatures, one seeking, the other evading. The predator was a small dragon with furious red eyes and a monstrous fanged mouth. It

waddled along the passage on six splayed legs, twitching its tail as it went. The other stood only half the size of the dragon—a strong-featured man, stark naked, with a copper fillet binding his long black hair. He moved slightly faster than his pursuer, which still kept relentless chase, using a measure of craft, speeding, doubling back, lurking at the angle in case the man should unwarily step around. By holding himself continually alert, the man was able to stay beyond the reach of the fangs. The man was Turjan, whom Mazirian by trickery had captured several weeks before, reduced in size and thus imprisoned.

Mazirian watched with pleasure as the reptile sprang upon the momentarily relaxing man, who jerked himself clear by the thickness of his skin. It was time, Mazirian thought, to give both rest and nourishment. He dropped panels across the passage, separating it into halves, isolating man from beast. To both he gave meat and pannikins of water.

Turjan slumped in the passage.

"Ah," said Mazirian, "you are fatigued. You desire rest?"

Turjan remained silent, his eyes closed. Time and the world had lost meaning for him. The only realities were the gray passage and the interminable flight. At unknown intervals came food and a few hours rest.

"Think of the blue sky," said Mazirian, "the white stars, your castle Miir by the river Derna; think of wandering free in the meadows."

The muscles at Turjan's mouth twitched.

"Consider, you might crush the little dragon under your heel."

Turjan looked up. "I would prefer to crush your neck, Mazirian."

Mazirian was unperturbed. "Tell me, how do you invest your vat creatures with intelligence? Speak, and you go free."

Turjan laughed, and there was madness in his laughter.

"Tell you? And then? You would kill me with hot oil in a moment."

Mazirian's thin mouth drooped petulantly.

"Wretched man, I know how to make you speak. If your mouth were stuffed, waxed and sealed, you would speak! Tomorrow I take a nerve from your arm and draw coarse cloth along its length."

The small Turjan, sitting with his legs across the passageway, drank his water and said nothing.

"Tonight," said Mazirian with studied malevolence, "I add an angle and change your run to a pentagon."

Turjan paused and looked up through the glass cover at his enemy. Then he slowly sipped his water. With five angles there would be less time to evade the charge of the monster, less of the hall in view from one angle.

"Tomorrow," said Mazirian, "you will need all your agility." But another

matter occurred to him. He eyed Turjan speculatively. "Yet even this I spare you if you assist me with another problem."

"What is your difficulty, febrile Magician?"

"The image of a woman-creature haunts my brain, and I would capture her." Mazirian's eyes went misty at the thought. "Late afternoon she comes to the edge of my garden riding a great black horse—you know her, Turjan?"

"Not I, Mazirian." Turjan sipped his water.

Mazirian continued. "She has sorcery enough to ward away Felojun's Second Hypnotic Spell⁴—or perhaps she has some protective rune. When I approach, she flees into the forest."

"So then?" asked Turjan, nibbling the meat Mazirian had provided.

"Who may this woman be?" demanded Mazirian, peering down his long nose at the tiny captive.

"How can I say?"

"I must capture her," said Mazirian abstractedly: "What spells, what spells?"

Turjan looked up, although he could see the Magician only indistinctly through the cover of glass.

"Release me, Mazirian, and on my word as a Chosen Hierarch of the Maram-Or⁵, I will deliver you this girl."

"How would you do this?" asked the suspicious Mazirian.

"Pursue her into the forest with my best Live Boots⁶ and a headful of spells."

"You would fare no better than I," retorted the Magician. "I give you freedom when I know the synthesis of your vat-things. I myself will pursue the woman."

Turjan lowered his head that the Magician might not read his eyes.

"And as for me, Mazirian?" he inquired after a moment.

"I will treat with you when I return."

"And if you do not return?"

Mazirian stroked his chin and smiled, revealing fine white teeth. "The dragon could devour you now, if it were not for your cursed secret."

The Magician climbed the stairs. Midnight found him in his study, poring through leather-bound tomes and untidy portfolios ... At one time a thousand or more runes, spells, incantations, curses and sorceries had been known. The reach of Grand Motholam—Ascolais, the Ide of Kauchique,

⁴ *Felojun's Second Hypnotic Spell*: A spell of domination? or mental paralysis?

⁵ The *Maram-Or* might be a fellowship of magic-users. Perhaps the "Or" is there to suggest *order*.

⁶ Magical boots that propel themselves at faster-than-natural speeds.

Almery to the South, the Land of the Falling Wall to the East—swarmed with sorcerers of every description, of whom the chief was the Arch-Necromancer Phandaal. A hundred spells Phandaal personally had formulated—though rumor said that demons whispered at his ear when he wrought magic. Pontecilla the Pious, then ruler of Grand Motholam, put Phandaal to torment, and after a terrible night, he killed Phandaal and outlawed sorcery throughout the land. The wizards of Grand Motholam fled like beetles under a strong light; the lore was dispersed and forgotten, until now, at this dim time, with the sun dark, wilderness obscuring Ascolais, and the white city Kaiin half in ruins, only a few more than a hundred spells remained to the knowledge of man. Of these, Mazirian had access to seventy-three, and gradually, by stratagem and negotiation, was securing the others.⁷

Mazirian made a selection from his books and with great effort forced five spells upon his brain: Phandaal's Gyrator⁸, Felojun's Second Hypnotic Spell, The Excellent Prismatic Spray, The Charm of Untiring Nourishment, and the Spell of the Omnipotent Sphere. This accomplished, Mazirian drank wine and retired to his couch.

The following day, when the sun hung low, Mazirian went to walk in his garden. He had but short time to wait. As he loosened the earth at the roots of his moon-geraniums a soft rustle and stamp told that the object of his desire had appeared.

She sat upright in the saddle, a young woman of exquisite configuration. Mazirian slowly stooped, as not to startle her, put his feet into the Live Boots and secured them above the knee.

He stood up. "Ho, girl," he cried, "you have come again. Why are you here of evenings? Do you admire the roses? They are vividly red because live red blood flows in their petals. If today you do not flee, I will make you the gift of one."

Mazirian plucked a rose from the shuddering bush and advanced toward her, fighting the surge of the Live Boots. He had taken but four steps when the woman dug her knees into the ribs of her mount and so plunged off through the trees.

Mazirian allowed full scope to the life in his boots. They gave a great bound, and another, and another, and he was off in full chase.

So Mazirian entered the forest of fable. On all sides mossy boles twisted up to support the high panoply of leaves. At intervals shafts of sunshine drifted

⁷ In order to add new spells to his repertoire, Mazirian has to go about finding them and then pay whatever price is required to have access to them.

⁸ *Phandaal's Gyrator*, we see later, is basically an exercise in telekinesis designed to torment its target.

through to lay carmine blots on the turf. In the shade long-stemmed flowers and fragile fungi sprang from the humus; in this ebbing hour of Earth nature was mild and relaxed.

Mazirian in his Live Boots bounded with great speed through the forest, yet the black horse, running with no strain, stayed easily ahead.

For several leagues the woman rode, her hair flying behind like a pennon. She looked back and Mazirian saw the face over her shoulder as a face in a dream. Then she bent forward; the golden-eyed horse thundered ahead and soon was lost to sight. Mazirian followed by tracing the trail in the sod.

The spring and drive began to leave the Live Boots, for they had come far and at great speed. The monstrous leaps became shorter and heavier, but the strides of the horse, shown by the tracks, were also shorter and slower. Presently Mazirian entered a meadow and saw the horse, riderless, cropping grass. He stopped short. The entire expanse of tender herbiage lay before him. The trail of the horse leading into the glade was clear, but there was no trail leaving. The woman therefore had dismounted somewhere behind—how far he had no means of knowing. He walked toward the horse, but the creature shied and bolted through the trees. Mazirian made one effort to follow, and discovered that his Boots hung lax and flaccid—dead.

He kicked them away, cursing the day and his ill-fortune. Shaking the cloak free behind him, a baleful tension shining on his face, he started back along the trail.

In this section of the forest, outcroppings of black and green rock, basalt and serpentine, were frequent—forerunners of the crags over the River Derna. On one of these rocks Mazirian saw a tiny man-thing mounted on a dragon-fly. He had skin of a greenish cast; he wore a gauzy smock and carried a lance twice his own length.

Mazirian stopped. The Twk-man looked down stolidly.

"Have you seen a woman of my race passing by, Twk-man?"

"I have seen such a woman," responded the Twk-man after a moment of deliberation.

"Where may she be found?"

"What may I expect for the information?"

"Salt—as much as you can bear away."

The Twk-man flourished his lance. "Salt? No. Liane the Wayfarer provides the chieftain Dandanflores salt for all the tribe."

Mazirian could surmise the services for which the bandit-troubadour paid salt. The Twk-men, flying fast on their dragon-flies, saw all that happened in the forest "A vial of oil from my telanxis blooms?"

"Good," said the Twk-man. "Show me the vial."

Mazirian did so.

"She left the trail at the lightning-blasted oak lying a little before you. She made directly for the river valley, the shortest route to the lake."

Mazirian laid the vial beside the dragon-fly and went off toward the river oak. The Twk-man watched him go, then dismounted and lashed the vial to the underside of the dragon-fly, next to the skein of fine hair the woman had given him thus to direct Mazirian.

The Magician turned at the oak and soon discovered the trail over the dead leaves. A long open glade lay before him, sloping gently to the river. Trees towered to either side and the long sundown rays steeped one side in blood, left the other deep in black shadow. So deep was the shade that Mazirian did not see the creature seated on a fallen tree; and he sensed it only as it prepared to leap on his back.

Mazirian sprang about to face the thing, which subsided again to sitting posture. It was a Deodand, formed and featured like a handsome man, finely muscled, but with a dead black lusterless skin and long slit eyes.

"Ah, Mazirian, you roam the woods far from home," the black thing's soft voice rose through the glade.

The Deodand, Mazirian knew, craved his body for meat. How had the girl escaped? Her trail led directly past.

"I come seeking, Deodand. Answer my questions, and I undertake to feed you much flesh."

The Deodand's eyes glinted, flitting over Mazirian's body. "You may in any event, Mazirian. Are you with powerful spells today?"⁹

"I am. Tell me, how long has it been since the girl passed? Went she fast, slow, alone or in company? Answer, and I give you meat at such time as you desire."

The Deodand's lips curled mockingly. "Blind Magician! She has not left the glade." He pointed, and Mazirian followed the direction of the dead black arm. But he jumped back as the Deodand sprang. From his mouth gushed the syllables of Phandaal's Gyrator Spell. The Deodand was jerked off his feet and flung high in the air, where he hung whirling, high and low, faster and slower, up to the tree-tops, low to the ground. Mazirian watched with a half-smile. After a moment he brought the Deodand low and caused the rotations to slacken.

⁹ "...Are you with powerful spells today?" The *with* is key. It suggests that a spell tags along with its memorizer and is not just another form of lore or abstract knowledge. A spell's mental presence/availability empowers a magic-user.

"Will you die quickly or slow?" asked Mazirian. "Help me and I kill you at once. Otherwise you shall rise high where the pelgrane fly."

Fury and fear choked the Deodand. "May dark Thial spike your eyes! May Kraan hold your living brain in acid!"¹⁰ And it added such charges that Mazirian felt forced to mutter countercurses.

"Up then," said Mazirian at last, with a wave of his hand. The black sprawling body jerked high above the tree-tops to revolve slowly in the crimson bask of setting sun. In a moment a mottled bat-shaped thing with hooked snout swept close and its beak tore the black leg before the crying Deodand could kick it away. Another and another of the shapes flitted across the sun.

"Down, Mazirian!" came the faint call. "I tell what I know."

Mazirian brought him close to earth.



ILLUSTRATION BY BARRY WINDSOR SMITH

"She passed alone before you came. I made to attack her but she repelled me with a handful of thyle-dust. She went to the end of the glade and took the trail to the river. This trail leads also past the lair of Thrang. So is she lost, for he will sate himself on her till she dies."

Mazirian rubbed his chin. "Had she spells with her?"

"I know not. She will need strong magic to escape the demon Thrang."

¹⁰ Could Thial and Kraan be demonic gods? or perhaps very powerful magic-users?

"Is there anything else to tell?"

"Nothing."

"Then you may die." And Mazirian caused the creature to revolve at ever greater speed, faster and faster, until there was only a blur. A strangled wailing came and presently the Deodand's frame parted. The head shot like a bullet far down the glade; arms, legs, viscera flew in all directions.

Mazirian went his way. At the end of the glade the trail led steeply down ledges of dark green serpentine to the River Derna. The sun had set and shade filled the valley Mazirian gained the riverside and set off downstream to ward a far shimmer known as Sanra Water, the Lake of Dreams.

An evil odor came to the air, a stink of putrescence and filth. Mazirian went ahead more cautiously, for the lair of Thrang the ghoulish bear was near, and in the air was the feel of magic—strong brutal sorcery his own more subtle spells might not contain.

The sound of voices reached him, the throaty tones of Thrang and gasping cries of terror. Mazirian stepped around a shoulder of rock, inspected the origin of the sounds.

Thrang's lair was an alcove in the rock, where a fetid pile of grass and skins served him for a couch. He had built a rude pen to cage three women, these wearing many bruises on their bodies and the effects of much horror on their faces. Thrang had taken them from the tribe that dwelt in silk-hung barges along the lake-shore. Now they watched as he struggled to subdue the woman he had just captured. His round gray man's face was contorted and he tore away her jerkin with his human hands. But she held away the great sweating body with an amazing dexterity. Mazirian's eyes narrowed. Magic, magic!

So he stood watching, considering how to destroy Thrang with no harm to the woman. But she spied him over Thrang's shoulder.

"See," she panted, "Mazirian has come to kill you."

Thrang twisted about. He saw Mazirian and came charging on all fours, venting roars of wild passion. Mazirian later wondered if the ghoulish had cast some sort of spell, for a strange paralysis strove to bind his brain. Perhaps the spell lay in the sight of Thrang's raging graywhite face, the great arms thrust out to grasp.¹¹

Mazirian shook off the spell, if such it were, and uttered a spell of his own, and all the valley was lit by streaming darts of fire, lashing in from all directions to split Thrang's blundering body in a thousand places. This was the

¹¹ Vance is suggesting yet another form of gaze attack/effect that renders its victim paralyzed in some way.

Excellent Prismatic Spray—many-colored stabbing lines. Thrang was dead almost at once, purple blood flowing from countless holes where the radiant rain had pierced him.¹²

But Mazirian heeded little. The girl had fled. Mazirian saw her white form running along the river toward the lake, and took up the chase, heedless of the piteous cries of the three women in the pen.

The lake presently lay before him, a great sheet of water whose further rim was but dimly visible. Mazirian came down to the sandy shore and stood seeking across the dark face of Sanra Water, the Lake of Dreams. Deep night with only a verge of afterglow ruled the sky, and stars glistened on the smooth surface. The water lay cool and still, tideless as all Earth's waters had been since the moon had departed the sky.

Where was the woman? There, a pale white form, quiet in the shadow across the river. Mazirian stood on the riverbank, tall and commanding, a light breeze ruffling the cloak around his legs.

"Ho, girl," he called. "It is I, Mazirian, who saved you from Thrang. Come close, that I may speak to you."

"At this distance I hear you well, Magician," she replied. "The closer I approach the farther I must flee."

"Why then do you flee? Return with me and you shall be mistress of many secrets and hold much power."

She laughed. "If I wanted these, Mazirian, would I have fled so far?"

"Who are you then that you desire not the secrets of magic?"

"To you, Mazirian, I am nameless, lest you curse me. Now I go where you may not come." She ran down the shore, waded slowly out till the water circled her waist, then sank out of sight. She was gone.

Mazirian paused indecisively. It was not good to use so many spells and thus shear himself of power. What might exist below the lake? The sense of quiet magic was there, and though he was not at enmity with the Lake Lord, other beings might resent a trespass. However, when the figure of the girl did not break the surface, he uttered the Charm of Untiring Nourishment and entered the cool waters.¹³

He plunged deep through the Lake of Dreams, and as he stood on the bottom, his lungs at ease by virtue of the charm, he marveled at the fey place he had come upon. Instead of blackness a green light glowed everywhere and

¹² The *Excellent Prismatic Spray* is evidently a "rain" of "many-colored stabbing lines" that create "countless holes" in the spell's target.

¹³ This charm evidently *nourishes* the lungs with breathable air when its user travels underwater. Its name suggests that it might have a generalized effect that provides nourishment for all the body's needs.

the water was but little less clear than air. Plants undulated to the current and with them moved the lake flowers, soft with blossoms of red, blue and yellow. In and out swam large-eyed fish of many shapes.

The bottom dropped by rocky steps to a wide plain where trees of the underlake floated up from slender stalks to elaborate fronds and purple water-fruits, and so till the misty wet distance veiled all. He saw the woman, a white water nymph now, her hair like dark fog. She half-swam, half-ran across the sandy floor of the water-world, occasionally looking back over her shoulder. Mazirian came after, his cloak streaming out behind.

He drew nearer to her, exulting. He must punish her for leading him so far ... The ancient stone stairs below his work-room led deep and at last opened into chambers that grew ever vaster as one went deeper. Mazirian had found a rusted cage in one of these chambers. A week or two locked in the blackness would curb her willfulness. And once he had dwindled a woman small as his thumb and kept her in a little glass bottle with two buzzing flies ...

A ruined white temple showed through the green. There were many columns, some toppled, some still upholding the pediment. The woman entered the great portico under the shadow of the architrave. Perhaps she was attempting to elude him; he must follow closely. The white body glimmered at the far end of the nave, swimming now over the rostrum and into a semi-circular alcove behind.

Mazirian followed as fast as he was able, half-swimming, half-walking through the solemn dimness. He peered across the murk. Smaller columns here precariously upheld a dome from which the keystone had dropped. A sudden fear smote him, then realization as he saw the flash of movement from above. On all sides the columns toppled in, and an avalanche of marble blocks tumbled at his head. He jumped frantically back.

The commotion ceased, the white dust of the ancient mortar drifted away. On the pediment of the main temple the woman kneeled on slender knees, staring down to see how well she had killed Mazirian.

She had failed. Two columns, by sheerest luck, had crashed to either side of him, and a slab had protected his body from the blocks. He moved his head painfully. Through a chink in the tumbled marble he could see the woman, leaning to discern his body. So she would kill him? He, Mazirian, who had already lived more years than he could easily reckon? So much more would she hate and fear him later. He called his charm, the Spell of the Omnipotent Sphere. A film of force formed around his body, expanding to push aside all that resisted. When the marble ruins had been thrust back, he destroyed the sphere, regained his feet, and glared about for the woman. She

was almost out of sight, behind a brake of long purple kelp, climbing the slope to the shore. With all his power he set out in pursuit.

T'sain dragged herself up on the beach. Still behind her came Mazirian the Magician, whose power had defeated each of her plans. The memory of his face passed before her and she shivered. He must not take her now. Fatigue and despair slowed her feet. She had set out with but two spells, the Charm of Untiring Nourishment and a spell affording strength to her arms — the last permitting her to hold off Thrang and tumble the temple upon Mazirian. These were exhausted; she was bare of protection; but, on the other hand, Mazirian could have nothing left.

Perhaps he was ignorant of the vampire-weed. She ran up the slope and stood behind a patch of pale, wind-beaten grass. And now Mazirian came from the lake, a spare form visible against the shimmer of the water.

She retreated, keeping the innocent patch of grass between them. If the grass failed — her mind quailed at the thought of what she must do.

Mazirian strode into the grass. The sickly blades became sinewy fingers. They twined about his ankles, holding him in an unbreakable grip, while others sought to find his skin.

So Mazirian chanted his last spell — the incantation of paralysis, and the vampire grass grew lax and slid limply to earth. T'sain watched with dead hope. He was now close upon her, his cloak flapping behind. Had he no weakness? Did not his fibers ache, did not his breath come short? She whirled and fled across the meadow, toward a grove of black trees. Her skin chilled at the deep shadows, the somber frames. But the thud of the Magician's feet was loud. She plunged into the dread shade. Before all in the grove awoke she must go as far as possible. Snap! A thong lashed at her. She continued to run. Another and another—she fell. Another great whip and another beat at her. She staggered up, and on, holding her arms before her face. Snap! The flails whistled through the air, and the last blow twisted her around. So she saw Mazirian.

He fought. As the blows rained on him, he tried to seize the whips and break them. But they were supple and springy beyond his powers, and jerked away to beat at him again. Infuriated by his resistance, they concentrated on the unfortunate Magician, who foamed and fought with transcendent fury, and T'sain was permitted to crawl to the edge of the grove with her life.

She looked back in awe at the expression of Mazirian's lust for life. He staggered about in a cloud of whips, his furious obstinate figure dimly silhouetted. He weakened and tried to flee, and then he fell. The blows pelted at him—on his head, shoulders, the long legs. He tried to rise but fell back.

T'sain closed her eyes in lassitude. She felt the blood oozing from her broken flesh. But the most vital mission yet remained. She reached her feet, and reelingly set forth. For a long time the thunder of many blows reached her ears.

Mazirian's garden was surpassingly beautiful by night. The star-blossoms spread wide, each of magic perfection, and the captive half-vegetable moths flew back and forth. Phosphorescent water-lilies floated like charming faces on the pond and the bush which Mazirian had brought from far Almerly in the south tintured the air with sweet fruity perfume.

T'sain, weaving and gasping, now came groping through the garden. Certain of the flowers awoke and regarded her curiously. The half-animal hybrid sleepily chattered at her, thinking to recognize Mazirian's step. Faintly to be heard was the wistful music of the blue-cupped flowers singing of ancient nights when a white moon swam the sky, and great storms and clouds and thunder ruled the seasons.

T'sain passed unheeding. She entered Mazirian's house, found the workroom where glowed the eternal yellow lamps. Mazirian's golden-haired vat-thing sat up suddenly and stared at her with his beautiful vacant eyes.

She found Mazirian's keys in the cabinet, and managed to claw open the trap door. Here she slumped to rest and let the pink gloom pass from her eyes. Visions began to come—Mazirian, tall and arrogant, stepping out to kill Thrang; the strange-hued flowers under the lake; Mazirian, his magic lost, fighting the whips ... She was brought from the half-trance by the vat-thing timidly fumbling with her hair.

She shook herself awake, and half-walked, half-fell down the stairs. She unlocked the thrice-bound door, thrust it open with almost the last desperate urge of her body. She wandered in to clutch at the pedestal where the glass-topped box stood and Turjan and the dragon were playing their desperate game. She flung the glass crashing to the floor, gently lifted Turjan out and set him down.

The spell was disrupted by the touch of the rune at her wrist, and Turjan became a man again. He looked aghast at the nearly unrecognizable T'sain.

She tried to smile up at him.

"Turjan—you are free—"

"And Mazirian?"

"He is dead." She slumped wearily to the stone floor and lay limp. Turjan surveyed her with an odd emotion in his eyes.

"T'sain, dear creature of my mind," he whispered, "more noble are you than I, who used the only life you knew for my freedom."

He lifted her body in his arms.
"But I shall restore you to the vats. With your brain I build another
T'sain, as lovely as you. We go."
He bore her up the stone stairs.



"GROWTH" BY MILES JOHNSTON



JOHN (JACK) HOLBROOK VANCE

THE D&D MAGIC SYSTEM

by E. GARY GYGAX

BECAUSE THERE ARE MANY LEGENDARY and authored systems of magic, many questions about the system of magic used in D&D are continually raised. Magic in CHAINMAIL was fairly brief, and because it was limited to the concept of table top miniatures battles, there was no problem in devising and handling this new and very potent factor in the game. The same cannot be said of D&D. While miniatures battles on the tabletop were conceived as a part of the overall game system, the major factor was always envisioned as the underworld adventure, while the wilderness trek assumed a secondary role, various other aspects took a third place, and only then were miniatures battles considered. So a somewhat different concept of magic had to be devised to employ with the D&D campaign in order to make it all work.

The four cardinal types of magic are those systems which require long conjuration with much paraphernalia as an adjunct (as used by Shakespeare in *Macbeth* or as typically written about by Robert E. Howard in his "Conan" yarns), the relatively short spoken spell (as in Finnish mythology or as found in the superb fantasy of Jack Vance), ultra-powerful (if not always correct) magic (typical of de Camp & Pratt in their classic "Harold Shea" stories), and the generally weak and relatively ineffectual magic (as found in J. R. R. Tolkien's work). Now the use of magic in the game was one of the most appealing aspects, and given the game system it was fairly obvious that its employment could not be on the complicated and time-consuming plane, any more than it could be made as a rather weak and ineffectual adjunct to swordplay if magic-users were to become a class of player character.

The basic assumption, then, was that D&D magic worked on a "Vancian" system and if used correctly would be a highly powerful and effective force. There are also four basic parts to magic: The verbal or uttered spell, the somatic or physical movement required for the conjuration, the psychic or mental attitude necessary to cast the spell, and the material adjuncts by which the spell, can be completed (to cite an obvious example, water to raise a water elemental). It was assumed that the D&D spell would be primarily verbal, although in some instances the spell would require some somatic component also (a fire ball being an outstanding example). The psychic *per se* would play little part in the basic magic system, but a corollary,



ILLUSTRATION BY MOEBIUS

mnemonics, would. The least part of magic would be the material aids required, and most of those considered stored or aided magic, so as to enable its more immediate employment, rather than serving to prolong spell casting time or encumber the player using these aids. Before exploring the whys and wherefores of these decisions, a further word regarding magical results must be said.

Spells do various things, and just what they do is an important consideration, for some order of effect in regard to the game would have to be determined. Magic purports to have these sorts of effects:

1. The alteration of existing substance (including its transposition or dissolution).
2. The creation of new substance.
3. The changing of normal functions of mind and/or body.
4. The addition of new functions to mind and/or body.
5. Summon and/or command existing entities.
6. Create new entities.

In considering these functions, comparatively weak and strong spells could be devised from any one of the six. Knowing the parameters within which the work was to be done then enabled the creation of the system.

Because the magic-using D&D player would have to be able to operate competitively with fellow players who relied on other forms of attack during the course of adventures, the already mentioned “Vancian” system was used as a basis, and spells of various sorts were carefully selected. Note, however, that they were selected within the framework of D&D competition primarily, and some relatively powerful spells were apportioned to lower levels of magic use. Charm Person and Sleep at 1st level are outstanding examples. The effect of some spells was set to reflect the level of the magic-user employing them. Many of the spells were developed for specific use in dungeon expeditions or during wilderness adventures. A few—mostly drawn from CHAINMAIL—were included with the tabletop battle in mind. All such spells were assumed to be of such a nature so that no less than three of the four basic components of magic were required in their use. All spells were assumed to have a verbal component. Each and every spell (not found on a scroll or otherwise contained in, or on, some magical device) would be absolutely mnemonic, magic-users would have to memorize the spells they wished to have available, and when a particular spell was recalled and its other parts enacted, then the memory would be gone and the spell no longer available until it was re-memorized (thus the magic-users’ spell books!). Most spells were also envisioned as containing a slight somatic and/or material component, whether in the preparation of a small packet of magical or ordinary compounds to be

used when the spell was spoken or as various gestures to be made when the enchantment was uttered.

Magic-use was thereby to be powerful enough to enable its followers to compete with any other type of player-character, and yet the use of magic would not be so great as to make those using it overshadow all others.

This was the conception, but in practice it did not work out as planned. Primarily at fault is the game itself which does not carefully explain the reasoning behind the magic system. Also, the various magic items for employment by magic-users tend to make them too powerful in relation to other classes (although the GREYHAWK supplement took steps to correct this somewhat). The problem is further compounded by the original misconceptions of how magic worked in D&D—misconceptions held by many players. The principal error here is that the one 1st level spell allowable to a 1st level magic-user could be used endlessly (or perhaps at frequent intervals) without the magic-user having to spend time and effort re-memorizing and preparing again after the single usage. Many players also originally thought scrolls containing spells could be reused as often as desired. Finally, many dungeon masters geared their campaigns to the level of TV giveaway shows, with gold pouring into players' purses like water and magical rewards strapped to the backs of lowly rats. This latter allowed their players to progress far too rapidly and go far beyond the bounds of D&D's competition scope—magic-users, fighters, clerics and all.

To further compound the difficulties, many dungeon masters and players, upon learning of the more restrictive intent of the rules, balked. They enjoyed the comic book characters, incredible spells, and stratospheric levels of their way of playing. Well and good. D&D is, if nothing else, a free-form game system, and it was designed with great variation between campaigns to be allowed for—nay, encouraged! Of course, there are some variations which are so far removed from the original framework as to be totally irreconcilable with D&D; these have become games of other sorts and not a concern of this article. On the other hand there are many campaigns which were scrapped and begun afresh after their dungeon masters consulted us or after they read other articles pertaining to the play of D&D as conceived by its authors—just as there will probably be some dungeon masters ready to try again after reading this far. It is for all of these referees and their players, as well as those who have played the game pretty much as was desired but were never quite positive that you were actually doing so, that the foregoing was written.

The logic behind it all was drawn from game balance as much as from anything else. Fighters have their strength, weapons, and armor to aid them in their competition. Magic-users must rely upon their spells, as they have

virtually no weaponry or armor to protect them. Clerics combine some of the advantages of the other two classes. The new class, thieves, have the basic advantage of stealthful actions with some additions in order for them to successfully operate on a plane with other character types. If magic is unrestrained in the campaign, D&D quickly degenerates into a weird wizard show where players get bored quickly, or the referee is forced to change the game into a new framework which will accommodate what he has created by way of player-characters. It is the opinion of this writer that the most desirable game is one in which the various character types are able to compete with each other as relative equals, for that will maintain freshness in the campaign (providing that advancement is slow and there is always some new goal to strive for).

This brings up the subject of new spells. The basic system allows for the players to create new spells for themselves at the option of the referee. It is certain that new spells will be added to the game system as the need arises, particularly with regard to new classes or sub-classes of characters or simply to fill in some needed gap. The creation of an endless number of more powerful spells is not desirable in the existing game system, and there is no intention of publishing 10th or higher level spells. As was said in a previous article, if character level progression is geared to the game system, it should take years for any magic-user to attain a level where the use of 9th level spells is possible!

As a last word regarding this subject, this D&D magic system explanation also serves another purpose. There should now be no doubt in dungeon masters' minds with regard to the effect of a silence spell on a magic-user, or what will happen to the poor wizard caught in a mess of webs. They will know that a magic mouth is basically useless as a spell caster — with the exception of those spells which are based only on the verbal component of the spell. When an enterprising player tries a wizard lock on somebody's or something's mouth he will not be prone to stretch the guidelines and allow it. Magic is great. Magic is powerful. But it should be kept great and powerful in relation to its game environment. That means all the magic-users who have been coasting along with special dispensations from the dungeon master may soon have to get out there and root with the rest of the players or lie down and die.

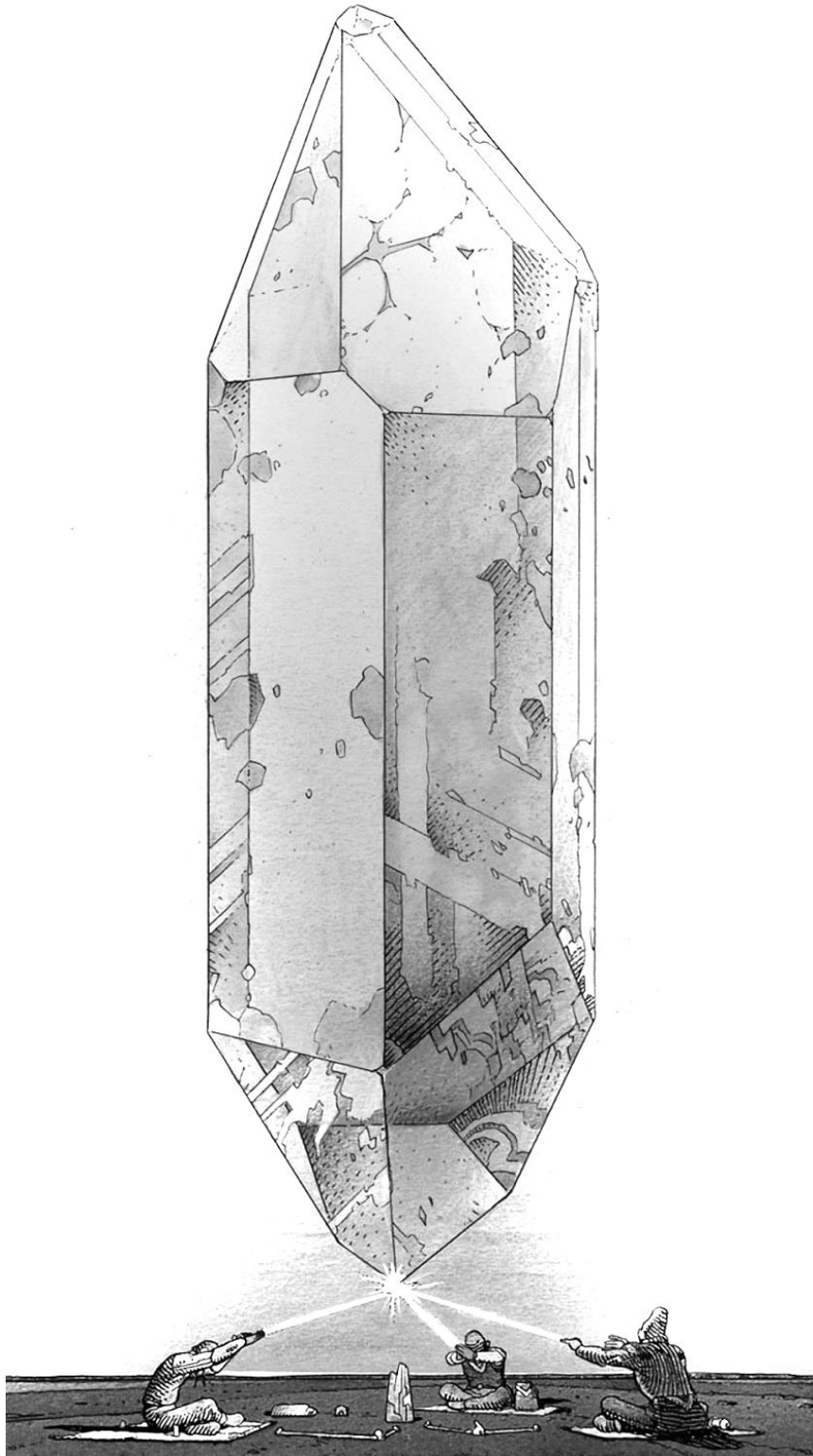


ILLUSTRATION BY MOEBIUS

ROLE-PLAYING

REALISM VS GAME-LOGIC

by E. GARY GYGAX

DESPITE THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF D&D, despite the ever-growing demand for the game, I remain somewhat amazed and very pleased that so many people share a love for the fantastic and heroic with me. It is indeed an unusual honor to have been able to bring so many people so much enjoyment. It tends to make one work harder at other projects so as to make certain the best possible effort is presented. Whatever is done will invariably be compared to D&D, and none of us at TSR have any desire to produce a game which falls short of public expectations.

The position of originating the concept of a paper & pencil fantasy role playing game and introducing it to the gaming hobby stands greatly to the credit of TSR. In my mind, it puts us beside the creators of chess (whoever they were), miniature wargames (H.G. Wells), and board wargames (thank you, Avalon Hill!). TSR designed and promoted the whole; it pioneered a concept which is today the most popular form of our hobby. Little did I—or the other members of the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association—realize as we fought out fantasy miniatures battles on my sand table that the publication of the rules we used to do so, the “Fantasy Supplement” to CHAINMAIL, would pioneer a whole new form of game. There are currently some 100,000 D&D players, and at the current rate of growth that number could easily double next year. This large audience is highly devoted. Well-wishers are many, and there but few who complain that D&D is not everything they had hoped for in a game.

However, amongst those who play the game avidly there are a vocal few who continually state their opinions as to how and where the game is lacking—and, of course, how *they* have the perfect solution. I do not take issue with any general statement that D&D is not flawless; obviously, human imperfection precludes the claim to perfection. I do admit to becoming a trifle irritated at times to read an article in some obscure D&D fan magazine or a letter to the editor of some small publication which attacks the game—or claims to be sure to improve D&D if only their new and “improved” rules are followed—with ill-conceived or asinine logic. My irritation is, I hope, only

impatience with those who only dimly perceive the actual concepts of the game, and not wounded vanity. Consider what a game is:

Gaming is a form of play. Games are usually for diversion or amusement, although sometimes they are played for a stake (gambling) or prizes. They are typically contests. *Fun* is a synonym for game. To my mind, a game which provides ample fun and enjoyment is good, and if it brings endless hours of amusement and diversion it is proportionately better. This view is held in common with most D&D enthusiasts, but there are those vociferous few who seem to find their principal enjoyment in attacking rather than playing the game. The uniform element amongst these individuals is a complete failure to grasp the simple fact that D&D is a *game*. Its rules are designed and published so as to assure a balanced and cohesive whole. Each segment has been considered and developed so as to fit with the other parts. Each part, meshing with the others, provides an amusing diversion, a game which is fun to play and set so as to provide maximum enjoyment for as long a period of time as possible. Each separate part must be viewed as something which contributes to the whole. Pulling this or that section from the body and criticizing it is totally invalid unless the workings of that particular segment do not harmonize with the whole, thus causing the entire game to be unenjoyable. That the vast majority of players agree with this view is evident. There are very few who attempt to insert dissimilar rules into a system which was carefully designed to work on precepts totally at odds with what the would-be designer views as crucial to making DUNGEONS & DRAGONS a “good” game.

D&D encourages inventiveness and originality within the framework of its rules. Those who insist on altering the framework should design their own game. Who can say that such an effort might not produce a product superior to D&D? Certainly not I.

Interestingly, most of the variant systems which purport to “improve” the game are presented under the banner of *realism*. I have personally come to suspect that this banner is the refuge of scoundrels; whether the last or first refuge is immaterial. “Realism” has become a bugaboo in the hobby, and all too many of the publishers—TSR included—make offerings to this god too frequently. The very definition of a game gives the lie to this false deity. *Real* implies being true to life, not artificial and related to actuality. A game is real, but its subject matter can, at most, give only a “sense” of what actually took place or exists. Paper maps, cardboard counters, plastic markers, or toy tanks and soldiers are not and never will be the stuff of historical reality. There, real bullets kill and maim actual people. Men, women, and children suffer and die, millions of dollars are spent and destroyed, all for the glory of war. Therefore,

those who desire realism in wargames, or simulations of social or political events, or racing, or anything else used as subject material for a game should go and do the actual thing—join the military, enter politics, become a race car driver, and so on. At best a game can give a reflection of reality, and then only if its rules reflect historical actualities and logically proceed from truth and facts.

When fantasy games are criticized for being “unrealistic”—and by fantasy I certainly mean both imaginary “science fiction” games and heroic fantasy—the sheer magnitude of the misconception absolutely astounds me! How can the critic presume that his or her imagined projection of a non-existent world or conjectured future history is any more “real” than another’s? While science fantasy does have some facts and good theories to logically proceed from, so that a semblance of truth can be claimed for those works which attempt to ground themselves on the basis of reality for their future projections, the world of “never-was” has no such shelter. Therefore, the absurdity of a cry for “realism” in a pure fantasy game seems so evident that I am overwhelmed when such confronts me. Yet, there are those persistent few who keep demanding it. The “camel” of working magic, countless pantheons of gods and devils, monsters that turn people to stone or breath fire, and characters that are daily faced with Herculean challenges which they overcome by dint of swordplay and spell-casting is gulped down without a qualm. It is the “gnat” of “unrealistic” combat, or “unrealistic” magic systems, or the particular abilities of a class of characters in the game which makes them gag. This becomes hard to cope with, because I am basically a realist.

In a pure fantasy game, one based on myth, mythos, and its own unique make-believe, realism (as a reflection of the actual) and logic can not be defined in terms conventional to other game forms. Realism in such a game can only be judged by the participants acceptance of the fantasy milieu invoked by the game. If this make-believe world is widely and readily accepted, if players fully agree to suspend their disbelief when playing it, the game has reality for them. Involvement and enjoyment indicate acceptance of a **game reality**, and the game becomes realistic thereby. **Game logic** in such a fantasy can only follow the basic tenets of the game, logical or illogical. If the basic precepts of the fantasy follow the *imprimus*, it has its own logic. Just as the fantasy must be accepted to achieve the game reality, so must the underlying principle of the game system be understood to follow its logic.

D&D is a make-believe game. It is designed, however, to facilitate close personal involvement in all aspects of play; this makes suspension of disbelief easier for those who can initially accept a game form which does not relate to any reality except a few tenuous areas, *viz.* actual kinds of weapons from the

medieval period are generally named, as are actual types of armor, and the social order of medieval Europe (and occasionally the Middle East and elsewhere in the world) is mentioned as bases for the game, to state the most obvious factual sources for D&D. It is a game for the imaginative and fanciful, and perhaps for those who dream of adventure and derring-do in a world all too mundane. As a game must first and foremost be fun, it needs no claim to “realism” to justify its existence. D&D exists as a game because thousands of people enjoy playing it. As its rules were specifically designed to make it fun and enjoyable, and the consensus of opinion is that D&D is so, does it need to have logical justification of any or all of its rules? Because logic does not necessarily create an enjoyable game form, the reply must be generally negative. Logic, even game logic, must be transcended in the interest of the overall game. If an illogical or inconsistent part fits with the others to form a superior whole, then its very illogicalness and inconsistency are logical and consistent within the framework of the game, for the rules exist for the play of the game, although all too often it seems that the game is designed for the use of the rules in many of today’s products. When questioned about the whys and wherefores of D&D I sometimes rationalize the matter and give “realistic” and “logical” reasons. The truth of the matter is that D&D was written principally as a game — perhaps I used game realism and game logic consciously or unconsciously when I did so, but that is begging the question. Enjoyment is the real reason for D&D being created, written, and published.

With the popularity of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS increasing so dramatically, I fervently desire to put the matter of variants, particularly “realistic” variants, to rest once and for all, so as to get on to other more important things, but it keeps springing up every time a sound stroke is dealt to it. Additions to and augmentations of certain parts of the D&D rules are fine. Variants which change the rules so as to imbalance the game or change it are most certainly not. These sorts of tinkering fall into the realm of creation of a new game, not development of the existing system, and as I stated earlier, those who wish to make those kind of changes should go and design their own game. In order to make this clear, a few examples of destructive variants are given below.

Why can’t magic-users employ swords? And for that matter, why not allow fighters to use wands and similar magical devices? On the surface this seems a small concession, but in actuality it would spoil the game! Each character role has been designed with care in order to provide varied and unique approaches to solving the problems which confront the players. If characters are not kept distinct, they will soon merge into one super-character. Not only would this destroy the variety of the game, but it would also kill the

game, for the super-character would soon have nothing left to challenge him or her, and the players would grow bored and move on to something which was fun. This same reasoning precludes many of the proposed character classes which enthusiasts wish to add to D&D. Usually such classes are either an unnecessary variation on an existing class, are too obtuse to be interesting, or are endowed with sufficient prowess to assure that they would rule the campaign for whomever chose to play as such (most certainly their authors). Similarly, multi-classed character types such as elves and dwarves are limited in most class progressions in order to assure game balance. That this can be justified by game logic, pointing out that humankind triumphs and rules other life forms in most if not all myths and mythos is a pleasant superfluity.

Combat is the most frequently abused area, for here many would-be game inventors feel they have sufficient expertise to design a better system. Perhaps someone will eventually do so, but the examples to date are somewhat less than inspiring of confidence. The “critical hit” or “double damage” on a “to hit” die roll of 20 is particularly offensive to the precepts of D&D as well. Two reciprocal rules which go with such a system are seldom, if ever mentioned: 1) opponents scoring a natural 20 will likewise cause a double damage hit or critical hit upon player characters; and 2) as a 20 indicated a perfect hit, a 1 must indicate a perfect miss, so at any time a 1 is rolled on the “to hit” die, the attacker must roll to find if he or she has broken his or her weapon, dropped it, or missed so badly as to strike an ally nearby. When these additions are suggested, the matter is usually dropped, but the point must be made that whole game system is perverted, and the game possibly ruined, by the inclusion of “instant death” rules, be they aimed at monsters or characters. In the former case they imbalance the play and move the challenge which has been carefully placed into *D&D*. In the latter, “instant death” no longer allows participants to use judgment when playing. Certainly some monsters are capable of delivering death at a single stroke, but players know these monsters and can take precautions. If everything that is faced has an excellent chance to kill characters, they will surely die before long. Then the game loses its continuity and appeal, for lasting character identification cannot be developed.

There are a number of foolish misconceptions which tend to periodically crop up also. **Weapons expertise** is one. Given the basic assumption that those normally employing weapons are typical of the medieval period, and D&D is plainly stated as a medieval fantasy game, it should follow in the minds of knowledgeable players that any fighting man worth the name made it a point to practice daily with all forms of arms. There was a prejudice against the use of the bow by knights, granted. This is of no

consequence in game terms. Any particular preference as to weapon type by a fighter most assuredly was not indicative of any lack of ability with another one. More to the point, however, D&D presumes that the adventurers are the elite, the cream of the cream. Each is a potential Hero, Archmage, and so on. Certainly each is also capable of employing a simple hand weapon to effect, and correctly utilizing any such weapon. The truth of the matter with respect to weapon expertise is, I believe, another attempt to move players closer to the “instant death” ability. For those who insist on giving weapons expertise bonuses due to the supposed extra training and ability of the character, I reply: What character could be more familiar and expert with a chosen weapon type than are monsters born and bred to their fangs, claws, hooves, horns, and other body weaponry? Therefore, the monsters must likewise receive weapons expertise bonuses. While this does put part of the system into balance again, it moves player characters closer to situations where they can be killed before they can opt to follow a course of action aimed at extricating themselves. Again, this feature is undesirable and must be discarded.

In general, the enjoyment of D&D is the fantasy: identification with a supernatural character, the challenges presented to this character as he or she seeks to gain gold and glory (experience levels and magical items), the images conjured up in participants’ minds as they explore weird labyrinths underground and forsaken wildernesses above, and of course the satisfaction of *defeating* opponents and gaining some fabulous treasure. This is the stuff of which D&D is made. Protracted combat situations which stress “realism” will destroy the popularity of the game as surely as would the inclusion of creatures which will always slay any characters they fight. The players desire *action*, but all but the odd few will readily tell you that endless die rolling to determine where a hit lands, having to specify what sort of attack is being made, how their character will defend against an attack, and so on are the opposite of action; they are tedious. Furthermore, such systems are totally extraneous to the D&D system. Although they might not ruin the game for a particular group of players, general inclusion in the published rules would certainly turn off the majority of enthusiasts. It would turn me to other pursuits, for if I was interested in that sort of game I would be playing a simulation of something historical, not a fantasy game.

Spell point systems are also currently in vogue amongst the fringe group which haunt the pages of “Amateur Press Association” publications. Now APAs are generally beneath contempt, for they typify the lowest form of vanity press. There one finds pages and pages of banal chatter and inept writing from persons incapable of creating anything which is publishable elsewhere. Therefore, they pay money to tout their sophomoric ideas, criticize those who

are able to write and design, and generally make themselves obnoxious. While there are notable exceptions, they are far too few to give any merit to the vehicles they appear in. From this morass rose the notion that a spell point system should be inserted into D&D. Strangely enough, “realism” was used as one of the principal reasons for use of spell points. These mutterings are not as widespread as the few proponents of such a system imagine. The D&D magic system is drawn directly from CHAINMAIL. It, in turn, was inspired by the superb writing of Jack Vance. This “Vancian” magic system works splendidly in the game. If it has any fault, it is towards making characters who are magic-users too powerful. This sort of fault is better corrected within the existing framework of the game—by requiring more time to cast spells, by making magic-users progress more slowly in experience levels. Spell points add nothing to D&D except more complication, more record keeping, more wasted time, and a precept which is totally foreign to the rest of the game.

There are numerous additions and supplemental pieces which are neither detrimental nor particularly useful to the game. If players find them enjoyable, there is certainly no reason why their particular group cannot include such material in their particular campaign. The important factor is the integrity of the game as a whole. The use of **social level** (as originally conceived by Game Designers Workshop and appearing in EN GARDE) is a good case in point. In the overall scheme of the game, social level is unimportant to a band of adventurers going out to slay monsters and gain treasure. However, in a campaign it can be used as scenario background—or not used—as the referee and his or her players see fit. Basically, social level means nothing to adventurers such as Conan, Fafhrd and Gray Mouser, Elric, Kugel the Clever, etc. Yet in a game, it can be a handy referee’s tool for setting a stage or rewarding player characters. It does not pervert the intent of the game, it does not destroy game systems. It can be readily included, or ignored, without effect upon the whole.

Certain small publishers of amateur magazines or second-rate work have accused TSR of maintaining a proprietary interest in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS from a purely mercenary motivation. This is usually because they have fervent desire to trade on D&D’s repute and make a reputation or quick buck on its merits rather than their own. Oddly enough, some individuals also fault TSR for being careful to protect its trade marks and copyrights and reputation, blandly faulting a desire to profit from our labors. D&D is inseparable from TSR. The repute of the game and of the company are high because we honestly strive to give buyers real value for their money. TSR’s customers, the buyers of D&D, et al are satisfied and then some, for what they have purchased has provided them with hours of enjoyment, and will

continue to do so for many more gaming hours. Just as we must prevent the ignorant and inept from spoiling the game by tinkering with the integral systems, we also take every possible step to prevent exploitation of D&D enthusiasts by publishers who hide shoddy products under a fantasy role playing guise. We cannot stop them from putting worthless material into print, but we can certainly make it clear that it is neither recommended nor approved for use with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. As long as these worthless goods do not trade on the good name of D&D, we can only tell our readers that they should beware of the products they purchase, so read before you buy!

To some extent, this same exploitation continually takes place in fantasy gaming oriented publications. Many seek to trade on D&D's popularity by offering "new" or "variant" systems which fit only with D&D, even though the game is not actually named. Buy them if you have money to throw away, but at peril of your campaign; do not use material which alters the basic precepts of the game.

Commerce is neither immoral nor unethical. It is part and parcel of our world. Workers are paid for their services, just as authors and publishers receive financial gain for what they provide. The same individual has a family which depends upon commerce to support itself (and possibly the individual if he or she is a student). The individual does, or will one day, work to earn his or her own living. But our interest in D&D extends beyond money and even beyond reputation. TSR created the whole of fantasy role playing gaming as a hobby, and we are proud of this achievement. Pride is what we have accomplished gives us a paternal right to protect our creation. Be glad, for it will help to assure that your game remains a good one, and that when you see "D&D" on a product you will have reasonable expectations with respect to its quality. Use your imagination and creativity when you play D&D, for there is much room within its parameters for individuality and personalization; always keep in mind that everything in the game is there for a reason, that major systems are carefully geared and balanced to mesh together to make a workable whole. Changing one part could well ruin the rest, and then what would you play?



IMAGE FROM *WIZARDS* (1977) DIR. RALPH BAKSHI

AD&D'S MAGIC SYSTEM

HOW AND WHY IT WORKS

by E. GARY GYGAX

WORKING UP RULES about make-believe can be difficult. Magic, AD&D magic, is most certainly make-believe. If there are “Black Arts” and “Occult Sciences” which deal with real, working magic spells, I have yet to see them.

Mildly put, I do not have any faith in the powers of magic, nor have I ever seen anyone who could perform anything approaching a mere 1st level AD&D spell without props. Yet heroic fantasy has long been one of my favorite subjects, and while I do not believe in invincible superheroes, wicked magicians, fire-breathing dragons, and the stuff of faerie, I love it all nonetheless! Being able to not only read about heroic adventures of this sort, but also to play them as a game form, increased the prospects of this enjoyment of imaginary worlds. So magic and dragons and superheroes and all such things were added to CHAINMAIL.

Simply desiring to play fantasy-based games does not bring them into being as a usable product. Most of the subject matter dealt with has only a limited range of treatment. Thus, giants are always written of as large and not overly bright, save in Classical mythology, of course. Some are LARGE, and some are turned to stone by sunlight, and so on, but the basics were there to draw from, and no real problems were posed in selecting characteristics for such creatures in a game. The same is basically true for all sorts of monsters and even adventurers—heroes, magic-users, et al.

Not so with magic. There are nearly as many treatments of magic as there are books which deal with it.

What approach to take? In CHAINMAIL, this was not a particularly difficult decision. The wizard using the magic was simply a part of an overall scheme, so the spells just worked; a catapult hurled boulders and a wizard fire balls or lightning bolts; elves could move invisibly, split-move and fire bows, and engage monsters if armed with magical weapons, while wizards could become invisible or cast spells.

When it came time to translate the rather cut-and-dried stuff of CHAINMAIL's “Fantasy Supplement” to D&D, far more selection and flexibility had to be delivered, for the latter game was free-form. This required

me to back up several steps to a point where the figure began a career which would eventually bring him or her to the state where they would equal (and eventually exceed) a CHAINMAIL wizard. Similarly, some basis for the use of magic had to be created so that a system of spell acquisition could be devised. Where should the magic power come from? Literature gave many possible answers, but most were unsuitable for a game, for they demanded that the spell-caster spend an inordinate amount of time preparing the spell. No viable adventurer character could be devised where a week or two of preliminary steps were demanded for the conjuration of some not particularly mighty spell. On the other hand, spell-casters could not be given license to broadcast magic whenever and wherever they chose.

This left me with two major areas to select from. The **internal power** or **mana** system where each spell-caster uses energy from within to effect magic, requires assigning a total point value to each such character's mana, and a cost in points to each spell. It is tedious to keep track of, difficult to police, and allows magic-users far too much freedom where a broad range of spells are given. If spell points were to be used, it would require that either selection be limited or all other characters and monsters be strengthened. Otherwise, spell-users would quickly come to dominate the game, and participants would desire to play only that class of character. (As a point of reference, readers are referred to the handling of psionic abilities as originally treated in ELDRITCH WIZARDRY. Therein, psionic mana was assumed, the internal power usable to tap external sources, and the range of possible powers thus usable was sharply limited.)

Having read widely in the fantasy genre since 1950, I opted instead for the oft-used system which assumes that magic comes from power locked within certain words and phrases which are uttered to release the force. This **mnemonic power** system was exceedingly well articulated by Jack Vance in his superb **The Eyes of The Overworld** and **Dying Earth** novels, as well as in various short stories. In memorizing the magical words, the brain of the would-be spell-caster is taxed by the charged force of these syllables. To increase capacity, the spell-caster must undergo training, study, and mental discipline.

This is not to say that he or she ever understands the words, but the capacity to hold them in the memory and to speak them correctly increases thus. The magic words, in turn, trigger energy which causes the spell to work.

The so-called "Vancian" magic system allows a vast array of spells. Each is assigned a level (mnemonic difficulty) rating, and experience grades are used to expand the capacity of the spell-caster. The use of this particular system allows more restrictions upon spell-casting character types, of course, while allowing freedom to assign certain spells to lower difficulty factor to keep

the character type viable in its early stages. It also has the distinct advantages of requiring that spell-users select their magic prior to knowing what they must face, and limiting

bookkeeping to a simple list of spells which are crossed off as expended.

The mnemonic spell system can be explained briefly thus: Magic works because certain key words and phrases (sounds) unlock energy from elsewhere. The sounds are inscribed in arcane texts or religious works available to spell-users. Only training and practice will allow increased memory capacity, thus allowing more spells to be used. Once uttered, the sounds discharge their power, and this discharge not only unlocks energy from elsewhere, but it also wipes all memory of the particular words or phrases from the speaker's brain. Finally, the energy manifested by the speaking of the sounds will take a set form, depending on the pronunciation and order of the sounds. So a **Sleep** spell or a **Charm Monster** spell is uttered and the magic effected. The mind is wiped clean of the memory of what the sounds were, but by careful concentration and study later, the caster can again memorize these keys.

When **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** was in the conceptualization stages some three years ago, I realized that while the "Vancian" system was the best approach to spell-casting in fantasy adventure games, D&D did not go far enough in defining, delineating, and restricting its use. Merely having words was insufficient, so elements of other systems would have to be added to make a better system. While it could be similar in concept to the spell-casting of D&D, it had to be quite different in all aspects, including practice, in order to bring it up to a higher level of believability and playability with respect to other classes.

The AD&D magic system was therefore predicated on the concept that there were three power-trigger keys—the cryptic utterances, hypnotic gestures, and special substances—the **verbal**, **somatic**, and **material** components, possible in various combinations, which are needed to effect magic. This aspect is less "Vancian," if you will, but at the same time the system overall is more so, for reasons you will see later.

Verbal spell components, the energy-charged special words and phrases, are necessary in most spells. These special sounds are not general knowledge, and each would-be spell-caster must study in order to even begin to comprehend their reading, meaning, and pronunciation, i.e., undergo an apprenticeship. The basic assumption of this training is the ability to actually handle such matter; this ability is expressed in intelligence or wisdom minimums for each appropriate spell-using profession.

Somatic spell components, the ritual gestures which also draw the power, must also be learned and practiced. This manual skill is less important in clericism, where touching or the use of a holy/unholy symbol is generally all that is involved, while in the Illusionist class it is of great importance, as much of the spell power is connected with redirection of mental energy.

Material components are also generally needed. This expansion into sympathetic magic follows the magic portrayed by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt in their superb “Harold Shea” stories, for example. Of course, it is a basic part of primitive magic systems practiced by mankind. In general, some certain material or materials are also needed to complete the flow of power from the spell-caster, which in turn will draw energy from some other place and cause the spell to happen.

[TEXT MISSING] now do considerable studying, but he or she must also have the source material to study. AD&D also assumes that such material is hard to come by, and even if a spell-caster is capable of knowing/memorizing many and high-level spells, he or she must find them (in the case of magic-users and illusionists) or have the aid of deities or minions thereof (in the situation faced by clerics and druids). These strictures apply to other professions which are empowered with spell use, as appropriate to the type of spells in question. In order to expand mnemonic capacity, spell-users must do further study and be trained. Thus, the system is in some ways more “Vancian,” as such information and studies are indicated, if not necessarily detailed, in the works of that author. It might also be said that the system takes on “Lovecraftian” overtones, harkening to tomes of arcane and dread lore.

In addition to the strictures on locating the information for new spells, and the acquisition of the ability to cast (new, more powerful) spells, the requirements of verbal, somatic, and material components in most spell-casting highlight the following facts regarding the interruption and spoiling of spells: Silencing the caster will generally ruin the spell or prevent its instigation. Any interruption of the somatic gestures—such as is accomplished by a successful blow, grappling, overbearing, or even severe jostling—likewise spoils the magic. Lack of material components, or the alteration or spoiling thereof, will similarly cause the spell to come to naught.

Of course, this assumes the spell has the appropriate verbal, somatic, or material components. Some few spells have only a verbal component, fewer still verbal and material, a handful somatic and material, and only one has a somatic component alone. (Which fact will most certainly change if I ever have the opportunity to add to the list of Illusionists’ spells, for on reflection, I am convinced that this class should have more spells of somatic component only—but that’s another story.)

All of these triggers mean that it is both more difficult to cast a spell, especially when the new casting time restrictions are taken into account, and easier to interrupt a spell before it is successfully cast.

Consider the casting of a typical spell with V,S, and M components. When the caster has opportunity and the desire to cast a spell, he or she must utter the special energy-charged sound patterns attendant to the magic, gesture appropriately, and hold or discard the material component(s) as necessary to finally effect the spell. Ignoring the appropriate part or parts, all spells are cast thus, the time of conjuration to effect the dweomer varying from but a single segment to many minutes or tens of minutes. These combinations allow a more believable magic system, albeit the requirements placed upon spell-casters are more stringent, and even that helps greatly to balance play from profession to profession.

A part and parcel of the AD&D magic system is the general classification of each spell by its effect. That is, whether the spell causes an **alteration**, is a **conjuration/summoning**, **enchantment/charm**, etc. This grouping enables ease of adjudication of changes of spell effects or negation of power. It also makes it easier to classify new spells by using the grouping.

It seems inevitable that the classification and component functions will eventually lead to further extrapolation. The energy triggers of sound and motion will be categorized and defined in relation to the class of dweomer to be effected. This will indicate what power source is being tapped, and it will also serve to indicate from whence the magic actually comes, i.e., from what place or plane the end result of a successfully cast spell actually comes. Perhaps this will lead to a spell-casting character having to actually speak a rime, indicate what special movements are made, and how material components are used. While this is not seriously proposed for usual play, the wherewithal to do so will probably be available to DMs whose participants are so inclined.

It all has a more important and useful purpose, however. Defining the energy triggers will make it possible to matrix combinations by class of spell-caster and dweomer group. Mispronounced spells, or research into new spells, will become far more interesting in many ways if and when such information is available and put into use!

As it now stands, the AD&D magic system is a combination of reputed magic drawn from works of fiction and from myth. Although they are not defined, verbal and somatic components are necessary energy-triggers. The memorization of these special sounds and motions is difficult, and when they are properly used, they release their small stores of energy to trigger power from elsewhere. This release totally wipes all memory of sound and/or motion

from the memory of the spell caster, but it does not otherwise seriously affect his or her brain—although the mnemonic exercise of learning them in the first place is unquestionably taxing. Duplicates of the same spell can be remembered also, but the cast spell is gone until its source is again carefully perused.

The new form which spell-casting has taken in *ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* has a more realistic flavor to it—unimportant, but some players revel in this sort of thing, and that is well enough. Of real importance, however, is the fact that it requires far more effort from spell-casters in gaining, preparing, and casting spells. It makes them more vulnerable to attacks which spoil the casting of the spell. All in all, it tends to make each and every profession possible for characters in *AD&D* to be more equal, but still very different, from all of the others. Lastly, it opens up new areas where new development can be done at some future time, and if such new material adds significantly to the enjoyment of the game, it will certainly be published—in experimental form herein, then possibly in final form in a revised edition of the work itself.

If the foregoing doesn't completely explain everything you or your players wish to know about the *AD&D* magic system; if after all of those words there are still unanswered questions, doubts, or disputes, remember the last and overriding principle of the whole: **ITS MAGIC!**



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM HOLLOWAY

JACK VANCE

AND THE D&D GAME

by E. GARY GYGAX

IT WAS BY READING **BIG PLANET** in a pulp science fiction magazine that I first became acquainted with Jack Vance as an author. Mark you, at that time, the early 1950s, I was so avidly following imaginative fiction that I often read two book or pulp magazines a day. Of course, on days I had lots of things to do I could manage only one book, or even just a short tale, but that's a different story... Back to this one, after finishing the **Big Planet** yarn, I decided that Jack Vance was one of my favorite authors, one of maybe fifty or so that I thought were tops. My list narrowed considerably as I matured, so that by the 1960s, the writers for whose work I actually looked for was down to about a dozen. Lo and behold, I found a new novel by Jack Vance then. As a matter of fact I have that very book now.

The Eyes of the Overworld published by Ace Books, Inc. in 1966 absolutely enthralled me as no work of fantasy had done for a long time. To my mind Cugel the Clever was just the sort of anti-hero that the genre needed. What a delight to get to know this fellow—from a safe distance—and read of his misadventures and less-than-ethical exploits! Later, when I picked up **The Dying Earth**, I was treated to more of the same sort of fanciful tale, an environment whimsy with characters to match. Fantasy set in a far future with just familiar elements of the medieval and renaissance in the environment to make it possible to relate to the environment. The strange and demonic denizens of the Dying Earth, the even odder inhabitants and their societies, the bizarre characters, were so perfectly melded into a whole as to enable not mere suspension of disbelief on the part of the reader. One just had to believe that such a place existed, or rather will exist in some millions of years time.

Need I say that I am not merely a Jack Vance fan, but that he is in my opinion the very best of all the authors of imaginative fiction? Well I am and he is!

When I began to add elements of fantasy to medieval miniatures wargames around 1969, of course the work of Jack Vance influenced what I

did. Along with Robert E. Howard, de Camp & Pratt, A. Merritt, Michael Moorcock, Roger Zelazny, Poul Anderson, J.R.R. Tolkien, P.J. Farmer, Bram Stoker—and not a few others, including the fairy tales Brothers Grimm and Andrew Lang, and conventional mythologies—his writing was there in my memory. Happily so. What I devised was based on the fantastic creations of many previous writers, an amalgam of their imaginations and my own, and it was first published in 1971 as the CHAINMAIL Medieval Miniatures Rules, the “Fantasy Supplement” thereto. Not much later, in 1972, I wrote the first draft of what was later to become the first commercial Role-Playing Game, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, published in January, 1974.

Just what portions of these works, the subsequent AD&D game, stemmed from inspiration related to the writing of Jack Vance? Several elements, the unquestioned foremost being the magic system used in these games. To my way of thinking, the concept of a spell itself being magical, that its written form carried energy, seemed a perfect way to balance the mage against other types of characters in the game. The memorization of the spell required time and concentration so as to impart not merely the written content but also its magical energies. When subsequently cast—by speaking or some other means—the words or gestures, or whatever triggered the magical force of the spell, leaving a blank place in the brain where the previously memorized spell had been held. Because I explained this often, attributing its inspiration to Jack Vance, the D&D magic system of memorized then forgotten spells was dubbed by gamers **the Vancian magic system**.

Of the other portions of the AD&D game stemming from the writing of Jack Vance, the next most important one is the thief-class character. Using a blend of “Cugel the Clever” and Roger Zelazny’s “Shadowjack” for a benchmark, this archetype character class became what it was in original AD&D. Also some of the spells and magic items found in the game were inspired from one or another of Jack Vance’s works. Notable are the **Imprisonment** and **Evard’s Black Tentacles** spells. The latter was devised after reading the short story, “The Bagful of Dreams” in **Flashing Swords #4** published in 1977—not in time for my work on the **Player’s Handbook** but added to it later in the **Unearthed Arcana** supplement. Did I mention the **Robe of Eyes**? Ah, and who can forget the **Ioun Stones** magical items. Before actually publishing the latter, I consulted with the creator, of course, to get permission.

That wasn’t difficult, for some considerable time previously I had written a fan letter to Jack, received a reply, written back, etc. Somewhere buried in one of many file cabinets stored in my basement is a folder with quite a few pieces of correspondence from Mr. Vance. As a matter of fact, we had hoped

to have him as the Guest of Honor for an early GenCon, but at that time his appearance fee was a bit beyond TSR's budget. He was very gracious when I spoke to him about being a Guest of Honor. Jack told me frankly that he was not particularly comfortable in such a role, mentioning that the fans, "seem to think that I should have little green horns growing from my forehead or something..." In retrospect, I believe that the Good Mr. Vance just didn't understand the awe in which his fans hold him, was not at ease with the adulation given to him. Anyway, later on when I got in touch about the **Ioun Stones**, permission was graciously given, and so a new and unique set of magical items was added to the AD&D game. Indeed, what mage did not long for those fourteen different colors and shapes to be circling his head? Mordenkainen, my own chief spellcaster PC, went on many a harrowing expedition searching for them, eventually wound up with an even dozen.

What did the creator of the concept for these marvelous magical stones ask in return for adding them to the game? Only what I was planning to do in any event, mention his books in the work. Not only is Jack Vance a great author, but he is a very nice guy too.

Aside from ideas and specific things, the very manner in which Jack Vance portrays a fantasy environment, the interaction of characters with that environment, and with each other, is so captivating that wherever I could manage it, I attempted to include the "feel" he brings to his fantasy tales in the AD&D game. My feeble ability likely managed to convey but little of this, but in all I do believe that a not a little of what fans consider to be the "soul" of the game stems from that attempt. Of course there were, as noted, a number of other authors who had considerable influence on what I wrote, so let it suffice to conclude that in all a considerable debt of gratitude is owed to Mr. Vance, one that I am always delighted to repay whenever the opportunity arises. It should go without saying that whenever I see a new title of his, I buy it and read it with avid pleasure.

Years past when I was doing that, reading one of Jack's SF novels, I came upon a "Lord Gygax" therein. I immediately phoned and complained that I had not appeared as a vicious "Starmeter", merely a luckless noble. Mr. Vance turned a deaf ear to my implorations, and sadly "Lord Gygax" has never returned in some greater and more adventurous role in his stories. Drat! Now that would be what I consider as *real* fame...

To spice up my own D&D campaign back in 1974 I added a number of special "dimensional portals" so that players might enjoy adventures in strange places that were different from the "everyday" realms of fantasy. The favorite of the players was one drawn whole from a series of SF novels written

by Jack Vance, and through play therein futuristic weapons were brought into play against sea monsters and trolls, the various dangerous critters of dungeon and wilderness in the D&D world. How sad the players when these weapons their PCs possessed ran out of energy...

As influential as Mr. Vance was in inspiring what went into the work that became *ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*, the game I created was not meant to reflect, let alone recreate, his, or any other fiction author's, own world or worlds. Clearly, the AD&D game was designed to accommodate a wide variety of fantasy concepts. The game and the environment I devised for play were written so as to serve many different tastes and styles, and in this it seems to have succeeded quite well. In doing that I used myth and legend, ancient and medieval historical bases, even some aspects of the Renaissance. To the delight of his many readers, Jack Vance is so creative as to devise entirely unique and wholly wondrous environments.

The "Dying Earth", for example is a marvelous, dark far-future world setting. The earth is no longer our world, just as the sun is no longer the Old Sol we see. It is a planet so ancient that its earlier history has been lost and forgotten. Of the later ages, a staggeringly long series of epics, information is revealed only in tantalizing snippets. All of its places are striking in that they are strange yet somehow familiar, and there is no question that something startling and new will be revealed at each turn. To inhabit the world are suitably odd and eccentric races, characters, and creatures. To my thinking, this milieu is creative far beyond the bounds of what has been offered in any material written for the role-playing game. This shortcoming has changed, because gamers are now able to enjoy direct play in the astonishing world that is the creation of Jack Vance, the home of Cugel the Clever, Rhialto, and so many other outstanding figures.

In considering the "Dying Earth" milieu, one must be prepared to accept some differences between it and the standard world of fantasy derring-do. While much has been forgotten, the whole of the race of mankind has matured, grown ancient and cynical. Naiveté there is aplenty, but there is behind it cynicism, duplicity, and treachery. Of the knight errant, the noble quest, the honest forester there is little or none. Those are things of youth, innocence and the bright future where the hope is to live happily ever after. As the ale-hewed sun of the decrepit earth totters along its course, there is always the question of it failing. There is no longer belief in such things as were known in a younger time. Too many ages have passed for the human race to cherish such fond notions. Time has disabused them.

So the milieu is one where Machiavelli would be considered the norm in civilized places, while in the hinterlands the oddest of things are to be

expected, the populace as savage and more bizarre than any callow one recorded in the earth's younger aeons. This strange and sinister mixture provides a perfect background for the fantasy adventure campaign, of course. While the hero is no longer in the standard mold, that archetype remains with eremitic overtones—not quite an anti-hero, but certainly not a paladin. In its last age, the folk inhabiting the earth are more guileful, one might say.

Does that mean that the Dying Earth can not expect altruism, bravery, even a sense of wonder in its leading characters? Hardly! While such are rare enough here and now to be remarkable, these traits are definitely human, will persist as long as *Homo sapiens* in whatever evolved form remain extant. The trick to survival for such individuals on the Dying Earth world must be *cunning*. The brash and the foolhardy are “naturally” selected out early in the process of living in such an environment. It need not be dealt with at any length that the mage and the thief that exist in this environment are not at all unlike those created previously for us. Clearly both must be clever and cunning...

There is a truly great advantage offered to the Game Master when devising a campaign set on the Dying Earth. It is not highly detailed. There is no strict timeline laid down. All that has happened before is not “recorded”, nor is there an accurate gazetteer of for the world. What magic operates? Nobody can say or guess, because in the long aeons of the Dying Earth's history, likely every form possible was discovered, used, and then forgotten...almost. That means that all that's necessary is to have the game in hand, the books that Jack Vance wrote about the world, to create a really compelling campaign environment. Using the creative base of the author, the GM's own imagination cannot fail but to rise to the occasion.

The Dying Earth is the perfect place for a sophisticated, whimsical, and enthralling fantasy campaign. It can be on virtually any scale, and feature whatever the participant group enjoys most. Combat and magic? Of course. The same is true for story and intrigue. To be forthright, the milieu is so broad as to invite any and all aspects of the RPG into play, and that in whatever mix and degree of emphasis is desired. Simply put, the Dying Earth milieu is just about a perfect one to transfer from fiction to game. The caveat is, don't think along “conventional” fantasy lines. It is a place where long ages have altered things, even magic and the human archetype to some degree.

In concluding this brief essay, it is impossible for me not to say I am most anxious to actually play a character in the game. If only Jack Vance were the GM I do believe that I'd drop everything else to fly out to California the minute I got the invitation. That dream aside, a pickup game at convention, or anything like that, will do. Think I'll create a wily and roguish character and name him Gnooodle...

DYING EARTH SPELLS FOR D&D

by SHADRAC MQ

EDITOR'S NOTE: If Jack Vance was asked to assess D&D's familiar assortment of spells and reinvent them in the style found in his Dying Earth stories, I imagine the results would look eerily similar to what follows.



ILLUSTRATION BY TEUFELSKUNST

SPELL LIST

1st LEVEL

- 1 *The Abstention of the Written Path*
- 2 *The Apotropaic Circle*
- 3 *The Audible Glamer*
- 4 *The Call to the Familiar Spirit*
- 5 *The Call to the Unseen Servant*
- 6 *The Charm of Appersonation*
- 7 *The Discerner of Enchantments*
- 8 *The Effervescent Lights of Kwalish*
- 9 *Evard's Frictionless Field*
- 10 *The Expeditious Retreat*
- 11 *The Heavenly Screen*
- 12 *The Howling Rune*
- 13 *The Hypnotic Charm*
- 14 *The Imperturbable Quiescent Sphere*
- 15 *The Importunate Insult*
- 16 *The Indelible Emblem*
- 17 *Isain's Fortuitous Interruption*
- 18 *The Kaleidoscopic Spray*
- 19 *Kazimir's Resplendent Couture*
- 20 *Laeral's Baleful Aura*
- 21 *The Lesser Sign of Sealing*
- 22 *Melf's Impermeable Membrane*
- 23 *The Metamorphoun of Fire*
- 24 *Nahal's Reckless Dweomer*
- 25 *Otto's Arachnid Grip*
- 26 *Phandaal's Polyglottal Lobe*
- 27 *Sirrian's Aggrandisement*
- 28 *The Spell of Exquisite Repose*
- 29 *The Spell of Pragmatic Amalgamation*
- 30 *Tenser's Floating Disc*

2nd LEVEL

- Arbane's Fulgent Coruscations*
- The Call to the Fetid Cloud*
- The Cure for Honesty*
- The Hands of Cold Certainty*
- Hornung's Deleterious Deflector*
- The Impudent Might of Ilskar the Bold*
- The Invigorator of Blades*
- Krest's Cerebral Consonance*
- Leomund's Escalatory Escape*
- Lugwiler's Dismal Itch*
- Lustoff's Vicarious Head*
- The Manifold Effigies of Being*
- The Marvellous Magic Mouth*
- Mazirian's Marasmic Malady*
- The Pattern of the Immanent Sublime*
- Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth*
- The Prosaic Preservation of Pandelume*
- Quaal's Near-Alchemical Transformance*
- The Ruby Ray of Reversal*
- The Spell of Barring and Broaching*
- The Spell of Phantasmal Forces*
- The Spell of the Imponderous Bounty*
- The Spur to the Libidinous Earth*
- Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter*
- The Tone of Resonant Discord*
- The Torment of Tantalus*
- Turjan's Translocation*
- The Unfettered Eye*
- The Veil of the Cimmerian Shade*
- The Web of Wondrous Entrapment*

SPELL LIST

3rd LEVEL

- 1 *Arbane's Precipitous Deluge*
- 2 *The Charm of Dire Sanguinity*
- 3 *The Charm of the Inveigling Tongue*
- 4 *Chun's Halo of the Unsleping Eyes*
- 5 *Felojun's Repudiation of Arrows*
- 6 *The Fury of the Captive Wind*
- 7 *The Globe of Distant Discernment*
- 8 *The Indefatigable Breath*
- 9 *The Instant Galvanic Thrust*
- 10 *The Interminable Interim*
- 11 *The Invocation of the Open Sky*
- 12 *Kuroth's Empathic Rapport*
- 13 *Leomund's Expansible Egg*
- 14 *Leuk-O's Vile Menagerie*
- 15 *The Liberation of Warp*
- 16 *Lorloveim's Creeping Shadow*
- 17 *Melf's Maladweomer*
- 18 *Mentzer's Relative Time Dilation*
- 19 *Mzhentul's Remarkable Polar Pull*
- 20 *Nchaser's Spectral Steed*
- 21 *Nolzur's Metabolic Suspension*
- 22 *Nulathoe's Accoustic Enhancement*
- 23 *Phandaal's Vitriolic Critique*
- 24 *Rary's Erratic Displacement*
- 25 *The Seventh Set's Web of Hiding*
- 26 *The Snapping Teeth of Yecind*
- 27 *The Solvent of Horrid Corrosion*
- 28 *The Spell of the Abysmal Flame*
- 29 *The Spell of the Slow Hour*
- 30 *Xult's Peregrination of Probability*

4th LEVEL

- Alamer's Cloak of the Consuming Chill*
- Arnd's Dimension Door*
- The Charm of the Inverted Pervulsion*
- The Efficacious Portal Ward*
- The Engendering Weave*
- Evard's Black Tentacles*
- Felojun's Incendiary Rune*
- Flamsterd's Curtain of the Violet Conflagration*
- The Gestation of the Ignoble Servitor*
- Gilgad's Hallucinatory Locale*
- Hlal's Umbral Monstrosity*
- The Illusion of Vile Arthropods*
- The Impermanence of Being*
- Johydee's Gentle Admonishment*
- Leomund's Lamentable Belabourment*
- Lhegrand's Silvery Skin*
- The Minor Globe of Invulnerability*
- Narissa's Blind Excess*
- The Onslaught of Dread Equines*
- Otiluke's Resilient Sphere*
- Quaal's Flawless Duplicity*
- Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer*
- The Seal Upon the Powers*
- The Spell of Expansive Excavation*
- The Spell of Mercurial Anatomy*
- The Spell of the Peremptory Polymorph*
- The Spell of Wyrld*
- The Summons to the Inclement Clime*
- Tasha's Morbid Jest*
- Tulrun's Filamentary Extension*

SPELL LIST

5th LEVEL

- 1 *Alphon's Anguish of the North Wind*
- 2 *Archveult's Crude Fabrication*
- 3 *The Augur of the Inscrutable Spheres*
- 4 *The Blade of Inexorable Dissection*
- 5 *Caligarde's Penetrating Vision*
- 6 *The Charm of Untiring Nourishment*
- 7 *Clambard's Remote Acquisition*
- 8 *The Conjure of the Elemental Id*
- 9 *The Dweomer of Ignominious Dismissal*
- 10 *The Elocation of Ka*
- 11 *The Extirpation of the Ruinous Cloud*
- 12 *Firdaan's Impenetrable Last Stand*
- 13 *The Hebetation of the Intellect*
- 14 *The Imperfect Invitation*
- 15 *Johydee's Indisputable Fantasy*
- 16 *Leomund's Dramatic Chest*
- 17 *Mentor's Perfect Inertia*
- 18 *The Oblong Barrier*
- 19 *Pandelume's Paroxysm of Pain*
- 20 *The Pattern of the Proscriptive Watchdog*
- 21 *Phandaal's Semblance of Psyche*
- 22 *The Reign of Long Nerves*
- 23 *The Satire of Life Renewed*
- 24 *The Seven Hundred and Seventy*
- 25 *The Shroud of Agonizing Immolation*
- 26 *Skye's Spell to Sidestep the Real*
- 27 *The Spell of Celeritous Relocalisation*
- 28 *Tenser's Destructive Resonance*
- 29 *Tzunk's Distance Distortion*
- 30 *Yon's Obliging Parapet*

6th LEVEL

- The Agency of Far Despatch*
- Ao's Enervating Opalescent Eyes*
- The Avulsion of the Spirit-Soul*
- The Binding of True Names*
- The Call to the Assiduous Pursuer*
- The Call to Inflexible Salvation*
- The Contingency of the Foreknown*
- Daern's Total Repulse*
- The Excellent Prismatic Spray*
- Hornung's Indiscriminate Expulsion*
- The Infallible Retrotropic Field*
- Khelpen's Permutation of Gravity*
- The Labyrinth of Elongated Shadows*
- The Omnipotent Sphere*
- Otiluke's Freezing Orb*
- Otto's Irresistable Dance*
- The Scrutiny of the Omniscient Eye*
- The Sequester to the Ethereal Coil*
- Serten's Immaculate Simulacrum*
- The Seven Symbols of Solomon*
- Sirrian's Spell Engine*
- The Speculum of Retribution*
- The Spell of Elegant Dissolution*
- The Spell of Forlorn Encystment*
- The Spell of Geas*
- The Spell of Temporal Disjunction*
- The Spell of the Stone that Weeps in Silence*
- Tenser's Transformation*
- The Tower of Indomitable Intellect*
- The Wrack of the Recalcitrant Spirit*

STARTING SPELLS

All magic-users begin knowing the Arcane Cypher, plus three spells randomly determined from the following tables:

I. OFFENSIVE

- 1 *The Charm of Appersonation*
- 2 *Evard's Frictionless Field*
- 3 *The Hypnotic Charm*
- 4 *The Importunate Insult*
- 5 *The Kaleidoscopic Spray*
- 6 *Kazimir's Resplendent Couture*
- 7 *Laeral's Baleful Aura*
- 8 *The Metamorphoun of Fire*
- 9 *Sirrian's Aggrandisement*
- 0 *The Spell of Exquisite Repose*

II. DEFENSIVE

- The Apotropaic Circle*
- The Audible Glamer*
- The Effervescent Lights of Kwalish*
- The Expeditious Retreat*
- The Heavenly Screen*
- The Howling Rune*
- The Imperturbable Quiescent Sphere*
- Isain's Fortuitous Interruption*
- The Lesser Sign of Sealing*
- Otto's Arachnid Grip*

III. MISCELLANEOUS

- 1 *The Abstention of the Written Path*
- 2 *The Call to the Familiar Spirit*
- 3 *The Call to the Unseen Servant*
- 4 *The Discerner of Enchantments*
- 5 *The Indelible Emblem*
- 6 *Nahal's Reckless Dweomer*
- 7 *Phandaal's Polyglottal Lobe*
- 8 *The Spell of Pragmatic Amalgamation*
- 9 *Sirrian's Aggrandisement*
- 0 *Tenser's Floating Disc*

SPELLS BY LEVEL

0 LEVEL SPELLS

The Arcane Cypher

R: 0 **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Read and understand magical inscriptions, scrolls, spell formulae, etc. Once deciphered can be read without recourse to spell.

FIRST LEVEL SPELLS

The Abstention of the Written Path

R: 6" **D:** 1 turn **AoE:** 1"x1" area/round **Save:** None

Detect secret passages, portals and openings.

The Apotropaic Circle

R: Touch **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** <1" diameter **Save:** None

Trace a circle in powdered silver; blocks all conjured & extraplanar creatures and possession attempts.

The Audible Glamer

R: 6" + 1"/level **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** Hearing range **Save:** None

Create auditory-only illusion.

The Call to the Familiar Spirit

R: Special **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Burn 1000 sp incense, herbs & fat, incantation lasting 24 hours. Summons familiar.

The Call to the Unseen Servant

R: 0 **D:** 6 turns + 1/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Invisible creature acts as valet, servant etc. AC 4, MV 18", HD 2; bound to obey caster but will not fight on their behalf. If abused seeks to pervert instructions.

The Charm of Appersonation

R: 0 **D:** 2-12 rounds +2/lvl **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Alter appearance and clothing to any humanoid figure. Cannot mimic specific individuals.

The Discerner of Enchantments

R: 6" **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** 1" path **Save:** None

Detect magic and intensity.

The Effervescent Lights of Kwalish

R: 4" + 1"/level **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Create A) 1-4 lights resembling torches, B) glowing spheres (as will-o-wisp), C) faintly glowing man-like shape. Moves as directed.

Evvard's Frictionless Field

R: 1" **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 1" square **Save:** Special
 Save vs. spell or slip and fall. If cast on item then save or drop immediately.

The Expeditious Retreat

R: 0 **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
 Triple movement, running jumps 30' forward or 10' up, cannot take any other action while moving.

The Heavenly Screen

R: 3" **D:** 2-8 rounds + 1/lvl **AoE:** 2"x2"x2" cube/level **Save:** None
 Veil of silvery mist obscures vision beyond 2'.

The Howling Rune

R: 1" **D:** 4 hours + 1/level **AoE:** 1 object/creature **Save:** Negates
 Target erupts in involuntary screaming (see Shrieker) when creature approaches within 10'.

The Hypnotic Charm

R: 12" **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 person **Save:** Negates
 Target regards caster as trusted friend and ally.

| Intelligence | Period Between Saving Throws |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 3 or less | 3 months |
| 4 to 6 | 2 months |
| 7 to 9 | 1 month |
| 10 to 12 | 3 weeks |
| 13 to 14 | 2 weeks |
| 15 to 16 | 1 week |
| 17 | 3 days |
| 18 | 2 days |
| 19 | 1 day |

The Imperturbable Quiescent Sphere

R: 0 **D:** 5 rounds/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
 Invisible barrier gives AC 2 vs. missiles, AC 4 vs. other attacks.

The Importunate Insult

R: 3" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 2 HD/caster level **Save:** Negates
 Target rushes to attack magic-user in rage, attacking melee only.

The Indelible Emblem

R: Touch **D:** Permanent **AoE:** <1 square foot **Save:** None
 Inscribes personal mark and 6 other characters, visible or invisible.

Isain's Fortuitous Interruption

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 second/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 200 lb + 200 per caster level assumes mass of a feather, no falling damage.

The Kaleidoscopic Spray

R: 0 **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** ½"x2"x2" wedge **Save:** Special
 Vivid colour spray affects 1d6 creatures. Caster level or below: unconscious 2-8 rounds. 1-2 levels higher: blind 1-4 rounds. 3 or more levels higher: stunned for 1 round. 6 HD or more gets a saving throw.

Kazimir's Resplendent Couture*

R: 0 **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
 Dazzlingly fashionable apparel, gain 2-8 charisma and viewers make immediate reaction checks, become impressed or jealous/irritated.

Laeral's Baleful Aura

R: 3" **D:** 1 round **AoE:** Caster **Save:** Negates
 Become unquantifiably terrifying; friends & foes save vs. magic or flee 1-3 rounds.

The Lesser Sign of Sealing

R: 2"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 80 square feet/lvl **Save:** None
 Seal door or gate as if securely barred and locked.

Melf's Impermeable Membrane

R: Touch **D:** 24 hours **AoE:** <10 cubic feet/lvl **Save:** None
 Repel all liquid from subject.

The Metamorphoun of Fire

R: ½"/level **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** 10' radius **Save:** None
 Increase fires up to double size/heat or down to embers, spread onto any burnable material, or snuff out all fires entirely.

Nahal's Reckless Dweomer

R: Special **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** Special
 Attempt to cast any spell in spellbook; roll results on Wild Surge table.

Otto's Arachnid Grip

R: Touch **D:** 3 rounds +1/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
 Climb vertical surfaces/ceilings at 3". Objects less than 5 lb stick to hands.

Phandaal's Polyglottal Lobe

R: Touch **D:** 5 rounds/level **AoE:** 1 object/creature **Save:** None
 Understand and speak any one language.

Sirrian's Aggrandisement / Sirrian's Reductor

R: ½"/level **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** <10 cubic feet/lvl **Save:** Negates
 Increase or decrease target's size up to 200%, Strength & damage change proportionately.



*Thanks, ckutalik

The Spell of Exquisite Repose

R: 3" + 1"/level **D:** 5 rounds/level **AoE:** 3" diameter **Save:** None
Cause comatose slumber, awaken only if slapped/wounded.

| Hit Dice | Number Affected |
|------------|----------------------|
| Up to 1 | 4-16 (4d4) |
| 1 + 1 to 2 | 2-8 (2d4) |
| 2 + 1 to 3 | 1-4 (1d4) |
| 3 + 1 to 4 | 1-2 (½d4, round off) |

The Spell of Pragmatic Amalgamation

R: 3" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 5'x5' / level **Save:** None
Mend or rejoin broken objects.

Tenser's Floating Disc

R: 2" **D:** 3 turns + 1/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Floating null-gravity plane supports 100 lb per level, moves as directed.

SECOND LEVEL SPELLS

Arbane's Fulgent Coruscations

R: 12" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Existing fire erupts in A) flashing fireworks, blind creatures within 12" for 2-5 rounds or save vs. spell; or B) smoke 100 times volume of fire, obscure vision beyond 2', lasts 1 round/level.

The Call to the Fetid Cloud

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 2"x2"x2" cloud **Save:** Special
Billowing vapours, save vs. poison or incapacitated (nausea) for 2-5 rounds after leaving cloud, or 1 round if saved.

The Cure for Honesty

R: 3" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 2"x2" **Save:** Negates
1 to 4 creatures permanently forget previous 1 minute per level of spellcaster. -2 to save if single target.

The Hands of Cold Certainty

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Invisible hands choke target for 1-4 damage/round and -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Hornung's Deleterious Deflector

R: 0 **D:** 2 rounds/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Missile attacks deflected to random target in 15' radius (including caster).

The Impudent Might of Ilskar the Bold

R: Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
Raise Strength score 1-8 points.

The Invigorator of Blades

R: Touch **D:** 1 turn **AoE:** 1 weapon **Save:** None
Blade receives +3 to hit and damage for 1 strike only.

Krest's Cerebral Consonance

R: ½"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature/round **Save:** None
Read surface thoughts of 1 creature per round.

Leomund's Escalatory Escape

R: Touch **D:** 2 turns/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Up to 6 creatures climb rope to hide in extradimensional space.

Lugwiler's Dismal Itch

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Horrible itching causes -4 to AC and -2 to attack rolls.

Lustoff's Vicarious Head

R: 9" (initial) **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
See through the senses of target creature.

The Manifold Effigies of Being

R: 0 **D:** 3 rounds/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
D4 duplicates +1 per level form around caster, indistinguishable, disappear when struck.

The Marvellous Magic Mouth

R: Special **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 object **Save:** None
Magic mouth speaks message when specific condition is met.

Mazirian's Marasmic Malady

R: 1" + ¼"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Target reduced to Strength 3 or 50% damage.

The Pattern of the Immanent Sublime

R: 3" **D:** Special **AoE:** 3"x3" **Save:** Negates
Display causes creatures to stand fascinated for as long as caster concentrates plus 2 rounds thereafter.

Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth

R: Touch **D:** 2 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
Become invisible. Telltale shimmering allows attacks at -4 against invisible targets once spotted.

The Prosaic Preservation of Pandelume

R: Touch **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 10 cubic feet/level **Save:** None
Target protected from rot and decay. Reverse ages non-living objects 100 years.

Quaal's Near-Alchemical Transformance

R: 1" **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** 10 lb/level **Save:** None
Copper, lead or brass changed to solid gold.

The Ruby Ray of Reversal

R: 8" **D:** 1 round **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Target repeats actions in last round exactly.

The Spell of Barring and Broaching

R: 6" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 10 square feet/lvl **Save:** None
A) Broaching: opens all doors, locks, bars, chains etc. B) Barring: closes the same.

The Spell of Phantasmal Forces

R: 6" + 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 4" + 1" sq/level **Save:** Special
Visual-only illusion lasts as long as caster concentrates.

The Spell of the Imponderous Bounty

R: Touch **D:** 6 hours + 1/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Enchant pockets to hold <100 lb or 5 cubic feet at 1/10th actual weight.

The Spur to the Libidinous Earth

R: 10" + 1"/lvl **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Special
Earth hands hold target motionless by legs, -2 to AC. Save vs. spell each round in contact with ground or be gripped. Hands are AC 5, HP double caster's.

Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter

R: 5" **D:** 4 rounds **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Lose actions for 1-4 rounds due to laughter.

The Tone of Resonant Discord

R: 6" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 3 foot radius **Save:** None
Crystalline or ceramic objects within 3' shatter.

The Torment of Tantalus

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Target dying of thirst, can do nothing but look for drink, consumes any potable liquids.

Turjan's Translocation

R: 2"/level **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 1 object/creature **Save:** Negates
Levitate up to 100 lb vertically only, 20' per round.

The Unfettered Eye

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1" path **Save:** None
Clearly see all invisible, astral, ethereal, hidden, out-of-phase creatures. First time casters save vs. magic or go insane 3-18 days due to terrifying abyssopelagic ethereal life.

The Veil of the Cimmerian Shade

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 turn + 1 rd/lvl **AoE:** 1½" globe **Save:** None
Impenetrable darkness in area of effect.

The Web of Wondrous Entrapment

R: ½"/level **D:** 2 turns/level **AoE:** 3" cube **Save:** Neg or ½
Mass of webs, entrapped creatures are stuck, 5% cumulative chance per turn suffocate to death. Highly flammable. Strength 13+ break through 1'/round, huge strong creatures 10'/round.

THIRD LEVEL SPELLS

Arbane's Precipitous Deluge

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 3" diameter **Save:** None

Instant rainfall drenches everything, extinguishes all fires including spells. Magical fires cause huge steam clouds for 1-3 damage/round lasting 2-5 rounds.

The Charm of Dire Sanguinity

R: 12" **D:** 1d4 rounds + 1/lvl **AoE:** 1 person **Save:** Negates

Target truly enjoys killing and goes berserk, attacking friend and foe alike.

The Charm of the Inveigling Tongue

R: 3" **D:** 1 hour + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Target obeys any one "reasonable" suggestion by caster.

Chun's Halo of the Unsleeping Eyes

R: 0 **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Halo of eyeballs let caster see in all directions, infravision 12", never surprised or backstabbed.

Felojun's Repudiation of Arrows

R: Touch **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None

Total invulnerability to small projectiles – arrows, axes, javelins etc – and -1 damage per die from large missiles, catapult stones etc.

The Fury of the Captive Wind

R: 0 **D:** 1 round **AoE:** 1" path, 10"/level **Save:** None

Gust of air extinguishes unprotected flames, fans fires outward, pushes flying creatures backward, deflects missile fire and breath weapons, knocks man-sized creatures over unless roll under Dexterity.

The Globe of Distant Discernment

R: Special **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

See anything in sight from chosen locale; locale must be familiar or obvious.

The Indefatigable Breath

R: Touch **D:** 1 hour/level + 1d4 **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Function without breathing. Duration divided by number affected.

The Instant Galvanic Thrust

R: 4" + 1"/level **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 1"x4" or ½"x8" **Save:** ½

Lightning bolt causes d6 damage per level (or save for half). Ignites combustibles, sunders doors, splinters 1' stone, melts soft metal. Bolt reflects off non-conducting materials.

The Interminable Interim

R: 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Target encased in amber, suspended animation completely unaffected by anything until dispelled or touched by caster. Direct spell or magic trap glyph.

The Invocation of the Open Sky

R: 0 **D:** 1 turn/level + 1d6 **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Caster can fly 24" (x½ ascending, x2 diving). Exact duration unknown/random.

Kuroth's Empathic Rapport

R: 20" (initial) **D:** 2 turns/level **AoE:** 1 creature/3 levels **Save:** None
 Telepathic bond between willing subjects while on same plane of existence.

Leomund's Expansible Egg

R: Touch **D:** 4 hours + 1/level **AoE:** 1" diameter **Save:** None
 Hemisphere of force maintains comfortable temperature, keeps out wind/rain, transparent inside but opaque from without. Illuminated at caster's command. Objects/creatures pass through freely.

Leuk-O's Vile Menagerie

R: 3" **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Give form to one or more monsters which are 90% likely to obey caster's commands. Roll below:

| 1d8 | Type | AC | 1d8 | Attack | Dmg |
|-----|------------|----|-----|-------------------|-----|
| 1 | Amoeboid | 2 | 1 | Stinging tail | 1d4 |
| 2 | Crustacean | 3 | 2 | Lashing tendrils | 1d4 |
| 3 | Insectoid | 4 | 3 | Crushers/horns | 1d6 |
| 4 | Reptilian | 5 | 4 | Rending claws | 1d6 |
| 5 | Amphibian | 6 | 5 | Slicing mandibles | 1d8 |
| 6 | Mammalian | 7 | 6 | Razor teeth | 1d8 |
| 7 | Avian | 8 | 7-8 | Roll twice | |
| 8 | Mollusc | 9 | | | |

| 1d4 | Size | Number | 1d6 | Locomotion | Move |
|-----|------|--------|-----|------------|---------|
| 1 | 4 HD | 1 | 1 | Slithering | 6" |
| 2 | 3 HD | 1d4 | 2 | Hopping | 6" + 6" |
| 3 | 2 HD | 1d6 | 3 | Skittering | 9" |
| 4 | 1 HD | 2d4 | 4 | Loping | 12" |
| | | | 5 | Buzzing | 15" |
| | | | 6 | Flapping | 18" |

| 1d20 | Special | Effect | 1d20 | Special | Effect |
|------|---------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Acid blood | D4 damage after wounding | 9 | Phase | Move through walls |
| 2 | Acid spit | D6 damage ranged attack | 10 | Poison | Save +4 or die |
| 3 | Big | ½ movement, x2 HD | 11 | Psychic | Save vs. paralysis or stunned |
| 4 | Blood-sucking | Drain D6 damage/round after hit | 12 | Prehensile tongue | Extra attack as giant frog |
| 5 | Draining | -1 ST per hit | 13 | Regenerat | 1 hp/round |
| 6 | Fast | ½ HD, x2 movement, x2 attack | 14 | Severing/mangling | Natural 20 incapacitates limb |
| 7 | Invisible | -4 to hit | 15 | Stinking | -2 to hit within 10' |
| 8 | Ooze | Dissolves metal | 16-20 | Roll twice | |

The Liberation of Warp**R:** 12" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 3" cube **Save:** None

Remove all temporary spells and disrupt spellcasting. % success equal to ratio of dispeller over spellcaster (e.g. 50% for 5th level vs. 10th level).

Lorloveim's Creeping Shadow**R:** 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Elongate shadow at 15"/round. Can see, hear, speak through shadow. Struck only by magic, AC as caster, HP loss suffered by caster.

Melf's Maladweomer**R:** 4" + 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Next spell cast chosen randomly from all spells in mind.

Mentzer's Relative Time Dilation**R:** 9" + 1"/level **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature/level **Save:** None

Affected creatures move and attack at ½ rate.

Mzhentul's Remarkable Polar Pull**R:** 3" + 1"/level **D:** 1 round/2 levels **AoE:** 10' cube **Save:** None

Earth or stone object functions as magnet.

| Distance from magnet | Strength of attraction | Missile attack penalty |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <5' | 20 | -20 |
| <10' | 18 | -10 |
| <20' | 14 | -5 |
| <30' | 10 | -2 |
| <40' | 4 | -1 |

Opposed Strength check or ferrous item wrenched from grasp, armoured characters dragged closer distance in feet equal to number by which they failed.

Nchaser's Spectral Steed**R:** Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Phantasmal, milky-eyed horse-like creature will bear subject at movement 4" per caster level. Shunned by animals, crosses any terrain without difficulty. AC 2, HP 7 + caster level.

Nolzur's Metabolic Suspension**R:** Touch **D:** 6 hours + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Target enters catalepsy indistinguishable from death; aware but unfeeling, wounds ½ damage, poison/paralysis/energy drain ineffective. 1 full round to restore bodily functions.

Nulathoe's Accoustic Enhancement**R:** Special **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Hear anything in range from chosen locale; locale must be familiar or obvious.

Phandaal's Vitriolic Critique**R:** Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** 1" radius **Save:** ½

Anyone besides caster (or those he/she instructs) reading text causes explosion, 6d4+6 damage with no save to reader, ditto all within blast radius or save for half. Writing is destroyed.

Rary's Erratic Displacement**R:** 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Teleport in random period (2d4 initiative order) and direction (d12 o'clock), 2' distance. 75% spell-casting fails while blinking. Opponents can attack only if initiative comes before the "blink".

The Seventh Set's Web of Hiding**R:** Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** 1" radius **Save:** None

Immobile circle renders all creatures invisible & inaudible from those outside area of effect.

The Snapping Teeth of Yecind**R:** Touch **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 1 creature/object **Save:** None

Snapping teeth in location touched attack creatures within 1', 1-4 damage as 4 HD monster.

The Solvent of Horrid Corrosion**R:** 1" **D:** 3 rounds **AoE:** 1 sq foot/level **Save:** ½

Acidic slime dissolves 6 inches wood, 4 inches stone, 1 inch metal per round. Flesh takes 2d4 damage per round.

The Spell of the Abysmal Flame**R:** 10" + 1"/lvl **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 2" radius sphere **Save:** ½

Burst of flame causes d6 damage per level (or save for half), incinerates combustibles, melts soft metal. Flame conforms to shape of area, equal to normal spherical volume (33,000 cubic feet).

The Spell of the Slow Hour**R:** 6" **D:** 3 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 1 creature/level **Save:** None

Affected creatures function at 2x normal movement & attack. Reaction times, spell casting not affected. Recipients aged 1 year due to sped-up metabolism.

Xult's Peregrination of Probability**R:** Special **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

One event taking place in previous round is recalculated (dice rerolled). Second outcome cannot be changed.

FOURTH LEVEL SPELLS**Alamer's Cloak of the Consuming Chill / Alamer's Cloak of Burning Embers****R:** 0 **D:** 2 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Caster surrounded by aura of flame. A) cold flame, caster immune to fire, creatures striking in melee take 2-8 cold damage. Caster takes double damage from cold. B) hot flame, effects reversed.

Arnd's Dimension Door**R:** Special **D:** Instant **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Step through interspatial door and reappear anywhere in sight.

The Charm of the Inverted Pervulsion**R:** 3" **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Recipient's next offensive spell affects its own caster rather than intended target.

The Efficacious Portal Ward

R: 0 **D:** 1 day/level **AoE:** 6" radius **Save:** None

All planar gates & portals sealed, teleportation and phase will not function in warded area.

The Engendering Weave

R: Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** 1 cubic foot/level **Save:** None

Create item of non-living matter – rope, door etc.

Evard's Black Tentacles

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 30 square feet/lvl **Save:** None

Writhing tentacles spring from ground. Number = caster level, 10' long, AC 4, HP = caster level, attack any creature in range. Save vs. spell or 2-8 damage and be held and squeezed for 3-12 automatic damage each round.

Felojun's Incendiary Rune

R: Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 object **Save:** 1/2

Any creature other than caster + those attuned passing within 1/2" causes burst of flame 1" radius, 1d4 damage + 1 per caster level.

Flamsterd's Curtain of the Violet Conflagration

R: 6" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Immobile curtain of fire 20' high, 20' long/level. 2-8 heat damage within 10' and 1-4 within 20' on one side of wall only. Passing through flames causes 2-12 damage + 1 per caster level. Undead take double damage.

The Gestation of the Ignoble Servitor

R: 3" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Creates a mephit from elemental matter (barrel of water, pile of slop etc). Alternatively roll on table:

| 1d20 | Mephit type | 1d20 | Mephit type |
|------|-------------|-------|---|
| 1 | air | 10 | mist |
| 2 | ash | 11 | ooze |
| 3 | dust | 12 | radiance |
| 4 | earth | 13 | salt |
| 5 | fire | 14 | smoke |
| 6 | ice | 15 | steam |
| 7 | lightning | 16 | water |
| 8 | magma | | |
| 9 | mineral | 17-20 | Spell fails; pathetic half-formed elemental monstrosity lives 1d4 turns |

One turn to complete. Mephit will not betray creator but check each day for desertion, loyalty 55% + charisma adjustment.

Gilgad's Hallucinatory Locale

R: 2"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 1"x1" area/level **Save:** None

Illusion hides actual terrain – pond as grassy meadow, room as cobwebbed & dusty, etc. Lasts until contacted by intelligent creature.

Hlal's Umbral Monstrosity

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 2"x2" **Save:** Special

Create phantasms of monsters caster has seen – total HD equal to caster level. Monsters have 20% HP, fight normally. If targets disbelieve illusion then fight as AC 10 and 20% damage only.

The Illusion of Vile Arthropods

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 3"x3" **Save:** Negates

Targets covered by illusionary swarm of disgusting invertebrates. Save vs. spells each round or drop everything to compulsively brush off imaginary bugs.

The Impermanence of Being

R: 3" **D:** 1-6 turns **AoE:** 10' cube **Save:** None

Affected objects are 50% likely to vanish, checked independently for each viewer and with each viewing. Each viewer treats object as existing or not existing according to own perspective.

Johydee's Gentle Admonishment

R: 0 **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 1"x3" cone **Save:** Negates

Ear-splitting shout causes 2-12 damage and deafens for like number of round, cracks stone.

Leomund's Lamentable Belabourment

R: 12" **D:** 2 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 6" x 6" **Save:** Negates

Save at -2 each round or confused. Confused creatures act randomly each round:

| 1d10 | Action |
|------|--|
| 1 | Wander Away for 1 turn |
| 2-6 | Stand confused for 1 round |
| 7-8 | Attack nearest creature for 1 round |
| 9-0 | Attack magic-user and his or her party for 1 round |

Lhegrand's Silvery Skin

R: Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None

Total protection from 1 physical attack, then shatters.

The Minor Globe of Invulnerability

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Immunity to 3rd level spells and below. Spells can be cast out of globe normally.

Narissa's Blind Excess

R: 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 4"x4" **Save:** Negates

Cause blind emotional reaction, typical examples as follos. Rage: +1 to hit, +3 to damage, +5 temporary HP, fight berserk without regard for life. Fear: flee in panic 2d4 rounds. Happiness: +4 reaction rolls, won't attack unless greatly provoked. Hatred: -4 reaction rolls, tend towards violence. Lasts as long as caster concentrates.

The Onslaught of Dread Equines

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 6" path 3" wide **Save:** Negates

Save vs. spells at -2 or flee in panic, pursued by illusionary sohmiens (nightmarish horse-beasts) for rounds equal to caster level. 10% chance summons d4 real sohmiens.

Sohmien

AC 0 MV 24" HD 6+6 D 2d4/d6+4/d6+4
SA save vs. spell or flee in panic XP 1800

Otiluke's Resilient Sphere

R: 2" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1' diameter/level **Save:** Negates
Globe of force encases subject. Immune to damage, nothing can pass through either direction.
Can be rolled.

Quaal's Flawless Duplicity

R: Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** 1 object **Save:** None
Create copy of any non-living item. Must fit within 20' cube.

Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer

R: 0 **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Immediately regain formula of spell 3rd level or below cast in previous round.

The Seal Upon the Powers

R: Touch **D:** Permanent **AoE:** Special **Save:** Special
Remove most permanent spells and baleful enchantments.

The Spell of Expansive Excavation

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 5' cube/round **Save:** None
Move earth (dirt, clay, loam, sand). Can create pits, ramparts, tunnels etc.

The Spell of Mercurial Anatomy

R: 0 **D:** 2 turns/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Change at will between form of any creature from as small as a wren to large as a hippo. Other abilities, hit points etc remain normal.

The Spell of the Preemptory Polymorph

R: ½"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Transform target into another creature. 100% chance assumes mentality of new form as well, -5% per point of Intelligence, checked daily.

The Spell of Wyrd

R: ½"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Special
Imaginary doom visible only to target, strikes as 4 HD monster, invulnerable to attack & pass through any barrier. Successful hit means victim dies from fright. Disbelieve or knock out caster or target to destroy.

The Summons to the Inclement Clime

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 round **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Either A) hailstones in 4" diameter inflict 3-30 damage, or B) sleet in 8" diameter blinds creatures 1 round, movement slowed 50% and 50% chance to slip and fall.

Tasha's Morbid Jest

R: 0 **D:** Special **AoE:** 3" diameter **Save:** Negates
Caster tells a joke. Save or stop to listen, and after punchline save again or incapacitated 1-10 rounds by painful laughter. The same joke will not work twice.

Tulrun's Filamentary Extension

R: 0 **D:** 4 turns/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Luminous filament shows recent path of creature visualised, within 1" radius of caster.

FIFTH LEVEL SPELLS

Alphon's Anguish of the North Wind

R: 0 **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Cone ½"/level **Save:** ½
Freezing wind causes d4+1 damage per caster level, or save for half.

Archveult's Crude Fabrication

R: ½"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 cubic yard/level **Save:** None
Convert material into finished goods e.g. trees into wooden bridge, flax into clothes, etc.

The Augur of the Inscrutable Spheres

R: 0 **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Direct contact with minds from other planes, ask 1 question per 2 levels. Choose how distant a mind to contact:

| Steps Removed | Chance of insanity | Chance of Knowledge | Chance of Veracity |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 20% | 60% | 65% |
| 2 | 25% | 65% | 67% |
| 3 | 30% | 70% | 70% |
| 4 | 40% | 80% | 73% |
| 5 | 45% | 85% | 78% |
| 6 | 50% | 90% | 81% |
| 7 | 55% | 95% | 85% |
| 8 | 60% | 98% | 90% |

Insanity strikes after 1st question asked, lasts 1 week per step removed. If insanity, then 1% chance per step of death.

The Blade of Inexorable Disjection

R: 1" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 0 **Save:** None
Shimmering, sword-like plane of force mentally wielded as if fighter of ½ caster level (requires concentration). Causes 2-8 damage and severs extremities as *Sword of Sharpness*. Mutually destroys magic barriers.

Caligarde's Penetrating Vision

R: Touch **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 cubic foot/level **Save:** None
Non-living matter becomes transparent.

The Charm of Untiring Nourishment

R: Touch **D:** 12 hours/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Recipient encased in skin-tight bubble of comfortable air, does not hunger or thirst, can survive in any environment or plane. Duration divided by number affected.

Clambard's Remote Acquisition

R: 1"/level **D:** 2 rounds + 1/level **AoE:** 25 lb/level **Save:** None
Move objects by concentrating on them – 2" first round, 4" second, 8" third etc, max 1024".

The Conjure of the Elemental Id**R:** 6" **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Conjure air, earth, fire or water elemental from suitable elemental matter (bonfire etc). Elementals are 16 HD. Unbroken concentration needed for control or will turn on caster and attack. 5% will turn on caster regardless, checked each round.

The Dweomer of Ignominious Dismissal**R:** 2" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None

Force extraplanar being to return to plane of origin. Name and title must be given; normal magic resistance applies.

The Elocation of Ka**R:** 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Special

Shift life force into special receptacle (gem or crystal). From there can sense presence and force exchange between receptacle and living target that fails saving throw, taking over target's body. Saving throw modified by difference in combined Intelligence and Wisdom between caster and target:

| Difference | Die adjustment |
|------------|----------------|
| -9 or more | +4 |
| -8 to -6 | +3 |
| -5 to -3 | +2 |
| -2 to 0 | +1 |
| 1 to 4 | 0 |
| 5 to 8 | -1 |
| 9 to 12 | -2 |
| 13+ | -3 |

The Extirpation of the Ruinous Cloud**R:** 1" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 4"x2"x2" cloud **Save:** None

Roiling fog kills instantly any creature 4 HD or below. 4+1 to 5+1 HD save vs. poison at -4 or die; 5+2 to 6 HD save normally. Cloud moves away from caster 1" per round, heavier than air.

Firdaan's Impenetrable Last Stand**R:** Touch **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None

Recipient surrounded by immobile shimmering sphere 5' diameter, totally protects against all non-magical weapons. Can use weapons normally from within sphere. Spells unaffected.

The Hebetation of the Intellect**R:** 1"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Victim's brain reduced to childlike imbecility and insanity. Magic-users save at -4.

The Imperfect Invitation**R:** 1" **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** Special

Summons extraplanar creature to be confined until it agrees to give service. Creature type must be stated, and name/title if any. In order to confine summoned creature, must prepare magic circle – takes 1 turn. 20% chance entrapped creature will break free and wreak vengeance, -1% per 1 turn and 1000 sp spent inscribing circle with special pigments etc. Any break in circle, even a straw, allows creature to break free.

Johydee's Indisputable Fantasy**R:** 6" + 1"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 2" square + 1"/lvl **Save:** Special

Illusion affecting all senses, operates according to program determined by caster. Believing creatures can suffer damage from illusionary effects.

Leomund's Dramatic Chest**R:** Special **D:** 60 days **AoE:** 2'x2'x3' chest **Save:** None

Store a chest on the ethereal plane, to be summoned with miniature replica. Chest must be 5000+ sp, hardwood & platinum, ivory & gold or bronze & silver. 1% cumulative chance/week chest will be discovered and tampered with, 5% chance draws through ethereal monster when summoned.

Mentor's Perfect Inertia / Mentor's Garish Weld**R:** 1" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 3' cube **Save:** None

Natural repulsion between non-living object and living things (except caster). Creatures within 1' thrown back, or repulse object, depending on relative mass. Reverse causes powerful adherence.

The Oblong Barrier**R:** 3" **D:** 1 turn + 1 rnd/level **AoE:** 10' square/level **Save:** None

Immobile, invisible, indescructible barrier prevents passage of anything in either direction, including all spells.

Pandelume's Paroxysm of Pain**R:** 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** ½

Convulsions, -2 AC and -4 to hit, 1d4 damage per round.

The Pattern of the Proscriptive Watchdog**R:** 1" **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None

Terrible phantasmal beast guards passage, door etc. Can detect invisible, astral etc creatures. Loud growling if any creature approaches, and strike as 10 HD for 3-18 damage. Cannot be combatted physically.

Phandaal's Semblance of Psyche**R:** 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None

Project immaterial duplicate of caster to any spot in range, can speak & cast spells through duplicate. Requires unbroken concentration.

The Reign of Long Nerves**R:** 1"/level **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates

Control target like an automaton. Immediate save at +2 if forced to take self-destructive action.

| Intelligence | Period between Saving Throws |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 3 or less | 3 months |
| 4 to 6 | 2 months |
| 7 to 9 | 1 month |
| 10 to 12 | 3 weeks |
| 13 to 14 | 2 weeks |
| 15 to 16 | 1 week |
| 17 | 3 days |
| 18 | 2 days |
| 19 or more | 1 day |

The Satire of Life Renewed

R: 1" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Animate dead bodies. 1 skeleton or zombie per level, or equivalent in hit dice.

The Seven Hundred and Seventy Steps of Slumber

R: 0 **D:** Special **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
 Fall asleep and enter the Dreamlands. May deliver a message to any sleeping creature personally known to the caster.

The Shroud of Agonising Immolation

R: 3" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
 Target bursts into flames. 2-12 damage per round, plus 1-4 damage and ignites flammable objects in 10' radius. Saving throw each round.

Skye's Spell to Sidestep the Real

R: 3" **D:** 6 turns + 1/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Open passage through solid matter, 2' deep per level.

The Spell of Celeritous Relocalisation

R: Touch **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Transport caster and 250 lb + 150 lb per level, to anywhere on same plane.

| Destination is | Probability | of | Arriving |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>High*</i> | <i>On target</i> | <i>Off target**</i> |
| Very familiar | 01 | 02-98 | 99 |
| Studied carefully | 01-02 | 03-95 | 96-97 |
| Seen casually | 01-04 | 05-90 | 91-94 |
| Viewed once | 01-08 | 09-80 | 81-88 |
| Never seen | 01-16 | 17-60 | 61-76 |

| Destination is | Probability | of | Arriving |
|-------------------|---------------|----|---------------|
| | <i>Mishap</i> | | <i>Low***</i> |
| Very familiar | 00 | | - |
| Studied carefully | 98-99 | | 00 |
| Seen casually | 95-98 | | 99-00 |
| Viewed once | 89-96 | | 97-00 |
| Never seen | 77-92 | | 93-00 |

* 10' above ground per 1% missed.

** d100% distance travelled in random direction.

*** Instant death if area is solid.

(Continued on next page)

The Spell of Celeritous Relocalisation (Cont.)

| 1d20 | Mishap | 1d20 | Mishap |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1 | High velocity arrival -- hurled d100 feet in random direction | 11 | Spawn evil twins -- vanish if killed |
| 2 | Travellers scattered in 1 mile radius of arrival point | 12 | Swap personalities -- trade character sheets clockwise |
| 3 | Travellers separated -- reroll arrival chances separately | 13 | Materialize partially inside objects -- d6 damage x HD |
| 4 | Only living matter transported | 14 | Materialize missing pieces -- save or lose an extremity |
| 5 | Only non-living matter transported | 15 | Materialize upside down -- d4 damage |
| 6 | Out of phase -- treat as Ethereal | 16 | Swap places with something at point of arrival |
| 7 | D100' radius surroundings transported along with travellers | 17 | Explosion at target: 50', 6d6 damage, travellers unaffected |
| 8 | Transported d10 days back in time | 18 | Save vs. spells or turned inside-out |
| 9 | Transported d100 days forward in time | 19 | Dumped into Astral Plane |
| 10 | Unexpected extradimensional passenger, roll random monster | 20 | Travellers arrive safely, but are wearing different hats |

Tenser's Destructive Resonance

R: 6" + 1"/level **D:** Special

AoE: 1 object

Save: Special

Beam causes non-living objects to spontaneously explode. Larger objects more destructive but must hold beam for longer.

| Weight (lb) | Resonance Time | Base Damage | Explosive Radius |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1-5 | Instant | 1 | 2' |
| 6-25 | Instant | d4 | 3' |
| 26-100 | 1 round | d6 | 5' |
| 101-500 | 2 rounds | d8 | 10' |
| 501-2000 | 3 rounds | d10 | 15' |

Explosion causes base damage x caster level (or save for half).

Tzunk's Distance Distortion

R: 1"/level **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 10" square/level **Save:** None
 Distances halved, doubled, or anywhere in between in area of effect.

Yon's Obliging Parapet

R: ½"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Wall of rock merges with existing stone. 100 square feet and ¼" thick per caster level.

SIXTH LEVEL SPELLS**The Agency of Far Despatch**

R: Touch **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Powerful forces hurl caster and 250 lb + 150 lb per level to any location on same plane, no error, or interplanar travel as below. 1 round to recover after transit.

| Destination is | Accuracy | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | <i>On target</i> | <i>1-10 miles</i> | <i>1-100 miles</i> | <i>1 plane</i> | <i>2 planes</i> | <i>Radom plane</i> |
| Very familiar | 01-50 | 51-90 | 91-95 | 97-97 | 98-99 | 00 |
| Studied carefully | 01-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-83 | 84-90 | 91-100 |
| Seen casually | 01-10 | 11-25 | 26-50 | 51-65 | 66-80 | 81-00 |
| Viewed once | 01-05 | 06-10 | 11-25 | 26-48 | 49-70 | 71-00 |
| Never seen | 01 | 04-05 | 06-10 | 11-35 | 36-60 | 61-00 |

Ao's Enervating Opalescent Eyes

R: 2" **D:** 1 round/3 levels **AoE:** 1 creature/round **Save:** Negates
 Caster's gaze causes their choice of effect:

- Charm* – target becomes totally loyal and docile to caster.
- Fear* – refuse to face caster, cover or bolt (50/50) if confronted.
- Sicken* - ½ ability scores, ½ movement, lose 1 Constitution per day until dead.
- Sleep* – comatose slumber until wakened.

Non-humanoid types save at +2.

The Avulsion of the Spirit-Soul

R: Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
 Project soul onto Astral Plane. Affects caster plus up to 1 other creature per 2 levels.

The Binding of True Names

R: 3" **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
 Speak true name of creature and cast spell. Must then chant desired effect in verse, preferably rhyme (takes 1 round).

- Command* – subject obeys instruction.
- Imprison* – subject magically transported/confined.
- Metamorphosis* – subject transformed into something else.
- Minimus Containment* – subject shrunk to 1 inch and imprisoned in gem or similar object.
- Slumber* – subject sleeps, forever or until specified.
- Transport* – subject transported to any location on any plane.
- Weakness* – subject paralysed and unable to act.

The Call to the Assiduous Pursuer

R: 1" **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Invisible creature arrives in 1-4 turns and will obey spellcaster. Resents servitude and seeks to pervert instructions.

The Assiduous Pursuer

AC 6 MV 6"/FL 24" HD 9 D 2-16/2-16
SD invisible MR 30% XP 2000
Faultless tracker. Flies silently and can carry 2 persons on back or draft horse in tentacles. If slain banished to own plane.

The Call to Inflexible Salvation

R: 3" **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** None
Summons powerful, specific demon, demigod, god etc, or their servant. Summoned creature is under no constraints. Spell ages caster 5 years due to cosmic strain.

The Contingency of the Foreknown

R: 0 **D:** 1 day/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Cast a spell; it will come into effect on caster's person when specified conditions are met.

Daern's Total Repulse

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/2 levels **AoE:** 1" radius **Save:** None
Invisible, mobile field surrounds caster in 10' radius and repulses all creatures.

The Excellent Prismatic Spray

R: 2" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 1/2" square/level **Save:** None
Darts of prismatic fire instantly slay 2d20 hit dice of creatures. 8 HD or more get a saving throw.

Hornung's Indiscriminate Expulsion*

R: 3" **D:** Instantaneous **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Banish target to random plane.

| 1d100 | Plane [Gygaxian multiverse] |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 01-04 | Abyss |
| 05-08 | Acheron |
| 09-12 | Arborea |
| 13-16 | Arcadia |
| 17-20 | Astral |
| 21-24 | Baator |
| 25-28 | Beastlands |
| 29-32 | Bytopia |
| 33-36 | Carceri |
| 37-40 | Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire, Water) |
| 41-44 | Elysium |

(Continued on next page)

* See alternate chart for *Hornung's Indiscriminate Expulsion* in **Vancian Companion I**

Hornung's Indiscriminate Expulsion (Cont.)

| 1d100 | Plane [Gygaxian multiverse] |
|-------|--|
| 45-48 | Energy (Positive or Negative) |
| 49-52 | Ethereal |
| 53-56 | Gehenna |
| 57-60 | Grey Wastes |
| 61-64 | Limbo |
| 65-68 | Mechanus |
| 69-72 | Mount Olympus |
| 73-76 | Negative Quasi-Elemental (Vacuum, Ash, Dust, Salt) |
| 77-80 | Outlands |
| 81-84 | Pandemonium |
| 85-88 | Para-Elemental (Ice, Ooze, Magma, Smoke) |
| 89-92 | Positive Quasi-Elemental (Lightning, Mineral, Radiance, Steam) |
| 93-96 | Prime Material |
| 97-99 | Ysgard |

The Infallible Retrotropic Field

R: 0 **D:** 1 turn/level **AoE:** 1'/level diameter **Save:** None
Invisible field moves with caster, completely suppresses all magic in area of effect.

Khelpen's Permutation of Gravity

R: ½"/level **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 3"x3" square **Save:** None
Reverse gravity in area of effect.

The Labyrinth of Elongated Shadows

R: 1" **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
Target vanishes into mental labyrinth until they solve a maze provided by DM, or roll below.

| Intelligence | Time trapped |
|--------------|--------------|
| <3 | 1d4 turns |
| 3-5 | 5d4 rounds |
| 6-9 | 4d4 rounds |
| 10-13 | 3d4 rounds |
| 14-17 | 2d4 rounds |
| 18+ | 1d4 rounds |

The Omnipotent Sphere

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/2 levels **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Impenetrable force protects caster absolutely from all physical damage.

Otiluke's Freezing Orb

R: Special **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** ½
Globe of absolute zero freezes water (100 cubic feet/level) or can be thrown, shatters for 4-24 cold damage within 10' (save for half). Shatters if spell expires.

Otto's Irresistable Dance

R: Touch **D:** 1-4 rounds **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
 Target spasmodically dances, -4 to attack and AC, can do nothing but shuffle and tap.

The Scrutiny of the Omniscient Eye

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** Negates
 Perceive all things as they actually are. First time casters save vs. magic or go insane. Reverse causes target to see things as they are not – rich is poor, rough is smooth, beautiful is ugly.

The Sequester to the Ethereal Coil

R: Touch **D:** 1 hour/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** Negates
 Subject becomes Ethereal. Affects 1 creature per 2 levels, plus caster at his or her option.

Serten's Immaculate Simulacrum

R: Touch **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
 Create duplicate of creature from ice and snow. Requires token from original. Simulacrum has d20+40% of original's hit points, knowledge, levels etc. Obeys commands from caster.

The Seven Symbols of Solomon

R: Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** Special **Save:** Negates
 Magic rune affects creatures which see, touch or pass over it.

Death – affects up to 80 hp of creatures.
Discord – bicker and attack companions, lasts 2-8 rounds.
Fear – flee 2d4 rounds, save at -2.
Hopelessness – do nothing and submit to any demand, lasts 3-12 rounds.
Insanity – go permanently insane.
Pain – convulsions, -2 to AC and -4 to hit.
Sleep – catatonic slumber for 1-12 turns.

Sirrian's Spell Engine

R: 1" **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** 1" radius/level **Save:** None
 Intangible wheel sucks up all spells cast in area of effect. Caster can cause wheel to fire random spell at target. Sucks up 2 spell levels per caster level; explodes if overloaded or touched by magic item for 6d4 damage 20' radius (save for half).

The Speculum of Retribution

R: 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Special **Save:** Special
 Reflects spells back towards caster if saving throw is made. Spells reflected back and forth until one side fails their saving throw.

The Spell of Elegant Dissolution

R: ½"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 object/creature **Save:** Negates
 Cause all matter to permanently vanish, up to 1" cubic volume. Affects magical matter (or energy) as well, including magical barriers. Living creatures and enchanted objects get a saving throw.

The Spell of Forlorn Encystment

R: 3" **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
 Target rooted to the spot and begins to sink into the ground. If spell is completed, target is trapped forever in small sphere deep underground. Reverse frees trapped individual plus 1-100 others.

The Spell of Geas

R: Touch **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
 Willing individual magically commanded to carry out or refrain from some action; failure to comply causes target to sicken and die in 1 to 4 weeks.

The Spell of Temporal Disjunction

R: 0 **D:** Special **AoE:** 15' diameter **Save:** None
Stops time for 1 round for all but the caster.

The Spell of the Stone That Weeps in Silence

R: 1"/level **D:** Permanent **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** Negates
Turns target to stone along with all their possessions. Reverse frees petrified creatures.

Tenser's Transformation of the Heroic and Grotesque

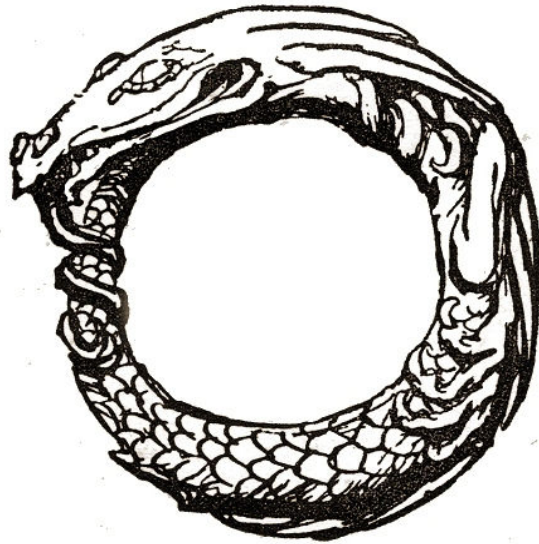
R: 0 **D:** 1 round/level **AoE:** Caster **Save:** None
Caster's hit points double, +4 to AC, attacks as fighter of same level and +2 to damage. Goes berserk until spell ends.

The Tower of Indomitable Intellect

R: 3" **D:** 1 day **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
Total protection from all mental attacks.

The Wrack of the Recalcitrant Spirit

R: 1" **D:** Special **AoE:** 1 creature **Save:** None
Prepare a special document (4d8 hours and 5000 sp) bearing the name of a specific lower planar being. When read has following effects on being named: 1st round – being is immobilised unless magic resistance roll made, and 90% likely to retreat otherwise. 2nd round – acute pain and loss of 1 hit point per die. 3rd round – horrible pain, loss of 50% hp, and at end of round is confined to own plane in torture for number of years equal to caster level. Being is cumulative 25% likely per round to agree to any demand.



AFTERWORD

by GREYHARP

Assuming you haven't just skipped straight to this afterword, you have read through the collection of stories and articles that have been gathered by our host, Greg. And if so, you don't need me to explain Vancian magic to you – the stories and articles contained in these pages do just that. If you haven't read them, go and do so now.

However, more than just explain Vancian magic, this volume gives the reader a history and a context for the famous, or infamous, depending on your bias, magic system of the world's first roleplaying game. Next year marks 40 years since the release of D&D. It would be fair to say that it will also mark 40 years of criticism of the Vancian magic system.

Like it or loath it, what is clear is that the magic of D&D is a foundational aspect of the game. Swap it for an entirely different system and you end up with a very different game. Reading the various articles in this volume written by Gary Gygax, it is obvious that much thought went into selecting a system that was quick and easy in execution, while providing progression through increasing levels of power. This achievement is often overlooked.

It's true too that as the game itself became progressively more complex, so too did "Vancian" magic, something Gygax acknowledges and even celebrates in the article "AD&D's Magic System: How and Why It Works". Even so, it's hard to go past the wonderful simplicity of magic as explained in Vance's story, "Mazirian the Mage". That delicate balance between the frighteningly powerful and the utterly helpless is delicious.

One fact that cannot be disputed after 40 years is that D&D and its close imitators are, and always have been the 800 lb gorilla of RPGs. I have no doubt whatsoever that the elegant simplicity of Vancian magic has had a large part to play in the game's long lasting popularity – a popularity which shows no signs of waning.

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