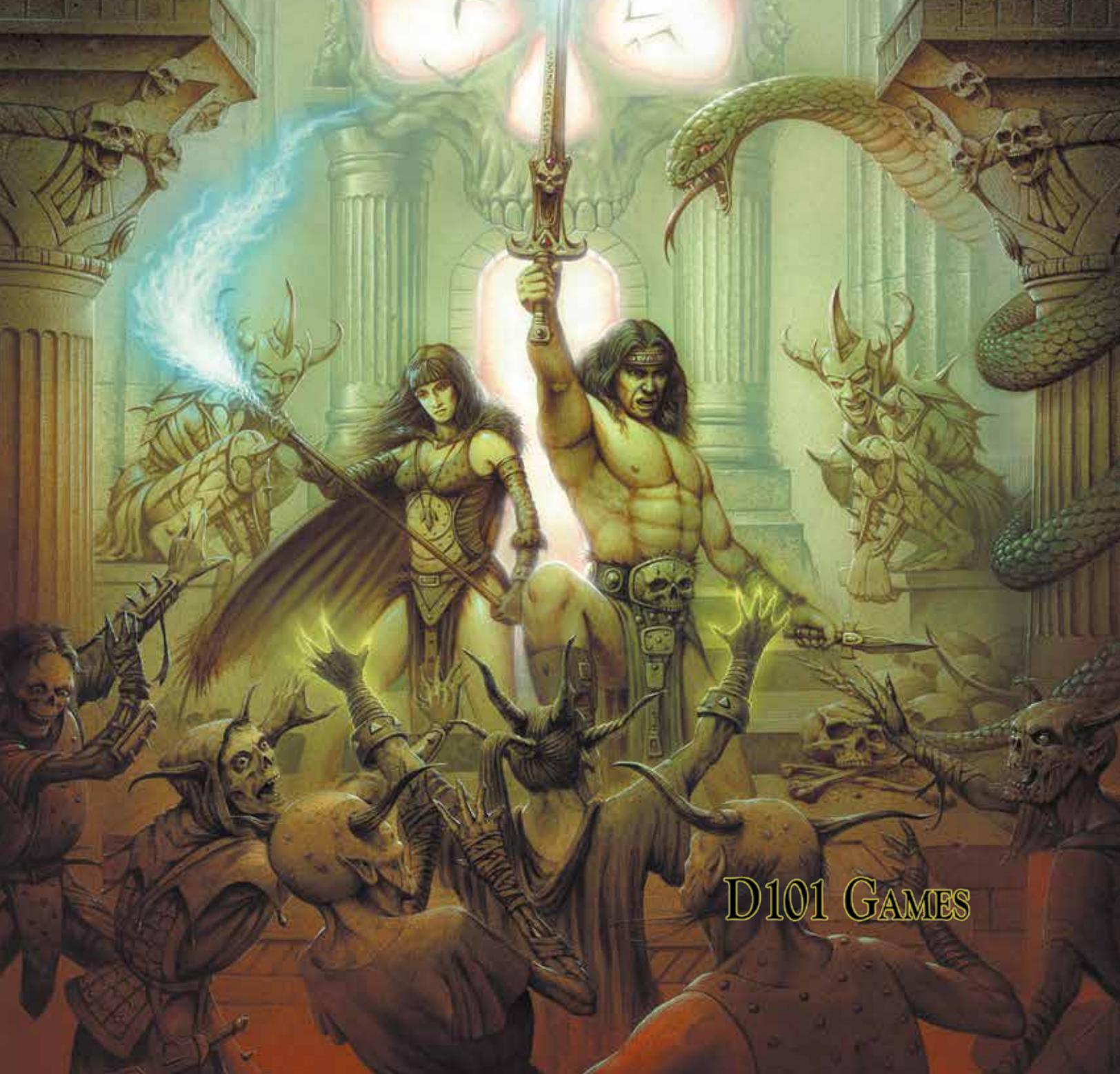


CRYPTS & THINGS &

A SWORDS AND SORCERY ROLEPLAYING GAME



D101 GAMES

CRYPTS & THINGS &

THE CHRONICLES OF ZARTH

REMASTERED

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UPON SUICIDAL WINDS THEY COME...

Treygor, Elda and Morstor trudged over the sands. They were tired and hungry. Treygor, ever the canny barbarian, feared that his companions were beginning to suffer adversely from the effects of the journey through the never ending desert. Elda in particular was still shaky after the fight with the blasphemous giant thing that had ambushed them at the oasis a couple of hours ago. This adventure had taken the thief well beyond her comfort zone of lifting purses and threatening shop keepers in the nearby city of Arestor. Morstor, the sorcerer, remained cold and unreadable. Certainly the worm hadn't fazed him. After Treygor and Elda had slain the beast, he had calmly stepped forward and harvested various body parts for his "magical researches". The stench had been terrible and Treygor hoped that the sorcerer would be more use when they reached their destination.

Then the wind whipped up again. A blasting wind that ground razor sharp sand and shards of rock into their exposed flesh. These evil winds had hounded them ever since they had set out over desert towards their goal. Morstor said they were the "Suicidal Winds of Zondos", an ancient curse that was invoked by even setting out towards the temple. After losing the mules and suffering a myriad of small cuts they had learnt to wrap up "desert style". Treygor saw them as yet another evil magic that he could physically beat. Elda merely cowered under her cloak and muttered something about the payout being worth it. This time the winds lasted but a brief but savage moment, like a final goodbye, for they had reached the summit of the last ridge of sand before their destination.

The ancient temple squatted on the plain before them. A baleful magnificence of vast ruins wrecked in some magical battle millennia ago, untouched by the viscous winds. Treygor re-examined his motives for coming here and wondered once more if Morstor had cast some malign magic which had befuddled his reasoning. Previously, he had been busy engaging

in a mini-crime spree across the city, when he had hooked up with Elda in Arestor. Together they had broken into Morstor's house in the dead of night. The pair had heard tales of a local sorcerer and his ill-gotten gold and decided to liberate it. Instead they found the dread sorcerer aware and ready for them. Soon they found themselves trapped in a magic circle like some demon summoned from the Otherworld. Morstor had heard of the infamous duo and had deliberately lured them to his mansion to make them a proposition. Treygor was still hazy about the specifics of the deal, but it involved the Sorcerer guiding them to the lost temple of Zondos and them being able to take the gold and riches of that place, while Morstor was after 'something' lost in that pit of hell many thousands of years ago. What that 'something' was Treygor had decided to deal with when the time came. What little he knew of Morstor indicated it would not be a good thing.

Ever the man of action, he stilled his thoughts as they traversed the shattered slabs of stone that surrounded the temple. Whatever happened in that ancient final battle, it was like some giant fist had descended from the sky and repeatedly pounded the structure into the ground. Morstor took the lead and the map inscribed upon a piece of cured human flesh was consulted again, as he led them through the maze of broken stones. Eventually they came to it. A large arch of ancient construction, with demonic frescos of Serpent Men whipping, slaying and eating apemen in a scene of savage joy. "You never told me this was a temple of Serpent men" Treygor rumbled. "You never asked" Morstor evilly smiled back. "Lets get this over with. I don't feel good about this place" Elda pleaded, breaking the deadlock between the two men.

With swords and spell readied they entered the gaping maw of the black portal.

Something in the darkness shifted in anticipation.

WELCOME TO ZARTH!

What is this Game About?

It's about exploring the ruins of the dying world of Zarth. Fighting off the Others, alien monstrosities from outside of reality, while making your mark on the world before it dives into the sun Nemesis.

The Game is played as a collective exercise in make believe, which involves the Players who play the Characters their alter egos in Zarth, who may belong to one of nine classes (such as savage Barbarians, wily Thieves and dark Sorcerers), and the Crypt Keeper who acts both as a rules referee and narrator for the adventures that unfold. See page 86 for an example of play.

The Dice

Crypts and Things uses several different kinds of dice, and we abbreviate them according to how many sides they have. So, the four-sided die is called a D4, and if we're telling you to roll 3 of them, we say to roll 3D4. The six-sided die is a D6, the eight-sided die is a D8, the ten-sided die is a D10, the twelve-sided die is a D12, and the twenty-sided die is a D20. There is no die with 100 sides—what you do to roll a D100 is to roll two ten-sided dice, treating

the first roll as the “tens” and the second roll as the “ones.” So, if you were to roll a 7 and then a 3, that would mean a 73. A roll of 0 and 0 means a result of “100”.

What is the Swords and Wizardry System?

It is a ‘retroclone’ of the original edition of the world's favourite role playing game system.

The rules are simple and streamlined which keeps rulings and dice rolls down to a minimum and encourages imaginative play on both sides of the Crypt Keeper's screen.

Crypts and Things uses the Swords and Wizardry system modified to better suit the Swords and Sorcery genre. In this book a reference to the rule system means the core rules as presented in Swords & Wizardry.



WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

This main rule book is split into two parts.

The Scrolls of Wonder

This first part of the book contains everything that the Players need to know to play their alter-egos in their adventures in the dying world of Zarth.

The first chapter details the process of *Creating a Character* using the information included in the next few reference Chapters.

Crypts and Things has nine *Character Classes* detailed in the second chapter including the Core Character Classes of character types immediately familiar to fans Swords and Sorcery literature (Barbarians, Fighters, Sorcerers and Thieves) and the Exotic Character Classes (Beast Hybrid, Disciple, Elementalist, Lizard People and Serpent Noble) which are more widely inspired by Swords and Sorcery literature and the setting of Zarth.

Life Events has all the random tables needed to create characters with backgrounds and special abilities relevant to their life history before they started adventuring.

If you are spell casting class (Sorcerer or Elementalist) you'll want to refer to the *Spell Lists* chapter to see what magical powers your character has access to.

How to Play contains all the rules, such as Combat and Sanity, you'll need to play the game. It outlines how the dice are used to resolve in game situations, when common sense roleplaying doesn't quite get there.

The Continent of Terror is the Player's overview of the world of Zarth. It may not be exactly what their characters know, since most of the characters come from areas which are isolated from the rest of the world, but it's a quick orientation for the Players so they have an idea of what the adventuring opportunities their characters may have.

The final chapter is *What My Elder Told Me*. These are questions and answers for each of the eight human cultures that the Player Characters typically come from. They are intended to give Players a better understanding on how to roleplay their characters and to provide hints of the wider setting background their characters come from.

The Book of Doom

This second part of the book is a collection of reference articles that helps the referee of the game, *The Crypt Keeper*, run the game.

The first five chapters deal with setting information about Zarth's Continent of Terror.

Secrets of the Continent of Terror is the Crypt Keeper's setting chapter, which gives more details about what is happening in the various lands. A quick list of adventure ideas and an general encounter table for each region, should help the harried Crypt Keeper come up with adventures quickly.

Dealing with Others is a short chapter on how the Crypt Keeper should deal with the theme of summoning the Demonic Others to Zarth.

The Greater Others and their Works details three of the Godlike Demons, their servants, cultists and associated Religions.

The five *Scourges of the Dying World* are player character Nemeses who can be used as recurring villains in your adventures.

Snake Dance is a chapter which details the Serpent Men, the major antagonists of the Continent of Terror, including their history, society and the ways that they attempt to enslave mankind.

The next two Chapters deal with various in-game objects that the Crypt Keeper can use to populate their adventures.

A Compendium of Fiends is full bestiary containing creatures, monsters and opponents that crawl, gibber and slither under the Locust Sun of Zarth.

Ill Gotten Gains of Dark Desire starts off with a short article on Treasure generation and then goes on to detail fifty magical items of dubious power and dangerous nature.

The next three chapters present three different types of Adventure as working examples.

The Halls of Nizār-Thun is an introductory underground adventure taking place in an old sorcerer's palace for beginning adventurers.

The Haunted Lands is a Weird Lands adventure, where the characters explore a dark and twisted land in search of a kidnapped child.

Port Black Mire is a setting for city based adventures. This city state ruled by the pirate captain of a demonic pirate fleet, can be used by the characters as a place to rest up and sell treasure gained on adventures as well as being a source of its own adventures.

Finally *Notes from the Abyss* is a collection of short articles, random tables and lists of inspirational reading and listening material to help the Crypt Keeper in their job of running entertaining adventures for both themselves and the Players.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING

Matt Finch for writing Swords and Wizardry, the bedrock of this game and still my go-to rules for when I want to play the Worlds Favourite Fantasy Roleplaying game.

Akrasia for the original Swords & Sorcery rules that were the basis of many of the rules tweaks that I made to the Swords and Wizardry Rules.

John Holmes for nagging me to tidy up 1st Edition and helping me get the Remastering process off the ground.

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ROLL OF HONOUR

The following people backed this book on Kickstarter and have my eternal gratitude.

The God Emperor of Zarth!

MORGAN HAZEL

All Hail the Conquerors!

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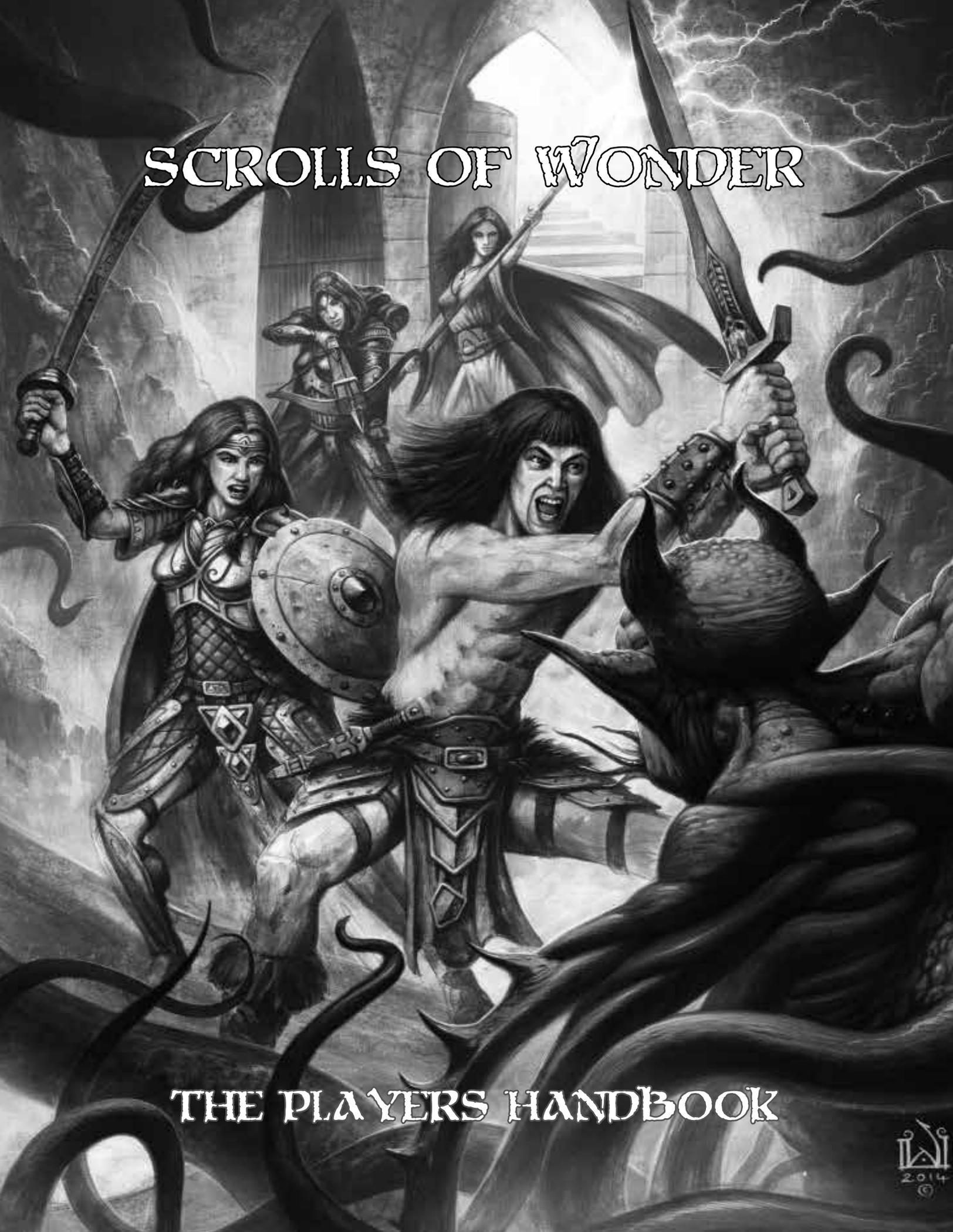
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SCROLLS OF WONDER



THE PLAYERS HANDBOOK

CREATING A CHARACTER

Unless you're going to be the Crypt Keeper, you will start by creating a Player Character. You'll roll some dice to determine your Character's basic abilities and attributes and you'll pick a Character Class based on what type of Character you want to play. Finally, you'll create some life events which tell you what happened to the Character before play started and then use the Character's available game money to buy equipment. You'll then start to play. If you're the Crypt Keeper, you've got a bit more preparation to do. That's covered later in a section especially for you, the Book of Doom and the chapter Notes from the Abyss.

This chapter covers the procedure of creating a Player Character and has a certain amount of reference material. You'll also need to refer to the Character Classes (see page 17) and Life Events (see page 38) chapters for information to complete your Character.

YOUR CHARACTER SHEET

Information about your Character goes on a Character Sheet. See the back page of this book for an example Character Sheet that may be printed out and filled in. Downloadable versions are available at D101games.com

1. ROLL ABILITY SCORES

The basic attributes of a Character are numbers representing Strength (physical prowess), Dexterity (quickness and coordination), Constitution (general health and hardiness), Intelligence (education and IQ), Wisdom (common sense), and Charisma (leadership). The first step needed to create a Character is to roll dice for these six ability scores.

Roll 3D6 for each score, and write it on your character sheet.

Strength

A high Strength gives your Character bonuses when attacking with a sword or other hand-held weapon (called a "melee weapon"). The table below shows you the effects of your Strength score. For convenience, you may want to write down these bonuses on your Character sheet next to the Strength score. Strength is the Prime Attribute for the Fighter Class.

Table 1: Strength

Score	Hit Modifiers	Damage Bonus
3-8	-1	-1
9-12	+0	+0
13-15	+1	+1
16-17	+2	+2
18	+3	+3

Dexterity

A high Dexterity score gives your Character bonuses when attacking with a bow or other missile weapon (usually called a "ranged weapon"), and improves your "Armour Class," making you harder to hit. Dexterity is the Prime Attribute for the Thief and Disciple classes.

Table 2: Dexterity

Score	Hit Modifiers	AC Adjustment
3-8	-1	+1 [-1]
9-12	+0	+0
13-15	+1	-1 [+1]
16-17	+2	-2[+2]
18	+3	-3[+3]

Constitution

A high Constitution gives your Character extra Hit Points, which are gained as the Character increases experience levels and are the measure of the Character's energy levels. When Hit Points are zero, a Character is fatigued and exhausted and cannot act. Constitution is also directly the measure against which life threatening damage is deducted once Hit Points are exhausted. If Constitution is reduced to zero the Character is dead (see page 82). Constitution is the Prime Attribute for the Barbarian, Beast Hybrid and Lizard People classes.

Table 3: Constitution

Score	Hit Point Modifier
3-8	-1
9-12	+0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

Intelligence

A high Intelligence is the Prime Attribute for the Sorcerer and Elementalist classes, and only Sorcerers with high Intelligence are able to learn the highest-level spells. When the Character comes across any language that is not their mother tongue the Crypt Keeper may require them to roll a D100 against their % Chance to understand language.

Table 4: Intelligence

Score	% Chance to understand Language	Max. Spell Level
3-8	0	-
9-12	10	5
13-15	25	6
16-17	50	6
18	75	6

Wisdom

Wisdom is the measure of how sane a Character is (see Sanity page 72). As your Character gradually cracks under the strain of encountering dark forces that ‘man was not meant to know’ you lose Wisdom. If you drop below zero Wisdom your Character becomes permanently insane. Wisdom is not the Prime Attribute for any class. Characters with a Wisdom of 13 or higher gain a +5% bonus to all experience point awards.

Charisma

A highly charismatic Character has a better chance to charm his way out of trouble, and can lead more followers than Characters with a low Charisma. The Character’s Charm % is the chance that they can fast talk their way out of danger, seduce the opposite sex, or otherwise gain a favourable reaction from a Non-player Character (NPC) at the Crypt Keeper’s discretion. The use of Charm % is intended to support role-playing not eliminate it.

Any Character with a Charisma score of 13 or higher receives a bonus of 5% to all experience point awards.
Charisma is the Prime Attribute for Serpent Nobles.

Table 5: Charisma

Score	Charm %	Max. Henchmen
3-4	10%	1
5-6	20%	2
7-8	30%	3
9-12	40%	4
13-15	50%	5
16-17	60%	6
18	75%	7

2. DETERMINE SKILL & LUCK

Luck

This is a measure of the Character’s innate quality to avoid trouble, stumble across useful items and have just the right thing happen at the right time. It is tested over the course of the adventure and decreases as the Character gets fatigued or injured. Eventually even the most Lucky Character will run out of Luck. To generate Luck roll 1D6 and add six (giving starting range of a range of 7-12). Every three Class levels add one point of Luck to the Characters Luck score. See “Testing Luck” on page 70 for more details.

Skill

The Skill score is used when it is not clear cut if a Character will succeed in something that requires skill to do, outside of the Combat and Magic systems. See How to Play page 71 for more detail about how to Test your Skill.

Table 6: Skill

Level	Skill
1	15
2	14
3	13
4	12
5	11
6	10
7	9
8	6
9	5
10 +	4 *
* Minimum Value, does not decrease after 10th	

3. CALCULATE SANITY

Sanity is a measure of how strong the Character is mentally. As they encounter the unsettling horrors of Zarth it is tested and may be gradually eroded away. See page 72 in the How to Play chapter for more details. At this point note that the Character's Sanity is equal to their Wisdom and make a note of it on the Character Sheet.

4. CHOOSE A CLASS

There are nine Character Classes: Barbarian, Beast Hybrid, Disciple, Elementalist, Fighter, Lizard Man, Thief, and Serpent Noble, Sorcerer. After choosing your Character class, make sure to write down your experience point (XP) bonus. It's based on your Wisdom (possible +5%), your Charisma (possible +5%), and the Prime Attribute for the Character Class you choose (possible +5%), with a total possible +15%. See the Class descriptions for information about Prime Attribute. Also write down your starting *Hit Points*, determined by rolling the number of Hit Dice determined by your Character's starting Level (usually 1st).

See "Character Classes" on page 17, for complete reference of all nine Character classes.

5. GENERATE LIFE EVENTS

At Character generation the player makes two rolls for Life Events, which represent two phases of the character's life.

Phase 1 Origin, provides the character's early origins, their homeland and gives them a significant event in their early years and a characteristic bonus.

Phase 2 Learning your Trade, tells the player about the formative years of the character in their chosen profession before they became an adventurer.

Non-Human Character Classes (Beast Hybrid, Lizard Man and Serpent Noble) use a different method. These Classes roll once on their own Non-Human Life Events table (see end of that section on page 47).

See "Life Events" on page 38 for the tables that you need to use.

Core vs Exotic Character Classes

The four *Core Character Classes* are Barbarian, Fighter, Thief and Sorcerer. These are the commonly encountered types of Characters in the Swords and Sorcery genre.



The *Exotic Character Classes* are Beast Hybrid, Disciple, Elementalist, Lizard Man and Serpent Noble. As the name suggests these are more fanciful character types, inspired by the Genre but not normally encountered as leading Characters. These Character Classes also take their inspiration from Crypts and Things default dying world setting of Zarth, so they may require a stretch of the imagination for players who are used to more straightforward Swords & Sorcery fare.

