

Questing

A Regular Feature for DragonQuest™ Players

by Gerry Klug

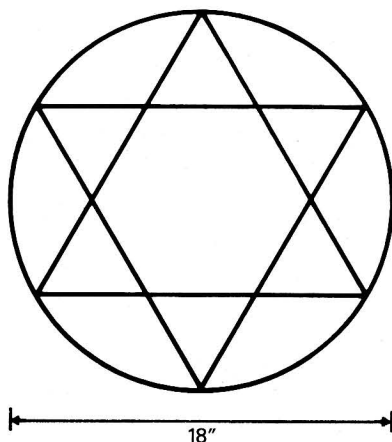
It has come to my attention of late that many of you are having a little difficulty concerning the College of Greater Summoning. Either the GM's aren't able to adequately balance and integrate it in their campaigns, or they really don't have any concrete idea what the demons, succubi, etc., do while on this plane or why they appear here. When these questions were put to me originally, I had a difficult time answering them to the players' satisfaction due to my own inexperience with the college. In my campaign, not very many players (0, to be exact) have chosen that college for fear of what could happen. I used the college as a great source of NPC's (Loklar and Daghan from *The Palace of Ontoncle* are still running around my world), but I never had a player nagging me to come up with a ruling about this Ritual or that Demon, so I never researched the college in depth as I should have.

Well, your inquiries have prompted my curiosity to go to the original source materials and examine where this college came from and how the source material became altered into the form we find now. What I discovered surprised me quite a bit.

But first, I will attempt to answer the specific questions which have been posed to me and include in the answers some of the information I have discovered.

One of the first questions which arose was what Triangle is being spoken about in the paragraph immediately below the diagram of the Circle of Protection and the Pentacle? It says, "the summoned entity is forced into the *Triangle* (outside the Circle of Protection)." What Triangle? None is mentioned in the text above the diagram, and the diagram itself certainly shows no triangle. What was omitted was the description of a Triangle which is drawn beyond the Circle at the compass point which relates to the source of the Demon being summoned (this will be explained later in this article).

The other question, which is related, concerns the reference to a "Hexagram" on the bottom of page 65 (*DragonQuest* Second Edition) under the list of items which these adepts receive after they are trained. A *Hexagram* is a symbol drawn on a parchment of calf's skin, covered with a cloth of fine white linen, and draped from the girdle of lion's skin outside the white robe worn by a Greater Summoner. It helps cause the demon to take physical form and compels them to be obedient.



Next, as opposed to what is implied in 47.2, an Adept of Greater Summoning *cannot* achieve rank with counterspells. Only a Namer may achieve rank with counterspells. Counterspells, as they relate to the College of Greater Summoning, are used as a form of banishment. When a General Knowledge Counterspell is cast over an Imp, Devil, Succubi, Incubi, or Hero *by the Adept who either was granted the companion or summoned the entity*, that entity or companion is banished back to the dimension from whence it came. A counterspell cast by anyone else will have no effect whatsoever. If a Special

Knowledge Counterspell is cast over a Summoned Demon by *anyone*, that Demon is banished back to the plane from whence it came. Thus Namers become important individuals in the control of the demon world on this plane. It should be emphasized here that counterspells can only be *passively* resisted, and it is up to the GM to decide which Demons, once summoned to this plane, will resist being sent back.

In reference to Imps and Devils, the 7% Base Chance of knowing past, present and future events represents the chance they will know the correct answer to a specific question posed to them. It is up to the GM to perform the roll and decide what their answer (if any) will be if the result is above the Base Chance.

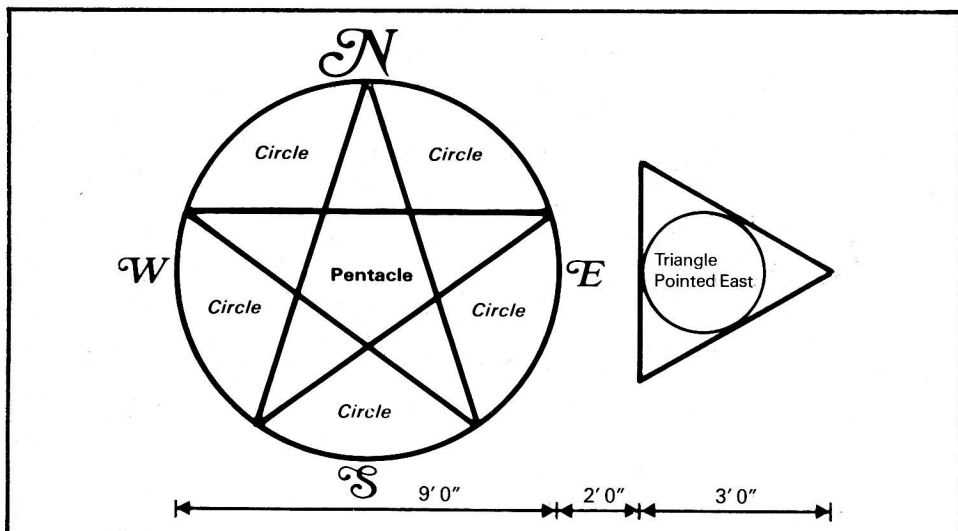
The Ritual of Summoning Succubi (and Incubi) has caused problems in two areas: first, it is possible without much difficulty to raise the chance to summon one of these creatures to 99%, thus making it almost fool-proof; second, some players and GM's are not aware of the background of these creatures and are not sure how they should be played. To answer both of these problems, the following paragraph should be substituted for the first paragraph in Q-2, Ritual of Summoning Succubi:

Q-2 Ritual of Summoning Succubi

This ritual may be used to summon one or more Succubi, who will arrive on this plane favorably disposed towards the summoner for having summoned them, and thus will not immediately need to be bound. Succubi arrive on this plane with only one goal: the enticement and mating with humans. Any deed the summoner desires of them which will further their goal will be approved and encouraged by the Succubi. If the Succubi are summoned to perform a task not immediately related to their goal, they will have to be Bound and forced to do the task. The Base Chance is 5% (+3 per Rank), and it is reduced by 10 for each Succubi above one being summoned at once. If the ritual backfires, the Succubi will appear and attempt to molest and then devour the summoner and his or her companions.

It is important to understand why Incubi and Succubi appear on this plane at all in order to successfully GM them in a campaign. They are not intended to be the "companions" of any Adept. Their sole purpose is to increase the number of followers of the Powers of Darkness on this plane. They are representatives of this Power, and as such, they cannot by themselves create anything. Thus, they must use mankind (members of both sexes to aid in their mission. By their sexual activity, they seek to create children who are, in reality and spirit, children of Darkness. Thus, an adept who can provide them with a mating can gain their temporary aid. **Note:**

(continued on page 39)



RP Gaming

Thieves' World™

Design: Lynn Abbey, Yurek Chodak, Steve Marsh, Midkemia Press, Steve Perrin, Greg Stafford Chaosium, Inc.

Additional Materials: Dave Arneson, Eric Goldberg, Wes Ives, Rudy Kraft, Marc Miller, Mary Beth Miller, Victoria Poyser, Lawrence Shick, Richard Snider, Ken St. Andre, Lynn Willis, Poul Anderson, Robert Asprin, Andrew Offutt

Components: One 64-page Game Master's Guide; one 64-page Personalities of Sanctuary book; two 20-page Players' Guides; one 22"x34" map; two 11"x17" maps, Chaosium, Inc., \$16.00

Reviewed by Steve List

The first fantasy role-playing games were basically dungeon oriented, and required a GM to prepare the dungeon in which the adventures would occur. Soon developed a secondary type of publication, the pre-generated dungeon. As FRP games became more sophisticated, so too did the scenarios and supplements created to support them. But with few exceptions, each was created for use with only one set of game rules. Some supplements were published in which the conditions and characters were so vague that they could be used with just about any game, but this left the job of "customizing" the adventure to the GM all over again.

Thieves' World moves in a new direction. As a literary work, Robert Lynn Asprin's *Thieves' World* (and its companion volume *Tales from the Vulgar Unicorn*) was a collection of stories by various authors set in the city of Sanctuary, in a world unspecified. Both the setting and the characters were eminently suitable for a role-playing situation, so Chaosium has incorporated them

into what is billed as a "complete adventure pack." The claim may be a tad exaggerated, for despite the wealth of material there are no complete scenarios per se; there are, however, ten "scenario ideas," extensive encounter tables, and manifold hints and suggestions for would-be Game Masters.

Thieves' World is not one of the vague-enough-to-be-universal types of work. It is not usable with every role-playing game, but has been customized for nine of them (the *Dungeons & Dragons*®, *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*®, *DragonQuest*™, *Adventures in Fantasy*™, *Chivalry & Sorcery*™, *The Fantasy Trip*™, *RuneQuest*™, *Traveller*™, and *Tunnels and Trolls*™ games). This adaptability has been accomplished in the Personalities of Sanctuary book by having people well-versed in the game involved (in five instances, the original designers of the games) provide the NPC stats and in most cases an essay reconciling the rules of the games with the world of Sanctuary.

To a large extent the explanations deal with magic. In general, an FRP game has a single system of magic, one that is distinct from those of other games. The two *Thieves' World* anthologies have as many different magic systems as there are magicians, as each was created by a different author. Even the prevalence of magic is hard to reconcile, ranging as it does from games like *Traveller* in which there is no magic (the sophistry which rationalizes this problem makes for interesting reading) to *RuneQuest*, in which anyone with a few points of Power and the price of a spell can perform it.

Players who require fastidious consistency may be annoyed by a feature of this approach. The various people who prepared the NPC stats listed the characters they thought best. Therefore, each has a different list, and while many major characters will be

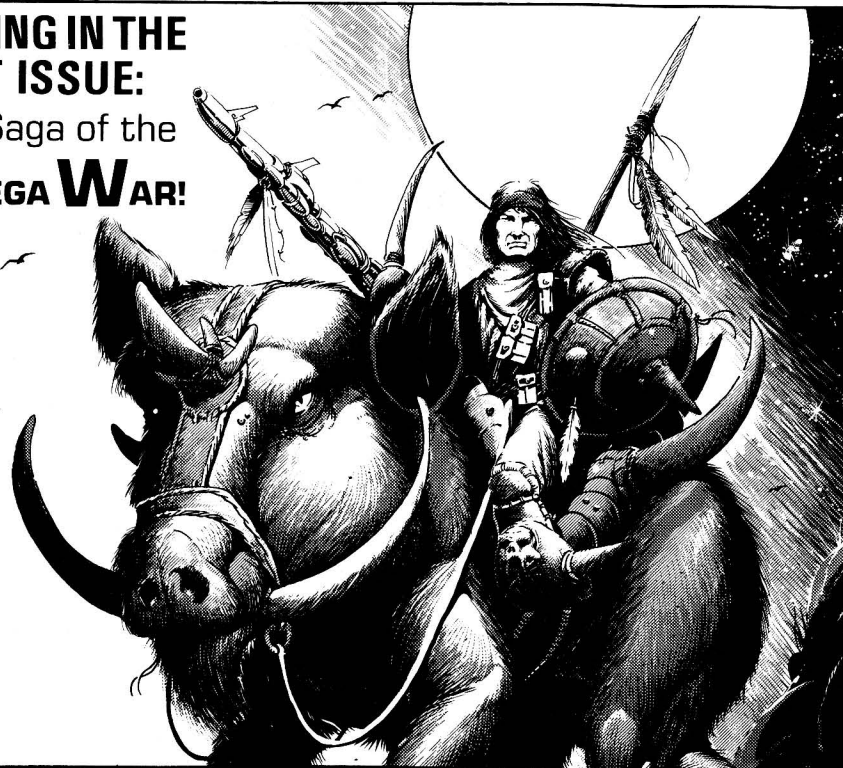
on everybody's list, some will be missing here and there. Those that are on many lists will be differently perceived. For example, Prince Kadakithis appears in the *D&D*™ game section as a ninth-level fighter but in the *C&S* section as only a level three non-fighter. Others may not vary so widely, but the phenomenon of differing perceptions led Eric Goldberg to provide the *DragonQuest* game stats with ranges of attribute values so individual GM's could use values they liked that were still "official."

Of the few drawbacks little can be said. As noted, there are no ready-to-play scenarios presented, but plenty of ingredients for a competent GM to use in conducting a superior one by himself. The exigencies of forcing the various magic systems to fit the constraints of the stories may be an annoying inconvenience in some circumstances. Each user will have to decide for himself if Sanctuary exists in his universe. If it does, there is the problem of how to more fully integrate it and make the inhabitants consistent with the previously defined portions. If it does not, the GM must decide by what means (inter-dimensional portals? space travel?) the player characters arrive there. Some gamers may be disappointed that their favorite FRPG is not covered in *Thieves' World*. Just as there are to be more anthologies about the city of Sanctuary, so Chaosium hopes to update the game with new systems in the future.

In summary, *Thieves' World* is not a work that allows a GM to spend merely a few hours reading it, nor does it present a campaign that will be exhausted in a few playings. It does provide a vehicle with which a GM willing to devote the time can create an entire city which should never grow stale no matter how many times it is visited. ■■

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

The Saga of the ΩMEGA WAR!



QUESTING (continued from page 38)

Because of their purpose, an Incubi will never kill the human he (?) has just mated with. He will endeavor to keep the nature of his true being from this woman so the child which he is trying to create will be born and not aborted. It is to be assumed that any mating between Incubi and a human female will automatically result in a pregnancy unless aborted. For more detailed information on this subject, a good reference is *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* by Russel Hope Robbins (New York: Crown Publishers, 1959).

When a hero is summoned, the GM should not pull (what I consider to be) the dirty trick of having the hero arrive in a battered or wounded state. If the GM makes the Ritual difficult enough to perform successfully in the first place, there is no reason to play little "games" with the players.

The Ritual of True Speaking should be enacted out in real time if at all possible, with the GM acting out the part of the Demon and the player enacting the part of his character. If there is no time, this may be shortened, but the GM should always strive to simulate the conversation as it would take place in as much detail as possible (this is *role* playing after all). ■■