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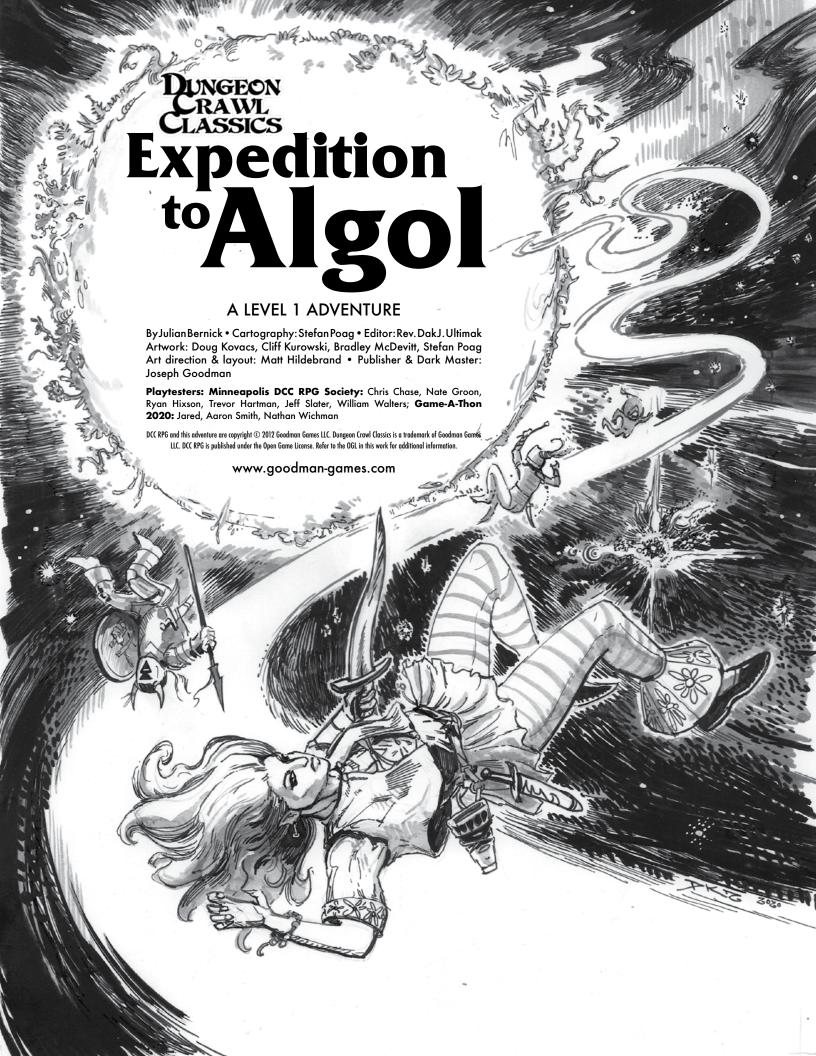
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INTRODUCTION



emember the good old days, when adventurers were running scared, NPCs were there to murder you, and the finale of every dungeon was the cha-

os lord on the 666th level? These are the good old days! Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG adventures don't waste your time with humdrum scenarios, boilerplate campaign settings, or NPCs who want you to kill ten shadow cats. Each adventure is 100% good, solid Dungeon Crawl Classics with monsters you have never seen before, traps that spare the flesh but destroy the soul, and the secret portals that lead to a thousand insane worlds.

This adventure, for 5-8 1st-level characters, transports the characters from their home world to a hothouse planet where warring factions of human-descended ani-men strive to unearth the secrets of their ancient progenitors. Surviving PCs will have a campaign-bending choice: Strike out to conquer this strange planet with the advantages of their heritage – or travel back to their home-place with the unproven devices of the ancients.

BACKGROUND



rom his youth, the wizard Bartakus-Thrum was tormented by dreams of the distant planet Algol. After a lifetime of study, the wizard built a glass

and metal apparatus to distill, transport and physically reinstate the essences of mortals upon that distant world. Thrum hired the party to accompany him and promised them equal shares of any treasure they should find. However, as their souls are transported, the four patrons to whom Thrum has committed his eternal service pull his essence four ways and the apparatus is destroyed, Thrum along with it.

Nonetheless, the characters are transported to Algol. This planet was founded by advanced human agents of the 331 Space Wasps (the Orax). Their human agents experimented on the planet's fauna and flora to breed races of ani-men to spread their civilization and to supply souls for their rapacious masters. But these ancient humans, who possessed a third eye above the two borne by the humans of Aereth, were ultimately overthrown by their resentful offspring. Now their descendants live in rival tribes upon the planet, striving for supremacy and seeking to learn the secrets of their long-dead masters. The Hall of Tests in Ssazzex, the City of Scales, is said to hold such secrets.

THE SIX RODS



hese strange techno-occult cylinders are needed to access various features in the Hall of Tests. Each is about a foot long, two inches in diameter and

made of a clear, tough glass, filled with a specific liquid. For characteristics of each of the six rods, see the table below.

Sealed: There is no means to open a sealed rod without breaking it. (Breaking requires a DC 10 Strength check against a hard surface.)

Capped: There is a cap on the hollow rod that can be removed in order to consume or pour out the liquid. Capped vessels can be re-used. Consult Table 1 below for the rods' functions and effects. Note: Unless specified, the rods' contents are not consumed when used.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ON THE WORLD OF ALGOL

The heat is intense and the light is alien. Most humanoids wear visors to keep the direct light out of their eyes.

Algol is extremely hot and humid. After one turn wearing metal armor outdoors, PCs are at -1d to all physical actions. Indoors, this is 1 hour. Underground, as in most of the Hall of Tests, this penalty does not apply.

Table 1: Rod Functions and Effects.			
Color	Format	Function	If Consumed
Ulfire	Sealed	Mechanical: Activates the Space Wasp devices.	Skin, hair turns silver. PC leaves silver slime everywhere.
Purple	Capped	Facilitates communication with the Space Wasps and their technology.	(Default is consumption)
Black	Sealed	Breaking summons the dronestroyer (See Appendix A)	Dronestroyer explodes out of unhappy PC.
Cerulean (light blue)	Capped	Fuels flying things.	Consuming this liquid allows user to levitate for 2d4 turns.
Argent	Sealed	Souls - made into the material of Space Wasp nests and fuels their devices.	DC 15 Will save or go mad from the rush personalities into PC's mind.
Green	Sealed	Distilled pain. If broken, ignites on contact with air for 3d6 points of damage in 5' area.	Agonizing death!



INTRODUCTION



elcome to the fantastic world of Nehwon, home to the crime-ridden metropolis of Lankhmar, the City of the Black Toga, and residence of its question-

able heroes, Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser! Based on the legendary works of Fritz Leiber, DCC Lankhmar allows judges and players to experience their own adventures in Nehwon, ones to rival the tales of Fafhrd and Gray Mouser. If you've ever dreamed of dueling in the foggy alleys behind Cheap Street, negotiating with supernatural mentors for scraps of forgotten lore, or merely trying to survive one more night in the criminal underworld, DCC Lankhmar is for you!

The Heist takes place over the course of a single night in Lankhmar. The party's goal is a simple one: to loot a legendary treasure-hold, secreted somewhere beneath the pleasure manse of Duke Oraso. Specifically, the PCs are in pursuit of three fabled gems. However, the vainglorious Duke has taken to taunting the city's own patron deities, the Gods of Lankhmar, and before the end of the night there shall be an accounting that sets things aright.

The initial challenge lies in planning and executing the PCs' raid on the manse. This favors creative and clever players over powerful PCs, and judges may find that a cunning group of low-level PCs can succeed where a more powerful, less thoughtful, group fails. The adventure allows for any multitude of stratagems; it falls to the PCs (or rather, their clever players) to formulate a plan and – when those plans go awry – cut a bloody path to freedom.

The Heist is designed for play by 4 to 8 3rd-level characters, but can be easily scaled to larger, more powerful parties by increasing the hit dice and the number of house guards. (Interestingly, larger parties often have a more difficult time with the adventure, as the players almost always coordinate less with one another, causing complications for the balance of the party.)

The adventure spotlights thieves, but warriors and wizards will also find ample opportunity to ply their deadly skills. Warriors especially will need to be creative when it comes to infiltrating the manse, possibly trading favored arms and heavy armor for more subtle, creative means.

Smaller parties of 2 to 3 characters will need to resort to clever, cautious play in order to triumph. That said, a party composed of a talented thief, warrior, and wizard - each played cunningly – may have the best chance of success.

Parties composed of 1st- and 2nd-level PCs will be the hardest-pressed of all, hampered by low thief skills and a shortage of flashing swords and blazing spells. These desperate souls must resort to audacity and daring, and pray that fleeting Luck carries the day.

Finally, when it comes to ill-conceived disguises, haphazard attempts at infiltration, and how even the Twain's plans might go awry (to great amusement), players and judges need look no further than Leiber's "Ill Met in Lankhmar" for inspiration.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND



merchant-lord's treasure horde is a prize worthy of any rogue, but the horde secreted beneath the manor house of Duke Oraso is legendary, even in

the City of the Black Toga. Three gems of inestimable worth are rumored to rest in the vault beneath his pleasure manse, offerings made in honor of the fearsome Gods *of* Lankhmar. Each of the gems is priceless on its own, but taken together they might ransom all the souls in Lankhmar.

Just as legendary as the gems are the vault's defenses. In a city of thieves, the treasure-hold has never been breached, though not for lack of ambition - and the iron gibbets hanging from the city walls bear testimony to the manse's defenses.

However, the thieves have seized upon a possible weakness: just this morning, Duke Oraso has announced a grand fêtetaboo, a mystery play dedicated to the Gods of Lankhmar, the city's own storied powers.

While foreign travelers might not appreciate the significance of such a celebration, its audacity is not lost on Lankhmarts. The Gods of Lankhmar are first and foremost to be feared and respected: any worship is best done from a distance, with sacrifices cast fearfully through the temple door. To celebrate the Gods with wine, laughter, and carousing is to court disaster.

Which, of course, is why every noble scion in Lankhmar will be in attendance. Whatever Duke Oraso has in store in his forbidden pleasure manse, it is not to be missed.

The expected crush of tittering, gawking nobles offers would-be thieves a window, a crack in the vault that is the otherwise impenetrable manor house.

Time is pressing. Invitations were delivered to the nobles' houses this morning. And, rightly fearing censure by common Lankhmarts, the fête-taboo will be held this very night.

At the start of the adventure, the PCs have 12 short hours before the celebration begins.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE



he Heist is designed to be run in a single 4-hour session. However, this depends on the players focusing on their goal. But this too, is a test of sorts: woe

to the thief that becomes distracted in the midst of a heist.

In typical convention games, the first hour is spent with the PCs gathering information and resources, and formulating a plan. Judges should feel free to adjudicate the PCs' failures and successes using common sense and perhaps an occasional Luck check. As accomplished adventurers (and perhaps members of the Thieves' Guild), the PCs have a wide variety of resources to draw upon.

This first chapter of the adventure is open-ended. It is left to the PCs to decide if they want to scout the layout of the manse during the daylight hours, whether or not they care to "acquire" copies of the invitations, and what gear they



INTRODUCTION

emember the good old days, when post-apocalyptic adventures were full of super-science, robots that were there to be mastered, and the finale of every underground adventure was setting the fusion power plant to overload? Those days are back. Mutant Crawl Classics adventures take place in an ambiguous time period after a great disaster has ravaged the world, and it's up to your neolithic mutant tribesmen to go out into the hot house jungles and radioactive deserts of Terra A.D. (After Disaster) and collect the artifacts of the Ancient Ones in order to attain great personal power and savage glory.

This adventure is designed for 6 to 8 1st-level Mutant Crawl Classics characters, but it is equally suitable for equivalent-level Dungeon Crawl Classics characters. Whether the party includes a hyper-intelligent cactus or an elf with *flaming hands*, they will still face deadly challenges in their pursuit of gold, glory, and survival. The adventure begins with the PCs having stumbled into a temporal rift and being deposited in the medieval dungeon lab of a mad wizard who has been researching time-based magics.

If running this adventure from a fresh start, simply have the party discover a strange artifact key that pulses and glows slightly. Any artifact check performed on this lost key triggers a defense program that throws the entire party into the time vortex and lands them unceremoniously in this adventure.

The PCs soon find themselves in a deathtrap dungeon of yore. This underground lair is the partially-neglected but ever-dangerous remnant of the wizard Ram'Gan's workshop. The party must navigate the lethal passageways, confront the wizard, and hijack his time tunnel to return to their own era and home.

BACKGROUND

he archmage Ram'Gan specializes in the magic of time and fancies himself a "chronoartist." He is a madman who sees time as the medium through which he can express himself and comment upon the vile nature of his hideous reality. He has dabbled in other arts, but he now isolates himself from everyone and everything that does not share his singular obsession. He is an unloved and unregarded individual.

The "ruins" of the title of this adventure are the abandoned sections of a workshop constructed within an underground temple, but also refer to remnants of Ram'Gan's failure as an artist. He has uncovered ancient technology allowing him to access the time stream, but he has not yet mastered its operation and he grows increasingly frustrated.

In recent weeks, he has spent only a few hours in the passageways outside his inner sanctum, barking at the razortooth soldiers who guard the complex, while he obsessively writes in tattered tomes. His creations roam free through the rooms or enact performances by rote for audiences that never arrive.

JUDGE'S NOTES

former temple of a minor pharaoh who declared himself a sun god, the rooms and passageways of Ram'Gan's converted workshop are decorated with ancient iconography: concentric circles, ankhs, scarabs, obelisks, and crude figure etchings depicting slaves bowing before a floating divine figure that resembles a strangely-helmeted wizard with a pipe. These images repeat throughout the passageways and rooms, covered periodically by canvases nailed into the stone, upon which spiral shapes are painted, sometimes in vibrant colors, other times in thick black paint speckled with diamond dust.

Because Ram'Gan still occasionally accesses the storeroom, and because the razortooth soldiers who guard the workshop cannot see in the dark, the passageways and rooms are lit with wall sconces. Light sources should not be a problem for the PCs unless there's a reason for the torches to blow out in an area (and area 1-1 is a dark storeroom). Many doorways provide open access to rooms, but if there is a door, consider it locked (DC 12 to open via Strength or Pick Lock checks).

If the PCs linger for more than a turn in any area, they face one of the three random encounters below. (Re-roll if a duplicate result is rolled during the adventure.)

1. A floating scimitar slashes through the air, flying toward you.

This is Karrzo, one of Ram'Gan's former assistants, now in deranged, invisible form after a magico-chrono-temporal curse. He will attack first and ask questions later, but if the PCs are able to reason with him, he will join them if they promise to help kill Ram'Gan. His scimitar is enchanted, and its glimmering reflective blade can be used to provide +2 AC vs. light-based attacks or to redirect beams of light back at a target (DC 15 Agility check).

Karrzo the Ghost: Init +4; Atk scimitar +3 melee (1d8); AC 14; HD 2d8; hp 10; MV 30′; Act 1d20; SP invisible; SV Fort -2, Ref +4, Will -1; AL C.

2. Two mangy-furred cat-faced warriors growl at you, bearing their sharp teeth.

These razortooth soldiers guard the workshop for Ram'Gan and think they are elite soldiers who can defeat any adversary.

Razortooth Soldiers (2): Init +2; Atk short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 7 each; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP bite attack if unarmed (+2 attack, 1d4 damage); SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; AL C.

3. You hear crackling behind you. Flakes of stone fall to the ground as dozens of small purple mushrooms sprout from the wall.

These sentient mushrooms seek human warmth. They will scream if removed from the wall, but then will coo like small birds if touched by human hands. If ingested, one will deal 1d4 damage and then heal 1d12 hit points. Eating a second mushroom will provide a permanent +1