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Presents a Fighting Fantasy amateur adventure

Sukumvit's Grotto

By

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FightingFantasy.com
Amateur Adventure

Sukumvit's Grotto

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A little Christmas gift for all gamebook enthusiasts.

Two dice, a pencil and an eraser are all you need to embark on this adventure, which comes complete with its own elaborate combat system and a score sheet to record your progress. It is up to YOU to decide which routes to follow, which dangers to risk and which foes to fight.

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INTRODUCTION

You are about to take the lead role in an adventure that will make you into a living legend, renowned and respected throughout the world. Before you take part in this quest, you must first determine your own strengths and weaknesses. You use dice to work out your initial SKILL, STAMINA, and FESTIVE CHEER scores. On page 8 is an *Adventure Sheet*, which you may use to record details of your adventure. On it, you will find boxes for recording your SKILL, STAMINA and FESTIVE CHEER scores. Write your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil so you can erase previous scores when you start again. You may make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures. Full details governing rules can be found in any of the Fighting Fantasy gamebooks as well as on the Official website: www.fightingfantasy.com.

SKILL, STAMINA, FESTIVE CHEER

To determine your *Initial* SKILL, STAMINA, and FESTIVE CHEER scores:

- ❖ SKILL Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the SKILL box.
- ❖ STAMINA Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number and enter this total in the STAMINA box.
- ❖ FESTIVE CHEER Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the FESTIVE CHEER box.

For reasons that will be explained below, all your scores will change constantly during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, and for this reason, you are advised to write small in the boxes or to keep an eraser handy. However, never rub out your *Initial* scores, except on those very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

Although you may be rewarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and FESTIVE CHEER points, these totals may never exceed your *Initial* scores, except on very rare occasions, when you will be instructed on a particular page. SKILL reflects your general expertise in fighting and combat; the higher the better. STAMINA score reflects your general constitution, your overall will to survive, your determination and overall fitness; the higher your STAMINA score, the longer you will be able to survive. FESTIVE CHEER score indicates how full of the Christmas spirit (or otherwise) you may be.

BATTLES

During your adventure, you will often come across pages in the book which instruct you to fight a creature of some sort. An option to flee may be given, but if not – or if you choose to attack the creature anyway – you must resolve the battle as described below.

First, record the opponent's SKILL and STAMINA scores in the first empty Encounter Box on your *Adventure Sheet*. The scores for each opponent or creature are given in the

book each time you have an encounter. You should also make a note of any special abilities or instructions, which are unique to that particular opponent.

The sequence of combat is then:

1. Roll two dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score. This total is the opponent's Attack Strength.
2. Roll two dice for yourself. Add the number rolled to your current SKILL score. This total is your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's, you have wounded it. Proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you. Proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided each other's blows – start the next Attack Round from step 1 above.
4. You have wounded your opponent. Subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. Proceed to step 6.
5. Your opponent has wounded you. Subtract 2 points from your STAMINA score. Proceed to step 6.
6. Make the appropriate adjustments to either your opponent's or your own STAMINA scores.
7. Begin the next Attack Round, starting again at step 1 with your current SKILL score. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent reaches zero (death). If your opponent dies, you are free to continue with your adventure. If you die, your adventure ends, Christmas is ruined (for you at least) and you must start all over again by creating a new character.

ESCAPING FROM BATTLES

You may never *Escape* from a live combat situation.

FESTIVE CHEER

At various times during your adventure, either in battles, or when you come across other situations in which you could either be willing to embrace the Christmas spirit or not (details of these are given in the relevant pages themselves), you may use FESTIVE CHEER to make the outcome more favourable to you. However, beware! Using FESTIVE CHEER is a risky business and, if you are a Grinch, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for *Testing your Festive Cheer* is as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your current FESTIVE CHEER score, you are full of Christmas cheer and the outcome will be in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current FESTIVE CHEER score, you are not embracing the season as you should and you will be penalised.

Each time you *Test your Festive Cheer*, you must subtract 1 point from your current FESTIVE CHEER score.

Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during the course of your adventure. Occasionally a paragraph may give you instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL

score, but it may not exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary.

Drinking the Potion of SKILL (see later) will restore your SKILL to its *Initial* level at any time; except when engaged in a battle.

Festive Cheer

Additions to your FESTIVE CHEER score may be awarded in the adventure when you experience something that reminds you to get in the festive mood. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your FESTIVE CHEER score may never exceed its *Initial* value unless specifically instructed on a page. Drinking the Dragon's Egg Nog (see later) will restore your FESTIVE CHEER to its *Initial* level at any time.

Provisions

You begin this adventure with no Provisions as you need to save room for a large Christmas feast that you are attending tomorrow.

EQUIPMENT AND POTIONS

You will start your adventure with a bare minimum of equipment, but you may find or buy other items during your travels. You have a backpack to hold any items you may come across, carry a sword, and are wearing a leather Christmas jumper at the request of Baron Sukumvit himself. In addition, you have one bottle of Dragon's Egg Nog in your possession.

The Dragon's Egg Nog can be drunk at any time, except during combat.

The Dragon's Egg Nog contains enough for *one* measure i.e. your FESTIVE CHEER may be restored once during an adventure.

ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL <i>Initial Skill =</i>	STAMINA <i>Initial Stamina =</i>	FESTIVE CHEER <i>Initial FC=</i>

Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
Stamina=

EQUIPMENT

Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
Stamina=

NOTES

Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
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Skill =
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Skill =
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Skill =
Stamina=

Skill =
Stamina=

ENCOUNTER BOXES

BACKGROUND

Baron Sukumvit is a changed man. No longer is he the sadistic trialmaster driven to creating increasingly tougher dungeons in the search for the ultimate hero. He has had an epiphany, following being thrice-visited by mysterious spirits who showed him the error of his ways. He immediately donated the vast majority of his fortune to the local orphaned Halflings' home in Fang. However, Sukumvit is not a man to be trusted, late-night visitations or otherwise.

Whilst driving your flock of Nandisheep home for Christmas, YOU noticed an intense light glowing in the sky and felt a bizarre compulsion to follow it to its source. That source transpired to be the site of Baron Sukumvit's long-sealed Trial Of Champions and, on arrival, you were greeted by a wizened old dungeon-keeper. Weary, and needing somewhere to bed down for the night, you asked the dungeon-keeper if he could accommodate you in return for the few pieces of gold you kept in a pouch on your belt in case of emergencies. No sooner had he told you that he had no room and you were set upon by three large Orcs, bundled into a large red sack, and struck over the head with a blunt object.

NOW TURN OVER

1

Rubbing your head, you blink several times to accustom your eyes to the peculiar light that now greets you. A small star hovers over your head and, as you move, you notice that it follows you, lighting the way ahead as you go. Taking in your surroundings, you see that you are in a dusty wood-floored tunnel with walls carved into hewn rock. With some relief, you feel your sword still hangs at your waist and can still feel the weight of your backpack on your shoulder.

Walking a short distance forwards, you reach a t-junction. Looking west and east you can see that the tunnel heads away into the darkness in both directions. Looking behind you, you can see only a sheer wall of rock and you determine that the only way onwards is to head in either a westerly or easterly direction.

To go west, turn to 66

To go east, turn to 101

2

You pick the dice up from the floor and see that it is made from ivory inset with black obsidian to represent the spots on each face. Unbeknownst to you the dice is enchanted and endows the holder with considerable skill in combat. You may now roll three dice when calculating your Attack Strength in battle. Gain 1 Festive Cheer point for your find. You may now try turning another ring (turn to 15) or return to investigate the metal door (turn to 10)

3

Without any hesitation, you hurl yourself out of the path of the light beams which converge where you were stood only seconds ago, exploding in brilliant magnesium-bright sparks, before the metal eyes of the statues cease to glow, becoming bronze-coloured again.

Roll one die:

If you roll 1-3, turn to 78

If you roll 4-6, turn to 140

4

The door opens into a small chamber with a startling sight about its walls. As you look about you see twenty-five small doors, each individually numbered from 1 to 25, running the entire length of its walls from corner to corner. If you have been given the code to escape this room, you will know which paragraph to turn to now. If the section you turn to makes no sense, the door you have opened merely opens into a small room with a single item of knitwear on a table at its centre – you have failed to escape the dungeon and all you have for Christmas is a new pair of woollen socks causing you to sit and cry in despair at having come so far yet having failed nonetheless.

5

The double-doors open into a large grotto in which three Elves are sat cross-legged on the floor. As you enter, they rise and you see that, for Elves, they are unusually short, standing only one metre high at the most. They eye you suspiciously and then they each

draw a short dagger from their belts before advancing on you. Do you have a turkey wishbone? If so, turn to 68. Otherwise, turn to 86

6

You grasp the ring and, as you do, the entire wall begins to crumble and collapses inwards towards you. Roll two dice. If the result is less than or equal to your current Skill score, turn to 104. If the result is greater than your current Skill score, turn to 113

7

You draw your sword and try to assume a confidently threatening posture. A foul smell wafts towards you as three massive chicken-like beasts waddle into the light cast by your guiding star, pecking the tunnel floor with their sharp beaks as they go. The closest of the three notices you and eyes you suspiciously as its two companions stand behind it as if it is the leader of the group. With a forward thrust of its head it opens its mouth and a jet of green gas erupts from deep within its feathered throat. Roll two dice. If the result is less than or equal to your current Skill score, turn to 31. If the result is greater than your current Skill score, turn to 88

8

‘So be it. My search continues as it must,’ the Knight muses with disappointment and continues down the southbound passage, leaving you to press on. Turn to 79

9

On noticing you, the creature stops moving and, raising a large clawed hand in your direction, utters a sound that distinctly resembles the word “Good”.

Will you greet the creature? Turn to 30

Or will you use the benefit of surprise whilst it appears docile, and attack it? Turn to 12

10

The door opens easily and soundlessly onto another tunnel, this time with wood-panelled floor and walls that heads away to the west. To take this new passage turn to 13, or to close the door and continue in your original northerly direction turn to 33

11

You feel a little guilty for killing the terrified beast (lose 1 Festive Cheer point) but the carcass is plump and you cut away some of the flesh from its body. This meat can be eaten to restore 4 Stamina points, which you can do now or take the meat with you to save for later. You now leave the room and return to the corridor. Turn to 52

12

Startled at your aggressive behaviour, the creature shrieks with rage and yells a word that sounds like it could well be “Naughty!” before slashing at you with vicious taloned hands. You have no choice but to defend yourself:

MRS CLAWS SKILL 6 STAMINA 7

If you defeat the distressed creature, turn to 111

13

A short walk along the passage leads to a sharp turn north around a corner lit with thousands of tiny sparkling lights that, as you approach, begin to coalesce into a single twinkling and quite magical facial form that smiles and giggles as you get closer. Once you are within a few feet of the face you are suddenly surrounded by the lights and you realise that they are in fact myriad tiny Faeries that make excited sounds as they dance about you.

All of a sudden, they join together in song:

‘Indulge us in our little trick, a simple friendly rhetoric, that will mean you learn an important bit’

They then return to giggling and darting about your body.

Will you try to walk on up the passage (turn to 77) or wait to see what the Faeries expect of you (turn to 16)?

14

No sooner have you rounded the corner and you reach another door with a well-worked smiling face carved into it set in the left-hand wall. To try this door turn to 32, or to ignore it and press on turn to 22

15

If you haven’t already, which ring will you now try:

The first? Turn to 87

The second? Turn to 62

The third? Turn to 25

The fourth? Turn to 6

Or the fifth? Turn to 29

16

The Faerie lights chatter with pleasure when they realise that you are willing to stay for their challenge. They re-form into the smiling visage and, in a sweet yet sly voice, ask you:

‘Whose ghost guards the room of gifts?’

Do you answer:

Lord Carnuss? Turn to 130

Holly and Ivy? Turn to 37

Or the Santa Claws? Turn to 105

17

Before you can hurl yourself to one side, all three beams of light converge at the exact point where you stand. In only seconds your entire body is engulfed in magnesium-bright flame as you are vapourised on the spot. Perhaps you should have heeded the words of warning! Your adventure ends here.

18

The vast bulk of the Santa Claws stumbles backwards with your final blow and falls crashing through the workbench, scattering partially-completed wooden objects in all directions. If you wish to search the body, turn to 99. Or to leave this room as quickly as possible before anything else is attracted by the noise, turn to 49

19

The women's chanting grows more intense and you are unable to move as the sound grows to a deafening crescendo, before the two women suddenly and unexpectedly vanish from sight. You feel very weak and you realise that you have been cursed by two highly-adept Frost Witches. Lose 1 Skill, 3 Stamina and 2 Festive Cheer points. Not wishing to spend a moment longer in this room you immediately leave and return to the corridor. Turn to 107

20

The paper-covered object lifts easily from the statue's hand. As you turn it over in your own hand, the paper covering falls away revealing a piece of light-coloured cake dusted with icing sugar. Will you try nibbling at the cake (turn to 128) or do you not wish to risk this and, instead, would prefer to reach for another object (turn to 26) or will you now leave the room and return to the corridor (turn to 124)?

21

The last slash of your sword cleaves the Jugarimp's head clean of its shoulders, sending a wave of red blood splattering along the wall. As you consider your fortune in avoiding an unpleasant death an odd sight catches your eye as the blood forms into letters on the wall. Once the liquid has ceased to move about and seems to have coagulated you can clearly read this word:

RBLURJQIB

Make a note of this strange word on your *Adventure Sheet*.

Not wishing to stay in this room any longer, especially given the evidence of your recent action that is distributed about the room you head for a second door that you can now see in the far wall which has become visible by an outline where no blood has landed. In fact, the blood appears to be actively avoiding the doorframe and the door! Turn to 115

22

Striding further along the corridor, the light cast ahead of you by the star that follows you casts over the huge form of a red-suited creature that is coming towards you from the opposite direction. As it comes into view, you see that it can barely stand upright in the tunnel. On its head it wears a small elvish-style forest hat, also in red, topped with a blue bow that shimmers in the light. The creature appears to be female and wears large black boots that reach up to its knees, although this does not conceal its upper legs which are only semi-concealed by the skirt section of her red bodysuit.

Are you wearing a gold charm of a partridge in a peartree?

If so, turn to 38

Otherwise, turn to 9

23

You walk some distance before you begin to hear the sound of sleighbells ringing. Looking about you see nothing so you continue on, although the pleasant sound gives you some light relief after the horrible blizzard and you feel strangely happy. Gain 1 Festive Cheer point, even if this means your current score now exceeds your *Initial* Festive Cheer. With a spring in your step, you head on up the tunnel and soon see a metal door in the left hand wall. To try this door turn to 10, or to ignore it and press on north turn to 33

24

You run over the Twelfth Knight's information in your head. Grasping the handle to the door marked 24 you turn it and it opens into a beautiful Winter wonderland. You are free from Sukumvit's latest dungeon, but have you found his secret message to those who not only escape but also find the path to festive happiness. If so, take the words of the message, in the order you found them, and decode it now. You will know if you have cracked it correctly...

25

The ring turns with some effort and a small section of the stone wall immediately above it falls away allowing a small insectivore to spring out and plant itself on your shoulder. You instinctively knock the insect to the floor at which it rears up and you see that it dramatically grows to almost four feet in height. Its jaw retracts showing sharp pincers and it clearly intends to make a meal from you. As it draws close you identify it as a Millennium Bug, an ancient species of beetle that can live in excess of a thousand year, but that are seldom seen by man due to their secretive nature and ability to reduce themselves to a small size to allow them to hide in dark places. You must fight:

MILLENNIUM BUG SKILL 6 STAMINA 8

A curious effect of being the presence of a Millennium Bug is a growing feeling of paranoia for anyone who tries to fight one. If you have not defeated the insect within 6 Attack Rounds you will lose all sense of proportion of this battle and become acutely paranoid to the point of being unable to fight on, allowing the Bug to easily crush your skull with its powerful pincers – your adventure will end here.

If you defeat the disturbing Bug, you may now try turning another ring (turn to 15) or return to investigate the metal door (turn to 10)

26

As you mull over which object to try to take next, you notice that the statues' eyes are all beginning to glow white with heat. Will you proceed and try to take another item (turn to 56) or will you quickly leave the room before anything unpleasant potentially befalls you (turn to 124)?

27

You take a few steps back and lunge violently at the box, driving the point of your sword deep into the wooden object and wrenching it sideways which, you are pleased to see,

completely shatters the entire side of the box, spewing its contents (a dense grey powder) all over the floor at your feet.

Test your Festive Cheer

If you are successful, turn to 65

If you fail, turn to 136

28

After a short distance, the tunnel swings hard to the right and continues in a northerly direction. Before long, you arrive at an ancient-looking wooden door in the left-hand wall. Do you wish to investigate this door (turn to 116) or would you rather be on your way (turn to 52)?

29

You turn the ring which springs forward with a loud bang. There is a slight smell of cordite which worries you but you quickly realise that nothing is amiss. On the ground you notice a plastic dice has fallen, presumably released when the ring shifted towards you. Will you pick up the dice (turn to 2) or ignore it and try turning another ring (turn to 15) or return to investigate the metal door (turn to 10)?

30

You hail the creature and make a gesture which demonstrates your good intent towards it. In response, the creature stops in front of you and begins to grunt semi-words in what seems to be a friendly manner:

‘Big door soon. Wanderer’s aim. Careful little-greens. Take present. Will protect.’

With that the creature searches about inside its red gown and produces a large bone which it thrusts towards you. You take the bone and, on examining it, you see that it is a turkey wishbone.

The creature seems pleased at your acceptance of its gift and, pushing you to one side, it lumbers off down the corridor.

Turn to 122

31

Without hesitation, you cover your nostrils with your left hand as the gascloud comes towards you. You gag a little as a small amount enters your throat, but not enough to harm you. You have heard legends of the toxic breath of the Stench Hen and you are grateful to not accidentally breathe any of the foul gas into your nasal cavities. Enraged that its normal defence mechanism has failed, the creature clucks at its two associates before the three of them simultaneously set about you, clawed feet and beating wings going in all directions in an attempt to confuse you into allowing their talons to tear at your flesh. You must fight these vicious fowl as one:

THREE STENCH HENS SKILL 8 STAMINA 13

If you defeat them, turn to 112

32

You about to grasp the handle when the smiling face suddenly winks at you and the door swings open to reveal a large rock cavern, the ceiling of which is made up of thousands of tiny multi-coloured twinkling lights. Sat on a snow-white throne at the far side of the cavern is a beautiful female humanoid with long flowing blonde hair. She is dressed in a shimmering silver-white robe and on her feet she wears see-through boots that show off her slender feet and red-painted toenails. In every way she appears human, but for a pair of otherworldly and staring lizardine eyes which flutter as you enter the cavern. 'Welcome to my wonderland,' she purrs and steps down from her throne to make her way towards you.

As she approaches you see that she almost glides along the cavern floor, before stopping just short of you and snapping the delicate fingers of her right hand. You are amazed to see a small cutting appear at her fingertips which she thrusts towards you, puckering her red lips as she does so. She holds the branch over your head and, looking up, you see that it has long thin green leaves with delicate white berries sprouting from in between them. Are you wearing a ruby ring on your finger?

If so, turn to 98

If not, or if you chose to put the ring in your backpack, turn to 117

33

You have not walked much further north when you reach a sheer rockface blocking your path. This appears to be a dead end, but the light that constantly follows you glints on five gold rings set into the rock itself. Each is fitted to a pivot and you get the feeling that, by turning one of them, the wall might hopefully move and allow you to continue north. To try turning a gold ring turn to 141, or to avoid taking any risks and instead return to investigate the metal door turn to 10

34

On closer examination, each of the three boxes has a small tag hanging from the silk ribbon that enwraps it. The first reads *Gold*, the second *Common Sense*, and the third *Grrrr*.

Will you try opening the box marked *Gold* (turn to 109), the box marked *Common Sense* (turn to 45), or the box marked *Grrrr* (turn to 80)? Otherwise, if this all looks too risky given the ghostly face's warning, you can now leave the room by turning to 52

35

The handle turns with some difficulty and you have to force the door with your shoulder, although not enough to cause you any injury. The door opens onto a scene of mayhem – toys and trinkets are strewn all about the room and, sitting in the middle of the chaos are two old women dressed as children, with bonnets on their heads and wearing long party dresses. Their clothes are grubby and in tatters as if they have been wearing them for some time. On spying you, the two women rise and greet you, speaking in unison: 'Welcome, traveller. How nice to receive a visitor today. We knew you would come, yes we did. Will you join us in a welcome drink?'

With this, the slightly plumper of the two snaps her fingers and a filthy glass full of a frothy brown liquid appears in her hand. She smiles and gestures that you should take it from her.

Will you accept the drink (turn to 131) or will you decline with thanks (turn to 134)?

36

You cautiously remove your worn leather boots and replace them on your feet with the new boots you have found. They are remarkably comfortable and you walk around the room testing them out with a curious spring in your step. These were once owned by Lord Carnuss himself and can make you remarkably fleet of foot. If you wish to abandon your normal boots here and replace them with these Lord's Boots o' Leaping, you may do so. Either way, add 1 Festive Cheer point for your find. You now leave the room and return to the corridor. Turn to 52

37

'Naaaaagggghhh' the lights cry in unison as they begin to burn up and dissipate in front of you. You assume your answer was wrong and start to trudge off up the northerly corridor wandering what good fortune you may have just missed out on. Turn to 75

38

On catching sight of the charm about your neck, the creature shrieks with rage and yells a word that sounds like it could well be "Naughty!" before slashing at you with vicious taloned hands. You have no choice but to defend yourself against the vengeful thing that is fully aware that you have slain its mate:

MRS CLAWS SKILL 6 STAMINA 7

If you defeat the distressed creature, turn to 111

39

You prepare to fight the hostile snow beasts. Has your sword been warmed by a Raindeer? If so, turn to 126. Otherwise, turn to 94

40

Merry Christmas (by the way, there is no way to reach this paragraph!)

41

You go for the less destructive approach and start to hack at a piece of the decorated wooden box with your sword, but your efforts have little effect. You decide your only option is to attempt to drive your blade deep into it and twist it in the hope of completely breaking one side down. Turn to 27

42

Although the cold is almost unbearable now, you carry on undeterred and, rubbing your cold hands together as you go to prevent frostbite setting in, you finally reach a point where the cold stops as suddenly as it had started and the temperature returns quickly to normal in the passage. Turn to 13

43

The guilt of having killed the two Claws' overcomes you with grief as you realise that these deaths could have been avoided. As you reflect on this, your will to live decreases and you simply stand still as the roof and walls of the tunnel fall in on you. Your body is crushed beyond recognition under several tons of rockfall. Your adventure ends here.

44

All that remains of your opponent now is a small puddle of water on the tunnel floor. If you wish to take a couple of pieces of coal that formed the Schneemensch's eyes you may do so before continuing north. Turn to 122

45

You carefully untie the ribbon and lift the lid of the box. As you do so, the other two boxes disappear into thin air. Looking inside the box you see a finely-cobbled pair of boots. To put the boots on turn to 36, or would you prefer to close the box and leave the room as this seems too fortuitous to be true (turn to 52)?

46

It does not take you long to find a tiny switch in the back wall of the grotto which you push to reveal a concealed door. Turn to 4

47

The witches lie dead at your feet, their bodies collapsed amongst the general chaos of the room. As you are deciding your next move, you hear a pair of heavy footsteps on the roof of the room as if someone is walking about above your head. Plaster begins to fall from the ceiling and large worrying cracks are appearing as if it is about to collapse in on you. Should you wish to do so, you have just enough time to make a basic search of one of the bodies before the roof grows any more unstable. Will you search the plumper Witch's body (turn to 123), the thinner Witch's body (turn to 139), or simply leave while you can (turn to 107)?

48

With a final swipe of your blade, the last Grotto Elf falls to the floor in a pool of blood. Will you search the Elves' bodies (turn to 73) or will you search the room for a potential way forward (turn to 46)?

49

Continuing along the tunnel, your ears soon pick up a bizarre scratching and clucking sound as if a large chicken were making its way down the tunnel. Will you stand your ground and prepare to face the source of the sound with your sword drawn (turn to 7), or will you try to run past whatever is making the odd sounds (turn to 138)?

50

Do you have a bottle of amber-coloured liquid?

If so, turn to 121

Otherwise, turn to 135

51

In spite of the growing intensity of the women's manic chanting you manage to focus your attention on drawing your sword and, on seeing that their usual means of defence is having no effect on you, the two women who are in fact Witches, begin to approach you. They are unarmed, but their limited knowledge of combat magic is enough to provide both defence and attack for them. They stay very close to one-another, which enables you to effectively fight them as if they were a single opponent:

FROST WITCHES SKILL 8 STAMINA 9

If you defeat them, turn to 47

52

Pressing on up the corridor, it is not long before you reach another door, this time in the right-hand wall. Emblazoned on the wooden door are three stylised golden crown symbols. Will you try this door (turn to 106) or would you rather just press on (turn to 124)?

53

The chestnuts are delicious and warming. Restore 3 Stamina points. You now head on your way along the passage. Turn to 122

54

The Goblin has nothing of use about its body, but the brown sphere may be of interest to you. To pick it up turn to 69, or to waste no further time here and press on around the corner turn to 14

55

You draw your sword and prepare to fight the advancing Schneehund:

SCHNEEHUND SKILL 4 STAMINA 6

If you win, turn to 44

56

You have hardly enough time to choose which item to reach for next when the three pairs of glowing eyes explode with light, sending scorching beams directly into the centre exactly where you stand.

Test your Festive Cheer

If you succeed, turn to 3

If you fail, turn to 17

57

A short distance on, you see a wooden door with a curved upper section in the right-hand wall. You can hear the sounds of haughty laughter coming from inside and a repeated thumping noise as if multiple heavy objects are being dropped on a hard floor.

If you wish to try the door, turn to 93

Otherwise, to ignore this door and press on further along the passage, turn to 49

58

You approach the Elves and wave your sword menacingly at them. They begin to blubber pathetically before one of them produces a piece of parchment from its pocket and waves it at you. Taking it, you unfold it to find a message in dark green ink:

IMPRESSIVE. YOU DO WELL TO GET THIS FAR. HEED THIS:
ONE UP, ONE DOWN, AFTER TURNING AROUND. ONLY THEN
WILL MY TRUE MEANING BE FOUND

Noting this message you make one final threatening gesture at the Elves before reaching for the handle of the newly-revealed door. Turn to 4

59

You turn and run from the snowfall, heading west and are pleased to see that the snow was bizarrely localised only in that one area of the eastern passage. You walk past the entrance where you originally arrived and, after walking a further ten metres, you notice something glinting on the left side of the wall. To investigate the source of the glinting, turn to 132. Otherwise, to press on, turn to 57

60

With some considerable strength of will, you manage to block the negative thoughts of the avoidable deaths of the Claws' from your mind and, putting your head down, you run forwards past the dead creature and into the corridor beyond as the roof collapses behind you sealing the tunnel down which you just came. Turn to 122

61

The moment your outstretched hand makes contact with the gold nugget, you feel yourself being literally absorbed into the metal itself. In a few brief but horrifying instances you become entrapped within the nugget where you will remain until another as greedy as yourself passes by and makes the same mistake as you. Be careful what you wish for! Your adventure ends here.

62

The ring turns easily, releasing a mechanism with a clicking sound. However, the wall remains in place but a small drawer opens that the ring must have been the handle for. Looking inside the drawer you see a stoppered bottle labelled "OVUM NOGGUS DRACONUS" – Dragon's Egg Nog! You may take this with you if you wish. You can drink it at any time to restore your Festive Cheer to its *Initial* level, but the bottle contains

only one measure. Pleased with your find, you may now try turning another ring (turn to 15) or return to investigate the metal door (turn to 10)

63

You turn the golden object over in your hand and notice that it is beautifully worked into the shape of a tiny partridge in a pear tree. You put the chain that it hangs from around your neck and are instantly filled with a wonderful feeling of joy and goodwill to all men. Increase your current and *Initial* Festive Cheer by 2 points. Feeling very pleased with your find, you leave the room and continue up the passageway. Turn to 49

64

On hearing you accept his challenge, the Knight smiles and dons his helmet. 'May fortune look favourably on you,' he utters before assuming a combat stance. You must win two consecutive rounds of combat to release the Twelfth Knight from his curse, a feat which will not be easy as he is certainly a powerful warrior. If you do win two consecutive Attack Rounds, the combat will end. The fight continues until either you are dead or you successfully best the Knight who is impervious to actual physical wounds and therefore cannot be killed as such but should he win an Attack Round, you will take 2 Stamina points of damage as normal:

TWELFTH KNIGHT SKILL 13

If you win the challenge, turn to 103

65

You realise that the box was full of very dry gunpowder. Thankfully your sword action created no spark as it penetrated the wooden frame otherwise the results could have been disastrous for you. You quickly destroy the far side of the box using the same plunging and twisting technique to shatter the wood and you are soon on your way again. Turn to 90

66

You walk ten metres, the curious light following you as you go, when you notice something glinting on the left side of the wall. To investigate the source of the glinting, turn to 132. Otherwise, to press on, turn to 57

67

After another few metres the passage turns again, this time northwards and, rounding the corner, you come face-to-face with a huge lumbering form made literally from snow. It stops when it sees you, allowing a much smaller four-legged snow form that must have been trailing behind it to move in front of it. The two snow creatures snarl at you, their deep black coal eyes staring menacingly at you as they bare sharp yellow fangs in their cavernous snow mouths. Do you have a tinderbox and flint? If so, turn to 82. Otherwise turn to 39

68

On seeing you produce the turkey wishbone, looks of mortal fear appear on the three small Elves' faces and they run and cower in a far corner of the grotto. They gesture manically to the centre of the back wall of the grotto and, with a wave of their hands, a door appears and they signal for you to go through it:

'Beyond is what you seek', they whimper.

Will you go directly through the door (turn to 4) or will you threaten the Elves for any more information they may have (turn to 58)?

69

You lift the sphere which turns out to be no more than a plum pudding. If you wish to eat some of the pudding, turn to 50. Alternatively to waste no further time here and press on around the corner turn to 14

70

After walking west for a short time you begin to feel liquid dripping onto your neck and, looking onwards, you notice a wall of water across the corridor. As you get closer the water begins to meet resistance as it falls – a large animal shape is beginning to form in the wall of water and, before long, the water moves around the outline of a large but otherwise invisible stag. Will you try to pass through the water (turn to 91) or will you draw your sword in anticipation of danger (turn to 83)?

71

The bottle lifts easily from the statue's hands. Will you take a sip of the liquid in the bottle (turn to 119), or will you just put the bottle gently in your backpack and leave the room (add it to your Equipment List and turn to 124), or will you reach for another object (turn to 26)?

72

You come to in a small cage only just big enough for you to squat uncomfortably in. Looking about you are relieved to see that you are still in the same room, but you are now dressed in the same scruffy children's party garb as the two women. You cannot see your sword or backpack anywhere, but you are more than aware of the two women talking loudly to one-another about how you will make an excellent plaything for their soon-to-arrive next guest. On attempting to move, you realise with horror that you are tied with strong bonds and the plumper woman suggests that struggling will only cause you to suffer as she strikes you about the head with a large blackjack, knocking you unconscious again. You are doomed to spend eternity trapped here as these curious women's plaything. You have failed in your quest before you had barely even started.

73

You rifle through the Grotto Elves' green outfits and find nothing on the first two corpses, although a search of the third body produces a piece of parchment from within a pocket Taking it, you unfold it to find a message in dark green ink:

IMPRESSIVE. YOU DO WELL TO GET THIS FAR. HEED THIS:

ONE UP, ONE DOWN, AFTER TURNING AROUND. ONLY THEN
WILL MY TRUE MEANING BE FOUND

Noting this message you set about searching the room for any potential ways forward.
Turn to 46

74

With relief, you see the defeated horror retreat into the painting which changes into an image of several snow-capped roofs with delicate hoofprints in the snow. Will you now try once again to look behind the picture (turn to 95) or have you had enough unpleasant surprises here already and wish to carry on westwards (turn to 120)?

75

You walk for some distance before the corridor ends at a t-junction. Will you turn west (turn to 70) or east (turn to 90)?

76

On seeing you draw your sword, the hideous creature retreats into a dark recess of the cavern, giving you ample time to leave the cavern, slamming the door behind you as you go, her pathetic cowering form now inspiring only sympathy in you. Gain 1 Festive Cheer point for surviving an encounter with a dangerous, if ultimately simply lonely, Siren-Hag. Turn to 22

77

You hear a collective sigh of bitter disappointment as you make to walk away and the Faerie lights instantly extinguish. You think you hear a tiny shrill voice saying 'You'll regret it human, yes you will, when the final calling comes to kill'. The final word "kill" is delivered with ominous resonant depth at odds with the rest of the utterance. Feeling unsettled by this you carry on sheepishly up the northerly passage. Turn to 75

78

Taking a moment to gather your thoughts, you realise that you have leapt to the far side of the room, amongst some drapes, at the opposite side to the door by which you entered. You landed in such a manner that your arm brushed a plush velvet curtain aside revealing a second doorway, previously concealed by the curtains. Not wishing to risk trying to cross through the paths of the obviously angered statues, you open this new door. Turn to 100

79

It is not long before the passage turns to the left to head west. As you round the corner you see a large painting mounted on the right hand wall. Do you wish to examine the painting (turn to 137) or ignore it and carry on west (turn to 120)?

80

You carefully untie the ribbon and lift the lid of the box. As you do so, the other two boxes disappear into thin air, but you have little time to reflect on this as an ever-growing

animal form leaps out of the box and steadies itself in front of you. It writhes for a moment before its body settles into what you assume must be its full physical form. Standing just over five feet high, the four-legged brown-coated creature resembles a small deer, but your eyes are drawn to the end of its muzzle where, instead of a nose, a small yellow flame burns. The animal rears up on its hind legs and charges you. You have no choice but to fight this terrified beast:

FLAME-NOSED PAIN-DEER SKILL 8 STAMINA 11

If you defeat the creature, turn to 11

81

You draw your warm blade and prepare to fight the advancing Schneehund. The heat from your sword is particularly potent against the snow creature and every Attack Round that you win you will do 3 Stamina points of damage to the creature rather than the usual 2:

SCHNEEHUND SKILL 4 STAMINA 6

If you win, turn to 44

82

Thinking quickly, you retrieve the tinderbox from your backpack and strike the flint across the dry twigs inside it. In no time at all you have a small flame burning and you hurl the now hot tinderbox at the advancing snow beasts which, due to their slow lumbering nature, cannot move out of the way. The tinderbox strikes the larger snow figure in the chest, melting it to nothing but water instantly. You have successfully killed a dangerous Schneemensh without a fight, leaving only its pet Schneehund to contend with. Has your sword been warmed by a Raindeer? If so, turn to 81. Otherwise, turn to 55

83

As you unsheathe your weapon, the outline of the stag lowers its head as if nodding to you. Will you try to run the invisible creature through (turn to 96) or will you simply try to walk through it (turn to 91)?

84

The metal box lifts easily from the statue's hands and is surprisingly light. You deduce that it must be made of a base metal, probably pewter judging by its discolouration. The box has no lid and inside you find a flint and some dry twigs – this is a tinderbox. If you wish to take the tinderbox you may do so. Will you now reach for another object (turn to 26) or leave the room and return to the corridor (turn to 124)?

85

The cold is almost unbearable now and, although you try to you carry on undeterred rubbing your cold hands together as you go, you simply cannot prevent frostbite setting in. Lose 1 Skill and 4 Stamina points. In addition, your hands are so badly affected by the biting cold that your reactions are no longer what they were and you will now automatically lose the first Attack Round of any future combats you may find yourself in.

After what seems like an agonising eternity of walking down the cold passage, you finally reach a point where the cold stops as suddenly as it had started and the temperature returns quickly to normal. Turn to 13

86

The Elves appear determined to fight you and so you draw your sword, hopeful that this may be the last time you are compelled to do so before escaping the dungeon. Fight them one at a time as they glean pleasure from watching you fight their brothers one-by-one:

FIRST GROTTO ELF SKILL 8 STAMINA 7
SECOND GROTTO ELF SKILL 6 STAMINA 8
THIRD GROTTO ELF SKILL 9 STAMINA 5

If you defeat the Grotto Elves, turn to 48

87

As soon as you grasp the gold ring you feel an intense electric shock shoot up your arm as you are thrown backwards against the side wall. Lose 5 Stamina points. The wall remains in place with the five gold rings as they were. To try turning another ring turn to 15 or to give up on this route and return to investigate the metal door turn to 10

88

Before you have time to protect your nostrils you inhale the gascloud and begin to wretch uncontrollably. You have heard legends of the toxic breath of the Stench Hen and you are horrified to have accidentally breathed in the foul gas. Lose 6 Stamina points and 1 Skill point for the disastrous effects of the creature's primary defence mechanism. Through the clearing green cloud you see a pleased glint in the creature's beady black eye, before it clucks at its two associates. The three of them simultaneously set about you, clawed feet and beating wings going in all directions in an attempt to confuse you into allowing their talons to tear at your flesh. You must fight these vicious foul as one:

THREE STENCH HENS SKILL 8 STAMINA 13

If you defeat them, turn to 112

89

As you touch the frame to move the painting it begins to shake alarmingly as the Chaotic in the picture begins to reach for your throat. Realising the gravity of the situation you relinquish your grip on the picture as the terrifying being emerges from the frame and makes to attack you. You must fight:

CHAOS SLAY-RIDER SKILL 10 STAMINA 12

If you defeat this powerful foe, turn to 74

90

As you head onwards you see a tall figure in armour and helmet striding confidently towards you from the opposite direction. Will you hail the figure (turn to 108) or draw your sword and threaten it (turn to 127)?

91

As you make to step through the water, the outline of the stag simply disappears and the water falls again in a full sheet. As odd as this seems, nothing seems to happen to you so you carry on westwards. Turn to 67

92

You were right to suspect the little Imp. As you draw your sword it whips a tiny stiletto dagger that was concealed under its fez and begins to dance around the room in a vaguely combative manner waving the dagger about its head. You have avoided being tricked by a Jugarimp, a cunning but evil species that lures its food in by playing simple games that always have the same inevitable outcome – the death of its opponent. This horrid little monster deserves to die:

JUGARIMP SKILL 7 STAMINA 6

If you defeat the nasty creature, turn to 21

93

The door opens easily into a large workshop. Several tables run around the walls and a large creature wearing a red suit is pre-occupied heaving several sacks bulging with square objects around the room. On hearing you enter, the creature drops its burden and, as it swings around to face you, you see it in all its terrible glory. Roughly the same size as an ogre, the red-suited being is grossly overweight with a long unkempt white beard obscuring much of its face, bar a pair of insane glowing red eyes and a large gaping mouth full of sharp teeth filed to vicious points. The creature cocks its head to one side before letting out a roaring sound that distinctly resembles the word “Naughty!” and hurtling towards you, raising its sharp taloned claws as it approaches. There is no time to convince the creature that there is any good in you as you draw your sword and prepare to defend yourself:

SANTA CLAWS SKILL 9 STAMINA 11

If you defeat this monstrosity, turn to 18

94

You draw your sword and prepare to fight the advancing Schneemensch and Schneehund. For as long as its master is alive, the Schneehund will cower behind it to protect itself allowing you to fight the creatures individually:

SCHNEEMENSCH SKILL 6 STAMINA 9
SCHNEEHUND SKILL 4 STAMINA 6

If you win, turn to 44

95

Gently grasping the picture's frame in case anything else untoward happens, you are relieved to be able to lift it and look at its reverse where you can make out two letters that have been crudely applied using silver paint:

ROZG

Make a note of this strange word on your *Adventure Sheet*.

You set the painting back to rest and are relieved to see that it remains just that – a painting – and that no more evil beings are emerging from the canvas. Turn to 120

96

You drive your sword forwards into the void and you begin to feel your sword grow warm. At the same time, the outline of the stag vanishes and the water falls again in a full sheet. Expecting your sword to burn your hand, you return it to the scabbard at your waist where you can now feel a warm, but not hot, glow against your thigh. Accepting that this is not presenting a danger to you right now, you press on westwards. Turn to 67

97

Blocking the eerie warning from your mind, you turn the handle and open the door onto a small square room which is empty save for a rectangular wooden table which stands in its centre. On the table are three multi-coloured small boxes, each tied with a silken gold ribbon.

Will you investigate the boxes (turn to 34) or will you simply leave the room and press on (turn to 52)?

98

As you look back at the female's face, the ring suddenly begins to grow warm and a startling change overtakes her appearance. Quickly she warps from her beautiful form into a hideous aged Hag as the Ring Of True Sight grows cold once again, its work here done. Do you wish to attack the Hag (turn to 76) or run from the cavern, slamming the door behind you as you go (turn to 22)?

99

A search of the Santa Claws' corpse produces nothing other than a gold charm on a chain that it wears around its bulbous neck. To put the chain around your neck, turn to 63, or to leave it behind, exit this room and press on along the tunnel, turn to 49

100

The door opens into a second, smaller room with highly-polished wooden floor and walls. A chandelier made from yellow and green crystals hangs from the ceiling creating a curious light effect around the room that is almost mesmeric. In one corner of a room is a large brass bed with yellow silken sheets in which slumbers a curious impish creature wearing a fez. On hearing your footsteps on the wooden floor its eyes flash one and it leaps from the bed landing just in front of you:

'Play game? Is good time for parlour games, no? You play game with friend, yes?'
Will you agree to play the little Imp's game (turn to 129) or will you attack it, suspecting a trap (turn to 92)?

101

You walk twenty metres, the curious light following you as you go, before arriving at a door in the right-hand wall. Nailed to the wooden door is a large lead sheet with runic letters scratched into the soft metal:

BEWARE, FOR THEY ARE NOW BOTH FULL-GROWN

Will you try the door (turn to 35) or ignore it and walk on (turn to 107)?

102

Reaching down and picking up the object you see that you have found a well-made pair of thick bear-skin gloves which you eagerly put on to protect your hands from the biting cold. Pleased with your lucky find, you carry on undeterred until you finally reach a point where the cold stops as suddenly as it had started and the temperature returns quickly to normal in the passage. You discard the gloves on the ground as your hands are now becoming too warm and sweaty – perhaps someone else may reap the same benefit that you found in them. Turn to 13

103

'Free at last,' the Knight wails with pleasure. 'Before I gain my wings and assume my long-awaited angelic form, I shall grant you the gift of foresight. Should you reach your final test in these walls, choose the Eve Of The Day Itself. Note this well, wanderer – you will know when you need to call on it.'

With that, the Twelfth Knight begins to dematerialise before your eyes and is soon gone. Gain 1 Festive Cheer point for this great and charitable achievement. You now press on northwards. Turn to 79

104

You react very quickly and side-step the collapsing wall which settles on the tunnel floor in a cloud of rock dust. Once satisfied that the tunnel is showing no further signs of movement or collapse you step over the fallen rock and can head on further up the northerly passage. Turn to 142

105

‘Naaaaagggghhh’ the lights cry in unison as they begin to burn up and dissipate in front of you. You assume your answer was wrong and start to trudge off up the northerly corridor wondering what good fortune you may have just missed out on. Turn to 75

106

The door opens easily onto a lavishly-carpeted chamber with deep purple velvet drapes hanging around the walls. Whoever resides here is clearly very wealthy. You notice that on the inside of the door, in gold letters, is written the words “BE NOT YE OVERLY COVETOUS”. Positioned in a triangular layout about the room and all facing inwards towards each other are three bronze statues of what look to be Kings, judging by their dress and crowned heads. Standing in the centre of the triangle, you can see that each holds its arms forwards with clasped hands that allow each statue to support an object. The first figure holds forth a bottle containing a translucent amber-coloured liquid, the second has a box made from a tarnished grey metal, and the third holds a lump of something wrapped in green tissue paper. If you wish to try to take one of the objects turn to 143, otherwise to leave this elaborate room and continue up the passage turn to 124

107

Making your way further along the corridor you notice, with some disbelief, that it begins to snow very heavily and you are soon caught in a mysterious blizzard within the tunnel! Do you wish to try to battle on through the driving snow (turn to 110) or will you turn back, retracing your steps past the door, beyond where you found yourself on arrival, and head along the western tunnel instead (turn to 59)?

108

You greet the approaching figure which moves closer before removing its helmet to reveal an old man with a wispy beard but keen intelligent eyes that are at odds with his aged face:

‘Friend, please listen to my tale. I mean no harm. My eleven brothers have gained their wings and lifted the burden of our ancient curse from their shoulders. Many seasons ago, we accidentally killed the one they called The Father, a benevolent overlord who, once a year, would bestow gifts and alms on all who had proved themselves worthy. As penance, we must each prove our fallibility in one-on-one combat. Yet our prowess is our greatest curse, and few can best us. After long years of searching, my eleven brothers have each found one strong enough to defeat them. Only I remain, the Twelfth Knight, to gain my wings by seeking out the ultimate foe. Do you believe yourself great enough to defeat me, wanderer?’

Will you accept the Twelfth Knight’s challenge (turn to 64) or apologise and walk on up the corridor (turn to 8)?

109

You carefully untie the ribbon and lift the lid of the box. As you do so, the other two boxes disappear into thin air, but your heart leaps as an intense glow emanates from within the box. Looking inside you see a huge nugget of gold that must be worth at least 1,000 gold pieces. Will you reach for the nugget (turn to 61) or would you prefer to close the box and leave the room as this seems too fortuitous to be true (turn to 52)?

110

With some difficulty and with your eyes necessarily closed due to the sheer force of the blizzard, you forge on through the freezing snow. After walking what seems like miles but is probably only a few metres but for the effort involved in making any progress at all, you reach a point where the snow starts to ease off and, very quickly stops. Looking behind you, you see the blizzard whistling about as if trying to catch up with you, but somehow being blocked by an invisible barrier. Glad to have got through the blizzard and still trying to understand how it can snow inside a tunnel, you press on. However, you feel an intense cold in your arms and looking at your hands you see that they are blue with cold. You have developed serious frostbite. Lose 3 Stamina points and 1 Skill point. A little shaken by your bad luck you make your way onwards and the corridor soon swings sharply to the left and heads north. Turn to 23

111

Mrs Claws falls to the ground with a resounding crash which sends a shockwave along the walls and ceiling of the tunnel.

Test your Festive Cheer

If you succeed, turn to 60

If you fail, turn to 43

112

The final bird falls dead to the fall in a crumpled heap of bloodied feathers. The oozing liquid from the three birds' wounds produces a truly repugnant stench and you cannot help but wretch with the smell. Lose 1 Stamina point. Not wishing to stay around the corpses any longer than is necessary and certainly having no desire in attempting to feed on them, you make haste further along the tunnel. Turn to 28

113

Although you try to dodge the falling rocks you are simply not fast enough and the wall falls directly onto you, crushing your body under very heavy rubble. Your adventure ends here.

114

You carefully reach into the flames which do not appear to harm you in any way. In fact, the tickling sensation you feel as your arm passes through them is actually quite nice. You take hold of the chestnuts and withdraw them from the flames which immediately extinguish themselves as if they expected you to take the nuts. Will you eat the chestnuts (turn to 53) or discard them (turn to 125)?

115

The door opens into a rather claustrophobic corridor with floor and ceiling made from the same polished wood as the room that you have just left. The walls are noticeably enclosed making it a tight squeeze as you make your way along the new passage. After inching along for some time, albeit without incident, the passage widens and the ceiling rises to two metres making the going much easier. However, as the passage opens out you are surprised to notice that the temperature has dropped dramatically and the passage is now bitterly cold.

Test your Festive Cheer

If you are successful, turn to 133

If you fail, turn to 144

116

As you reach for the handle a terrifying spectral face appears in the centre of the door panel. You blink as you see the visages mouth begin to move and you suddenly recognise the face as that of Baron Sukumvit's long-dead brother, Lord Carnuss. Lose 1 Festive Cheer point as a chill runs down your spine as you realise with horror that you are being addressed by Carnuss' Ghost:

'Only misfortune awaits you within. Run along now, heed my words!'

The ominous message that the ghost repeats makes you feel unsettled as its disjointed rasping voice grows ever more insistent.

Do you ignore the advice and continue on through the door (turn to 97) or have you heard enough and wish to press on (turn to 52)?

117

Unable to resist her beauty, you stand motionless as the female creature moves to kiss you under the mistletoe that she holds over your head. A sly glint in her strange eyes is the last thing you will ever see as your life-force is sucked out of your body by the deadly Siren-Hag. She craves eternal company and what better way than to contain your being in her own body. Your adventure ends here.

118

Although they are crudely formed you can clearly read these words:

SAY THEM BACKWARDS – THERE'S A START

Memorising this cryptic message, you quickly press on. Turn to 57

119

With a little hesitation, you unstop the bottle and draw it up to your lips. As the liquid hits your mouth you feel a warming sensation and you realise this bottle contains an excellent brandy. You swig the contents and feel invigorated. Gain 3 Stamina points for the pleasant effects of the brandy, but you must also lose 1 Skill as you now feel a little tipsy.

Will you now reach for another object (turn to 26) or leave the room and return to the corridor (turn to 124)?

120

You walk a further few metres before being faced with an intriguing sight as celestial flame dances about a one metre circumference circular area on the floor of the passage. In the middle of the mysterious fire you can see several small brown objects that look to be chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Will you reach into the flames and try to take some chestnuts (turn to 114) or ignore this bizarre cameo and carry on (turn to 122)?

121

A thought suddenly crosses your mind that the amber-coloured liquid may well simply be brandy and you pour it over the pudding before taking a bite. Realising that there are no immediate ill effects and that, on the contrary, the brandy-basted sweetmeat tastes fantastic, you wolf it down quickly, but not so quickly as to accidentally swallow a metal object hidden inside it. Spitting the metal object out, you notice that it is a small ring with a deep-red ruby set into the mount. Make a note of whether you choose to slip the ring onto a finger or if you simply put it into your backpack. Restore 3 Stamina points for the delicious food. Suitably refreshed, you now press on around the corner. Turn to 14

122

You walk on a short distance before arriving at a large double-door in the north wall. About the doorframe hangs a large amount of garish decoration with a wreath mounted over the centre apex which forms the letter "S". You take this to mean "Sukumvit" and conclude that you have reached your final challenge, hopeful of meeting Baron Sukumvit himself and making good your escape from this bizarre dungeon that you have found yourself unwillingly exploring. You make to push the double doors inwards. Turn to 5

123

A search of the plumper Witch's clothes produces nothing other than a small tag with the name "Holly" stitched into it as if to identify the owner of the party dress. A little disappointed, you run from the room as the ceiling begins to fall in. Turn to 107

124

You continue further along the corridor, the strange star still hovering over your head to light the way forward. After some thirty or so metres you see a figure sprawled on its back on the tunnel floor. As you get closer you see that it is the body of a largish Goblin. A sprig of holly is embedded in its heart which you assume must be how it met its end. A small amount of green blood drips from the wound and onto the tunnel floor. The right arm of the dead creature is stretched out onto the ground, its open hand extended around a small brown spherical object.

To examine the body further turn to 54, or to ignore the corpse and press on around a turn to the right that the corridor takes immediately beyond the dead Goblin turn to 14

125

You toss the chestnuts aside and they vanish in the same way that the flames that cooked them vanished. You wait a moment to see if anything further happens, but nothing does so you go on your way. Turn to 122

126

You draw your warm blade and prepare to fight the advancing Schneemensch and Schneehund. The heat from your sword is particularly potent against the snow creatures and every Attack Round that you win you will do 3 Stamina points of damage to the creatures rather than the usual 2. For as long as its master is alive, the Schneehund will cower behind it to protect itself allowing you to fight the creatures individually:

SCHNEEMENSCH SKILL 6 STAMINA 9
SCHNEEHUND SKILL 4 STAMINA 6

If you win, turn to 44

127

As you draw your sword you feel yourself unable to move. Your arm then starts jerking backwards and forces your sword back into the scabbard at your belt. You decide it would be wise to hail the approaching figure after all as there are clear powers at work here beyond your control. Turn to 108

128

You break off a small part of the cake and put it in your mouth. As you chew on it the cake becomes ever more delicious. You are eating enchanted Elvish Stollen, a very rare sweetmeat indeed. Gain 1 Stamina point as well as 1 Festive Cheer point. You can eat the remainder of the cake now or take it with you for later (eating the rest will restore an additional 2 Stamina points.) Pleased with your find, will you now reach for another object (turn to 26) or leave the room and return to the corridor (turn to 124)?

129

The Imp skips about the room with joy as it explains the long and complex rules to its convoluted parlour game. You are about to question it as to how to win when it draws a tiny stiletto dagger and, leaping with surprising agility, it hurls itself at your face, driving the blade deep into your jugular. You fall to the floor, choking on your own blood. Your adventure ends here as the evil Jugarimp dances on your corpse.

130

‘The wanderer’s good, the wanderer’s good’ chant the Faerie lights in unison as they form themselves into two letters that hover in the air in front of you:

EG

Make a note of this strange word on your *Adventure Sheet*. With this the lights suddenly extinguish themselves leaving you feeling pleased if a little confused. Gain 1 Festive Cheer point for this odd if pleasing encounter and turn to 75

131

You take the dirty glass and both women begin to jibber excitedly to one-another in an incomprehensible yet slightly sing-song tongue. After a few sips you begin to feel very groggy and the room starts to spin as you black out from the effects of the drugged mulled orc ale you have drunk. Turn to 72

132

Looking closer at the wall, you can now make out several words formed on the wall in a silver and gold tinselly script. To read the message, turn to 118, or to ignore it and carry on, turn to 57

133

As you press on undeterred in spite of the freezing cold your foot glances against something jutting out of the now very frost-covered floor. To investigate this object, turn to 102. Or to ignore it and forge on, turn to 144

134

You politely refuse the drink and, instantly, the two women fly into a blind rage, shouting insults at your brazen affrontery of their gesture of goodwill. They both stare at you with beady black eyes and begin to chant as one.

Test your Festive Cheer

If you succeed, turn to 51

If you fail, turn to 19

135

You take a bite of the pudding which tastes delicious. Realising that there are no immediate ill effects, you wolf the rest of the pudding down, although you cannot help but feel that it could have somehow tasted better. Thankfully you did not eat it so quickly as to accidentally swallow a metal object hidden inside it. Spitting the metal object out, you notice that it is a small ring with a deep-red ruby set into the mount. Make a note of whether you choose to slip the ring onto a finger or if you simply put it into your backpack. Restore 2 Stamina points for the pleasant, if slightly lacking, food. Suitably refreshed, you now press on around the corner. Turn to 14

136

You realise that the box was full of very dry gunpowder. Unfortunately, your sword action created a spark as it penetrated the wooden frame which has ignited the dry powder and you are thrown forwards in a violent explosion which hurls you through the far side of the box suing shattering the wood as you land on the floor in a bloodied heap. Lose 6 Stamina points. If you still live you brush yourself down and you are soon on your way again, alive but seriously shaken. Turn to 90

137

The painting is very well rendered, showing an acolyte of Chaos riding across a snowscape in a silver sleigh with many vicious spikes mounted along its side. The sleigh is being hauled by skeletal horses that snort back smoke from their flaring nostrils. Do

you wish to try looking behind the painting (turn to 89) or will you now simply press on (turn to 120)?

138

Test your Festive Cheer

If you succeed, you have managed to negotiate your way quickly by three repulsive-smelling foul birds which, confused by the sudden movements of their potential prey, lose interest in you and scrape off down the corridor in the direction you came from. Turn to 28

If you fail the roll, the first of the three hideous birds moves to stand in your way and you have no choice but to attempt to appear unfettered by this. Turn to 7

139

A search of the plumper Witch's clothes produces nothing other than a small tag with the name "Ivy" stitched into it as if to identify the owner of the party dress. However, written below the name in blue ink are these letters:

ZQSDN

Make a note of this strange word on your *Adventure Sheet*. You now have no choice but to you run from the room as the ceiling begins to fall in. Turn to 107

140

Taking a moment to gather your thoughts, you realise that you have leapt back towards the door by which you entered, having come to rest just by the internal door handle. You turn the handle and leave the room, pleased to still be alive. Turn to 124

141

Which gold ring will you turn:

The first? Turn to 87

The second? Turn to 62

The third? Turn to 25

The fourth? Turn to 6

Or the fifth? Turn to 29

142

This section of the passage differs from the area before the collapsed wall in that the floor and walls are made from polished wood giving a warm and homely feel as you make your way onwards. However, it is not long before your path is once again barred, this time by a large wooden crate with intricate designs of snow scenes painted onto the sides. The box is marginally too wide and too tall for you to be able to attempt to squeeze by or crawl over. Your only option is to try to break it open somehow. Will you attempt to cut into it with your sword in the hope that it is made of a soft or thin wood allowing you to remove a small section (turn to 41) or attempt to drive your blade deep into it and twist it in the hope of completely breaking one side down (turn to 27)?

143

Which object appeals to you?

To try to take the bottle turn to 71

To reach for the metal box turn to 84

Or to grasp the wrapped lump turn to 20

144

As you carry on down the freezing corridor, you grow ever more demoralised as you begin to lose all feeling in your hands.

Roll 3 dice and compare the result to your current Stamina score.

If the result is greater than your current Stamina score, turn to 85

If the result is less than or equal to your current Stamina score, turn to 42