

FREDIGAR'S HOPE

An Advanced Fighting Fantasy adventure for 3-5
novice adventurers in the Blackmoor Living World

For Directors' eyes only!



GALFIERO RISALITI



CHIMERAE

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We welcome your feedback about your Advanced Fighting Fantasy adventures in the Blackmoor Living World and about this humble publication. That is the main thing that pushes us to publish more and, if we can, better.

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This adventure is obviously dedicated to Havard, with so much gratitude.

This adventure is designed for the Blackmoor Living World campaign and is suitable for three to five novice adventurers, i.e. adventurers with 0 XPs. However, it can be adapted easily for low-experience adventurers (i.e. with up to 300 XPs) by adding one point of SKILL to all opponents.

Typical Blackmoor Living World adventures require a single gaming session between two and four hours of play and this adventure should be among those a little shorter, as recommended for all novice adventures, to allow more time at the beginning of the game to learn the rules (if necessary) and create new characters to play.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Comeback Inn

This hugely famous inn has seen the very history of Blackmoor being moulded so many times by all Blackmoorian adventurers worth mentioning and it was not by chance. The Blackmoor Inn has in fact several and mysterious enchantments cast on it. It appears to be in fact a kind of living, and perhaps even sentient, connection between many times and places, just like the *Inn Between the Worlds* that is mentioned in several bedtime stories in Blackmoor.

It was originally established by a peasant guy called Fredigar Cripps, however all the magic associated with the Inn was bought at a really princely price!

Fredigar Cripps

The young Fredigar, from Blackmoor, loved to sit at the local inn and listen all the telltales of the toughest looking adventurers that frequented the then Village of Blackmoor. He also dreamed, one day, to become and adventurer as well and to find a huge treasure – not an uncommon dream for sure, among his peers. He also dreamt of owning a wonderful Inn where all the best adventurers would lodge and tell their heroic tales. In his mind he dreamt to call his Inn with the name of Fredigar's Hope.

Well, eventually his dreams came true! He went adventuring and found a great treasure during his very first adventure! Part of the treasure was donated to the peasants, but part of it was invested in the most marvellous adventurers' inn ever known. However, at the last minute he changed mind and decided to call it: The Comeback Inn!

Many people say that his huge luck at his very first attempt is a bit too suspicious and that he was actually

guided by the will of the deities that wanted to mould Blackmoor as an example among the nations. Perhaps they are right, after all.

The Wizard Pit

Centuries ago, The Emperor of Thonia was the ultimate authority on Blackmoor, that he ruled through Duke Bruadaire. The Duke's court wizard, Graewende, was actually an undercover agent of the Emperor, that didn't fully trust his Duke, just like he didn't fully trust anyone.

Duke Bruadaire forged an alliance with the Elven King Uhlmar to destroy the evil Cult of the Temple of Id (year 500), but the Emperor didn't give him his permission neither to get into any alliance nor to attack the Temple of Id, therefore at the last minute Graewende cast his magic on the Duke, turning him into a dog! After that episode, Bruadaire was known as the Dog Duke.

The army of Blackmoor, seeing what happened to the Duke, fell into great confusion and didn't attack the Temple of Id, as Graewende expected, leaving the Elves of King Uhlmar unsupported in the battlefield, apart a few Blackmoorians that fought even in absence of the Duke. Eventually, the Elves won, but paying an enormous price in blood, and destroyed the Cult. Many Elves on this day lost their trust on the Humans, eventually leading to the division between Cumasti and Westryn Elves.

Once the Duke went back to his Human form, he seized the magic staff from Graewende and punished him gruesomely, having him undertaken alive in the trench where the wizard used to practice his magic, not far from the walls of Blackmoor. After this episode, that place was known as *the Wizard Pit* and legends spread about a fabulous treasure that could be found there.

As it sometimes happens, the legend has some truth in it! The wizard, to prevent his own death, used the magic Cube of Nolubez that he had on a chain around his neck and found refuge in a Tesseract: a bizarre, multi-dimensional artefact. At the time, he didn't know much of the magic of the Tesseract, but he didn't have any other option to save his life and he is still trapped in there, without realizing that so many years have passed.

The Topaz Room and the Room of Dreams

Fredigar Cripps had the luck to find the entrance to the tesseract, to overcome the wizard and to get a treasure out of it at his very first adventure. He went on and built the Comeback Inn and all its wonders using that treasure. One of the fabled rooms of the Inn is the Topaz Room, another is the Room of Dreams and their doors face each other across a corridor in the Comeback Inn. People says that these specific rooms are imbued with particularly

strong magic associated with divination (it is not a case that Blackmoorian Seers Guild, most trusted by King Uther for all the good reasons, is called the Topaz Eye) and that the Room of Dreams in particular causes those who sleep there to have particularly interesting and vivid dreams. Apparently, the room attunes itself to the sleepers, generating appropriate and revealing dreams, but nobody knows exactly how this magic works.

This adventure will go from the gates of the Comeback Inn, to the Room of Dreams, to a time when Fredigar Cripps was still a dreaming guy, just about to start his very first adventure, obviously in the Wizard Pit!

ADVENTURE HOOK

Just following the tradition of many Blackmoorian adventurers, you decided that your very first adventure has to be a visit to the fabled Comeback Inn, the favourite of all the adventurers worth mentioning in Blackmoor, a place full of story and myth! You met each other on the way from your villages and, as normal in Blackmoor, you decided to form a group and go to the Comeback Inn together.

This is the perfect opportunity for the players to describe their characters and for the characters to be introduced to each other.

Your trip to Blackmoor City is uneventful and, as you approach, you stare from the distance at the black silhouette of the fabled Blackmoor Castle. At the gates, the guards seem to recognize at first sight that you are novice adventurers and weave you in with a grin, allowing you the first entry without paying any entry tax.

You walk through the streets in wonder, as you never saw so many people and so many buildings all together. Eventually, you find yourselves in front of the famous Comeback Inn. You realize it is late, sunset is over. There are two guards on either side of the door and, as you approach, they inform you that this evening the Inn has been hired for a private function and you can't enter without an invitation. As you hear that, after your long trip you are bounced at the gate, you feel suddenly so, so tired, thirsty, hungry, desperately needing a warm fireplace in front of you.

Hopefully the characters will beg the guards to be admitted anyway or at least will stay for a little while near the door. Attempting violence against the guards or against the Comeback Inn establishment is so foolish that will straight away terminate the adventuring career of the characters, probably transformed into frogs or something like that.

A bizarre, wrinkled man wearing an elegantly ornate mustard tunic and two strange stones floating in mid-air around his head, comes forward and says to the guards: "These Ladies and Gentlemen are my assistants. Please admit them. They will sleep in the room that I have booked just across my usual room, the Topaz Room." Then the man swiftly enters in the Comeback Inn. The guards finally welcome you as they open the doors for you.

Once again, hopefully, the adventurers will take the chance and enter the gate as well, otherwise this adventure will be already over.

A strange force washes over you as you pass through the threshold. You step on the flagstone floor of the greatroom, that is crowded by many bizarre patrons: some of them wear flashy armours, some other pointy hats and staves adorned with precious stones as big as a fist! A few of them are missing some limb, replaced by clockwork limbs! Even the barman is very peculiar: he is in fact a fully grown Ogre, dressed in a fashionable way and with a dark leather apron. In the center of the crowd there is a grizzled man, bare-chested, hairy, rippled with oversized muscles and with a long, wild beard. His eyes are even wilder! He picks up a big barrel of beer, holds it above his head for a moment and then slams it straight on his forehead. The thick wood of the barrel breaks against his skull and he drinks the full barrel from the inside! Everybody roars, cheers and laughs wildly, slapping each other on the shoulder. You are absolutely in awe.

The same man that helped you getting through the gates of the Inn comes forward and tells you: "Hey! Look at me! It is not yet your time to join this kind of parties: Marfeldt the Barbarian might not be any more exactly in his prime, but, as years pass by, his temper hasn't got any more patient with gatecrashers and I'm sure he did not invite you to his party. I didn't let you in to be massacred at the very beginning of your adventuring career. Now, follow me upstairs." As he mentioned Marfeldt the Barbarian, your hair stood on the back of your neck, as you heard a lot of gruesome stories about this.... hem... somewhat controversial hero of Blackmoor: sometimes very generous, some other times very deadly... even for the most futile reasons.

The bizarre man in mustard clothes won't answer any characters' questions as he leads them upstairs, but of course the characters can have a better look at him. His mustard tunic is ornate with eye-shaped motives, around his neck is a little golden chain with a blue gemstone (a topaz), cut in the shape of an open eye. Around his head are circling, like small satellites around a planet, two stones: a marbled scarlet and blue sphere and a pure white octahedron (they are of course two fabled Ioun stones). He is a High Thonian Human and he likes to be called Pernumian. He is part of the Topaz Eye, the Blackmoorian Seers Guild, he had a positive gut feeling about the characters and for this reason he wants to help them, as he always follows his gut feelings. He will

participate to Marfeldt's party, but he decided that the characters will have a chance of sleeping in the Room of Dreams, while he is lodged in the Topaz Room, of course!

If the characters decide to behave like spoilt brats, the Director should feel free to deal with them in harsh ways, maybe turning them into frogs or maybe simply having them kicked out and banned from the Comeback Inn. Anyway, this adventure will end very suddenly for them and they won't be easily readmitted in the Comeback Inn (add Character Sheet note: *Misbehaved at the Comeback Inn*).

Eventually, the man in the mustard tunic stops upstairs along a corridor and opens a door: "This is your room for tonight. Please excuse the guys as they have their little, private party, forcing you to have dinner in your private room... as my guests." You have a quick look inside and you see an immaculately furnished room, with white velvet curtains. On the small table there is a rich dinner. In front of you there is a bizarre Thonian man, dressed with a simple, mustard colored dress: he is bald and his flowing beard is not made of hairs but of small snakes, that, startled by your appearance, stand up on his face and open their mouths threateningly. "Haztian, did you already put your things in the cabinet?" asks your guest. "Yes, my Lord." Replies the man with the snakes on his face. "Very good. Now vacate the room swiftly, as these people will stay here tonight instead." The man seems momentarily saddened (the snakes too!), but executes the orders in very short time and recollects his few possessions before leaving with just a nod. The wrinkled man in the mustard ornate tunic finally says: "Enjoy your dinner and good night! I shall see you tomorrow morning for breakfast in the greatroom... hem... better if you don't expect me too early... Just make sure you don't wander around the Comeback Inn tonight... it can be very dangerous." and he shuts the door. You have a look at the food and drink in your room and... it is a feast!

After dinner you feel terribly sleepy and suddenly your eyelids become too heavy.

The Room of Dreams helps the characters embarking in their oneiric adventure, but first add Character Sheet note: *Haztian's resent*. Proceed to Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 1: NEW SELVES

Suddenly, you realize that you are walking in a group, outdoors and it is a nice, although quite chilly, morning. You look around you and you realize that you are outside a modest wall around a village surrounded by vast forests. Looking on the other side of the wall, you notice the top of a black stone tower sticking out.

If the characters guess that it could be Blackmoor Castle, the Director will confirm that it looks broadly like that, but not exactly, as various expansion and reconstruction projects were delivered in the meanwhile.

Now the Director needs to decide who will impersonate Fredigar Cripps. The choice should fall on a magic user or priest with some Seer-like spell or ability. If more than one character are equivalent under this point of view, the one with higher LUCK should be chosen. If it is again a draw, choose randomly. The chosen character will receive a copy of *Handout 1* (that is essentially Fredigar's character sheet, plus associated instructions, to be used just for this adventure instead of the normal character sheet). Please note that the amulet around Fredigar's neck is nothing less than a present from Khoronus (in disguise and coming from the future, of course) and it will ensure that the wearer has always 12 points of LUCK, as long as it is hold in hand, hoping for good luck.

In practice, the effects of the Room of Dreams are sending in a dream and back in time the characters, at the time of Fredigar's first (and last) adventure. All characters look slightly different (but their characters sheets won't change), and that's mainly due to the adaptations to different (ancient) fashion, but one of them will be fundamentally different, as s/he takes the features of none the less than Fredigar Cripps! Let the "transformed" characters re-introduce themselves while they walk from the walls of Blackmoor Village to the Wizard Pit. As this is an oneiric adventure, the Director is advised to reduce a bit the stringent control of logic and facts on reality. Also the characters will be more lightheaded than usual and won't ask themselves too many questions about what happened, but will rather face reality as they perceive it in the dream. If necessary, the Director can advise them accordingly. Proceed to Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2: THE WIZARD PIT

OK, now your adventuring lives will start. When you went out of the gates of Blackmoor Village you were still kids, but now that you reached the Wizard Pit, you have to grow up and become true adventurers! A life of danger and, hopefully, rewards is now in front of you!

The Wizard Pit is not far from the walls and it is a kind of big trench... a pit, in fact. They say that a wizard, long time ago, used this place to practice his magic in all safety for the other villagers. When the Wizard disappeared, they say he left behind his treasure... and, hopefully, you will find it! Hopefully you just need to dig a bit...

The characters will now probably search the Pit, that is covered in grass and small bushes, with some scattered stones here and there. The grass has patches of slightly different colors, indicating where there is something underneath, hampering the growth of the grass. The characters will have to make SKILL + Awareness rolls as they search (Fredigar has a couple of spades to help the search, apart from the Awareness Special Skill). A failed roll will unearth nothing interesting. A roll passed by three points or less will unearth some cut/ornate/burnt stone fragments: something that may momentarily raise the characters' curiosity and their excitement (the characters will guess that a scholar may want to buy them and perhaps they will load themselves with stones), but useless under every other point of view. A roll passed by over three points will unearth a shallow, stone basin.

If the Quicksilver from Fredigar's backpack is poured on the stone basin, it will create a silvery liquid surface reflecting the sky on its small, slow moving waves. The liquid is very dense, but, if something is pushed through the silvery surface, the depth that can be reached is bigger than the shallow stone basin. In fact, this surface is now a magic door, as expected by Fredigar. All characters that will take the chance and jump in, will go to the *Cube A* in Chapter 3.

If the characters can't find the stone basin and activate the magic door, go to *Conclusion A*.

CHAPTER 3: INTO THE TESSERACT

As mentioned, the strange dimension that the characters just entered is a Tesseract, that is a kind of multi-dimensional cube, containing eight different cubes in the very same place. As they enter for the first time, the characters will always find themselves the *Cube A*, then they can hopefully find the way to move to other cubes and find the treasure.

Inside the Tesseract things are pretty weird. If a character dies while dreaming of being in the Tesseract, s/he will wake up the morning after, after a bad night of sleep, completely sweaty, but substantially OK. However, if the character impersonating Fredigar Cripps dies, the dream is over for everybody in the group.

In each cube there are six "gates" (considering a random reference point, they can be labelled as "up", "down", "left", "right", "in front" and "behind") and the characters can use them to explore the Tesseract, but the "gates" don't take necessarily from point 1 to point 2 and

vice versa on the way back. Every time a gate is crossed, roll 2d6: a roll of 2, 3 or 4 will teleport the characters to another random cube (not the "normal" destination and not the cube from where they come from), a roll of 12, 11 or 10 will send the characters back to the cube they just left, all other rolls will take to the various other cubes mentioned in every single section. Every time a character re-enters a cube, it is as it was found the first time, as nobody ever went in there before (a part a couple of exceptions that are clearly flagged). If a gate is opened and closed and then re-opened again by a character that was together with the characters that just went out, it won't take this last character to the same place, but will have an effect just like above mentioned rolling a 2, 3 or 4. Remember that going through a gate in the Tesseract is not like going through a normal door, but causes the character to be magically teleported in the middle of next cube. Not everything follows logic in this place.

Cube A

You look around and realize that you are suspended in the sky! You move your arms and legs and feel like you are swimming towards a soft, white cloud! You look momentarily down and you see the sea... it is very calm!... The sea! You suddenly realize that you are falling! SPLASH! The contact with the surface of the sea hurts, as you fell from quite high!

Hitting the water surface causes a damage of just one point of STAMINA. The characters will fall the first time even if they can fly, as they were not prepared, but next time they will be able to think forward and use their magic, etc. so they won't get hurt. The sea is very calm, so floating won't be too difficult, but the bottom of the sea is 4 or 5 meters deep, it is necessary to pass a test of SKILL + Swim or LUCK to avoid drowning, or you have to hang on to somebody that can swim and help you (Fredigar, for example, knows the Swim Special Skill). However, a character with stones in his/her backpack with straight away sink and go through the gate in the bottom of the sea.

You are floating on the surface of the sea and you look around. If you tilt your heads, you can notice that there are some discoloured surfaces floating around: one in front of you, one behind you, one to your right, one to your left, all just above the water level, and then one above you, in mid air, and one below you, on the bottom of the sea.

The gate in front normally takes to *Cube B*.

The gate behind normally takes to *Cube C*.

The gate above (it will be difficult to reach it without magic or a pair of wings) normally takes to *Cube D*.

The gate below normally takes to *Cube E*.

The gate to the right normally takes to *Cube F*.

The gate to the left normally takes to *Cube G*.

Cube B

You suddenly realize that you are walking across a desert savannah... it is very hot and the air is dry. Suddenly, you look up and see some Giant Wasps that are quickly approaching!

There is one Giant Wasp (OotP, page 117) for each character. The characters may exploit the weakness of the insects and chase them away with fire, or they may want to fight them, but if they will flee through a gate, the insects will have the free attack as normal in these cases.

You look around and again you see some discoloured surfaces that create that strange gates in front of you, to your right, to your left and even above, near the top branches of a rare tree, and below, at the bottom of a deep waterhole.

The gate in front normally takes to *Cube H*.

The gate behind normally takes to *Cube A*.

The gate above (assuming the characters can climb that high or have other ways to get there) normally takes to *Cube D*.

The gate below normally takes to *Cube E*.

The gate to the right normally takes to *Cube F*.

The gate to the left normally takes to *Cube G*.

Cube C

You are at the center of a wide room shaped exactly as a cube, except that the corners have been rounded up. Under the light of countless candles, are the most extraordinary lifelike statues of knights, mages and warriors. A white-haired old man, barely covered by scraps of fabric, but with a silver coronet on his head, suddenly appears in mid air further away from you, giggling before landing graciously. The mad sparkle in his eyes makes you feel uncomfortable. In a high-pitched voice he says: "Oh goody! More stones for my garden? Come to join your friends, have you? You know? I am king Astragalus!... old Nolubez made this place just for me, but I feel sooo boring and, when somebody visits me I enjoy having fun with them! If the visitors prove they are worthy, I give them presents! If the visitors are not worthy, then I turn them into stone, as they amuse me more this way... He chuckles again, obviously pleased with your arrival.

Astragalus was in fact *jailed* in this Tesseract by Nolubez the Magnificent many centuries ago, for reasons that nowadays nobody remembers and the statues are adventurers that during this time found their way to this room just like the characters, perhaps looking for the

fabled treasure of Graelwende, but had hard luck instead. Astragalus can't go out, but he is fundamentally almighty and immortal inside this specific part of the Tesseract... and he's also completely mad.

"Now, I'm a fair king and so I'll ask you a question... just a little, little question to one of yours. If he'll answer correctly, I'll help him, but if his answer is wrong, I'll turn him to stone! Simple! Isn't it?"

A few questions / logical quizzes are proposed below, but the Director may want to have some more ready, a bit for variation, a bit in case the characters come back here more often than planned.

The old man points at the statue of a knight, with an agonizing face. "He weights 100 pounds plus half his weight. How much does he weight?" The right answer is 200 pounds.

"A father, son, and grandfather walked into this room. They each answered to a question of mine. What is the fewest number of questions answered, such that both sentences will be correct?" The right answer is one.

"If there are 5 apples on the counter and you take away 2, how many do you have?" The right answer is two.

Correct answers are awarded with congratulations and the following objects (in order, one each time the characters come to this cube and answer correctly): a Horn (that fits perfectly the slot in *Cube H*), a thick candle (that magically lits on its own when in darkness and that will fit as well the slot in *Cube H*), a dog-sized collar and leash (that will magically tame a dog in *Cube F*), a crown (useless)... and whatever other useless objects the Director's fantasy can come up with (but characters turn into stone will never be released). After this, six doors open in the cube and the characters can chose the one that they prefer (they can walk on the walls and the ceiling, if they want).

If the characters instead tell Astragalus that they don't want his presents (but information, etc.), he will tell them that he is actually a prisoner of this place, rather than its king, but at least he's not the only prisoner around, as there is also a crazy wizard that always avoided him... in another part of the Tesseract there is a carved, wooden pillar and the presence of a dog will summon the wizard, as he is fond of well-tamed dogs. He is of course Graelwende. Astragalus will not tell which gate leads to Graelwende as he doesn't know the rest of the Tesseract, but can perceive the presences in it and, after long time of study, some of their thought.

Every now and then (at the very least least once every time the characters enter this cube and then once every time Astragalus feels excited) Astragalus jumps and, as he jumps, the cube around him rolls as if it was the inside

of a dice being rolled (the characters can make an Acrobatics roll to avoid getting hurt by this roll, that otherwise causes the loss of one point of STAMINA). The Director can roll a dice as well (it represents the room and the number of the dice represent the positions of the gates) and check below to understand where each gate leads to. No rolls to check if the characters progress to an uncommon cube are to be made.

Gate 1 takes to *Cube H*.

Gate 2 takes to *Cube F*.

Gate 3 takes to *Cube D*.

Gate 4 takes to *Cube E*.

Gate 5 takes to *Cube G*.

Gate 6 takes to *Cube A*.

Cube D

You are in a square room made of big, grey stones, roughly squared. On the walls there are rings where torches are burning. Near the center of the room there is a big treasure chest, with a big, golden key in its lock. There is a wooden door on each of the four walls and there are two trapdoors, one on the floor and one on the ceiling, that can be reached by standing on the treasure chest. All these doors and trapdoors have a lock, but no key is in them, of course.

The treasure chest is of course a Chest Monster (BtP, page 32) and the golden key in its lock can open any other lock in the room. In alternative, the doors can be opened with magic or with a suitable Special Skill roll. The Chest Monster won't move, if the characters don't touch it first.

The door in front normally takes to *Cube B*.

The door behind normally takes to *Cube C*.

The trapdoor in the ceiling normally takes to *Cube H*.

The trapdoor on the floor normally takes to *Cube A*.

The door to the right normally takes to *Cube F*.

The door to the left normally takes to *Cube G*.

Cube E

This underground place is incredibly hot and there is a strong odour of burnt irons! The black, burnt surfaces of the walls, the floor and the ceiling are extremely rough and they are constantly trembling as if there were continuous earthquakes. You wonder where this reddish, vibrating lights in the middle of the room come from and the answer to this question fills you with worry! You are surrounded by fire-breathing, stone-

skinned devilish creatures and the fire they breath is the only light you can see!

Due to the intense heat and the lack of air, every round passed breathing in this cube causes the loss of one point of STAMINA. The characters are surrounded by Maze Fiends (see BtP, page 54).

The fiery lights show you that there are some kind of gates: one in front of you, one behind you, one to your right and another to your left.

If the characters use something explosive (magic, firepowder, etc.) on the floor or on the ceiling, they can uncover the gates on the floor and on the ceiling as well.

The gate in front normally takes to *Cube B*.

The gate behind normally takes to *Cube C*.

The gate in the ceiling normally takes to *Cube A*.

The gate on the floor normally takes to *Cube H*.

The gate to the right normally takes to *Cube F*.

The gate to the left normally takes to *Cube G*.

Cube F

This cube looks like the inside of a huge wooden box, where a pack of wild dogs barks and suddenly attacks you!

The first time the characters come to this room, there is one Wild Dog (see OotP, page 38) for each character, the second time there are two for each character, then three, four, etc. This is a partial deviation from the general rules of the Cube of Nolubez.

The dogs will calm down immediately if a character has the collar with leash from *Cube C* and a dog will meekly come forward and allow himself to be collared. It will follow the group from now on, even if they will get out of the Cube of Nolubez (see Character Sheet Note: *the Dog of Nolubez*).

If either the dogs are all dead or the collar and leash has been put on one of the (the rest will stop attacking and just watch, as far as the collar and leash are in the Cube), gates will appear as usual.

The gate in front normally takes to *Cube H*.

The gate behind normally takes to *Cube A*.

The gate above (the ceiling is not that high, so characters can reach it by standing on the shoulders of a companion, for example) normally takes to *Cube D*.

The gate below normally takes to *Cube E*.

The gate to the right normally takes to *Cube F*.

The gate to the left normally takes to *Cube G*.

Cube G

You feel startled as soon as you find yourselves in this place, as it is pitch black!

If the characters have the Candle from *Cube C*, it will lit automatically, showing pretty clearly the scene around.

The center of the scene is occupied by an adult Bonecrusher (see BtP page 23) quietly shifting around in the darkness. This creature walks slowly and turns around even more slowly, but is perfectly adapted to darkness, is very silent and its attack can often be lethal. It is in the center of a round room with heavy portcullis at the four corners (in one round a portcullis can be lifted with a successful roll of SKILL + Strength). In the darkness the Bonecrusher will have an overwhelming advantage over inexperienced adventurers groping randomly.

The portcullis in front normally takes to *Cube B*.

The portcullis behind normally takes to *Cube C*.

The portcullis to the right normally takes to *Cube A*.

The portcullis to the left normally takes to *Cube H*.

Cube H

You find yourselves in a round room with sandy floor, walls and ceiling. In the middle of the room, similar to a dark, wooden pillar going from floor to ceiling, there is a carved statue representing, in a stylized way, an exceedingly emaciated man, you a kind of round hole, or niche, on his forehead.

Digging in the sand for three rounds it is possible to find the usual gates above, beyond, in front, behind, to the right and to the left. With a successful LUCK roll it can be possible finding a gate in a single round.

Lodging the Horn in the slot on the forehead of the statue will cause the statue to swell horribly and turning (within 2+1d6 rounds) into a Gargantis (see BtP, pages 56-57, but without the mental powers).

Lodging a Candle on the forehead of the statue will prevent the Horn from activating, if in the future it will be slotted in by the same group of characters (this is a partial deviation from the general rules of the Cube of Nolubez), but it will also prevent the characters to bring the Candle somewhere else, as taking it out of the slot will be a hard work (test for SKILL + Strength) and, if successful, the candle will break. It may look like a solution cutting off a bit of it, but it will lose its magic power of getting alight when in the darkness.

Bringing a dog into this room will make Graewende appear (go to *Chapter 4*).

The gate in front normally takes to *Cube B*.

The gate behind normally takes to *Cube C*.

The gate above (if the characters found it) normally takes to *Cube E*.

The gate below (if the characters found it) normally takes to *Cube D*.

The gate to the right normally takes to *Cube G*.

The gate to the left normally takes to *Cube F*.

CHAPTER 4: GRAELWENDE

As soon as you are in the room with a dog on leash, from behind the dark wooden pillar comes forward a man wearing a blue pointed hat and a blue tunic, all decorated with silvery stars and crescents. Around his neck is a silver chain with a silvery little pendant shaped as a cube. He opens his arms wide and says: "Ah! You must be the rescue party sent by the Emperor! At last you are releasing me!"

He is of course Graewende, mistaking the characters for his saviors. As long as the characters will keep pretending they are what he thinks, Graewende will tell them all (his) truth, that is that the Duke betrayed the Emperor and his orders not to accept nor give alliance without his direct permission (probably because Duke Bruadaire wanted to forge his own kingdom), so Graewende used his magic to prevent the Duke from doing that and he expects all the Imperial appreciation.... Perhaps Graewende himself will be named as the new Duke of the Northern Marches, who knows! Graewende is indeed convinced that he did everything right and that the Dog Duke condemned him to death in a gruesome act of blatant rebellion.

Graewende is now mad and frail, after five hundred years more or less alone in the Tesseract, and if attacked will fall at the very first hit, but, if given the chance to defend himself or at the news that the characters are from Blackmoor and that Blackmoor is now an independent kingdom, he will just point a finger to the closest character and the character will suddenly turn into a dog! This is indeed the very last magic that he can still remember!

If the characters go out of this Cube and then come back, Graewende will appear very time in the same way, after

forgetting everything, as it is normal for the rules of the Tesseract.

If Graelwende is asked about a treasure and he still trusts the characters, he will say that the treasure is still safe in the Cube of Nolubez, indicating the silvery cube dangling in front of his chest.

If Graelwende is fallen or if anyway the Cube is taken from his neck and carefully observed, it will be possible to see the discoloured surfaces that often signaled the gates inside the Tesseract. Just desiring to go through them will take the characters to a room full of a soft, golden light, with an incredibly rich treasure, just like the ones of the tales: golden coins, gemstones, fine jewels, weapons and any sort of object. On the wall there is a mirror with silvery reflexes and small, slow waves on it, even if it is vertical. Looking in the mirror, the characters will see the sky above the Wizard Pit and will remember their oneiric story. The last thing that they will hear before waking up in the Comeback Inn, is the “Thank you, friends!” of Fredigar Cripps.

Go to *Conclusion B*.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion A

It is morning and you wake up in your room in the Comeback Inn. You don't feel great and, when you go downstairs to have breakfast, you find a message from Pernumian, the bizarre man that paid you this night at the Comeback Inn. It is just a good morning and good luck, but nothing more. Soon after, you are again outside, with the feeling that it didn't go as well as you hoped, but now there's nothing you can do apart from focusing on your next adventure!

The characters get 5 XPs for being able to enter the Comeback Inn and to see Marfeldt the Barbarian, but the rest of their experience is overall forgettable.

Conclusion B

Still thrilled about your fantastic dream, you go downstairs to have breakfast. The greatroom is still a terrible mess after Marfeldt's carousing (later on they will explain you that the Comeback Inn tidies up magically by itself, but just at midnight and the feast went on until dawn, so they have some more time to go), but a corner has been cleaned and a couple of tables have been prepared for breakfast. The only customer is the bizarre old man with a mustard tunic that you met yesterday evening and his eyes look very puffy. He calls for Batts, the Ogre barkeep, to bring breakfast for you as well, then he says, with a broad smile:

“Congratulations! It is not common at all sleeping in the Room of Dreams and reliving in a dream the story of Fredigar Cripps, the most honoured founder of this famous Inn!

Believe me when I tell you this, because I am part of the Topaz Eye, the Seers Guild of Blackmoor at His Majesty's Service (although He is now sound asleep...) and I was sure you had something when I saw you yesterday, but I didn't know you'd perform so well! The future of Blackmoor needs plenty of talented people like you!”

On his gesture, Batts brings you also a ring with a stylized hawk, the crest of the Andahar, to each of you: the Ring of the Comeback Inn. They explain you that with this ring you may come and go freely through the doorway of the Comeback Inn and you can book your room and board in the Inn, that otherwise would be denied. The ring is a symbol of the tradition and legacy of the heroes of Blackmoor and the Comeback Inn is honoured that you keep it with you, but may well recall or deactivate it if in the future you will not uphold this tradition.

After this famous experience, the characters receive 50XPs and one extra rank of social status. All objects acquired during the oneiric adventure are of course not with the characters anymore, after they wake up, apart from the Wild Dog on a leash.

The character that had the honour of impersonating Fredigar Cripps is invited to be part of the Topaz Eye (see Character Sheet Notes). Pernumian will be his/her direct superior in the Guild.

All surviving characters, whatever conclusion they reached, can restore their LUCK, STAMINA, MAGIC and MAGIC POINTS scores to their initial levels before taking on new adventures.

CHARACTER SHEET NOTES

Here are the consequences of each note added to the character sheets.

You misbehaved at the Comeback Inn!

You will not allowed inside the Comeback Inn anymore, unless somebody wearing the ring of the Comeback Inn accompanies you all the time and guarantees for your deeds. Anyway, you will not be allowed to sleep in the Comeback Inn. This is not a sentence, as several famous heroes of Blackmoor had the same problem, but it will take some time to clear your name.

When this note is acquired, the character loses two ranks of social status (the minimum social status attainable is zero.... at least there are no negative numbers).

Haztian resent

You did nothing wrong directly to Haztian, but you indirectly caused his master, the bizarre Pernumian of the Topaz Eye, to kick him out of a room in the Comeback Inn, where he was very happy to stay. Haztian doesn't know all the story behind this action and resents that delusion.

The dog of Nolubez

A Wild Dog (with normal characteristics as per OotP page 38) follows the character faithfully and obeying until the collar and leash is removed. When the collar and leash are removed, the dog does all possible to run away.

Member of the Topaz Eye

The Topaz Eye is the Seers Guild of Blackmoor, it is particularly faithful to King Uther Andahar and being part of it is an honour and a duty (and earns you a necklace with a topaz cut in the shape of an open eye, that opens many doors and ears of rulers in Blackmoor, as the Guild is highly respected).

Every three tendays a member can go to a Guild office (in any of the major cities of Blackmoor) and work for the

Guild for one tenday, with full accommodation expenses paid, plus 50 gold coins for each divination spell known and made available for use to the needs of the Guild.

A Guild member will teach new divinations spells to the members that may need teaching, for free.

To enter the Guild at the member level (the lower one), it is absolutely necessary to swear the following oath:

- *I understand that divination is a tool and a gift that should not be abused*
- *I will not deny the right of knowledge to any individual who meets the Guild's requirements*
- *I will, to the best of my abilities, abide to the laws of the Wizard's Cabal*
- *I will not use my powers against King Uther or his vassals*
- *I will keep in confidence the results of all castings unless I believe that lives will be put in danger if I did*
- *I will not reveal the name of any who sought my abilities unless I believe that lives will be put in danger if I did*
- *I will inform the Guild of any and all services that I provide*
- *I will serve king Uther, when asked, without request of pay*

Handout 1: You are Fredigar Cripps!

While in the back of your conscience you believe you are still yourself, your body and your memories are now the ones of the young Fredigar Cripps!

Blackmoor is still a village, rather than a city, and all things of life are simple, in your mind: you want to find a treasure and buy a inn! You are thinking about calling it Fredigar's Hope and you want to attract there all the best adventurers, so you'll be able to listen to their stories. Everybody knows that there is a treasure somewhere in the Wizard Pit, a kind of trench not far from the walls of Blackmoor Village, and you want to find it! However, while many youngsters searched the Wizard Pit extensively, nobody yet found the treasure. A bizarre old wizard, with a long beard, told you that there is a stone basin in the Wizard Pit and, if you pour Quicksilver in it, it will open a magic door to a place where you can find a treasure! After you were told this, you immediately invested your (meagre) savings in Quicksilver!

You organized a small expedition with a few other novice adventurers (this is your very first adventure as well!) and are now walking towards the Wizard Pit.

Your characteristics: Your SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK, while you impersonate Fredigar Cripps, as a basis, are exactly the same as before. However, Fredigar hasn't studied any magic so far, so, if you have some points in MAGIC, you have to remove them (together with associated MAGIC POINTS, if you have them) and add your MAGIC score to your SKILL.

SKILL: ...

STAMINA: ...

LUCK: ...

Also your Talents and Special Skills as Fredigar Cripps will be different:

Talent: Fleet Footed

Special Skill: Swords (1), Awareness (2), Swim (1)

Weapons: Sword

Armour: Leather Cuirass

Backpack: 2 meals, a waterskin, a bedroll, two spades, a waterskin (full of Quicksilver instead of water and therefore pretty heavy)

You wear around your neck an amulet shaped like an hourglass on a little steel chain (a present from the old, bizarre wizard mentioned above) and you took the habit of clutching it when you need a bit of luck!

Gold: not even a copper coin left!

Very best of luck!!!



As many young adventurers in Blackmoor, the first adventure that you want to face is going to the Comeback Inn, a very famous place where all Blackmoorian adventurers worth mentioning have been and where the very story of the kingdom has been moulded.

The foundation of the Inn is another story shrouded in myth and perhaps you will be able to learn a bit of it... but you will have to be very careful not to get in a brawl with other patrons, as among them there may be legendary warriors and mages with a legendary short temper! Be careful!

