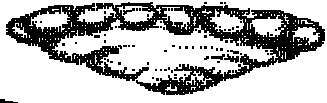


THE EYE SHIELD



Issue 11

September 2001

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MESSAGE FROM ME

Hello, it's Jake Collins here, welcoming you to the eleventh issue of The Eye Shield. You'll find more of what's in issue 10, plus a few more things. I have written the final chapter of *A History of Nightmare*, left unfinished from issue 9. What's that you say? You thought that it had been completed in that issue? Well, it was in a way, and it wasn't in another way. Read the article for more information. Also, you will find the fourth chapter of Rosey Collins's epic story, *Love Wyrms*. And, of course, the adventures of dungeoneer Paul begin in *Adventure Time*. I bet you can't wait to start reading. So what's keeping you?

CORRESPONDENCE

My thanks to those of you who took the time to e-mail me about The Eye Shield, or post messages on the forum. If you do send an e-mail at any time, please tell me the name of your home town and/or county so that I can include them with your views. The following e-mail comes from Jamie Murray of London.

Dear Eye Shield.

I stumbled across a Nightmare fan site just today and found it was hosting a new issue of The Eye Shield fanzine, so I wanted to express my appreciation. I watched Nightmare when I was little and applied to go on it with my cousins, but we got a letter back saying that the series had ended. The Dave Morris novellas with the first four books were excellent but the next two were substandard. Anyway, cheers for editing the fanzine.

Thanks for your enthusiasm about TES, Jamie. I hope that others share it. I, too, missed out on auditioning for the programme because it ended before I was old enough to do so. I take your point about the Nightmare books, but you must remember that the last three are aimed at a much younger audience than the first four. The first book I ever bought was The Forbidden Gate in 1992, which I found much easier to read than my next purchase later the same year, The Sorcerer's Isle. Don't forget to read my unbiased summaries of all seven Nightmare books in I Think I Read Somewhere. Thanks for getting in touch, Jamie, and keep reading.

REMEMBER THIS?

–
Series 7. Level 2.

THE TRIAL BY SPIKES

–
This challenge was set on a chess board. Each of the squares had a long spike sticking out of it to begin with. When the dungeoneer was about to attempt the puzzle, the first row of spikes would disappear, only to reappear momentarily with one spike missing. The spike-free square was the safe square in that row. Each row had a safe square, which the team had to find as the dungeoneer progressed across the board, otherwise they would be skewered. The team would have learned how many squares to step to the left or right for each row before the puzzle was attempted. In this way, they could find the safe square each time.

Nicola II and Naila learned the combination from spy-glasses, Julie II learned it from Grimaldine, Ben III learned it from Marta, Barry read it on a scroll and Alex II's advisors had to watch Romahna complete the puzzle and write down the sequence themselves. Most teams managed to find all the safe squares and cross the board. However, Naila and Ben III met their end here. Naila's advisors got totally lost because they didn't really understand how to use the combination, and backed Naila into a spike. Ben III was a different matter. This team had made a mistake in a previous chamber by not using a clue object to find part of a vital spell, so they were killed off here. A huge troll entered the room and blocked the advisors' view, so they could not see where Ben was standing. He got skewered. For the viewers at home, it certainly looked like a nasty challenge. The tension was high as it felt like a race against time to find the correct square before the spikes shot up.

Difficulty: 6 Not too many problems, but some tricky footwork required.

Killer Instinct: 7 Deadly on occasions.

Gore Factor: 10 A spike up the bottom is not to be ignored.

Fairness: 5 Fair enough, but possibly would be more suited to level three.

ADVENTURE TIME

–

As promised, here are the latest adventures to take place in the Nightmare Dungeons. The score so far is Dungeon 2, Humans 1. Let's see how the next team can affect that scoreline.

The next dungeoneer is called Paul. After Treguard has equipped him for his quest, he boldly enters the Dungeon and awaits instructions from his guiders. He enters a long corridor.

"Warning!" shouts Treguard. "This is the Great Corridor of the Catacombs; there is no telling what dangers may lurk here. Exit with haste, or your quest ends now."

Sure enough, a grating noise occurs as the far wall begins to move forwards. Paul's advisors waste no time in directing him through the nearest door. He emerges into a red room with two exits and a table in the middle. The advisors direct Paul round the back of the table, and ask him to describe the objects to them.

"There's a bar of gold, a silver hand-mirror and some kind of green bar, possibly some soap" Paul reports vaguely.

"Much here to catch the eye" Treguard intervenes. "But first, team, prepare yourself for a challenge."

The far wall rumbles and cracks to form the face of Brangwen, the wall monster.

"Turn intruder!" Brangwen commands. "Turn and face me, for I am the Brangwen She and none passes here without pleasing me."

Paul hastily turns to face the guardian.

"Listen closely, small thing of flesh and bone" Brangwen continues. "I have three mysteries, and here is the first. It gallops fast, though no-one rides it. It bears a fearful lance, yet no-one guides it. What is it?"

After much discussion, Paul's advisors venture an answer.

"Unicorn" Paul cries.

"Truth accepted" says Brangwen levelly. "Here is my second. Invaders came upon these shores. One book they wrote of land and laws; one book to wrap a kingdom in. So name it, puny manikin!"

The advisors cannot come up with an answer to this, so Paul ventures one of his own.

"The Bible" he pipes up hopefully.

"Falsehood!" declares Brangwen with scorn. "The Doomsday Book was the truth I sought. Here is my third. Red fought white, and white fought red, great Houses fought while England bled. So, answer as my riddle poses, who fought each other over roses?"

The team remain silent.

"Come now, team, surely you know who fought the Wars of the Roses" Treguard presses them.

"York and Lancaster!" cries Paul triumphantly.

"Truth accepted" sneers Brangwen. "Two is the score, you may learn more. She who lies in wait likes nothing more than to reflect upon her own beauty. Remember, the first step is the *salute*. It is not, however, the next step. The quest is for the Sword, but you may not wield it."

With that, Brangwen disappears. The team immediately decide to take the mirror, but are curious to know what the green object is.

"Come now, Paul, you should recognise it if you are truly a hardened Knightmare fan" Treguard tells the dungeoneer.

"Yes, I know what it is!" Paul exclaims. "It's a dragon mint. I bet we'll need this rather than the gold."

Acting on Paul's advice, the team decide to take the mint. Paul is then guided through the right-hand door, and emerges into a stone hall with a single exit. There is a table in the middle, on which sits Motley, the jester. Paul approaches him and introduces himself.

"Oh, so the rumours about dungeoneers coming back are true" says Motley with apparently no interest. "Well, young Helmet Head, I'm Motley the jester, as you no doubt know. Trouble is, I'm not much use at the moment. You see, someone has stolen my laughter."

"Ah, how saddening" grins Treguard broadly. "Yet another jester who's lost his laughter. Well, team, you may as well abandon him, as he's no use to you in this state."

"Not fair, Master" Motley protests forlornly. "I can still help, if you help me find my laughter. What do you say, Paul?"

"Alright" Paul agrees.

"Great!" says the jester with more enthusiasm. "It's trapped in my folderol, somewhere on the level. I'll go looking for it too, and hopefully we'll meet up later on, alright?"

Motley then leaves the room. Their task for the level clear, the team direct Paul out of the room as well. He emerges into a green room with a large pit in the middle. As his advisors try to direct him round it towards the only exit, a large and scaly green head pops up out of the pit and speaks in a rich voice.

"Who is this, intruding in my lair?" the voice says. "Come on, human, state your business."

"No cause for alarm here" Treguard assures the team. "This is Smirkenorff, the Great Crested Green dragon."

"I'm Paul, a dungeoneer on the quest for the Sword" Paul shouts up to Smirkenorff.

"Oh, dungeoneers, is it?" Smirkenorff rumbles. "No doubt wanting help of some form or another?"

"Yes please, if you can offer any" Paul replies politely.

"My dear young person, I could make or break your quest if I so chose" Smirkenorff says self-importantly. "Certainly I know everything there is to know about this level. But what do you have to offer me in return for my aid and my valuable time?"

"This dragon mint" says Paul, holding it up.

"Oh, most acceptable" smiles Smirkenorff as he extends a long pink tongue to take the mint. After he has crunched it up, he turns his attention back to Paul. "Very nice, thank you. Now, there is a causeway at the end of level one. There isn't supposed to be, you know, but some spiteful sorcerer has stuck one there purely to inconvenience you. Would you like to know the combination?"

"Yes please."

"Well then, here it is" Smirkenorff says obligingly. "*Six, four, two, one, three, five.* And now I shall return to my slumber."

As Smirky's head sinks out of sight, Paul is directed out. He enters a very large chamber decorated with lush tapestries and regal ornaments. An elegant woman in rich clothes sits at a dressing table. The team notice all sorts of jars and bottles on the table, but also Motley's folderol. The woman rises in alarm as she notices Paul.

"How dare you intrude into my private chambers!" she screeches. "I am Kalina, ruler of all in level one, and I do not expect such an invasion of my privacy."

"Oh dear, team, you've fallen in with Queen Kalina" Treguard chuckles. "Don't take too much notice of her claims to power, but treat her with respect all the same."

"I'm sorry to have disturbed you, My Lady" Paul hastily apologizes. "I meant no harm; I am merely Paul, a dungeoneer on the quest for the Sword."

"Well, Paul, I thank you for your gracious apology" Kalina replies more calmly. "But you really must leave me in peace; I must prepare for my banquet tonight."

Paul's advisors quickly tell him about the folderol, and tell him to offer Kalina the mirror in exchange.

"Um, would this hand-glass aid your preparations?" queries Paul.

"Why, it's quite enchanting" Kalina titters. "But I know your kind, Paul; you always want something in return."

"Well, I wouldn't mind that folderol on your dressing table" comes the reply.

"Would you not indeed!" Kalina says haughtily. "I found that lying around my chambers this morning. I had wanted to use it for my centre-piece at dinner this evening, but I suppose I can find something else."

Kalina retrieves the folderol from the table, hands it to Paul and takes the mirror. She then points to a door on Paul's left.

"There is the way back onto your path" she says. "Now, leave me."

As Kalina returns to her dressing table, the advisors direct Paul through the door she has indicated. The hexagonal causeway follows. There are many different number combinations that could form a path across, and the team have no trouble in using Smirkenorff's code to cross the floor puzzle safely and exit through the door. Motley is waiting for them in the next chamber.

"Did you get it?" he asks anxiously as Paul approaches him.

"Here it is" says Paul confidently, handing over the fool-on-a-stick.

Motley looks at the folderol blankly for a second. Then a smile begins to form on his face. It broadens rapidly. Soon the jester is laughing merrily.

"Oh, thank you!" he splutters through guffaws of laughter. "This feels wonderful!"

"Er, great" ventures Paul. "So, can you help me now?"

"Of course" replies Motley more seriously. "I owe you a great debt which I will repay. Listen. The way past the blocker can be found with the word *jest*. The route to level two at the moment lies by the Descender, which can be found upon this path. Remember, to start it shout *down*, but don't forget to shout *stop* after eight levels, otherwise you're likely to meet a dreadful fate. The second step is the *march*. Well, bye for now, Paul, and thanks again."

Motley runs off, laughing to himself, and Paul is directed out. The next room is dominated by a large stone wall, which begins to move forwards, towards Paul.

"The Opposition is playing a blocker, team" Treguard warns as the great stony face appears to block Paul's path.

"Password!" the blocker demands.

"Jest!" calls Paul, and the blocker shoots off backwards, leaving the way clear. Paul is taken through the exit, into the Descender.

"Here is your way to level two, Paul" Treguard remarks. "But remember what Motley told you to do."

Paul commands the lift to move, and the advisors count eight levels as it descends. They tell Paul to cry *stop* on the ninth level. There is one single door here. It swings open on its hinges, and Paul walks through it into level two. The first room is a cavern tinged with blue, containing a section of raised floor and one exit. Before Paul's advisors have finished

describing the cavern, eerie echoing laughter occurs, followed by the appearance of a large transparent vision of the face of Mogdred.

"My, my" the fiend's voice echoes throughout the cavern. "One of the bold ones is with us I see. It is true, then, what I have heard about the return of dungeoneers to my chambers. Take off the helmet, intruder, look upon Mogdred and quail."

"No, don't!" urges Treguard.

"No chance!" states Paul instinctively.

"Listen, Paul" Mogdred hisses in chilling tones. "This level is too difficult for your lesser intelligence to handle. Your only chance to succeed is to use my gift. The name of the spell I gift you is *victory*. Use it, and be a winner. Spurn my gift and you fail, like hundreds before you."

With that, Mogdred's image disappears.

"You must understand, team, that no true quest is unopposed" Treguard explains. "It is in the nature of evil to struggle against truth and justice. Remember, fear lives stronger in the threat than in any deed."

Clearly rattled by the encounter, the team pluck up the courage to guide Paul out.

So, do you think Paul is up to the tests of level two? Can the team survive Mogdred's tyranny? Read the next Adventure Time to find out.

PUZZLE PAGE

—
This puzzle is about what characters said about one another. You have to name the character responsible for the quote, and about whom they are talking. **For example:** "That scummy jester's worn me down" is something that **Cedric** said about **Folly**.

1. "Her nature is fey and her purpose is fell."
2. "She's a smashing piece of work!"
3. "Merchant by trade and scoundrel by religion."

4. "She's about seven foot tall and quite good-looking in a big sort of way."
5. "_____ is mere play by contrast and unworthy to be called a rock."
6. "He can and may hinder your quest, but he would much rather just scare you into making a mistake."
7. "Stupid hag! If she thinks she and that bunch of unwashed flying midwives can get the better of me then they can think again."
8. "Drunken, thieving incompetent dolt!"
9. "He's a great man, isn't he? Nothing but the best for a mage of the upper levels."
10. "Tried to pinch me bum, 'e did!"
11. "A strange but fell beast hunts for me."
12. "She ain't 'alf got a mouth on 'er, that cavern elf."

REMEMBER HIM?

Series 3/4/5/6/8. Level 1/2/3.

MOTLEY

—
Knightmare's second jester was played by Paul Valentine. Because of his somewhat infrequent appearances, it is easy to forget that Motley was on Knightmare for a very long time. His total of five series is second only to Hordriss's six and Treguard's eight, and his time on the programme actually spans a longer period than Hordriss's, even though he appeared in far fewer episodes. Motley was introduced to us in the first episode of series 3 and was last seen in the final episode of series 8. As Treguard implied during Motley's first appearance, he was a direct replacement for Folly. Motley wore red and yellow garments as opposed to red and green,

and he had no face-paint like Folly's. He filled Folly's role in series 3, giving clues about which door to take and so on, but developed into a fully-fledged character as the programme progressed and developed itself. He is the only character to have missed a series and then rejoined the cast.

As we saw his character develop through series 3-6, it became clear that Motley was something of a cheeky rogue who did not necessarily like jesting that much, but found that it was the only thing he was good at. He was good-hearted and friendly to dungeoneers, though, and clearly feared both Mogdred and Lord Fear and wanted to see them defeated. Motley was attracted to many of Knightmare's female characters during his time on the programme, often making for a scene of gentle comedy, as he tended to choose to try and woo those ladies who would sooner kill him than listen to his profession to love them. He tried to woo Gundrada in series 4, Gwendoline in series 5, Sidriss in series 6 and Stiletta in series 8. This led to him facing the threats of being cut into pieces, shafted with an arrow, perforated by throwing-knives, and actually being shrunk to the size of a mouse. However, he also had a firm friendship in series 3 and 4 with Mellisandre, who may have actually been his lover.

In terms of meetings with dungeoneers, Motley was always friendly and helpful. Unlike Folly, however, he could be serious and level-headed when the need arose. Motley could be useful for giving spells, passwords and combinations if the dungeoneer pleased him. Ways to do this included solving a riddle, freeing him from the stocks or a magic playing-card, persuading Sidriss to remove the spell she'd used to shrink him, or chucking pigeon droppings over him to release him from his statue-like state. Telling a joke was another way to please him, as he readily admitted that his act wore thin as time went on. Motley's most frequent appearances are found in series 3 and 4. It is a shame that most of Paul Valentine's time was taken playing Sylvester Hands in series 5 and 6, leaving Motley a total of only seven of the thirty-one episodes in those two series. His reintroduction in the first episode of series 8 was very pleasing. He appears in four out of the ten episodes in this series, the last one being episode ten, where he again falls victim to Sidriss's erratic magic.

Fear Factor: 2 He scared a pooka once.

Killer Instinct: 0 100% dungeoneer-friendly.

Humour Rating: 10 It comes with the job.

Oscar Standard: 9 Possibly not as convincing as Hands, but one of my favourites.

CLASSIC QUEST

Series 3

Quest: The Cup that Heals.

Dungeoneer: Martin II.

Advisors: Lee, Jamie and Darren.

Home town: York.

This team appeared late on in series 3, and were the last chance for a winner that year. They nearly made it, too.

Level One: After rolling the die, Martin finds himself waste-deep in water. What is more, a shark is swimming close by! After some confusion, the advisors safely direct him onto the causeway and out of the room. Martin finds a pie in the kitchen and is about to pocket it when Motley rushes in and stops him. He explains that the pie belongs to Mr. Grimwold, and should be left alone. Motley asks Martin to tell him a joke in exchange for a spell. Martin does so:

Martin: "Why did the punk cross the road?"

Motley: "I don't know, why did the punk cross the road?"

Martin: "Because he was stapled to the chicken."

Motley gives him the spell GHOST. Golgarach's chamber follows, where the team score two out of three. Martin picks up a bottle and a key, and learns the first step: the *tree*. A dwarf tunnel leads to the fire room, which the team successfully negotiate. They next find Velda trapped in some manacles. Although she is wary at first, she allows Martin to release her with the key. She gives him a clue about the moving wall, and also the second step: the *lion*. At the moving wall, the team cast GHOST so that Martin can pass through safely. He then scares off a wellway guard before returning to human form. With the wellway clear, Martin descends to level two.

Level Two: After picking up a pineapple on the spindizzy, Martin meets the Oracle. Amongst her ramblings, the team discover the third step: the *crystal*. Merlin's chamber follows. Martin successfully calls the steps and strides across the pit to meet Merlin. The team answer both questions correctly and earn the spell CURE, which Merlin tells them is a universal remedy to any ailment. The next challenge is the Hall of Spears, where Martin grabs some food between the spear paths. This leads to a room where Mellisandre is helping Motley perfect his mime act. She tells Martin that Hordriss has taken Motley's voice away after an argument between the jester and the warlock, and so Motley must now earn his living by doing mimes. The team agree that Motley is their friend and they should help him, so they cast CURE. Motley regains his voice and is very grateful to Martin. He promises to come and help if Martin calls his name. After negotiating the cavern range and outmanoeuvring some goblins, Martin reaches the minecart chamber. He calls for Motley, who rushes in and sits him in the cart before pushing him down the mine to level three.

Level Three: The team blow their quest very early on in this level. After abandoning a destructor in the clue room, they meet Owen, the dozing dragon. He poses a riddle that the team cannot answer, and so refuses to give them any dragonmagic. Martin goes on to meet Merlin again, who rescues his life force and then warns him that Morghanna is close by. After dodging the cobra, Khar, and passing the cat statues, Martin emerges into the stained-glass window room. There is a quest piece on the correct path out of the chamber, but before the team can direct Martin out the stained-glass window disappears to reveal a huge full-body manifestation of Morghanna. The sorceress pauses briefly to mock and deride Martin's efforts before releasing her evil magic at him. With no spell from Owen to stop her, the team can do nothing to prevent Martin from being destroyed.

Summary: An excellent team. Like Leo earlier in the series, they were incredibly close to victory but faltered because of one incorrect answer in level three. In both cases, a real shame.

Score: 8 out of 10.

Rooms: 24, and several tunnels.

LOVE WYRMS

Here is the continuation of Rosey Collins's tale of dragons, romance and rivalry. This is the fourth chapter, which follows on from the third, in TES #9. If you wish to appreciate the story fully, read the first three chapters first!

-

The young dragon watched the adult males as they lashed out at one another. One of these, presumably, was his father - the one on the right as he looked at them, he assumed. He looked down at the salmon pink scales on his own front legs; he most certainly was not the offspring of two red dragons.

"Aren't you a little young to be wandering around here all on your own, sonny?" he heard in his right ear.

"Mmm?"

"Does your mother know you're here?"

"Eh? Um... probably."

It was Julius Scaramonger who had spoken. Orion found the sound of the man's voice buzzing in his ear intensely irritating, and he rather wanted to flick the little man away with his tail like one might a particularly annoying fly, but, living more or less in the middle of nowhere with his mother, it had not occurred to the young dragon that harming humans was acceptable.

"Ah well, that's all right then," Scaramonger went on. "Are you looking for anything in particular?"

"Thanks," Orion said politely. "I think I've found it."

"Other dragons, is it?" Scaramonger asked, following the youngster's gaze to the fighting monsters. "Do you know, I might have just the thing

you're looking for. It's a spell; it calls a dragon to you quicker than you could snap your fingers."

"But I've already found them," Orion pointed out.

"All right, I won't push you. How about a genuine, fool-proof..."

"Oh my..." Orion interrupted. "Quick! Get some brandy!"

"Brandy?" Scaramonger said suspiciously "Hold on a minute; how old are you?"

"Not for me, you moron," Orion snapped, moving hurriedly over to where Bhal-Shebah lay unconscious on the ground. Looking up, he saw the victorious green dragon retreating into the air.

"He's still breathing," Orion said, noticing that Scaramonger had followed him. "Where's the brandy?"

"Look, sonny, it'll take more than a bit of booze to get him back on his feet. I mean, look at the size of him."

"But... but can't you do anything?" Orion sounded positively frantic.

"Well, of course I can't, although of course if you asked most people around here they'd probably think it best to let it die."

"How can you say that?"

"Listen, that dragon is more trouble than it's worth. It's killed others, you know, and this is no more than it deserves."

Close to tears, Orion shook his head and said, "Didn't your mother ever tell you two wrongs don't make a right? Isn't there... can't we do anything?"

"I said I can't," Scaramonger returned, "but if you want him cured that badly surely you can do it yourself. You know - use a bit of dragon magic."

"I don't know any."

"What, not any at all?"

"No," Orion persisted. "Well, not much anyway."

The situation seemed hopeless. Bhal-Shebah's breathing was strained and incredibly faint. He was bleeding from several places, but it was the gaping wound near his throat that worried Orion the most. A huge chunk had obviously been ripped from the red dragon's neck; Orion wondered whether the green dragon had intended to miss the throat. In utter despair, the youngster began crying pitifully - or rather screeching in a most unpleasant manner.

This brought Tassie to him almost immediately. She was followed closely by Esta, the green dragon, but the latter did not land. Instead she circled the air a few times and, after receiving a venomous look from Orion for no apparent reason, she left her companion to it and flew to some other destination.

"What's the matter?" Tassie asked. She could demand an explanation and lecture and punish her son for his disappearance any old time, but right now he was obviously in distress.

"Mum, he'll die!" Orion cried. He was immensely relieved to see his mother; if she remained true to form everything would be fine in just a moment.

"Oh dear." Tassie sounded at the most a little perturbed. "He doesn't look too good, does he."

"Do something!"

"Do something?" Tassie repeated. She sounded a little surprised. "Darling, I don't think you understand. This dragon is an enemy of your father's, and from what I could see I'd say your father did this to him... unless another dragon has come here since I've been away."

"Then... you won't help him?"

"It would be disloyal."

Orion choked back his tears. He could not believe what he was hearing. He had not yet even met his father and already his parents were, between them, killing another dragon. Miraculously this dragon was still breathing. Orion almost wished that he would hurry up and die so that he no longer had to suffer. Then something most unexpected happened; the wounded dragon vanished before his very eyes.

"What happened?" Orion cried. Needless to say he was deeply disturbed by this new development.

"I don't know," his mother said truthfully.

"Don't care, you mean."

"And neither should you. Do you still want me to take you to meet your father?"

"No."

"Then come home."

"I will go home," Orion began, "when I find out what happened to that dragon."

One bit of magic that Orion did know was how to make himself invisible; he did so now, and flew in whichever direction he happened to be facing. He expected his mother to call frantically after him; she did.

Orion had no idea where he was going. After all, where does one begin to find a dragon that has literally disappeared into thin air? All Orion really wanted to do was fly as far away from his mother as possible. He knew in his heart of hearts that he would go back to her eventually, even if he did never speak to her again.

After just thirty minutes Orion began to get tired; his invisibility spell wore off and he was forced to land where he was. He looked around. He seemed to be free of his mother and the green dragon; he had hoped to have escaped civilisation as well, but there was no such luck. He had landed immediately outside a large fortress. Its name was Marblehead, though of course Orion did not know that. He did not much care either, for soon enough he was fast asleep.

*

"Lordness!"

"What, what is it, what do you want?" Fear demanded irritably. He had been about to catch forty winks himself; trust Lissard to think of something futile to say at that very moment.

"Forgive me, Lordness, but I thought you'd be interested to know there's a pink lizard sleeping in front of the castle."

"Pink?... A lizard?"

"A pink lizard, Lordness."

Convinced that Lissard was either hallucinating or pulling his leg (and hoping for his henchman's sake that it was the former), Fear made his way to the nearest window which gave him a view of the land in front of Marblehead. Evidently Lissard was not hallucinating, although of course he was not intelligent enough to know what this lizard was.

"That's a dragon, you imbecile."

"But it's pink, Lordness."

"Yes, I know. I'll tell you what, Lissard, it's that idiot Tassie's mongrel. That's what happened when we tried to get her and Bhal-Shebah to make us some baby dragons for killing dungeoneers with. Not that we seem to get dungeoneers to kill any more, but that's beside the point."

"He looks unhappy, Lordness." Lissard's face was the picture of concern.

"Yes it does. I'm not surprised, you know. That, Lissard, is what we call a misfit. Nobody wants it, you see. A bit like you, only even more useless. It's the dragon equivalent of me having a baby with Treguard."

"I think that's very sad," Lissard said.

"Yes. Evidently so does that hideous thing. Do you know, Lissard, I think I'll go and find out what's bothering it. Go and get a goblin or something for the poor little fellow to eat, will you?"

*

"Now then, what's all this?" Lord Fear demanded, doing his best to sound concerned. Orion was awake and in tears by the time Fear got to him.

"I've made a terrible mistake," the young dragon sobbed. "I want to go home."

"Are you lost?"

Orion looked around; he had no idea where he was.

"Maybe a little," he replied. "And I lied. I don't want to go home, because if I go home I'll have to see my mother."

"That's no way to speak of your mother."

"But she's horrible. Horrible, horrible, HORRIBLE! Do you know what she did? She left a wounded dragon to die."

"Now that's not very nice, is it? Oh, I say, hold on a minute!" Lord Fear said brightly. "It wasn't by any chance a red dragon, was it?"

Orion sniffed. "Yes."

"Do you know, he's my dragon. When I saw he was wounded I brought him straight back home... by magic," he added, noticing the youngster's puzzled expression.

"That's where he went!"

"Of course. I'm terribly sorry, I didn't mean to worry you."

"Is he all right?" Orion asked.

"Nothing a little healing spell couldn't fix. Would you like to see him? He's just underneath the castle."

"I don't know..."

"No, of course. I'm sure your mother told you never to talk to strangers, and here I am inviting you into my home! You just run on back to your mother; forget you ever met me. I'm sorry to have bothered you."

Fear turned to leave. "Wait," Orion said, and Lord Fear stopped.

"Yes?"

"I... I would like to see him before I go... if you're sure it's all right."

"Well, of course it is," Fear said, making an audible effort to sound kind. "Follow me."

Fear took Orion to Bhal-Shebah, introduced the adult dragon to the infant and bade him share his meal with the youngster. Orion was grateful; he had not eaten at all that day.

"Feeling better?" Lord Fear asked. Without meaning to he found himself speaking in baby talk.

"Yes," Orion replied. "Much better, thank you."

"What's your name?"

Lord Fear knew the dragon's name; he had recognised Orion instantly. Still, Orion did not need to know that. He told Fear his name: "Orion."

"Like the stars."

Orion shrugged and replied, "I'm not much of a hunter, never mind a great one."

"I'm sure you'll learn," Lord Fear said. "I'm sure your mother's an excellent teacher."

Orion's face suddenly fell, and he looked at the ground. He was beginning to feel guilty for abandoning Tassie the way he had, but he could not

forgive her for what she had done to Bhal-Shebah. His eyes were welling but he blinked back the tears and looked up at the adult dragon.

"Are you sure you're all right?" he asked it.

Bhal-Shebah assured the youngster that he was all right - no thanks to Mum, Orion thought. Again he looked at the ground, not sure what to do next.

"Everything okay?" Lord Fear asked.

"Yes. Fine." Orion looked at him and smiled. "You know something? You're a very nice man."

*

Lissard was full of questions about Orion; was he all right, had he had enough to eat and so on.

"He's putty in my hands," Fear assured him. "He thinks I'm a saint. He won't go back to his mother as long as we keep being nice to him."

"But Lordness, surely his mother will come looking for him."

"You really are a panic-merchant, Lissard," Fear said accusingly. "Bhal-Shebah will soon stop her; we just can't let the kid see him kill her."

"Are we going to keep him, then?" Lissard asked, excited.

"Certainly, Lissard. We are going to turn him into a vicious, blood-thirsty killing machine. We've waited this long; we can wait a few more years until he's big enough to wipe out anything Treguard throws at him."

Will Lord Fear's evil plan to draw Orion over to the dark side succeed? Will the red and green dragons ever resolve their differences? Will Bhal-Shebah get a line? Find out in the fifth chapter of *Love Wyrms*, coming your way in November 2001.

CREATURE FEATURE

Series 4/5. Level 1.

ASSASSINS

The time of the assassins was really series 4; so much so, in fact, that the Knightmare book published that year, *Fortress of Assassins*, featured them quite prominently. From the book, we learn that the assassins are Muslim warriors who have been hypnotised into believing that they have entered Paradise. They are woken up and ordered to destroy certain people before they can return to their state of total happiness. The assassins on Knightmare wore long black cloaks and hoods and carried sharp glistening knives. Their advancing form was always a terrible danger to dungeoneers. Being masters of camouflage, they could hide in virtually any Dungeon chamber or woodland glade and spring out on the dungeoneer. The way to defeat an assassin was by its cowardice; assassins did not strike if there was any sign of resistance. It was therefore up to Treguard and Pickle to encourage the advisors to tell the dungeoneer to yell at the assassin until it ran off.

The first appearance by an assassin was at the end of Alistair's level one. Once it had been spotted, Alistair yelled at it until it ran off. It reappeared as he entered the wellway, leading to worried shouts from the advisors to hurry up. Nicola I also met an assassin having lunch with Brother Mace, but she was in no danger as the monk clobbered him with a joint of meat. Vicky had to scare off an assassin in the Greenwood. Dickon's advisors saw two assassins briefly in the wellway room, but they ran off instantly. Jeremy and Giles both met an assassin at Dungarth. Jeremy had to yell at his to make it go away, but Giles simply made a hasty exit. In series 5, Lord Fear used assassins a couple of times, to try and sneak up on Jenna and Kelly II in the Greenwood. He found them to be ineffective allies, however, as Jenna scared hers off easily and Kelly blew a horn to frighten hers before Gwendoline rushed on and shot them!

Fear Factor: 8 Dark and mysterious: very unnerving.

Killer Instinct: 2 Very close shaves.

Humanity: 10 They *are* human.

Gore Factor: 0 Not in the least repulsive, for all that.

I THINK I READ SOMEWHERE

KNIGHTMARE: The Labyrinths of Fear

Published by Corgi in 1989.

Written by Dave Morris.

Plot: While attending the Earl's tournament at Alvingham, Treguard runs into his old foe, Rupert of Armitage. After being humiliated by Treguard at the joust, Rupert runs off into the dark depths of Anwin Wood. Treguard gives chase. The pair do not realise, however, that they are blundering into the realm of the Elf King, Arawn. Treguard becomes completely lost, and has to battle for his life against several of Arawn's servants. Rupert, meanwhile, has gained entry to Arawn's court under false pretences. Back at Alvingham, the Earl and some of his court decide to enter Anwin Wood to find Treguard. They are soon met by the Elf King's forces. Helped by Velda, who is rebelling against her king's evil ways, Treguard must find a way to defeat both Rupert and Arawn. The answer lies in the Dream Caverns, the place where the ley-lines converge. As a game of cat-and-mouse ensues in the depths, can Treguard contest the awesome power of the ruler of the Wildwood?

Quest section: This is your chance to do battle with Arawn. Although there are several routes through the Dungeon, it is actually very hard to collect all the objects and spells necessary to succeed. Level one involves many chances to collect some of these, pitting your wits against Mildred, a mad knight or some hungry goblins, before being tested by Motley. There is the entrance to a maze in the wellway room. If you have a compass, a ball of thread or the RAT spell you can explore it and come out alive. Those with a compass may also meet Mogdred (here called Mordred) and have a chance to acquire an iron horseshoe from him, which is a valuable weapon later on. In level two you must please Lillith and avoid some poisoned meat. Merlin also offers you aid twice, if you can find him. Velda is also a potential ally. A choice of either battling some of Arawn's knights or enlisting the aid of a monk and some saints follows, before the fateful meeting with Arawn in level three. Before besting him in a riddling contest, you must defeat three of his faerie creatures: a hellhound, a ghoul-bear and a troll.

Characters from the main story:

Treguard: He has come to Alvingham to enjoy the tournament, and is not happy to find an old foe there. But there is worse waiting for him in Anwin Wood.

Earl of Alvingham: He thinks highly of Treguard, and is keen to find him when he goes missing in the wood. He considers himself only the heir to the earldom as his uncle Hugo is lost in Anwin Wood, and may still be alive.

Motley: The jester plays for the Earl's court, and tells Treguard the tale of Hugo's disappearance. He later becomes Treguard's squire for the joust.

Cedric: A Hospitaller Knight-turned-monk, Cedric's quick temper marks him as powerful foe in the joust. He becomes Treguard's ally when they gang up on a Norman, and is part of the Earl's rescue party later on.

Rupert of Armitage: One of the villains of the first book, Rupert has now been knighted. He plans to have Treguard overwhelmed by his allies on the battlefield, but flees in disgrace when this fails. He pretends to be the Earl so Arawn accepts him into his court - find out why later - but his trickery is soon uncovered.

Gregory of Aquitaine: Rupert's unchivalrous ally, Gregory helps to instigate the treachery against Treguard.

Mirrach ab Dunann: He is a strange Druid priest, and one of Arawn's servants. He tricks Treguard into following him into the Wildwood before raising a horde of evil murderous skeletons. Treguard defeats these with his dragon-blade, Wyrmslayer.

Arawn: The Elf King dislikes mortals trespassing in his realm. He makes Treguard his firm enemy thanks to Rupert's trickery, and is quite confident of his ability to defeat the Saxon swordsman. However, he does not reckon on following Treguard through the Dream Caverns to his power-centre, Nightmare Castle.

Sir Linden: One of Arawn's knights. He relies on his battle-prowess to defeat mortals who trespass in the wood, and is the first to challenge Treguard.

Sir Rowan: He has more success than his rival, Sir Linden, in challenging Treguard. He first tricks the Saxon into exhausting himself by freeing him from a false trap, and then attacks and wounds him.

Hugo of Alvingham: The Earl's uncle has become Arawn's trusted adviser, and therefore the Elf King welcomes the Earl into his court. At first Hugo believes Rupert to be his nephew, but when the real Earl turns up and the mistake is realised, Arawn vows revenge against Rupert.

Sir Gareth: One of the Earl's rescue party, he recognises the Elf King's seneschal as the Earl's long-lost uncle.

Velda: The elf-maid tends to Treguard's wounds and shows him to the Dream Caverns. She also warns Hugo not to leave the wood as it is only Arawn's power that keeps him alive, and he will die if he goes home.

Merlin: Treguard seeks him out in his fevered dream once again. The wizard tells Treguard of Arawn's nature, and makes him realise that the place to defeat the Elf King is in his own realm, Nightmare.

A HISTORY OF KNIGHTMARE

This section was featured in *The Eye Shield* issues 4-9. Written by David Bradshaw and Stephen Wilson, it gave a summary of series 2-8, as well as David and Stephen's unsuccessful audition to appear in series 8. This is the seventh and final chapter of *A History of Nightmare*, looking at series one, which David and Stephen did not write about because they could not remember it. Fortunately for me, the first series is actually very easy to summarise because the nature of the quests is very uniform, as it was very much a kind of guinea-pig series.

Series 1. 1987.

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The first level began with a challenge of a choice of four doors. For some teams, this would involve spelling out a word by walking on letters to unlock a door (David and Mave). Others had to walk on or piece together keys (Simon I, Helen I, and Richard I). Daniel I was given a door-elimination riddle by Folly for this challenge. The rest of the level contained such challenges as bomb rooms, the sneezing Giant, the monster's stomach and the Corridor of the Catacombs. Progression through these depended on a successful riddling contest with either Granitas or Olgarth, bribing Lillith to create her magic causeway, and getting down the wellway by the use of an object from the clue room (David and his magic lamp, which he forgot to take) or a spell from Lillith or Folly (FLARE for Simon I, ITCH against Gumboil for Daniel I, WELL for Helen I and Richard I).

Only three teams reached the second level. It involved the completion of Cedric's (or just "the monk" as he was known in those days) riddles, the meeting of Casper who would then help with the Moving Keyhole puzzle, the completion of Merlin's riddles and consequential gaining of magic to use to escape the level, the Hall of Spears, and the wellway.

Only Richard I reached level three. He had to use a *sniff* bottle to distract the hungry cavernwights and then cheer up the depressed Gargoyle. He was also supposed to take Joshua's horn to bring down the walls of Jericho in Merlin's chamber, but he took a dagger instead. As there was no quest object to retrieve in this series, Merlin's appearance in level three would presumably have been to say: "Congratulations: you've won."

That was the first of eight wonderful series, and that means that the History of Nightmare is now complete. I hope you enjoyed it.

POETRY CORNER

Remember Julian, Vaughn, Becca and Mary, the second winners from series two? If not, everything is about to become crystal clear.

The second team ever to win through

Are Julian and friends from series two.
Flattering Gretel was no easy feat,
Olgarth the wall they were destined to meet.
The Talisman, he said, was the object they sought,
Mildread back to herself Gretel's FOUL spell brought.
Down the well by the Automatum they were chased,
Gretel helped where the numbered doors were placed.
Past ghost and destructor they had such a fit,
Merlin rewarded them with Folly's wit.
With the trick of a stone that was mere illusion,
Gumboil and Olaf were lost in confusion.
Level three's gargoyle clue helped them choose objects well,
Merlin gave them more than one spell.
Medusa reaped nil thanks to Treguard and the shield,
But Mogdred's hurt feelings would never be healed,
When Julian passed Owen with no trouble at all,
And refused to come into Mogdred's thrall.
In the final challenge they had to be quick,
They cast the spell that did the trick.
To the Challenge they'd remained true,
The Talisman was theirs, the glory too.

THE BIG ISSUE

Who's your favourite jester, Folly or Motley? Before you decide, take a look at the comparisons below.

FOLLY: The original jester from series 1 and 2, Folly's red and green jester suit and jolly face-paint were worn by Alec Westwood. Folly was a constant source of information, clues, tricks and spells for dungeoneers in the first two series.

Advantages: What better character to introduce to a medieval gameshow than a traditional court jester? And Folly filled this role to perfection. Like a court jester, he was full of jolities and japes and often appeared to be something of a clutter-brain, but in fact he was very knowledgeable and a great source of help. The role of court jester or fool to a king was

to entertain, but also advise through this entertainment. It is as Folly himself says to Daniel I in the fifth episode of series one:

Folly: "Did you get through the Hall of Folly, then? You must have done. That means you're no longer a fool, which is shame, because there's more wisdom in foolish wit than ever you can imagine."

Behind Folly's prattle there was always a clue, piece of information or spell to be found. What is more, this was often vital to the quest. Folly himself was always friendly and keen to help, which meant that he was a good character to meet for early dungeoneers. Most of the characters in the first series - Treguard, Merlin, Cedric, Lillith, Casper, Giant, the wall monsters - were prepared to help dungeoneers to some extent, but only if they were bribed with an object or appeased by correct riddle answers. Folly, however, represented a friend in this somewhat hostile environment: he was cheerful and full of good wishes for the dungeoneer even if they had trouble with his riddles. Folly is one of the very few characters from series 1 and 2 that can be classed as 100% dungeoneer-friendly or unfriendly, which was a help to early teams. Alec Westwood had some opportunities to prove his acting prowess in two very enjoyable scenes of comedy with other characters, namely Cedric and the Battle of Insults in series 1 and Gumboil and the sorcerer's stone trick in series 2.

Disadvantages: Because of his short and early time on the programme, Folly was very much a one-dimensional character. His purpose was to prattle on to the dungeoneer, give them some help and then leave. Treguard often accused him of wasting time. On most occasions, there were no surprises when Folly entered the room. He was undoubtedly an excellent jester and fool, but not so much a fully-fledged character with likes and dislikes, particular quirks and some variety in appearances to keep the viewers interested in him. Although this is partly to do with the format of the early series, other characters of this era did manage to develop certain aspects to move them from being set, boring and one-dimensional to varied, interesting and two-dimensional. For example, Cedric revealed his fear of spiders and his frustration at having no friends. Gumboil developed an alcohol problem in the second half of series 2. A rivalry between Olgarth and Granitas was established very early on. Folly had no character development, and so he will always remain stuck as a memory of the early years rather than a Knightmare legend. Also, his jokes weren't actually that funny(!)

MOTLEY: Motley arrived in series 3 to replace Folly, and stuck around until the end of Nightmare. His costume was like Folly's except that yellow replaced green, and he had two dangling banana-things on his head instead of three. Paul Valentine was the man responsible for the rough-and-roguish accent.

Advantages: Motley appeared in five series of Nightmare over six years, giving him plenty of time to establish himself as a favourite character. He seems to have been a favourite among the production team as well, as he was promptly reinstated into series 8 after having missed series 7. He did little more than fill Folly's role in series 3, giving clues about which door to take and so on, but had plenty of time to develop into a fully-fledged character as the programme progressed and developed itself. He was helpful and friendly to dungeoneers in a variety of ways, often getting involved in quests with continued re-appearances or escorts. As a jester he was fairly convincing, telling jokes and even juggling on occasions. Motley was serious and level-headed when the need arose. He bravely dispatched a pooka in the second episode of series 6; one gets the feeling that Folly would have run away and hid. As I said in *Remember Him?*, the ways to make a friend of Motley were numerous, adding to his depth of character. He could provide a variety of forms of aid, too, including spells and clues like Folly, but also vital passwords and clue objects. As a character, Motley is better than Folly because he had more time to develop.

Disadvantages: Because of his somewhat infrequent appearances, it is easy to forget that Motley was on Nightmare for a very long time. He should be remembered as a classic character, and certainly Paul Valentine's principal one, but this glory is given to the more famous Sylvester Hands. The other thing is that Motley is not as good a jester as Folly. He does not provide the role of a classic fool, certainly after series 3, as his appearances are not particularly jester-related. Anyone can be released from the stocks or have pigeon droppings chucked over them, but only a fool can dupe a drunken guard with a clever trick. Motley did not even look or behave as much like a jester as Folly did. Folly was always bowing and moving like a mime-artist, and was never without his folderol, but Motley skipped about as any lithe young man may do, and often appeared without his folderol or even left it contemptuously behind on a table.

So, there you have it. My favourite of the two jesters is Motley, but I think that if you judge them in terms of being jesters then Folly is the clear winner and if you judge them in terms of being enjoyable characters then Motley is the winner. Of course, it's up to you to make your own choice.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

1. Merlin about Morghanna.
2. Motley/Stiletta.
3. Brother Mace/Julius Scaramonger.
4. Lord Fear/Gwendoline.
5. Olgarth/Granitas.
6. Merlin/Mogdred.
7. Lord Fear/Greystagg.
8. Casper/Gumboil.
9. Rothberry/Hordriss.
10. Heggaty/Ridolfo.
11. Smirkenorff/Brollachan.
12. Motley/Elita.

NEXT ISSUE

There's more to look forward to from The Eye Shield in November. You'll be able to read about yet another classic puzzle, character and creature, find out how Paul and his friends fare in level two, read about Daniel II's epic series 8 quest, find out what happens to Orion and the other dragons in *Love Wyrms*, learn about the third Nightmare book, *Fortress of Assassins*, enjoy Neil Payne's quest in verse, complete more brain-teasers, and see Morghanna and Malice battle it out in The Big Issue. If you think it all sounds too good to miss, don't forget to come back to TES in November 2001. See you then.