


THE EYE SHIELD



Issue 17

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MESSAGE FROM ME

Welcome to issue seventeen of The Eye Shield as I, Jake Collins of Harpenden, share with you some more of my thoughts and observations about Nightmare. Here is a question for you to mull over whilst reading this issue, the answer to which will appear in *Next Issue Details*. I will try to set one of these in each issue from now on, so be prepared to have your Nightmare knowledge stretched to its very limits. This issue's question is: Which four characters have appeared on Nightmare whilst drunk? You can feel proud of yourself only if you name all four, by the way. While you're thinking about that, you can, as ever, enjoy all the regular Eye Shield fun, including the start of *The Quest* in *I Think I Read Somewhere*, where you can take on my version of an interactive Nightmare adventure, and the long-awaited funny pages from Merseyside's finest, Robin John Barlow. Enjoy!

CORRESPONDENCE

David "Nightmare Dave" Holt has sent in two more of his favourite Nightmare quotes. The first is from Snapper-Jack in series 8. Dave thinks that Snapper-Jack is a nasty piece of work, and he wouldn't like to meet him on a dark night. The second quote comes from series 7, when dungeoneer Naila has entered the dwarf tunnels in level two. Dave has chosen this quote because he is - erm - interested in the connotations of its open ending.

Snapper-Jack: *"Ah, what have we here? No need to run, no need to hide: we'll snap you anyway if we decide."*

Treguard: *"Ooh, stop. It's too dark in here just for..."*

Advisor: *(Giggles.)*

REMEMBER THIS?

Series 8. Level 1.

FIREBALL ALLEY

Fireballs were Lord Fear's favourite anti-dungeoneer weapons in series 8, and his employment of them in Fireball Alley presented a challenge to most teams in the final series. The room had four arrow slits - grouped in two pairs - on the far wall, an exit on the right-hand wall, and the entrance towards the left-hand wall. Fireballs used to shoot out of the slits, which the team had to keep clear of their dungeoneer while guiding them across the room. The fireballs travelled in a sequence from left to right. This pattern allowed even the most dreary of teams to attempt the challenge successfully, particularly as there was a safe zone in the middle of the room where the dungeoneer could stand and wait if necessary while the advisors gathered their wits - a painfully short task for some, I might add.

I use as an example here the first team of the season, Richard III and his friends. The gormless girls attempted this challenge with no trouble, even though previous scenes had proven them incapable of processing blatantly simple scroll clues! To be fair to Fireball Alley, I like the challenge it presents even though it is quite easy, and it provides a welcome link to similar challenges of the early series of Nightmare in the occasionally disappointing final run. It is also worth noting that the puzzle was reconfigured to present further challenges later in the series. Rebecca and team were faced with super-fast fireballs blasting at them, which they had to put right with a spell called SPEED that Smirkenorff had given them. And then Dunston and friends had to use the *reach* wand to reveal a door in the wall next to the safe zone while simultaneously trying to outmanoeuvre the fireballs. This amenable development is of course moderated by the fact that the revealed door led into the Short Cut, but that's another story.

Difficulty: 3 The fireballs proved menacing enough.

Killer Instinct: 0 No hits, no score.

Gore Factor: 4 Because we know that fireballs can be very nasty.

Fairness: 8 A nice level one challenge of brainwork and footwork, somewhat unusual for the later series.

ADVENTURE TIME

Due to the victory of Beth and her friends last time, the score is now Dungeon 5, Humans 2. Let's see how the next lot do.

The next dungeoneer is called Sam, short for Samantha. After walking along a dwarf tunnel, she emerges straight into the level one clue room. The advisors take her to the table, on which she finds a key, a silver brooch and a book entitled *jokes*.

"Fortune is on your side, team, for you've jumped straight to the clue room for this level" Treguard remarks. "However, don't waste your good fortune; all these things must be earned."

As he speaks, the face of Brangwen appears in front of Sam.

"Who dares to rob the Brangwen She?" the wall monster demands. "Touch nothing until you have faced me, dungeoneer."

"You'd best face her, Sam, and keep your wits about you," says Treguard.

"Listen carefully, human" Brangwen advises. "For I have three mysteries, and here is my first. I gave a gift to a sorrowful friend, when she received my gift her sorrow did end. The gift I gave was not prepared, and it is a gift best shared. What is it?"

The advisors chatter for a while before giving Sam an answer.

"Love" says Sam.

"Falsehood!" declares Brangwen. "Laughter was the truth I sought. Here is my second. Adam was the first man, Eve was the first woman, but who was the first dream-reader?"

"Joseph" says Sam, who is fortunately well taught in religious education.

"Truth accepted," says Brangwen. "Here is my third. What name do you give to a footprint in a rock?"

"Fossil" Sam replies.

"Truth accepted," says Brangwen again. "Two is the score; you may learn more. Your quest is for the Sword, but you may not wield it. The doors ahead are not locked by any normal means. The first step is the *skier*."

With that, Brangwen is gone. Sam picks up the book and the brooch and is directed out of the room. The spectral scorpion's chamber follows.

"Avoid that sting, team, but don't delay" is Treguard's advice.

The advisors guide Sam carefully past the swinging tail and through the door. She finds herself in the chamber of Queen Kalina. The sorceress is lounging on a chair.

"Oh, heavens, not another one!" she exclaims. "Why do you young people always have to use my home as some sort of pit-stop? Well, what is your name, then?"

"Sam" says Sam.

"Well, Sam, I can't talk for long because I have to prepare for a dinner party later" says Kalina in a tired voice. "So you'll have to tell me quickly what you want from me."

"What do you have to help me in my quest?" asks Sam.

"Er, well, let me see" Kalina says thoughtfully. "A dragon slumbers nearby; he has the password for this level. I have got a firestone amongst my treasures. Would that help you?"

"Yes, it would" enthuses Sam.

"What do you have to offer in return?" Kalina demands, sitting up suddenly.

"This brooch" says Sam, holding out the object.

"Very nice" says Kalina approvingly as she rises from her chair. "That seems like a fair bargain to me."

She opens a chest and takes out a red gem. She gives it to Sam as she takes the brooch.

"This will impress my guests" Kalina says happily. "Well, off you go, Sam. Good luck. Oh, and remember this: the second step is the *rower*."

The advisors direct Sam out. She finds herself on a large chess board. There are two exits, one straight ahead and one diagonally to the right, but both are blocked up with bricks. On the floor squats Motley, the jester.

"Hello Helmet-Face" Motley greets Sam. "You've blundered into a dead end, I'm afraid. You won't get out of this room unaided."

"Isn't that what you're here for?" Sam asks coyly.

"That's very presumptive, I must say" Motley replies. "Still, that's not to say that I won't help you out. You just have to make it worth my while. My act's wearing awfully thin nowadays, you know. Got any fresh jokes for me?"

"I've got a whole book of them," says Sam, holding out the joke book.

"Very good" says Motley approvingly as he takes it and flicks through the pages. "This'll keep 'em amused. Okay, youngster, here's the deal. You can only unblock one of these doors. For this purpose, I gift you the spell *bolt*. As to which one is the correct door, well, that's easy! Listen to this: If you want to meet a brute, simply take the Castle route. If a Bishop you would be, take his steps for passage free. And now, you're on your own."

Motley skips out of the room, leaving the team to ponder his words.

"You must now make your choice, team" Treguard encourages them.

"Should you approach the Bishop's door, or the Castle's?"

After agreeing that bishops move diagonally, and that this is the correct route, the advisors take Sam towards the door on the right.

"Spellcasting:" says the spellcaster. "B-O-L-T."

A bolt of energy shatters the bricks. Sam steps over the rubble and through the door. She finds herself standing on the edge of a pit. Snoring can be heard coming from below.

"Here sleeps the dragon that Kalina spoke of," says Treguard. "But if you're to enlist his aid, you'll have to attract his attention."

Sam is told to shout loudly to wake the dragon. She calls into the pit:

"Smirkenorff!"

There are grumbling sounds from below before the large green head appears out of the hole. Smirkenorff blinks sleepily a few times.

"Oh, a dungeoneer" the dragon rumbles. "Well, I must say, it was incredibly rude of you to wake me up suddenly like that; I was having such a lovely dream, too. Apologise at once if you seek an audience with me."

"I'm sorry to have disturbed you, my lord" Sam grovels. "My name's Sam and I was told that you might be able to help me."

"Yes, I can help you" Smirkenorff agrees. "I know everything there is to know about escaping level one. You have to use the trapdoor at the moment. It's very easy to open: just jump three times and prepare yourself for a fall. Of course, you'll have to get past the blocker first. That requires the password. So, little dungeoneer, convince me that I should tell it to you."

"I'll give you this firestone," says Sam, holding out the gem.

"Oh, a firestone" Smirkenorff says eagerly. "That is indeed most useful as it restores my powers by fuelling my metabolism. Very well, toss it up in the air, Sam."

Sam does so. Smirky flicks out his tongue and catches the stone before crunching it up noisily. He licks his lips.

"Yes, most satisfying" he says approvingly. "Very well, then. The password is *dragonflight*. And, as the stone was so delicious, I'll tell you something else. The third step is the *runner*. Now, on your way."

Smirkenorff's head sinks back into the pit and Sam is directed out. She meets the blocker in the next chamber.

"Password!" it demands.

"Dragonflight" Sam replies.

The blocker shoots off, leaving the exit clear. The next chamber contains a wooden trapdoor. Sam is directed over to it and jumps three times as per Smirkenorff's instructions. It opens up, and Sam falls into level two. The first room is a large blue cavern. An image of Mogdred shimmers on the wall. The advisors jump violently as it begins to speak.

"I have been waiting for you, Sam" Mogdred's voice echoes. "I've just been dying to tell you that I've completely blocked off the exit from this

level. It is via the Descender, you see, but I have worked my most powerful magic and completely rusted the machinery. There will be no way to level three for you, so you will die here on this level. Give up now, or just prolong the agony!"

The image then disappears.

"Not a very warm welcome, team, as I'm sure you'll agree" says Treguard. "However, don't let him put you off; the Dungeon will not allow him to cheat. Press on now."

Sam's advisors guide her into the clue room. On the table are a key, a dagger and a spanner. The team sensibly decide not to take the dagger, and take the other two objects instead. Sam is guided quickly out, into Merlin's room.

"Here is a place of magic," says Treguard. "But steps must be taken if the magic is to work."

Sam is taken to the edge of the pit. She begins by miming a skier, holding imaginary poles out to her side. The first step appears. She next pretends to row with a pair of oars. The second step appears. Finally she runs on the spot. The third step appears. Sam walks forward and Merlin arrives on his throne.

"Very good, Sam" smiles the wizard. "You're quite the Olympian, I must say. Now, what am I doing here again?"

"It is time for the test, Merlin" Treguard prompts him testily. "The riddles, if you recall."

"Of course, the riddles!" exclaims Merlin. "Well, here they come, then. Listen carefully, Sam and friends, for you must answer both correctly to succeed. Here is my first. I saw a songbird drink a drop this very morn. It did not drink from a lake, river or stream; from a pond, sink or birdbath; indeed, from any water source. Yet it certainly was water that was drunk. What did the song-bird drink?"

One of the advisors picks up on the clue in the word 'drop', and tells Sam the answer.

"Dew" she says.

"Truth accepted," says Merlin approvingly. "Here is my second. It weighs nothing at all, yet even a strong man may not hold it for more than a few seconds. But some aquatic creatures such as whales and crocodiles can hold it for hours on end."

"Breath" Sam replies.

"Truth accepted," says Merlin again. "Well done, Sam. For passing my test, I will reward you with the spell *restore*. It is synthetic magic, remember, so use it on a synthetic device. Good luck."

Merlin disappears in a blinding flash. The advisors direct Sam out. The cave that follows is empty except for one locked door, but an ominous whirring sound fills the room.

"Warning team" says Treguard. "The Automatum is close by."

Will Sam escape the Automatum? Can the Descender be fixed? Does anybody really care? Read the next Adventure Time to find out.

PUZZLE PAGE ONE

Here I have provided you with one series and twelve associated words. The rest is up to you.

Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	F	G	G	G	H	J	K	L	M
N	B	B	V	C	X	Z	A	Q	M	E	R	T	R	Y	U	I	I	O	S
O	B	R	O	L	L	A	C	H	A	N	O	H	I	F	F	K	M	A	W
L	L	O	S	U	I	C	K	M	R	Y	B	I	M	U	I	C	E	B	O
O	O	T	G	F	S	A	T	C	T	O	C	K	A	E	D	Y	Y	B	R
A	A	H	R	O	S	W	E	N	A	A	F	R	L	K	J	O	U	S	D
B	B	E	O	M	A	W	H	A	L	O	T	L	D	A	I	T	Y	X	E
B	B	R	E	R	R	A	L	L	L	D	F	E	I	J	T	H	I	G	N
S	S	S	I	O	D	F	E	B	P	L	E	S	N	A	T	H	A	S	A
X	X	T	W	M	A	K	N	M	E	S	A	Y	E	E	H	T	N	K	L
G	G	R	O	M	A	H	N	A	Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S
L	L	A	L	Z	L	O	T	J	Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S
O	O	N	O	L	O	H	O	I	T	C	P	A	O	K	H	E	I	S	N
A	A	G	A	O	A	E	Y	D	O	R	O	T	H	B	E	R	R	Y	R
B	B	E	B	A	B	U	R	A	B	A	R	R	E	A	A	S	S	T	G
B	B	A	B	B	B	R	E	S	U	P	C	U	L	E	N	T	E	N	Y
S	S	S	S	B	S	X	Y	L	F	T	E	Y	F	T	A	T	H	O	U
X	X	F	X	S	X	D	Z	L	U	O	M	M	S	I	S	O	G	U	I
G	G	F	G	X	G	S	E	W	E	R	S	O	F	G	O	T	H	J	Z
Q	E	R	T	G	U	I	O	P	A	F	Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	F

BROLLACHAN
BROTHER STRANGE
FIDJIT
GRIMALDINE
LISSARD
MAJIDA

MARTA
RAPTOR
ROMAHNA
ROTHBERRY
SEWERS OF GOTH
SWORD

CARRY ON KNIGHTMARE:

A guide to the humour within the show in three parts by Robin John Barlow.

PART 1: SERIES 1-3. (1987-1989)

Welcome readers fond of illusion to an article of confusion, which I alone have mastered. No, not really! It's actually a guide to the humour that was to be found in this great show that we all so dearly cherish. So make yourselves comfortable, get on your jester suits and prepare for a journey through all eight series. Part one will deal with the first era (Series 1, 2 & 3) of the Dungeon, where Treguard alone was at hand to offer advice, encouragement, sarcasm and a great deal of shouting. The next part (Series 4, 5 & 6) will deal with Pickle's more *spritely* approach as the Opposition became finally known and started reshaping things. Then we look at the hyperactivity that followed with Majida at hand (Series 7 & 8) to see the Dungeon go into its final phases whilst keeping her nose intact. This will be then followed by a brief reflection on the series as a whole and a brief conclusion seeing how all things humorous changed throughout the run of the show. Anyway, the screen burns, my typing yearns, so let the article begin. READ ON!

Series 1: 1987.

Knightmare first graced our screens on the seventh of September 1987. Dungeoneers, teams and the viewing public alike had no idea of the perils and format of the show before them. As this was only a beginning with no idea of a long and successful run, things were fairly stale in comparison to that which was to follow. In many cases humour was actually derived from the bumbling of the teams in their attempts to direct their dungeoneer successfully, or not as the case so often was. This was actually the case

with all series, but in this series and the next it shows most clearly. Folly, the jester, was indeed there to lighten the atmosphere somewhat, but the general feeling I got was, like Pickle's first description, he wasn't exactly "one of us" either. But the highlight of this and his next series has to be his duel of insults with Cedric, for it was truly sublime and shines out amongst all other Folly encounters before and after. Some characters in hindsight are destined for greater things, like Merlin for instance, but you get the impression that many things were played completely seriously. The urgency for life force didn't help matters either as it led teams into panic and confusion and thus they were less relaxed compared to the more jovial banter that was to follow with later series' teams. Most of the humour therefore came from sly asides and most of these were not likely to be picked up on by its young audience. To the watchers' parents this was their reward for allowing their kids to experience what was a fairly dark show at this time...

Series 2: 1988.

Series 2 was upon us less than a year later and came with double the number of episodes to that of the preceding series. The direct result of this was surprisingly a most welcome change in pace and things were considerably smoother than before. New characters were brought in, for whom comedy was used chiefly in interaction, yet they were not truly original, drawing as they did on established myths and legends. Olaf springs foremost to mind here. Merlin had already been created and so a counterpart was brought in, in the more physical form of Mogdred, who ushered in a welcome foe who was scary yet darkly humorous. Casper the talking key also caused much hilarity for me at least. Also deserving a mention are the progress reports at the start of each episode, which were imported from the first series. These "Dungeon ditties" helped to relax the viewer somewhat before the game was to begin properly. Even at the tender age of seven I knew how bad some of those rhymes were!

Series 3: 1989.

This is the one the fans crave for. This is the series in which no one won yet people desperately wished they had. (Series 1 was the only other losers only series.) This was Nightmare at its very best before the arrival of Lord Fear and chums. Many jokes were now understandable and given by its more aware teams. The changing of Folly to Motley was a definite step forward in my opinion. Paul Valentine took the part and made it seem as though he'd been helping "Helmet Heads" (no comment!) for years. His dalliances with Mellisandre were absolute innocent fun. Plus the

unsung hero of Knightmare, McGrew, made his only appearances here; this was by the use of national stereotype, but believably so. Hordriss was first seen here and his pomposity was already present, but also humbleness, a rare trait from the Confuser, which adds to the general merriment in this series as the overall atmosphere had changed somewhat too. Treguard was no longer as scary as he had actually once seemed and the Dungeon was far less enclosed. Another firm favourite here is the character of Mrs. Grimwold, revealed to be the suffering (or is it the other way around?) wife of the ogre who had appeared previously. The character's shrill and piercing cry of "Shut up, Festus" - the often heard yet never seen household pet - will remain with me forever. (*The thing I find funniest about Mrs. Grimwold is that she's actually a man dressed as a woman!* - **Jake.**)

Well, I'd better stop before Jake tells me to "Shut up!" too, so you will all have chew on your bones until next time when we examine series 4 through to 6. My many thanks also go to those who helped contribute when I asked for inspiration all that time ago before the summer.

Doesn't this guy ever shut up?! Seriously, Robin, I must thank you once again for this enthralling article, which gives a detailed insight into some of the most enjoyable bits of the world's greatest TV programme. I'll look forward - as will the other readers I'm sure - to the next installment in November.

REMEMBER HIM?

Series 5/6. Level 1/2.

JULIUS SCARAMONGER.

This trader and stallholder was introduced to us by Brother Mace as a leading citizen of the town of Wolfenden, which dungeoneers usually passed through as part of level one in series 5 and 6. Rayner "Skarkill" Bourton wore Julius's red and cream clothes and blond wig, which offset a character who lived and worked exclusively for his own personal material gain. Julius relied on his bartering skills for this, which were undoubtedly considerable as he proved himself capable on several occasions of flogging

just about anything. (*"Wasn't he responsible for selling his own mother to Count Brinkator as a washerwoman? - Pickle.*) It was in this capacity that he dealt with dungeoneers in series 5, giving them spells, objects and information in exchange for gold or silver. The teams had to be careful, though; such was Scaramonger's desire to make a profit that the dungeoneer might easily be fast-talked into purchasing a useless object if the team were not on their toes.

Early in the series winning dungeoneer Ben I managed to persuade Julius to part with a useful green stone instead of a useless red one, but later dungeoneer Chris III was less fortunate. As you may remember from a recent *Classic Quest*, Scaramonger sold Chris a spell that turned him into a goblin! Julius's bartering skills combined with his position of constantly bartering with dungeoneers inspired Lord Fear to ask the merchant to join the Opposition towards the end of series 5, but Scaramonger elected to remain neutral, much to Fear's scorn. (*"Like all good middlemen; and take money from both sides!" - Lord Fear.*) However, Scaramonger could often be found working for Fear in series 6, principally because the opening of Ah Wok's stall in Wolfenden was robbing Julius of most of his trade, particularly in the case of passing dungeoneers. Ah Wok robbed Julius of the trade of dungeoneers Matt and Ben II in Wolfenden, sending Julius over to the dark side. After striking an unsuccessful deal with Lord Fear to assassinate Ah Wok, Julius became instrumental in importing Lord Fear's red dragon into the Dungeon with a dragon caller. Fortunately, Elita and dungeoneer Sofia put an end to this. Julius became much more difficult for the teams to deal with as he became more of an ally to Fear. This came to a head at the end of series 6 when a drunk Scaramonger had to be bashed on the head by Chris IV with a magic hammer before he would take part in any bartering. After this, Julius left the Dungeon, depressed and broke.

Fear Factor: 3 Often friendly, but occasionally threatening.

Humour Rating: 4 Mostly a very down-to-business type of fellow.

Killer Instinct: 2 He made a profit at the fatal expense of Chris the goblin.

Oscar Standard: 8 Very convincing, and a memorable character.

CLASSIC QUEST

Series 3.

Quest: The Crown in Glory.

Dungeoneer: Douglas.

Advisors: Richard, Derek and Matthew.

Home town: Weston-Super-Mare.

Team score: $\frac{1}{2}$ out of 10.

A classically awful attempt this time, and possibly the worst one ever!

Level One: The team's first challenge is the spectral scorpion, which they fail dismally, causing Douglas to get stung and lose a life force level. Through a dwarf tunnel they find Mellisandre feeding some green maggots. She asks Douglas an easy question, which the team answer correctly. Mellie tells them that the first step is the windmill. Next is the clue room, where they score only one out of three with Brangwen. With no clues as to the correct objects to take, Douglas picks up some gold and a key, leaving behind a gauntlet. They then pass the moving wall successfully in the Corridor of the Catacombs, before meeting Motley in the room that is usually filled with water. The jester is upset because he had wanted to have a bath, but the pool has been drained. He begins to rub himself with soap anyway, and a large cobra appears, unnoticed, in the pool behind him.

A team with any wits whatsoever would have warned Motley about this danger, but, despite Treguard's relentless urging, they only whisper amongst themselves about it. (*"Don't tell each other!" - Treguard.*) Motley eventually notices the giant reptile and makes his escape, meaning that Douglas misses out on whatever information the jester had to share. (*"Thanks for telling me about the snake! I'm off." - Motley.*) The advisors calmly direct Douglas out, still seemingly happy with their dismal performance. As if to illustrate that they shouldn't be, Douglas is quickly killed off in a bomb explosion in the next room. Treguard explains that they needed the gauntlet to freeze the fuse.

Summary: Completely useless from start to very early - but richly deserved - finish.

CREATURE FEATURE

Series 1/2/3/4/7. Level 1/2/3.

GIANT REPTILES.

Just to be clear, I'm not talking about dragons here. I'm talking about real live reptiles that were brought into the studio at Anglia Television and enlarged by the magic of advanced camera techniques, for the purpose of superimposing them into the Dungeon as colossal saurian threats. The first of these appeared in series 1 in the shape of giant snakes, which appeared from behind a broken-down door to menace passing dungeoneers in level one. This challenge returned for series 2, but caused no real damage to quests as it was only ever intended as a scare factor. The closest shave, I think, belongs to Neil from series 2, who was a hair's breadth away from brushing a large purple pre-recorded snake before he managed to escape.

The threat of becoming snake-chow remained in series 3, in the particularly nasty form of the Dreadful Khar, an enormous Egyptian Cobra. He popped out of his pit in level one to menace travellers with his immense appearance, but never actually satisfied his apparent constant hunger by eating a dungeoneer. Khar also appeared in level three from a pit in the room that used to be used for Combat Chess. Mogdred or Morghanna called him forth, but, again, he was purely a scare factor.

The threat of giant reptiles returned for series 4, but shifted to the form of giant lizards. Simon III had to stop a hissing monstrosity that was guarding the wellway by freezing it in time with an hourglass. An even more enormous lizard lived somewhere amongst the ruins of Dungarth, which started licking its lips and hissing when it saw a dungeoneer. As Jeremy and Vicky found out, however, a speedy dash to safety was all that was required.

After series 4, with the advents of first puppetry and then computer graphics, it was much less common to see threats such as the giant snakes and lizards. We were treated to one more enlarged reptile, though, early in series 7: a tortoise called Nigel. He was actually Hordriss in disguise, and Simon IV had to convince him to return to his true form so he could rescue a mini-Sidriss from a bottle. So, we have had giant snakes, lizards

and tortoises - and, of course, dragons - so the only question is, why were there no giant crocodilians? Answers, please!

Fear Factor: 7 Even if they were only pre-recorded film.

Killer Instinct: 0 Purely for show.

Humanity: 3 We're all vertebrates.

Gore Factor: 8 Primarily the reason for choosing to enlarge them.

I THINK I READ SOMEWHERE

Have you ever dreamed of going on a quest through the Nightmare Dungeon, just like the heroes in *Adventure Time*? Well, here's your chance to undertake an Adventure Time quest, just like those in the first six Nightmare books. All the usual rules of the Dungeon apply. You will need a six-sided die. There are three levels to complete over the next three issues. Here's your chance to attempt level one, if you dare.

1

You stand before the great door, nerves running high. Although you wear the Helmet of Justice, you can still see the path ahead. Before you begin your adventure, Treguard asks you to select a quest object: either the Cup that Heals or the Crown in Glory.

If you want to try and redeem the Cup, go to **29**.

If you go for the Crown, go to **37**.

2

You are in the chamber of Queen Kalina. The sorceress is fiddling with a padlock on a large chest, which she is obviously having trouble opening.

If you sneak past without attracting her attention, go to **17**.

If you offer her a skeleton key, go to **31**.

3

"Yes, that's a good enough reason" Fatilla leers as he takes the gold from you. "In fact, it's such a good reason that I'm going to tell you a useful word that I know. The word is *goblin*. Now, push off, before I change my mind."

You hurriedly go to **25**.

4

You probably would have done better not to take this chance, as the tail is swinging wildly. However, you might get past if you're quick enough. Roll a die.

If you score an even number, go to **26**.

If you score an odd number, go to **13**.

5

“What possible use could I have for that?” snorts Smirkenorff huffily. “Go away, human, and only come back when you have gained some sense.”
Go to **24**.

6

“Thank you, my dear young person” Mildread rasps at you. “This will come in most handy for flavouring. In return, I gift you the WELL spell. Use it wisely.”
You thank Mildread and go to **17**.

7

You just make it to the door before the bomb explodes. Go to **40**.

8

You find yourself in Mildread’s chamber. The old witch is stirring her cauldron and muttering to herself.

If you sneak past without attracting her attention, go to **17**.

If you offer her a gem, go to **18**.

If you offer her a potion, go to **6**.

9

That was not the correct password. The blocker shoots forward and swallows you.
Your adventure ends here.

10

You should have thought of two of the following: Little John, Will Scarlet, Friar Tuck, Alan-a-Dale, Mutch the Miller’s son and Maid Marian.

If you did so, go to **19**.

If not, go to **43**.

11

You hurl the water at the fuse and it fizzles out. You can now walk at your leisure to the exit. Go to **40**.

12

“You have failed the test!” Phelheim cries triumphantly. “Now, I feed on you.” Your adventure ends here.

13

Luckily, you make it past the scorpion without incident. Go to **42**.

14

What do you think the password is?

Ghost. Go to **9**.

Goblin. Go to **39**.

Dungeon. Go to **23**.

Well. Go to **28**.

15

You find yourself in a dark cave. The only exit is blocked by Fatilla, the Barbarian guard.

“No exit, young adventurer” Fatilla slurps. “You’d better give me a good reason not to blip you and then blop you.”

If you offer him a potion, go to **30**.

If you offer him a gem, go to **22**.

If you offer him gold, go to **3**.

16

“Thank you, human” smiles Smirkenorff. “You have pleased me. In return, I will tell you the word. It’s *goblin*.”

You thank Smirkenorff and continue on your way. Go to **24**.

17

You are in the blocker’s chamber. Before you have time to make for the exit, the wall grates forwards and forms a gigantic face.

“Password!” the blocker demands.

If you can give the password, go to **14**.

If you do not know the password, go to **38**.

18

Mildread is intent on making her stew and takes no notice of what you are saying to her. You are forced to leave empty-handed. Go to **17**.

19

“Truth accepted” Brangwen says. “Listen, human. The key is a skeleton key, and can be used in any lock. The glove holds nothing.”

The wall monster disappears, leaving you to choose your two objects. To remind you, there is a gauntlet, a key and a dragon mint. When you have decided, go to **33**.

20

You should have thought of two of the following: Lancelot, Gawain, Galahad, Bedevere, Bors, Balin, Balan, Gareth, Percival, Kay, Agravaine and Tristan.

If you did so, go to **41**.

If not, go to **12**.

21

You walk through the door and are impaled on a large spike. Your adventure ends here.

22

“That’s not a good enough reason, I’m afraid” Fatilla tells you. “So I’ll just have to blip you and then blop you!”

If you can offer him a bar of gold, go to **3** quickly.

If not, your adventure ends here.

23

That was not the correct password. The blocker shoots forward and swallows you. Your adventure ends here.

24

You emerge onto a chequered floor. There are two exits from this chamber, one directly to the right on the same row of squares as you, the other one row and three squares to the left of you. At the far end of the room squats Motley, the jester.

“Hail to you, adventurer” Motley calls. “Welcome to the level one crossroads. Do you want to know which way is yours? It’s quite simple, really. *If you want to be a rook, do not take a second look. If you want to be a knight, you’ll get more than just a fright.*”

If you take the door to the left, go to **21**.

If you go right, go to **2**.

25

The room you enter has two exits, one to the right and one to the left. You are about to go to the right when the Automatum comes clanking out of the door that you are making for.

If you think you can dodge past him, go to **36**.

If you go over to the other door, go to **8**.

26

The tail shoots out and poisons you as you are running past. Your adventure ends here.

27

“What possible use could I have for that?” snorts Smirkenorff huffily. “Go away, human, and only come back when you have gained some sense.”

Go to **24**.

28

That was not the correct password. The blocker shoots forward and swallows you. Your adventure ends here.

29

You enter a room dominated by the spectral scorpion. There is a possible exit beyond the path of its swinging tail on the right-hand wall. You notice, however, that the tail is swinging more quickly than usual, giving you little or no room for error in your dash to safety. There is another exit immediately to your left.

If you take the left-hand exit, go to **42**.

If you try to dash past the scorpion, go to **4**.

30

“That’s not a good enough reason, I’m afraid” Fatilla tells you. “So I’ll just have to blip you and then blop you!”

If you can offer him a bar of gold, go to **3** quickly.

If not, your adventure ends here.

31

“Oh, thank you,” breathes Kalina gratefully as the key turns in the lock. “I don’t know what I would have done if I couldn’t have got that chest open. It holds all my

best silverware, you see, which I need for my dinner party tonight. To show my gratitude for your help, I gift you the WELL spell. Use it wisely.”
You thank Kalina and go to **17**.

32

You are not fast enough. The bomb explodes and you are blown to smithereens. Your adventure ends here.

33

You find yourself at the pit of Smirkenorff, the dragon. He looks at you with disdain before speaking to you.

“I have a special word that I will share with you” Smirkenorff rumbles. “If you offer me relief for my rumbling stomach.”

If you have a dragon mint to give him, go to **16**.

If not, will you offer him a skeleton key (go to **27**) or a gauntlet (go to **5**)?

34

Congratulations on completing level one! You cast the spell and a stone well appears in the corner of the room. You climb down this into level two. Read *I Think I Read Somewhere* next issue to learn what challenges await you.

35

It may have been worth putting out the fuse to save yourself some time. Still, you might make it before the bomb explodes. Roll a die.

If you roll an odd number, go to **32**.

If you roll an even number, go to **7**.

36

That wasn't a very sensible idea. You hardly have time to think before your skull has been crushed by the Automatum's morning star. Your adventure ends here.

37

You emerge into a room dominated by a large bomb. The fuse is burning brightly, and a bucket of water sits on the floor beside it. The only exit is about ten metres away.

Will you make a dash for it, or risk tarrying long enough to try and put the fuse out?

If you decide to try and put the fuse out, go to **11**.

If you dash for the exit, go to **35**.

38

You must have made a mistake at some point on the level to have missed this vital clue. Your adventure ends here.

39

The blocker shoots off, leaving the exit clear. You step through it into an empty chamber. There is no visible means of exit.

“Here is the wellway room, young adventurer, and the end of level one” Treguard's voice says from nowhere. “But I hope you have not been so foolish as to have missed the way to find the well.”

If you have the WELL spell, go to **34**.

If you do not have this spell, go to **38**.

40

You are in the level one clue room. On the table you find a bar of gold, a green stone and a potion. Before you can make your choice, the face of Phelheim appears on the wall in front of you.

“Only those who show knowledge will leave my chamber alive” Phelheim tells you. “If you wish to do so, human, then give me the names of two of Arthur’s most famous knights, who sat at his round table.”

When you have your answer, go to 20.

41

“Truth accepted,” says Phelheim. “Listen, human. There are none on this level who value gems over stews or base metal. Leave quickly, and quietly.”

Decide which two objects to take from the selection of a bar of gold, a green stone and a potion, then go to 15.

42

You have entered the level one clue room. On the table are three objects: a key, a dragon mint and a gauntlet. Before you can make your choice, the far wall changes into the face of Brangwen, the wall monster.

“Hold your hand, thief” Brangwen says to you. “You may not have passage until you have answered my question. This time, it is a matter of general knowledge. Give me the names of two famed followers of Robin Hood.”

Once you have your answer, go to 10.

43

“You have failed the test!” Brangwen cries triumphantly. “Now, I feed on you.” Your adventure ends here.

PUZZLE PAGE TWO

Here I have provided you with one series and twelve associated words. The rest is up to you.

L	I	N	G	H	O	R	M	Q	D	S	S	L	F	G	L	H	J	L	K
W	E	R	T	L	Y	U	A	I	O	P	A	O	N	M	O	L	M	O	L
B	L	V	C	O	X	Z	R	A	S	D	F	A	S	G	A	O	I	A	H
J	O	K	L	A	P	O	B	I	U	Y	T	B	K	R	B	A	R	B	E
Q	A	E	R	B	M	A	L	D	A	M	E	B	E	T	B	B	E	B	Y
U	B	I	O	B	P	A	E	S	D	F	G	S	L	H	S	B	M	S	S
J	B	K	L	S	Z	X	H	C	V	B	N	X	E	M	X	S	A	X	N
S	S	I	B	X	L	I	E	K	E	H	A	G	T	L	G	X	N	G	A

H	X	N	H	G	N	A	A	H	O	X	L	E	R	O	Y	G	C	L	P
O	G	A	A	L	L	I	D	E	P	O	I	N	O	A	S	T	E	O	P
R	G	O	L	D	E	N	G	A	L	L	E	O	N	B	T	R	C	A	E
T	L	H	S	R	I	S	T	I	E	O	A	C	E	B	I	N	N	B	R
C	O	L	H	X	A	A	H	L	P	L	E	S	T	S	L	N	L	B	J
U	A	O	E	O	E	L	H	C	H	O	O	L	E	X	E	I	O	S	A
T	B	A	B	R	L	I	A	N	N	J	T	R	R	G	T	E	A	X	C
I	B	B	A	O	L	L	R	O	S	E	T	A	H	C	T	T	B	G	K
S	S	B	H	O	N	E	S	T	Y	B	A	R	T	R	A	M	B	U	R
E	X	S	Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	D	F	G	S	N	H
W	G	X	S	J	K	L	R	E	A	C	H	Z	X	C	V	B	X	N	M
E	L	G	L	Q	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	D	F	G	J	J

BHAL SHEBAH
 GOLDEN GALLEON
 HONESTY BARTRAM
 LINGHORM
 MALDAME
 MARBLEHEAD

MIREMAN
 REACH
 SHORT CUT
 SKELETRON
 SNAPPER JACK
 STILETTA

A LAST RESORT

Welcome to the seventh chapter of the mammoth story penned by Newark's Carl Bateson. Matt, James and John are trying to survive in a level that no longer exists. Can they win the quest?

James opened his eyes. He was floating, but in what? He looked down at a bright spot in a field of darkness. His eyesight drifted as he could just make out the floor and the larva as it engulfed the cavern. They were rapidly travelling away from the site as he saw Matt and John, floating, just like him, in some sort of energy bubble. It appeared purplish to the eye. Both of them seemed unconscious. He wasn't sure if they were dead or not - if they had fallen into the larva. He panicked.

"John!" he bellowed, but no noise was produced.

He suddenly began to fade out of consciousness, as he lost all sight.

John awoke with the others in a well-bricked room. Shivers ran down his back as he slowly got up. He felt down his back and then to his feet. He was surprised to find himself unhurt and full on energy. He woke the others, to find that they were also fine. He concluded that it was down to Hordriss's magic. They looked around them. The room was bricked with limestone. It was very cold, and had two windows and a closed door. Matt walked to the window. He lent on its ledge and looked outside. The snowfall was heavy and bombarded the ground. A thick blanket of snow already lay upon the floor as it slowly grew.

"Weather's not too good" he told them.

"Its lovely" James disagreed. "Are you sure this is level three? It seems too pleasant."

"I thought *you* were the expert" Matt retorted as he swung open the door, causing both snow and wind to drift in.

"Close the door!" boomed James. "It's cold."

"Unfortunately we do not have this option. We saw what was happening to other parts of level three. We don't really have the time" John told them as he reopened the door.

"Shut the ruddy door!" James yelled at him.

"Hey, sod off!" John retorted.

James walked over to the door and slammed it shut. John reopened it

"Go suck a banana, you son of a..." John began, but was stopped by a left hook from James, crushing his check bone. John aimed several kicks at James's shin as James grabbed hold of his tunic and winded him, then aimed another punch at his head. John cleverly blocked the wide swing and madly headbutted him in the eye as he finished the combo with a sharp knee to the undefended realms of his groin. Under much agony, James was about to retort, when all three of them were halted by an evil laugh, echoing amongst the walls. Both James and John stood still as Matt crept around them and reopened the heavy oak door.

"I'm going out - I may be gone for some time" he told them as he disappeared down the path.

John looked at James. They were both worried sick. Without a word, the pair ran after Matt.

They stopped at an old rotten tree stump. A scroll lay there, half buried. The three of them stood outside a large ruin of a castle, now covered in snow. They shivered uncontrollably.

"Spellcasting: W-A-R-M-T-H" James shouted, as large scarlet cloaks appeared around the team. All three pulled the garments desperately around themselves as John opened the scroll.

"I can't read it" he told the others. "The ink is far too smudged."
Matt, too, had a look at the coating of ink that resembled letters. John displayed his hands, also covered in a thick layer of ink.

"Hope it wasn't important" he said.

Suddenly all attention was diverted to a green glowing object, shining in the snow. John walked slowly up to it. He slowly wiped away the snow to reveal a green gem. Satisfied, he lifted it up. It began to shine brighter, when suddenly it disappeared. James panicked as he wiped away further snow to reveal a stand and some engraved runes.

"Something tells me you shouldn't have done that" James told him.

There was a deep rumbling noise as a large trapdoor opened and all three plunged into the depths of some underground cavern. The light rapidly waned as the sky faded further into the distance. They were falling, but very slowly. The three looked at each other before they hit the ground with a thud. Even though they were falling unnaturally slowly, James still managed to injure his knee.

James felt around, looking for the others. His hands rubbed against some snow that had fallen through. They were lucky; they had landed on some soft straw. He stood as his left hand rubbed against a stone object. It was not anything natural, but hewed rock or stonework. Suddenly the whole room lit up as several torches, hung high on the walls, burst into flame. The walls were blue, and bones were littered around. Slime covered the walls as the team found each other, and looked desperately around the large room.

"Looking for something?" came an evil voice from the other side of the room. The three turned to face a woman, wearing dark clothes of some status. Her finger pointed to a distant corner of the room. Lightning stretched from it to produce a small emerald object in the corner of the room. It was a figure, arms stretched out. It was standing on a thick base. Its sides curled up into points and touched the figure. It was one of the most beautiful objects they had ever seen.

"The Idol of Gysmutu" she stated, evil intentions underpinning her every word.

"How do you know?" James demanded.

"I'm Aesandre the Sorceress - I know everything! Tell me, who is the greatest power of all?"

"The Powers that Be!" shouted James.

"Wrong!" she returned.

"The Powers that Be!" he repeated in a stronger, firmer voice.

"Last chance, scum" sneered Aesandre.

"You are!" John interjected strategically.

"Creep!" Aesandre shouted. "Truthful, but still creepish. Since it took you three attempts, I'll give you a choice of fate. You could either be transported into the level three torture chamber, or you can stay here."

"We are staying here and claiming the Idol of Gysmutu!" Matt shouted.

Brave words from Matt, but something tells me that Aesandre is not going to give up without a fight. Find out what happens next time in the final part of *A Last Resort*.

POETRY CORNER

Another look back at series 4 this issue, readers, so apologies to those of you who don't like it. I do, however, so here is a summary of the final quest that I wrote in the golden summer of 1996.

Hampshire's challenge now rings out,
Here's Giles for the final bout.
With two truths the quest was earned,
Merlin's plight was duly learned.
The test was one of chivalry,
The task: to find an iron key.
Motley's act was in the inn,
Was Giles too slow for a goblin?
The jester's gift could magic make,
Securing Giles a quick escape.
Oakley's *sniff* gift floored the guard,
Level two was very hard,
Brother Mace gave Giles a card!
It called Motley with his wit,
Ariadne had a fit!
The Dunswater was crossed quickly,
Giles found Merlin's magic key,
He gave them the spell TINY!
On they went past buzzsaw blade,
But it transpired, I'm afraid,
That after Mogdred's taunt and jeer

The Dungeon closed for another year.

NEXT ISSUE DETAILS

That's it for now, but please come back and join me for The Eye Shield issue eighteen in November 2002. *A Last Resort* reaches its long-awaited conclusion. Sam attempts to outmanoeuvre Mogdred's meddling in *Adventure Time*. *Classic Quest* examines some Welsh wizardry and Celtic cunning. Are you up to level two of the adventure in *I Think I Read Somewhere?* *Poetry Corner* presents another quest in verse. Another puzzle goes under the hammer in *Remember This?* This elf is short but she has a big mouth: can you *Remember Her?* *Creature Feature* sets out to make your skin crawl once more. Robin Barlow invites you to carry on reading *Carry On Nightmare*. And you'd best bone up on your character quotes in preparation for the *Puzzle Pages*. It's all coming in November, so keep your eyes peeled for it then, but be sure to bring your friends for this is no place to visit alone.

The answers to this issue's challenge question are Gumboil, Brother Mace, Julius Scaramonger and Sylvester Hands.