

THE EYE SHIELD



Issue 10

July 2001

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MESSAGE FROM ME

Welcome to the tenth issue of The Eye Shield. Yes, nearly four years after TES's untimely demise, it is back with a vengeance. However,

despite the fact that all your old favourites are contained herein, you will notice some changes. The most noticeable of these is that TES's new home is here in cyberspace, thanks to the efforts of Illusion and myself. I will also be bringing you a new issue of TES every two months rather than every three. As I said, these will contain all the previous TES articles such as Adventure Time and Classic Quest, but will also feature some new articles, including a regular Creature Feature and my summaries of Dave Morris's Nightmare book series in I Think I Read Somewhere. Now, are there any more changes I should mention? Oh, yes. I am not Paul McIntosh.

I am TES's new editor, Jake Collins. You may remember me from such fanzines as TES issues 2-9, and such internet posting boards as The Nightmare Forum. I'm more of an author than an editor, actually, as TES is no longer a fanzine in the true sense of the word. However, if you do wish to contact me with any feedback or ideas for TES, you can e-mail me at the address at the bottom of the page. In the meantime, get reading, and enjoy TES #10, as its second coming commences.

REMEMBER THIS?

It's time to take a look at one of Nightmare's puzzles. For those of you who need reminding, the scoring system is as follows:

Difficulty: How difficult is the puzzle?

Killer Instinct: How good is it at killing dungeoneers?

Gore Factor: How gory is any death achieved by the puzzle?

Fairness: Is it fair to pit the team against it?

Series 4. Level 3.

THE TRANSPORTER PAD

This obstacle was set between two walls, with ledges jutting out, and a large strip of floor and an exit beneath, only accessible by being transported by magic from the top ledge to the bottom ledge. An armoured knight stood on one ledge, swinging his sword menacingly; he

had to be avoided! The ledges each had three flagstones; a grey one bordered by two red ones. The object of the puzzle was to step carefully onto either the left or right red square and then step back into the middle, thus being transported to a lower ledge and making progress towards the door whilst avoiding the knight. Pickle introduced this idea to the team, who then had to work out the moves for themselves. It was less complicated than it seemed, as Alistair and Dickon found out when they attempted it, involving a total of one sidestep right followed by two sidesteps left. Series 4 ended in this chamber, just before Giles had started to attempt the puzzle.

Difficulty: 7 A lot of thought was involved.

Killer Instinct: 0 Failed to get the better of anyone.

Gore Factor: 0 The knight's sword failed to make contact.

Fairness: 7 Less complicated than it seemed.

ADVENTURE TIME

Believe it or not, adventures are still going on at Nightmare Castle. Here within The Eye Shield's point of view, some of the Dungeon's denizens are eagerly awaiting a fresh batch of dungeoneers. So read carefully if you wish to take the challenge.

TREGUARD, THE DUNGEON MASTER

The master and custodian of the Nightmare Dungeon, he welcomes dungeoneers into his fantastic lair to pit their wits against the Dungeon's challenges.

KALINA

The self-proclaimed ruler of level one, this sorceress is proud and vain, and will only help those who help her first. Dungeoneers must take care not to offend her.

BRANGWEN and PHELHEIM

The wall monsters. They give the object of the quest and clues for level one, but don't fail their riddles or you'll end up crushed between their jaws of stone.

FATILLA

The level one Barbarian guard. Take care around him; he may be easy to bribe, but he is also very keen on using his club to "blip" and "blop" you.

MILDREAD

It is difficult to make a friend out of this witch, but she knows lots of useful things about the Dungeon; tread cautiously.

MOTLEY

The Dungeon jester is always friendly and keen to help out, but don't stick around too long or life force will run out before he's finished talking to you.

SMIRKENORFF

From his level one pit, the *Great Crested Green* dragon is a useful source of magic and information. He likes dragon mints and firestones, but he hates bad manners.

AUTOMATUM

With his spiked club (or morning star), the *Mindless Mechanical Warrior* will do his best to end your quest. His major weakness is his slow pace.

HORDRISS

He's a powerful mage, and very pompous. For goodness's sake, don't offend his honour or you may make an enemy of him.

ELITA

This cavern elf is notoriously rude and unhelpful. However, don't dismiss her as a potential ally; she can be persuaded to your cause.

MOGDRED

The malignant threat of this evil sorcerer hangs throughout levels two and three. He may not be quick to take the offensive, but do not trust him.

MERLIN

This wizard's magic is vital to the completion of your quest. Do not fail his riddles or fall for his tricks, or you will not survive level two.

MORGHANNA

Level three's most powerful sorceress, Morghanna will put an end to your quest at any given opportunity; defeat her as you may, but do it quickly!

Would you like to see how well the latest dungeoneers meet the challenges posed by these characters? If so, read about it in Adventure Time, starting September 2001.

PUZZLE PAGE 1 **Famous Last Words**

Now, here's a puzzle for you. What you must do is name the characters that spoke the following sentences as their last words on Knightmare. If you're really clever, you'll name the series, episodes and dungeoneers' quests that go with the quotes as well.

1. "Yes, I thought so. Do the honours, will you, Dungeon Master?"
2. "Now, you'd best get going, or it'll soon be Autumn; and then where will you be?"
3. "The door's before, the quest's below. Get you gone, and off you go."
4. "You have firm ground for taking this chance I suppose. Somehow, I think not!"
5. "Lord Fear? Lord Fear, are you ready to surrender?"
6. "My pleasure. Boys, follow me."
7. "'Ere, Lord F., it's them, the Powers that Be."

8. "Tell your Treguard to aim well, and not to miss. Go now, boy!"
9. "Don't be so foolish, milord. She's a blonde, isn't she?"
10. "I have no time for boys from Ash, so crumble ledge and boulders crash!"
11. "The red dragon, that's gone, too."
12. "You called, Dungeon Master?"

REMEMBER HIM?

Now it's time to take a look at one of Knightmare's classic characters. For those of you who need reminding, the scoring system is as follows:

Fear Factor: How frightening is the character?

Killer Instinct: How good is he/she at killing dungeoneers?

Humour Rating: Does the character have a sense of humour?

Oscar Standard: Does the actor play the character convincingly?

Series 3/4/5/6/7/8. Level 1/2/3.

HORDRISS THE CONFUSER

Clifford Norgate played the part of Hordriss for six series, which is the most series for any character other than Treguard. With his majestic red robes and red-streaked white hair and beard, Hordriss was essentially a very vain and very powerful sorcerer. He referred to himself mostly as "one" rather than "I". His role within the quest changed drastically in the six years he appeared on Knightmare. He was introduced to us as a non-aligned warlock who could prove either a fatal foe or a powerful ally, but ended up as a member of the Powers that Be who was constantly in danger from Lord Fear.

It is interesting to track this progression. His initial infrequent series 3 appearances saw Hordriss as something of a threat. When he met Leo on the bridge, for example, he refused to let the dungeoneer pass and had

to be scared off with a SWORD spell. Later on in the series, he became more of a potential ally, but still had to be treated with extreme caution. Series 4 saw Hordriss join the cast as a regular character, this time often charging the dungeoneer with finding an object for him in return for magical aid. There was still a lingering threat about him.

Series 5 and 6 saw the biggest change in this character. He acquired a gold medallion in series 5, as he had apparently been promoted to a wizard from a warlock. He was promoted again to mage in series 6. These series allowed him to identify solely with the powers of good, as Lord Fear's introduction to the Dungeon had obviously forced Hordriss to finally acknowledge the difference between good and evil. At the end of series 6, Hordriss joined the Powers that Be.

He remained as a mage throughout series 7 and 8, when Lord Fear was constantly trying to spell-trap and take advantage of both him and his daughter Sidriss, clearly showing that Lord Fear recognised Hordriss's potential for being a powerful ally to dungeoneers. The main focus of Dunston's quest in series 8 was releasing Hordriss from Lissard's body cage, one of his cunning traps, which the team achieved at the beginning of the final episode. Throughout the six years, Hordriss offered powerful spells and information in exchange for dungeoneers' help.

Fear Factor: 7 Could be pretty terrifying if he wanted to.

Killer Instinct: 1 He could and would have done in series 3.

Humour Rating: 6 He was very upset when Ben of series 5 didn't laugh at his jokes.

Oscar Standard: 10 Six years was plenty of time for Norgate to perfect the role.

CLASSIC QUEST

This is the part of TES where I examine in detail a classic quest. It may be either classically good or classically bad. This one is classically bad.

Series 2

Quest: The Sword of Justice.

Dungeoneer: Akash Rams-Hari.

Advisors: Carrie Saunders, Kirsten Arnold, Tanya Carter.

Level One: The quest begins with a choice of four doors. Akash is directed through the one that is furthest to the right. He next encounters the Troll, who is very keen to eat the dungeoneer. Treguard points out that with no spells or bribes, Akash will just have to convince the Troll that he is not good to eat. He succeeds in doing this well, leaving the Troll grateful to Akash for saving him from a stomachache. He gives the team the spell TRUTH. Then things start to go wrong. A bomb room follows, where the team take ages to pluck up the courage to direct their dungeoneer out. Amid shrieks of "Akash, Akash!", Kirsten finally succeeds in directing him out.

Igneous's chamber follows, and the wall monster poses three riddles that the team cannot answer. However, they score one by casting the TRUTH spell in answer to the first riddle. Igneous tells them of their quest and scorns Akash before disappearing. There is a gem, an ice pack and a bottle of poison on the table. All they really need is the ice pack, as they discover later, but they take the other two objects.

The Corridor of the Catacombs follows. A toadadile can be seen at the end. Panicking again, the team are faced with two exits, featuring a sword to the left and a cup to the right. Akash is directed straight to the right, forcing Treguard to cry in exasperation "What's your quest?!" Whispers of "sword" are then audible, and Akash is taken to the left. He emerges into Lillith's chamber. The sorceress has a very bad headache, and needs the ice pack to soothe it, but Akash does not have it. They try offering her the gem, but to no avail. Lillith claims her second of three victims as she takes the ground from under Akash's feet.

Summary: A hopeless team who were doomed from the start, but at least they were fun to watch.

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Score: 1 out of 10.

Rooms: 5

CREATURE FEATURE

You may remember this section, which looks at Knightmare's creatures and monsters, from a previous issue of TES, in which cavernwights were examined briefly by Tim Morris. The article will henceforth take the same format as the Remember Him/Her and This sections. The scoring system is as follows:

Fear Factor: How frightening is/are the creature/creatures?

Killer Instinct: How good are they at killing dungeoneers?

Humanity: How closely related to humans are they?

Gore Factor: How physically sick does this creature make you?

Series 3/4/5/6/7/8. Level 1/2/3.

GOBLINS

Surely these little critters are the most famous in Knightmare's history! The warty-faced cave goblins scuttled around all levels of the Dungeon in series 3-8, blowing their hunting horns; that infamous screech became a clear sign that danger was nearby. Hunting in the Dungeon and the Greenwood, throughout all three levels, meeting a group of goblins, which could contain anything from two to six of the creatures, was always dangerous. A speedy exit, spell, or rescue by a character was required in these situations.

The goblins claimed one victim during their time in the Dungeon: series 3 dungeoneer Julie. Having failed to earn Merlin's magic earlier on, Julie was powerless to stop a group of four goblins from overwhelming her in the Corridor of the Catacombs. Three goblins were given names, principally the brothers Grippa and Rhark, who featured in series 5, 6 and 7. They hunted dungeoneers under the guidance of Skarkill, and later Raptor and Sylvester Hands. The other goblin to be named was the hobgoblin of series 5 and 6, Tiny. Hobgoblins were exactly like goblins, except about three times larger: very intimidating. However, hobgoblins were very infrequently seen on Knightmare: Tiny made one appearance in person in both series 5 and series 6. There were two other hobgoblin sightings, in series 3 and 8.

Goblins will always be a memorable part of Knightmare, as for six years they always seemed to be lingering close by, leading to urges from Treguard, Pickle and Majida to get a move on.

Fear Factor: 9 Built up quite a reputation.

Killer Instinct: 5 One victim is more than most.

Humanity: 7 More closely linked in mythology to humans than faerie.

Gore Factor: 6 Quite ugly.

I THINK I READ SOMEWHERE

As you may remember, this section deals with the Knightmare books. Books were sheets of paper all bound together with string that we used before computers took over the world; you might remember them. A series of seven, based on Knightmare, was published between 1988 and 1994. In this section of The Eye Shield, you can read summaries of their plots and quest sections, and a little about the characters featured in them.

KNIGHTMARE (a.k.a. Can You Beat The Challenge?)

Published by Corgi in 1988.

Written by Dave Morris and Tim Child.

Plot: Inspired by the death of a disillusioned Englishman, former mercenary Treguard of Dunshelm returns from the Continent to England to reclaim his birthright: Knightmare Castle, stolen from his family ten years before by Vestan of Brittany. His hazardous journey takes Treguard through city and marsh, wood and mountains. He meets many allies on the way, but also makes some enemies. Watching his progress is the evil Gruagach, who has seized Vestan's forces and is using Knightmare Castle as a death trap for brave knights errant. As he finally nears his old home, Treguard is armed with a magic shield that can turn the power of the Gruagach against him, and his magic sword, Wyrmslayer, that has been bathed in dragon's blood. Along with his faithful ally Folly the jester, Treguard must complete the hazardous journey through the Knightmare Dungeon before finally meeting his malign foe.

Quest section: This takes the reader on a quest through the Dungeon. The route is very contrived and mapped out, unlike in the later books where there is some variety in the routes through the quest. It involves the completion of all three levels of the Dungeon, overcoming such characters from the programme as Lillith, Granitas and the Troll. There are three separate quests: slightly difficult, harder and difficult; only when you have completed all three does Merlin recognise you as a true Champion of Nightmare. This quest section uses the reader's knowledge of the main story effectively in being able to complete the adventure.

Characters from the main story:

- **Treguard:** The outlawed Saxon knight is the hero of the piece and must prove his worth as a true knight if he is to win back his castle.

- **Vestan:** The murderer of Treguard's family and new lord of Dunshelm. Well, until the Gruagach turns up.

Horgan: Vestan's lieutenant, and the chief of his army. Horgan is the first to recognise the Gruagach's dominance over Vestan.

Gruagach: The incarnation of evil. He watches Treguard's progress through his magical Green Eye, and is the final foe that must be defeated.

Leahra: The mysterious witch who tells Treguard of the new ruler of Dunshelm, and advises him to find the sword, shield and Folly to complete his task.

Bealwit: This evil dragon is the Lord of the Marsh, and demands a tithe from the villages nearby in exchange for not destroying them.

- **Anna:** The young fen girl. She helps Treguard find and destroy Bealwit, which benefits her as she was supposed to be part of his tithe.

Rupert of Armitage: The young sergeant whom Treguard humiliates in Sherwood Forest. He becomes a firm enemy; look out for him in later books.

Robin Hood, Paul Littlejohn, Friar Tuck and others: They help Treguard escape the Sheriff's men, and find Folly and the magic shield.

The Sheriff of Nottingham: Robin Hood's most famed enemy oversees the Nottingham Joust and arranges Treguard's imprisonment.

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Brian of Gascony: The owner of the magic shield: Treguard has to defeat him in the joust to obtain this vital weapon of defence.

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The Black Knight: The Gruagach's champion. He's been sent to kill Treguard, but he's only an evil spirit in a suit of armour: he's unintelligent and vulnerable.

Folly: After being rescued from the Black Knight by the Merry Men, he guides Treguard towards his victory at Nightmare Castle.

Merlin: He appears to Treguard in a dream and gives useful advice about the turbulent times ahead.

Eric of Northumberland: Leader of the rebellion against Vestan by those members of his army who owe loyalty to Treguard.

Granitas: The grumpy wall monster is just one of the challenges that Treguard and Folly face during their journey through the Dungeon.

PUZZLE PAGE 2

First Words

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This is exactly the same challenge as Puzzle Page 1, except it refers to characters' first words spoken on the programme.

1. "Welcome, watchers of illusion, to the castle of confusion."
2. "Away you mindless bits of metal! What companions for an intellect that can freeze rivers and move mountains."
3. "Stop. You really cannot pass, you know; not before someone of higher breeding such as myself."

4. "I say, wait. Hold up a minute there. It's just about to become your lucky day."
5. "Out the way, out the way, come on, move aside for a V.I.P.; that's a Very Insistent Person."
6. "My, my. One of the bold ones is with us I see; one of the bold yet brainless ones."
7. "What a ridiculous way to travel. Tell me, do you always walk everywhere like that?"
8. "Not true! I am a girl so get your filthy hands off me."
9. "Argh, it's harsh words. It's unkind, un-Christian and un-called for. Especially when it pockets me geld* at the same time!"
10. "I hunger. Why don't you feed me?"
11. "Silence! I may not have the power to stop you watching, but I can certainly stop your muttering."
12. "Oh good, a tasty helping of dinner. Now the only question for us is: cooked or raw?"

*German for money.

POETRY CORNER

Here is another of my quest poems, which are inspired by Treguard's Dungeon Ditties of series 1-3. This one is about Leo and team from series 3.

Leo and his friends from Kent,
Had to search for the Chalice wherever they went.
Past the fire and skull ghost's maw,

They met Mellisandre, who fell through the floor.
With maximum help from the Brangwen She,
The scorpion's door was unlocked with a key.
The threat from Olaf, who's luckily thick,
Was ended by magic from Motley's stick.
Into level two, before the axe attacks!
A big hairy foot caused the team to make tracks.
With help from the Oracle they could proceed,
To Merlin, whose magic they'd certainly need.
Hordriss thought Leo'd offended his honour,
Invoking a sword made the warlock a gonner!
Level two's end, Motley pushed them down the mine,
Even though their joke didn't get the thumbs-up sign!
Mogdred and Khar plagued them in level three,
And the gargoyle's riddle wasn't easy.
The choice of four paths proved them to miff,
As Leo was guided straight off a cliff.

THE BIG ISSUE

You may remember this section from issue eight. It involves comparing two similar Knightmare characters to see which one is best at what they do. Lord Fear and Mogdred went head to head last time. This time it's Treguard's two assistants, Pickle and Majida.

PICKLE: This wood elf was Treguard's assistant throughout series 4-6. Played by David Learner, Pickle was a friendly and cheeky fellow, who simply turned up in the antechamber at the start of series 4.

Advantages: Pickle's knowledge of the dangerous woods that the dungeoneers had to walk in in series 4 and 5 was very valuable. Perhaps this was part of the motivation for his introduction. Pickle stayed around for much longer than Majida, not only in terms of series but also episodes (47 vs. 25.)

Pickle was very helpful to the teams who were lucky enough to feature in series 4-6, both in terms of his physical assistance to the quest and his

attitude to and relationship with the team. Pickle can be seen aiding quests by giving advice on choice of quest objects, clues and incantations in the Dungeon. His presence also undoubtedly helped teams to feel comfortable in the quest situation, as there was always someone who was clearly keen to help close by. His urgent voice encouraging the team in moments of tension made the experience more real and enjoyable for both the team in the studio and the viewer at home.

Pickle became more like a member of the team than the cast as the quest progressed, forming firm alignments with many teams. Younger, more nervous teams found this particularly helpful, like Jeremy's team in series 4 and Sofia's team in series 6. He also added a fresh new dimension to Treguard's role as the host of the programme, getting involved with the greeting and dismissing of us, the watchers. Paul cites in *Remember Him?* in issue eight the occasion when Pickle was allowed to ask us nicely to leave. The second episode of series 5 consequently ends like this:

Pickle: Will the watchers go home now, Master?

Treguard: Well, of course, they will; if you ask them nicely. Well, go on, don't be shy.

Pickle: What, really?

Treguard: Yes.

Pickle: Oh, alright then. I say, you lot. Bog off!

Disadvantages: It could be said that Pickle had no room for much character development. The somewhat samey nature of series 4-5 confined Pickle mostly to scripted dialogue with Treguard. However, David Learner overcame this very well in his interaction with the teams. Some Knightmare fans may have objected to his introduction to the programme, as the role of assistant to Treguard was previously unheard of. Such questions as "will Pickle make the quest too easy?" may have been asked. Indeed, Pickle can be seen to be overstepping the mark sometimes, sneaking food into the knapsack and giving away a causeway combination during series 5. The prime example of this is his intrusion into Simon III's quest in the eighth episode of series 4. Pickle entered the Forest of Dunn and stopped Fatilla from clubbing Simon. Fortunate for the team, but he shouldn't have done it. However, it was a great scene!

MAJIDA: Treguard's genial assistant during series 7 and 8. Played by Jackie Sawiris, Majida was a stubborn genie who apparently was asked by Pickle to assist Treguard because he was fed up with it(!)

Advantages: Majida can certainly not be accused of making the quest too easy; she stuck rigidly to the rules, but still offered useful advice where appropriate. She was also the first Knightmare character inspired by mythology not from Europe; as a genie from the East, she added a new dimension to Knightmare's inspiration archives. Pickle cannot claim the same originality, particularly as there had been another wood elf, Velda, in series 3.

Majida was also a symbol for the medieval equivalent Girl Power. Although Knightmare had featured many female characters in its first six series, all the principal ones introduced before Majida were male: Treguard, Merlin, Mogdred, Hordriss, Motley, Pickle, Lord Fear, Skarkill and even Lissard (he appeared about two minutes before Majida.) It is also perhaps unfair to hold Majida's relatively short stay on Knightmare against her, as she had no chance to continue after the programme's untimely demise.

Disadvantages: Have you heard her full name?! It's ridiculous: *Daughter of the setting moon, whose eyes are like daggers in the hearts of men who guard the great caravan of the Sultan.* Indeed, Majida is a much less believable character than Pickle. I don't think Jackie Sawiris did a particularly good job anyway, but the idea of a genie in a bottle is something of a cliché, even in 1993. Majida was not as good at being an assistant as Pickle was; she was rude and stubborn, and constantly objected to having to fetch the quest equipment.

On this subject, I will never forgive Majida for persuading Treguard to replace the Helmet of Justice, but I understand that there are technical reasons behind this in actuality, namely the introduction of seeing-eye spells and potions for series 7 and 8. Majida failed to form good relationships with the teams; she never supported and reassured them like Pickle did. She also seemed to take away some of Treguard's power as Dungeon Master, taking over the calling of *Enter Stranger* and explaining some of the quest equipment to the dungeoneers in series 8. Her so-called banter with Treguard served merely to undermine his authority, and took something away from his character. This detraction from Treguard's supremacy as host may be responsible for the lack of his

traditional monologue at the end of series 8. Honestly, giving the last word to Lord Fear...

So, there you have it. As you may have worked out, my favourite by far is undoubtedly Pickle, but it's up to you to make your own choice. Stay tuned to The Big Issue in the future for such comparisons as Folly and Motley, Merlin and Hordriss, Morghanna and Malice, and Skarkill and Lissard.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Famous Last Words

1. Merlin. Series 4, Episode 16. Giles's quest.
2. Oakley. 5, 3. Richard II.
3. Folly. 2, 14. Steven.
4. Mogdred. 4, 16. Giles.
5. Treguard. 8, 10. Oliver.
6. Hordriss. 8, 10. Dunston.
7. Skarkill. 6, 15. Chris IV.
8. Captain Nemanor. 6, 15. Chris IV.
9. Aesandre. 5, 16. Kelly II.
10. Lillith. 2, 14. Anthony.
11. Pickle. 6, 15. Chris IV.
12. Smirkenorff. 8, 10. Oliver.

First Words

1. Treguard. 1, 1. David.
2. Lord Fear. 5, 1. Catherine.
3. Hordriss. 3, 5. Leo.
4. Julius Scaramonger. 5, 1. Catherine.
5. Motley. 3, 1. Cliff.
6. Mogdred. 2, 3. Chris I.
7. Morghanna. 3, 8. Ross.
8. Majida. 7, 1. Simon IV.
9. Sylvester Hands. 5, 1. Catherine.
10. Brollachan. 7, 1. Simon IV.

11. Malice. 4, 3. Alistair.
12. Bhal-Shebah. 8, 1. Richard III.

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NEXT ISSUE

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Thanks for reading issue 10 of TES. I hope you enjoyed it. As you know, TES is now bi-monthly, so you can expect to see the eleventh issue of The Eye Shield right here in September 2001. In it you can read about another classic character, puzzle and monster, complete more of my puzzles, read about another quest through the Dungeon in bygone times, find out about the second Nightmare book, The Labyrinths of Fear, see Motley and Folly go head-to-head in The Big Issue, enjoy another quest poem, and read about the continued adventures through the Dungeon in Adventure Time. Plus the long-awaited fourth part of Rosey Collins's epic tale of dragons and romance, *Love Wyrms*. It's all coming your way in September, so stay tuned. See you then!