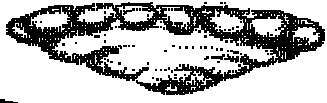


THE EYE SHIELD



Issue 13

January 2002

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MESSAGE FROM ME

Happy New Year! It's Jake Collins here, welcoming you to the thirteenth issue of The Eye Shield. Rosey Collins's epic tale Love Wyrms reaches its thrilling conclusion in this issue. It's certainly been a long time coming; Love Wyrms started in TES way back in June 1997! My thanks go to Rosey for agreeing to finish the story for the new TES. As one story ends, another begins; look out for the first part of reader Laurie Marks's masterpiece, The Path Opens. Another new article is My Nightmare Story, which chronicles my own personal Nightmare experiences from 1987 to the present. Elsewhere, all the other regular features wait for you. Will you keep them waiting?

CORRESPONDENCE

Thanks to those who responded to my plea for feedback last time. Here is what Laurie Marks of Feering, Essex, has to say about Nightmare.

Dear Eye Shield.

I started watching Nightmare in the middle of Series 6, in my opinion the best, and from then on I was hooked and watched it to the end. I never read The Eye Shield until finding www.knightmare.clara.net, so thank you for resurrecting it.

Thanks for getting in touch with me Laurie. I watched Nightmare from the very start, but I was only four in 1987. Like you, I enjoy series six a lot more than series seven and eight, particularly Pickle's interaction with some of the teams. I am glad you are enjoying reading TES; keep it up. As for the rest of you, look out for Laurie's brilliant story The Path Opens, starting this issue.

London's Jamie Murray has been sharing with me more of his thoughts on the Nightmare books.

Dear Eye Shield.

My favourite section is I Think I Read Somewhere. That brought back memories. I've long suspected that the novellas weren't as good as I remember, but the mention of the Hugo of Alvingham plot in The Labyrinths of Fear reminded me that they must at least have been quite good. The first four novellas form a distinct quartet; I remember the death of Rupert at the end as genuinely powerful.

Powerful indeed, though a little contrived. The first four books are very good, but I did appreciate the last three a lot more when I first read them. Thanks for keeping in touch, Jamie.

The following praise comes from Robin John Barlow.

Dear Eye Shield.

Congratulations on taking the helm of what looks like a promising magazine to be sure. The three latest issues show not only skill and commitment but also an in-depth understanding of the greatest children's television programme to date. I can only hope that through this magazine, and the various petitions flying around, Nightmare comes back in one form or another.

Thanks for that, Robin; it's nice to be appreciated. Please keep reading TES as it will just get better and better. As for your other comment, it is a nice thought but I wouldn't hold your breath.

Here is what Anthony Hobson of Ashton-in-Makerfield, Greater Manchester, had to say about TES:

Dear Eye Shield.

What a nicely done online fanzine. The website brought back a lot of memories and your fanzine added to the information. I like the character comparisons, and the puzzles are still perplexing. Keep up the good work.

Thanks for your feedback, Anthony. Keep reading TES, for all the reasons I've mentioned already.

I was very pleased to receive an e-mail from a fellow Eye Shield veteran in December. This is what Newark-on-Trent's Carl Bateson had to say.

Dear Eye Shield.

Good news on you continuing the hit fanzine! I was disappointed to find out that you didn't conclude my mammoth story (shown from issues 7-9) called A Last Resort. I know Paul edited my version. Perhaps you could dig up the rest - I'm not sure if I still have the original. Good luck with the continuation of The Eye Shield!

I told Carl that if he wanted to see his story finished then he would have to either find or write an ending to it, so watch this space, readers. Thanks for getting in touch, Carl.

REMEMBER THIS?

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

THE DESCENDER.

This was a lift-like device designed to help dungeoneers change levels. The great metal contraption would rattle down a lift shaft, passing various doors and windows on its way. Although it had a few appearances in series 6 and 7, the Descender only presented a challenge in series 5, when it was voice-activated. The dungeoneer would have to shout "DOWN" to start the device, and then call "STOP" or "HALT" to stop it in the right place. Usually this involved counting levels (doors and windows) as directed by a character or scroll. Sometimes the challenge was slightly different. Winning dungeoneer Ben I, for example, was told by Gwendoline that it was winter in level three. The advisors had to look at the scenery through the windows and tell Ben to stop the Descender when they saw a wintry landscape.

Earlier in the series, Sarah had been told by the Gatemaster that level three was five levels down, six levels up and two levels back down from her current position. As the Descender does not go up, however, the team had to work out that this was the equivalent of simply one level down. Once the challenge was complete, the team could choose their door - often avoiding the one with a frightknight logo above it - and proceed onto the next level. Failing to stop the device in the right place would result in a very swift and unpleasant end to the quest, as Duncan found out when he failed to pluck up the courage to shout out when he was told to. He emerged from the Descender into the Corridor of Blades, where he was immediately sliced in two. (*Treguard*: "You missed your station, and now Duncan is missing parts of his body.") The Descender stopped and started itself in series 6 and 7, and was used mainly for travel between levels two and three.

Difficulty: 5 Counting windows shouldn't be too difficult.

Killer Instinct: 4 One victim in one series.

Gore Factor: 10 As it was the Corridor of Blades on the other side.

Fairness: 7 A small challenge between levels.

ADVENTURE TIME

—
Last time, dungeoneer Paul came to a sticky end at the hands of Mogdred in level two. The score now stands at Dungeon 3, Humans 1. Can Nick and his friends make any impression on it?

From the level one clue table, Nick picks up a bar of gold and a bottle of potion, acting on Phelheim's advice. He is then directed out. The room he enters contains two doors, one broken down with debris behind it. There is a scroll on the floor between the two doors.

"Caution team" Treguard warns. "Wyrms are present on level one. Those who linger longer in this chamber may linger forever."

No sooner has he finished speaking than a giant green snake slithers out from behind the broken door. The advisors frantically start to guide Nick out.

"Grab the scroll!" cries one of them suddenly.

Nick is hastily guided over to the scroll and he picks it up. The advisors then take him quickly through the door. He finds himself walking down a dwarf tunnel and is able to read the scroll to his advisors.

"It says *barbican*" Nick tells them.

The advisors write down this word, not yet knowing what it means, as Nick drops the scroll (which he shouldn't really have taken because it meant that he had three objects) and continues to the end of the tunnel. Nick has entered Mildread's room. There is a bubbling cauldron in the middle, beside which the witch is sitting.

"Oh, hello" Mildread smiles toothily. "Another dungeoneer comes blundering into my lair. What is your name?"

"Nick."

"And do you have anything for poor old Mildread?"

"Have a care here, team" Treguard warns. "Mildread is notorious for her trickery."

"Well, what have you got for me?" Nick asks promptly.

"Such a lack of manners!" spits Mildread. "That Treguard fills your head with distrust, boy! In my day, we respected our elders and betters."

"Okay, okay, I'm sorry" Nick hastily apologises. "Would you like this potion for your cauldron?"

"Your wits are sharp, boy, that you guess Mildread's plans" says the witch calmly. "Very well. Give me the potion and I will give you a powerful spell that you'll need to complete the level."

The team decide to trust Mildread and Nick hands over the potion.

"Very nice, deary, very nice" says Mildread as she gives it a sniff. "In return, I will give you the word *rust*. Now, get you gone!"

Nick emerges onto a mountainside with a door cut into the rock. The team think that their escape is ensured, but out of the door steps Fatilla, the barbarian guard.

"Ah" smiles Fatilla with relish. "A dunger-person in a moo-cow helmet. Well, young dunger-person, you'd better give old Fatilla a good reason not to blip you and then blop you."

"Because I'm on the quest for the Shield?" ventures Nick hopefully.

"That's a reason *to* blip and blop you!" Fatilla seethes in glee, advancing menacingly with his club raised. "You'll have to do better than that."

"Come on, Nick, remember the words of the wall monster!" cries Treguard.

"I'll give you this bar of gold" Nick offers in inspiration.

"Right, now we're talking" slurps Fatilla greedily. "Gold, you say?"

Nick hands over the bar of precious metal. Fatilla eyes it with enthusiasm.

"Yes, very nice" he nods happily. "And because you've made me so happy, I'm going to tell you a secret. The second step is *laughter*."

Fatilla shambles off, very happy indeed with the gold, and Nick is directed through the door. He finds himself in a courtyard dominated by a huge grey wall. It starts to move towards him with a grating noise. A face forms.

"Password!" the blocker demands.

"Is it *rust*?" one of the advisors says.

"No, it'll be the scroll word!" Nick insists. "What was it again?"

"*Barbican*" say the advisors.

"Barbican" Nick calls.

The wall shoots off and leaves the exit clear. Nick next enters the wellway room.

"Well done, team, you've reached the end of the level" Treguard commends them. "But beware, for the well is usually guarded."

Sure enough, the Automatum clanks into the room and blocks Nick's path to the well. The advisors try to manoeuvre round him, but there is just no way past his fearsome spiked ball.

"No time for tactics, team!" Treguard exclaims. "You must use what weapons you have immediately."

"Spellcasting:" says an advisor. "R-U-S-T."

The Automatum falls to the ground with a colossal crash, his insides rusted away to dust. Nick is able to reach the well and descend to level two. The first room contains a set of stocks, in which the hands and head of Motley are trapped. Nick is taken over to him.

"Oh, hello" Motley says forlornly. "Another dungeoneer. What's your name?"

"Nick" he replies. "Um, would you like some help getting out of there?"

"Oh, I'd love some, kind young sir" Motley laments. "But without the key you've got no chance."

"Who's got the key?" Nick asks.

"That brat of a cavern elf, Elita" Motley replies. "The only way you could help me is if you could persuade her to release me. Trouble is, you'd need to bribe her for that. I know there's an object that she wants lying around this level somewhere, if you can find it."

"What is this object?" Nick asks.

"Well, that's just it" Motley moans. "She's put a spell on me to stop me from telling anyone; you'll just have to work it out for yourself. But, if you'll help me, I can tell you the third step. Deal?"

"Yes" Nick agrees.

"It's *celebration!*" Motley tells him. "Well, thanks Nick. See you later, hopefully."

Nick is guided out of the room, into the level two clue room. The table contains a talisman, a green stone and a dagger.

"Hey, team!" Nick exclaims. "Elves like these green gems, don't they?"

The team agree, and tell Nick to take the green stone and the talisman. The next room is Merlin's chamber, with a big hole spanning the floor.

"Here is a place of magic" says Treguard. "But to reach that magic you must take the appropriate steps."

Nick steps to the edge of the pit. He begins by pretending to cry very loudly, causing the first step to appear. He then invokes the second step by laughing merrily. Finally he cheers boisterously, completing his path. Merlin appears on the throne.

"Greetings Nick" says the wizard. "Welcome to the latest test in your adventure. I seek two truths from you and I must have both. Do you feel confident?"

"Er, sure" Nick stammers.

"Very well" smiles Merlin. "Here is the first. Where is the Wailing Wall?"

"Jerusalem" Nick replies.

"Truth accepted" Merlin says. "Here is the second. Where falls the blow that harms you not, and ends the state of common man?"

"Huh?" the team whisper to each other.

"Could you repeat that, please?" Nick asks politely.

"How very tiresome!" Merlin complains. "Very well. Where falls the blow that harms you not, and ends the state of common man?"

"Come on team" Treguard encourages them. "You can't spend all 'knight' thinking about it."

"Of course!" declares Nick, picking up Treguard's clue that the answer lies in the sword-dub of knighthood. "On the shoulder."

"Truth accepted" says Merlin approvingly. "Now, listen carefully. The name of the spell I gift you is *freeze*. Use it against an icy stare. Good luck."

Merlin disappears in a flash of lightning, and Nick is directed out. He enters a cave dominated by the huge features of the face of the Medusa. Snakes writhe in her hair, and her stone stare bares down on Nick.

"Warning, team, the glare of the Medusa will turn you to stone if you do not find some way to combat it" Treguard informs them.

"Spellcasting:" says the spellcaster. "F-R-E-E-Z-E."

"All right, that should stop her, but hurry quickly out!" Treguard urges them.

Without hesitation, the team direct Nick past the frozen Medusa and through the exit, deeper into level two.

Can the team find Elita? Will she agree to release Motley? Read the next Adventure Time to find out.

PUZZLE PAGE ONE

Dungeoneers

Here are some questions relating to specific dungeoneers. The answers to the questions are either a dungeoneer's Christian name or home town, a number of dungeoneers that have a particular name, or a particular

character, creature or puzzle. There are more questions of this type on Puzzle Page 2.

1. How many dungeoneers were called Simon?
2. What was the name of the first dungeoneer?
3. Name one of the three dungeoneers who came from St. Albans.
4. Which character killed dungeoneer Richard II in series 5?
5. Which creature killed dungeoneer Claire in series 2?
6. Which puzzle killed dungeoneer Simon IV in series 7?
7. What is the name of the dungeoneer killed by Sylvester Hands?
8. Which dungeoneer was killed by goblins?
9. Who was the first to be killed on the Block and Tackle?
10. Which dungeoneer had to travel the smallest distance from her home to reach the Anglia Television Studios in Norwich? Where did she come from?

THE PATH OPENS

Eye Shield reader Laurie Marks of Feering, Essex, has written an account of his version of what has been happening in Nightmare for the past few years, and what is about to happen. I thank you very much indeed for this excellent story, Laurie, and hope that the rest of you readers enjoy it as much as I did.

Lord Fear sat alone in the throne room of Marblehead, wondering for the umpteenth time whether it was worth taking the lift up to the tower to see what was happening in the levels. As usual, he decided not to bother. Since the path had closed seven years ago there was little for him to do.

He had really enjoyed attempting - and usually succeeding - to kill, capture or in some other way defeat the children Treguard had had the nerve to send against him.

Yes, always children - Nightmare was only - he corrected himself: had only been - a game. Lord Fear had always considered the Powers that Be foolish to think of it as such, but he knew, deep down, that they were right, though he constantly tried to convince himself they weren't.

He wondered what might have happened if it was real in their dimension. He entertained himself with thoughts of dungeoneers being scared out of their wits by the rotting corpses of the dead hanging all over level three, or grimacing as they saw the two his minions had captured (Only two? Had his servants really been *that* incompetent?) being tortured behind him as they watched him through spyglasses. He cackled evilly. There was no one to hear him, but he enjoyed it.

No one to hear him...yes, Marblehead was a lonely place now. Not that Lord Fear had ever had any friends, but he liked bullying underlings. Now, Hands had gone back to his 'work' for the Honourable Guild of Thieves and Beggars, Lissard had gone back to Atlantis and Raptor had just gone - Lord Fear didn't know or care where. The only other residents of Marblehead were the goblins, Grippa and Rhark, in the cellar and the skeletron that passed for a servant, but at least it could do all the menial things which its master hated doing.

The silence was broken by a loud knock at the gate. Lord Fear wondered how the visitor could have got there with the moat and the rune puzzle in the way. He willed the skeletron to let the stranger in. He saw no point in great security as no one hostile to him would dare try and enter, and even if it was a foe, a skeletron would not be able to stop someone who could get past the miremen in the moat. Lord Fear himself was another matter. The door opened, and a slender figure in a jet-black cloak came in.

Treguard sat alone in the room in Nightmare Castle where he had seen so many quests take place. How sad that most of them had failed; that most of the enthusiastic youngsters who had arrived in this chamber and trodden the path had been defeated. He felt particularly sorry for those who had fallen so close to victory - the girl who died on the Great Causeway, the boy who so nearly Played his Cards Right, the very first to reach level three, who could not bring down the wall... Still, that was the

nature of Nightmare. And it made the handful of winning quests all the more special and truly worthy of celebration.

But that was all over now - the path had been closed for seven years. At first Treguard had entertained the hope that the Dungeon was simply taking a long time to reform itself, but now he was sure that there would be no more dungeoneers. It meant a lot less work for him, of course, but that was little consolation. He lived here alone now - Majida the genie had left him four years ago when he had given up all hope of future quests.

But Lord Fear was still there. He had made it clear that he would never give up, challengers or no challengers, when Treguard had seen him for the last time, through a spyglass, and asked him to surrender. The technomancer had replied "What? Me? Surrender? You must be absolutely OUT OF YOUR TINY MIIIND!" But Lord Fear's presence was no longer a cause for concern. He had done nothing of note since sending a dragon to attack and reclaim Linghorm. He would never bother Treguard again.

Just then the exterior door of the chamber burst open, and a thin, dirty, tired-looking man in torn green clothes burst into the room. Treguard found him strangely familiar. Then he saw that he wasn't a man - he was an elf. "Master, I have returned!"

"Who are you, and what do you think you're doing disturbing me like this?" "My name is Kalaræ, your lordship," said the visitor in a deep, quiet voice, "and I am disturbing you because I wish to do so before something else does."

"What are you talking about, *Kalaræ*?" enquired Fear, spitting the man's name with obvious contempt.

"The path is soon to open again, your lordship."

You'll have to wait until issue 14 to find out what Kalaræ is talking about. Can you wait? I know I can't.

REMEMBER HIM?

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

SMIRKENORFF.

The introduction of Smirkenorff the dragon to series 5 was a bold step forwards by the Nightmare production team. Dragons were no new concept, of course, but flying on one as part of the quest was. The Smirkenorff puppet was made by the company Talismen, and was about three metres long and took four people to make it fly. Making it appear many times bigger on the screen and flying dungeoneers across vast areas of countryside and seascape heralded the arrival of Smirkenorff the dragon to Nightmare. He was introduced in the first episode of series 5, giving Catherine a flight at the start of her quest. All quests in series 5 - except the last one (Kelly II) - began with either a ride on Smirkenorff, a trip in the Descender or a boat ride. Smirky also started providing flights between levels one and two in this series. Elita, who was his keeper and best friend in series 5 and 6, would skip up onto his back and demand payment for the flight, which was gold or silver in this series.

In series 6, both Smirkenorff and the Descender stopped appearing at the start of quests and turned their attention wholly to changing levels. Smirky was given a voice this series, that of Clifford Norgate, the man responsible for Hordriss. This allowed him to negotiate his own fares with dungeoneers, and revealed his character to be very proud and pompous - like Hordriss - but friendly and well-mannered. Smirky would agree to fly to level two as long as he was asked nicely and presented with the appropriate fare. In series 6 this could still be a precious metal, or a dragon mint. In series 7 he would only fly for firestones. It was also possible to earn a ride by appealing to Smirkenorff's vanity, if the dungeoneer had no fare to give him. He would chat quite happily and amiably to his passenger as they flew. In series 8, the flights stopped. Smirky appeared late on in this series, popping his head out of his level one pit. If he received a firestone from or was charmed with a spell by the dungeoneer then he would part with useful spells and advice. In series 6 and 7, dungeoneers and advisors were always pleased to meet Smirky as they had learned that it meant that they had almost completed the level. Smirkenorff proved his allegiance to the Powers that Be on several occasions. One of these occurred near the beginning of series 7, as Smirky shot a fireball at Raptor when he accosted dungeoneer Nicola II. Smirkenorff added a new dimension to Nightmare, and will always be remembered as a legendary character.

Fear Factor: 4 Friendly but big.

Killer Instinct: 0 Despite what Elita liked to think.

Humour Rating: 3 Usually quite serious, but laughed at Dunston's joke.

Oscar Standard: 7 His manner was very similar to Hordriss's.

CLASSIC QUEST

Series 8.

Quest: *The Crown in Glory.*

Dungeoneer: Richard Howse. (Richard III.)

Advisors: Angela, Rebecca and Rowena.

Home town: Bracknell.

Team score: 1 out of 10.

The first quest of the final series was a complete shambles, and very enjoyably so.

Level One: After a quick stroll through the snap-dragon infested dwarf tunnel, Richard meets Brother Strange. The monk warns that much of level one has changed since the last season, and asks Richard's advice about the safety of the dwarf tunnel ahead. Richard warns him about the snap-dragons, but Strange has confidence in his ability to fend them off. He gives Richard a spyglass, through which the team see Lord Fear and Lissard arriving in Fear's new tower home, Marblehead. Fear shows Lissard his new telescreen, which he is extremely proud of, and also explains that all the spyglasses now automatically release fireballs after a few minutes of use. As Lord Fear and Lissard continue to chat, a fireball appears on the screen and Richard is told to put the glass down. The level one clue room follows, where their fate is sealed. On the table Richard finds a green knife, a black bottle of pigeon droppings, a silver key and a bar of gold. The scroll reads: *Green for a girl, black for a boy.* This is telling the team in no uncertain terms that they should pick up the green knife and the black bottle, but Rowena immediately insists on taking the other two objects! The other advisors are not sure. What do they think the scroll is for, one wonders. Decoration? Treguard decides to prompt them.

Treguard: "Well, what does the scroll say, team?"

Rowena (dismissively): "Green for a girl and black for a boy."

Richard: "Do you want the key?"

Rowena (emphatically): "Yes!"

They do at least pick up the pigeon droppings as well as the key, but without the knife they are doomed. Fireball Alley follows, which the team complete with no problems. Richard next finds himself in a room with a chest full of loot and a statue of Motley. Majida asks what the statue is. Treguard explains that it is a stone tribute to the famous Motley, a jester who used to reside in the Dungeon. Richard begins rooting through the chest. Stiletta arrives and stops him from doing this, as she explains that the loot is hers and the Warrior Thief Code she lives by says that there should be sufficient honour among thieves that they do not steal each other's loot. Richard protests his innocence, but fortunately Stiletta is more interested in asking him if he has seen her lost green knife. When Richard tells her that he has seen it but he does not have it to return to her, Stiletta is disappointed. She explains that the Code says that as he has not returned something to her, she does not owe him anything. She promptly leaves to do her target practice.

Richard is then guided over to Motley, and chucks the pigeon droppings at him, releasing him from the spell. Motley is suspicious of Richard at first, as he does not recognise the new helmet as belonging to a dungeoneer. Once Richard has explained the situation, Motley asks him to fill him in on what he's missed. Richard tells Motley about everything he's seen and learned, and the two people he's met. Motley tells him that Stiletta has all the codes to the floors and doors, indicating to the team their mistake. Motley agrees to help Richard find his way out of the level. The next chamber is the trapdoor room, which Motley explains is the way to level two. There is a rune lock covering the puzzle, but the team have no idea how to cope with it as Stiletta has not given them the information. A roaring sound fills the chamber. Motley recognises it as that made by an approaching dragon, and runs off at once. Richard is left standing like a lemon on the blocked trapdoor as the large red head of Bhal-Shebah enters the room. The dragon says how pleased he is to have found such a tasty morsel for his dinner before frying Richard with a large fireball. The quest ends here.

Summary: A useless team who richly deserved to die, as anyone who can't read blatant clues on scrolls should not be challenging the Nightmare Dungeon. But you've got to laugh!

CREATURE FEATURE

Series 5/6. Level 1/2.

BLOCKERS.

These creatures were disguised as huge walls of grey bricks. When a dungeoneer entered a blocker's chamber, the wall would grate forwards and form a large and threatening face across the path. Blockers only ever said one word: "Password!" Passwords were essential for escaping levels one and two in series 5 and 6, and the team should have learned the current password as part of their task on the level, either from a character, scroll or spyglass. If the dungeoneer ventured the correct password, the bricks of the wall would shoot off, leaving the pathway clear. Despite the fact that many advisors were noticeably rattled by the huge face before their dungeoneer, most teams were able to get past. Only once did we get to see what happened if the dungeoneer did not have the password, and it was a truly stunning piece of computer wizardry.

Series 5's Chris III had got himself into a right mess in level two, having bought a spell from Julius Scaramonger that had turned him into a goblin. He had also failed to take Motley's folderol from the clue table, which ultimately meant that he was denied the password. When the level two blocker grated forward and demanded the password, the Chris-goblin had nothing to give him but the causeway code: *red, blue, green and grey*. In answer to this, the blocker shot forward and filled the entire screen, while Chris was whisked off his feet and sucked into the blocker's mouth. It was a fitting end to a totally messed-up quest.

Fear Factor: 8 Injected a lot of panic.

Killer Instinct: 6 A pleasure to see Chris being swallowed.

Humanity: 2 Human facial features.

Gore Factor: 1 Not really aesthetically unpleasant.

I THINK I READ SOMEWHERE

KNIGHTMARE: The Sorcerer's Isle.

Published by Corgi in 1991.

Written by Dave Morris.

Plot: Treguard has remained in the Holy Land, where he has earned the title of the Lord of Dreams. He is sought out by a pair of English folk. They claim to be Erica, a Cornish maiden, and Sir Lancelot of Camelot, who has been brought back to life by divine forces to retrieve the Holy Grail. Erica and Lancelot ask Treguard to assist them in this quest. Treguard takes them to visit Emeritus, a scholarly friend of his who knows where the Grail might be. But Emeritus has been murdered. Using his notes on the subject, the questers set off for the Sorcerer's Isle, the supposed home of the Grail. They travel across city, desert and sea, enlisting the aid of the merchant Ghazi, on an arduous journey towards King Arthur's lost treasure. They are pursued by a group of Knight Templars, led by the newly-ordained Rupert of Armitage, who believes that his old foe, Treguard, is the murderer of Emeritus. Although Rupert is not quite right, the murderer is close by. Who else would send endless sorcery to hinder the Templars' progress? Can you work out the twist to the tale: who is telling the truth about themselves, and who is not?

Quest section: It is your turn to quest for the Holy Grail. There are four paths to choose, all of which converge in the Forest of Freneville, where a vampire waits for you. Whatever you do, you must find some way to defeat him. The four paths offer different ways. You may answer some riddles set by a strange woman in a fountain, in which case you can earn a spell called MAZE. You might like to enter a tournament, where can be found an alternative spell - FOREST PATHS - or a bow and arrow, if you do well enough in the contest. You could negotiate a fearful forest, where you can pick up a metal trap. Or you could help an elf maiden by buying some geese for her at a market. Here you can also purchase a trap or a bow and arrow.

If you do not gain one of these weapons to use against the vampire, you probably won't get past him. Before you enter the Forest of Freneville, you have the opportunity to get a pot of salve from a leper in return for giving him food or money. This is very useful as protection during the night in the forest. Once you have passed the vampire and spent a night in a tree, hopefully coming to no harm, you must cross a river to the land of

Avalon, where the Grail waits for you. You may do this by defeating a knight in combat, or paying a ferry-man for the ride. Don't let him take you all the way, though, or you'll end up somewhere totally different. Once you reach Avalon, you find the Grail. Beware, though, for only if you have gained enough *chivalry* points during your adventure will you be allowed to take it.

Characters from the main story.

Erica: She claims to be a Cornish maid who has been chosen to accompany Lancelot on this quest. But it soon becomes clear that this is not quite the whole truth.

Lancelot: He has been woken from a deathly sleep to seek out the Grail. But are all the tales of Camelot false in their depiction of Lancelot as a noble knight? This gruff, unchivalrous and bad-tempered character would seem to suggest so.

Vittorio: The leader of a pack of curs who try to rob Erica and Lancelot. But the burly knight soon ends this plan.

Treguard: Although reluctant at first, he agrees to help Erica and Lancelot find the Grail. He leads the expedition as best he can, but finds Lancelot's impetuous and brusque nature very difficult to deal with.

Pickle: Here described as an imp rather than an elf, Pickle has become Treguard's loyal servant. He works his faerie magic to confuse the questers' pursuers.

Rupert of Armitage: He has taken the oaths of priesthood, but Sir Rupert still wants to see Treguard suffer. He is thrilled at the prospect of arresting the Saxon for murder, so sets off in pursuit of the party.

Ghazi: This merchant sells camels to Treguard's party for their trek across the desert, and is hired to join them as their guide. His knowledge of the tribes who dwell in the oases is a big help, as are his bartering skills for later acquiring a boat to sail to the Sorcerer's Isle.

Tancred: A Christian sorcerer, and one of Rupert's cronies. He guides the Templars in their pursuit of Treguard's party, locating them by his magic arts.

Chieftain of the Desert Tribe: Ghazi persuades him to provide fresh provisions for the group's trip. Unfortunately for Treguard, this tribe's customs involve a guest presenting one of his possessions as a gift if one of the tribe says that he admires it. The Chieftain says this about Treguard's sword, *Wyrmslayer*, which he is accordingly given. Treguard finds a new sword on the Sorcerer's Isle.

Zaman al-Hazred: The wise sage tells Treguard's party the story of how the Holy Grail ended up on the Sorcerer's Isle.

Prince Rashad: The noble prince who sought to stop a demon from stealing the Grail and taking it to his master on the Isle.

Melaphoras: The sorcerer whom the Sorcerer's Isle is named after. He has hidden the Grail in his tower. Prince Rashad could not get it back from him. Can Treguard and co. do so?

MY KNIGHTMARE STORY

This is my own personal Knightmare journey, from an awe-struck four-year-old to TES editor. I hope you enjoy it.

1987: I was four years old in September 1987. There was nothing I enjoyed more than watching television with my mother. This would often constitute watching Children's ITV. Whenever I had watched something on ITV or C4, I used to insist on watching the adverts afterwards. One fateful afternoon, after watching something like *The Raggy Dolls* and the following adverts, my mother and I witnessed one of the CITV presenters introducing a new medieval fantasy game show, Knightmare. I was ready to get up and switch off the television, but my mum stopped me and said that we may as well see what this new programme was going to be like. As I was young and impressionable, I agreed. I was treated to the most exciting twenty-four minutes of my life thus far. I had never before seen a programme that appealed so much to my sense of mystery and imagination, and also showed me a time that I was intrigued by: the days of old when knights were bold. Every week for the next two months I

watched Knightmare without fail. Although I didn't understand all of it, I loved every minute.

1988: I had been at school for one term in September 1988, and was not at all sure that I liked it. Knowing that I was going to come home to the second series of Knightmare once a week made things that significant bit more bearable. I was quite happy about Knightmare's format by this time, and felt very involved in the quests. My favourite character was undoubtedly Granitas at this time, but I also enjoyed it when the dungeoneers met Merlin. Knightmare was the only programme I just *could not* miss. One evening, my sister had to be taken to the doctor by my mum. The appointment was at half-past four. Ordinarily, I would have been collected from school and taken along for the ride, but such was my need to watch Knightmare that my mum dropped me off at the house of a kind neighbour before she took Rosey to the surgery. Here I watched my favourite programme in relative happiness.

1989: When I watched the first episode of series three, I was very upset that Granitas had been replaced. I remember my surprise and outrage as I first saw Golgarach appear on Granitas's wall. However, I enjoyed this series even more than the first two, as my understanding of what was going on grew ever deeper. I remember watching in awe as Martin met Owen in level three, and later cringing in dismay as Morghanna destroyed him. As the credits rolled at the end of episode sixteen, I shed many a tear.

1990: In the summer of this year, we bought a video machine. When Knightmare returned, I made my mum give me a tape and show me how to record my favourite programme. My surprise at all the changes in the first episode was overwhelmed by my delight at being able to watch it over and over again. Unfortunately, my attempt to record the second episode failed miserably, as the VCR was set to BBC2 instead of ITV. However, the rest of the series was successfully recorded. I watched it over and over before series five started, and it began to warp my memories of the first three series. As far as I was concerned, series four was very much like series one, two and three; Merlin was still there, some series three characters remained, and the dungeoneers did what they had always done. The only differences, I thought, were the inclusion of Pickle and the seemingly slower pace of the quests. It would be another five years until I was reminded of just how much I had forgotten.

1991: I was very excited when series five reared its head, and managed to record it all this time. I noticed the bold change in format from earlier series, but found that I enjoyed the programme just as much. The only thing that disappointed me slightly was the absence of Merlin, but I did like the inclusion of Lord Fear and Skarkill.

1992: Series six was the first series I documented; I wrote down which characters appeared each week. I liked the new style Knightmare seemed to have made for itself, and the idea of a battle between good and evil. The new all-powerful Lord Fear was definitely my favourite part of this series, and each week I did not feel fully satisfied until I had seen a spyglass sequence. Fortunately for me, there was at least one every week. After an episode of this series when *The Forbidden Gate* was being advertised, it occurred to me for the first time that I might like to buy a Knightmare book. My mum bought it for me from Bunty's in Harpenden High Street. I enjoyed reading the book very much, and the quest section was very exciting. I knew that previous Knightmare books had been published, and because I liked to flick through the opening pages of *The Forbidden Gate* a lot, I soon noticed that there were four previous titles in the series. I mentioned to my mum that I would like to read these. She told me that she would - very kindly - order them from Bunty's. She also told me that she thought she had seen another Knightmare book on the shelf while we were buying *The Forbidden Gate*. Just before Christmas we went back to Bunty's and, sure enough, we found a copy of the book that I remembered being advertised after series five, *The Sorcerer's Isle*. My mum ordered the other three from the shopkeeper. When I got the book home and placed it next to my earlier purchase, I was struck by the difference in their size. I was later struck by how much more difficult *The Sorcerer's Isle* was to read than *The Forbidden Gate*. After a few attempts, I resolved to stick with just doing the quest section for a while.

That's it for now. Next time, find out what happened between 1993 and 1995.

PUZZLE PAGE TWO
Dungeoneers

Here are some more questions relating to specific dungeoneers. The answers to the questions are either a dungeoneer's Christian name or home town, a number of dungeoneers that have a particular name, or a particular character, creature or puzzle.

11. How many dungeoneers were called Chris?
12. What was the name of the last dungeoneer?
13. Name one of the two series 3 dungeoneers who came from Suffolk.
14. Which character killed dungeoneer Helen II in series 4?
15. Which creatures killed dungeoneer Rebecca in series 8?
16. Which puzzle killed dungeoneer Matt in series 6?
17. What is the name of the dungeoneer killed by Cedric?
18. Which two dungeoneers were killed by Ariadne, the giant spider?
19. Who was the first to be killed in the Corridor of Blades?
20. Which dungeoneer had to travel the greatest distance from his home to reach the Anglia Television Studios in Norwich? Where did he come from?

POETRY CORNER

Settle around the campfire, readers, and prepare to hear another tale of bravery and cunning. This time it is about series 5's Sarah, Helen, Keighley and William.

Northampton's finest brave the quest,
For Sarah and friends there'll be no time to rest.
The quest began with the boat-man's oars,

He rowed Sarah to foreign shores.
Silver was found on the Wolfglade's track,
What contraband lurked in Scaramonger's sack?
It was venison that the poacher had plundered,
Gwendoline was angry; had Sarah blundered?
She proved herself by pointing out the thief,
Gwendoline chased him off; what a relief!
Dragon-flight waits past the causeway, how nice,
But Elita came in and demanded a price.
Smirkenorff flew them o'er mountain and sea,
What would level two's challenges be?
Brother Mace's chess game set the task out clearly:
To find and recover Merlin's magic key.
Sir Hugh took them onwards to a country inn,
Where sat Sylvester Hands with an avaricious grin.
He sold them the key, which was just as well,
It opened the chest to a PIXEL spell.
This saw off Skarkill and his goblins, too,
The level was over; that would do!
The Gatemaster sent them to level three,
Where they chose some objects carefully.
Elita wanted the gem for her game,
But they took too long to trust her; what a shame!
So in the next chamber, you'll be dismayed,
That Sarah got sliced open by a blade.

LOVE WYRMS

It is finally time for TES's longest running story to finish its run. Thanks for writing it, Rosey, and I hope our readers have enjoyed it.

Treguard's heart skipped a beat when he woke up, having fallen asleep in his chair waiting, and realised that someone was trying to communicate with him. He hurried over to the magic pool; his heart not only started beating again but it sank as well. It was only Majida.

"What do you want?" he asked impatiently.

"They only have the normal stuff, not that lemon flavour you like. What do you want me to do?"

"What?" It took Treguard a moment or two to figure out what she was talking about. "Oh! Majida, forget the washing up liquid. I'm waiting for a very important call here."

"From whom?"

"Hordriss. He's out looking for Orion."

"Orion?"

"He... I'll explain later, Majida, but you're hogging the line." As her countenance faded she shouted after it, "And don't come back without that lemon washing up liquid!"

Majida's face vanished and was replaced with that of a young green dragon. At last!

"Hordriss?"

"Yes, Dungeon Master, it's me."

Treguard was disappointed that Hordriss was using his real voice. He could have done with some cheering up, and Hordriss sounding like a little girl would have done very nicely.

"Why have you made yourself into a girl dragon?"

"Don't be so childish, Treguard," Hordriss snapped. "Lord Fear wasn't interested in male dragons. He wanted a female to mate with Orion."

"You mean he's with Lord Fear?"

"Yes."

"Is he all right?"

"He's asleep at the moment," Hordriss replied, looking over his shoulder. "But I think he's missing his mum."

*

"Ok, here we are." Treguard got to his feet and wobbled precariously in the saddle whilst trying vainly to get a good view of Marblehead over Tassie's head.

"Just sit down will you, you stupid man," Tassie snapped, twisting her head around sharply and knocking Treguard's feet from under him. She then turned her attention back to the fortress. "I can't see him."

"Well he's probably inside, isn't he," Treguard returned, a distinct note of disdain in his voice.

Tassie nodded, swooped down and circled the fortress a couple of times before shouting, "Hey!"

No response.

"HEY!" she yelled again. This time she landed and put an eye to the nearest window. The room she looked into was empty.

"HEEEEEEEY!"

"What in the Underworld do you think you're doing?" Treguard demanded. The force of Tassie's yell had almost sent him tumbling to the ground.

"Come on," Tassie urged through clenched teeth. "I refuse to believe they can't hear me."

"Well of course I can hear you!" came an angry voice from above their heads. Tassie looked up, and there was Lord Fear leaning out of the window on the storey above them. "Are you going to leave now, or am I going to have to kill you for disturbing the peace?"

"I want my baby, you scum!" Tassie yelled back, extending her neck and rising to her back feet so as to meet his eye-level. Treguard let out a small noise and grabbed hold of the back of the saddle. If she kept this up there was going to be some serious cleaning up to do in a minute.

"I'm sorry, madam, but this isn't a... ARGH!"

Treguard would have been interested to hear the witty retort, but before Lord Fear could finish Tassie had grabbed him by the arm and wrenched him free of the castle.

"You tell be where he is or I'll sbap you id halv!" Well, talking isn't easy when you've got a whole person between your teeth.

Lord Fear wasn't having any of this. He zapped Tassie with a fireball so powerful that she screamed and reared up in agony, sending Fear and Treguard to the ground. The former landed first, followed by Treguard, who ended up sprawled across Fear's chest in a most undignified manner.

"Bhal-Shebah!" Fear bellowed, and seconds later the red dragon appeared looming over the fortress. He saw the predicament his master was in, and immediately began flying towards him.

"No, no, stop her you idiot!" Fear cried, exasperated. He was trying to push Treguard away with one hand whilst pointing frantically at Tassie with the other. The dragon was evidently over the shock of a big fireball in the face, as she had now flown to the roof of Marblehead and was clawing noisily at it.

Bhal-Shebah flew up behind her, and knocked her free of the fortress with one blow of the tail. Before she could react Tassie was hurtling to the ground; Treguard and Fear separated and scrambled free of her impact zone.

"Kill her over there somewhere!" Fear shouted to the dragon on his roof. "I don't want a massive great dragon rotting all over another of my homes!"

Bhal-Shebah flew down after Tassie, and began rugby-tackling her whilst simultaneously trying to nudge her a good distance from the castle. Fear winced. He would have to give Bhal-Shebah a few pointers before he got him teaching Orion and Emerald to fight.

Tassie was giving as good as she got. She had Bhal-Shebah's right shoulder in her mouth, and was trying to beat him off her with her tail.

"Treguard!"

Immensely surprised at hearing Majida's voice, Treguard turned round. He was even more surprised to see two blue dragons flying towards him, followed closely by the most enormous brown dragon you could ever hope to meet.

"OWEN! Esta, Smirkenorff, Majida! What are you doing here?"

"I found some!" Majida yelled, waving a bottle of lemon Fairy Liquid above her head. "What can we do?"

"You can help me for a start!" came Tassie's muffled tones from within Bhal-Shebah's grasp.

Esta dropped Majida off beside Treguard, and then the three dragons swarmed towards Tassie and Bhal-Shebah. Bhal-Shebah shrieked as Esta and Owen dragged him away from Tassie. Smirky wandered over to Tassie, who looked very rattled, and began, "Are you...?"

"This is all your fault!" Tassie snapped, struggling to her feet. "You're all the same, aren't you! Making mess after mess and leaving me to pick up the pieces! You... you..."

"It's over, Fear," Treguard suddenly said. "There are four of them now... although goodness knows what Owen's doing here. You don't stand a chance."

Fear had to admit that Treguard was right, if only to himself. But he wasn't going to give up that easily.

"Tassie," he said, turning to Tassie (obviously). "Why are you fighting on the side of these albinos? You're a red dragon and by rights you should be on my side. What's say we put all this behind us and... eep!"

He leapt back just in time to avoid Tassie's claws from closing around him. She was glaring at him, and after a moment of silence said, "I don't think so, mate."

*

Thinking of as many different revenges as possible, Fear let Orion, Emerald (who, just in case you didn't pick it up, was really Hordriss) and Widget go. Once outside Marblehead, Orion spotted Smirky and realised that if he wanted, he could get what he came for.

Timidly he approached the dragon and stuttered, "Um... are you okay?"

Smirky didn't answer. He just gave Orion a look.

"I'm okay," Orion went on.

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Right, well... I'm going home with Mum now."

"I'd rather you than me."

"What?"

"Er... I mean... good luck. If you want to - you know - come and visit sometime... you can."

"Thanks," Orion said, smiling. "And look after Widget for me."

"Widget can look after... Um, I mean... of course I will, Orion."

*

"Come on then, Majida, why did Owen suddenly show up?" Treguard asked, handing her another plate. He was washing; she was drying.

"Turns out he's Esta's friend. She brought him to meet Tassie, and met me on the way and offered me a lift home. We came and found you gone so... well, we came to find you."

"I'm glad you did."

"Yes... Hey Treguard, how about next time I wash. Otherwise my hands will never be as soft as yours."

Here endeth the lesson for now, readers, but who is to say that Orion and co. will not return sometime in the future? Thanks once again to Rosey for finishing the story.

THE BIG ISSUE

Although they appeared in the programme together for two years, Merlin and Hordriss are often compared in the same way as other characters from this feature. It is certainly true that Hordriss took over as the main wizard from series 5 onwards, but did he really fill the role of Merlin? Now's your chance to decide.

MERLIN: The main wizard from series 1, 2, 3 and 4. He appeared in levels two and three to test dungeoneers, offering spells and advice if they passed. Played by John Woodnutt.

Advantages: A character steeped in as much history and legend as Merlin had to add an extra dimension to Nightmare. His appearances in levels two and three were always enjoyable, and also very important. The power that Merlin exerted over the quests was absolute; without a spell earned on level two, the game was up for the team. John Woodnutt played this part to perfection for four years, seemingly resisting the urge that the rest of the original cast seemed to have to leave after the second series. Merlin will always remain a classic Nightmare character, and rightly so.

Disadvantages: Merlin's main disadvantage is series four; although he still appeared in level two to give vital magic in exchange for riddle answers, his air of mystery and mastery were gone because he was always in 'disguise' (wearing a silly monk's habit). Without his former spark, the Merlin of series four lacked a great deal. What is more, he did not appear on level three until the final episode, and only then because Giles called him. This seems to reaffirm his less than prominent position in this series.

HORDRISS: The red-robed sorcerer from series 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Hordriss played a variety of roles in quests, always having spells, advice or objects to give to dungeoneers if he saw fit. Played by Clifford Norgate.

Advantages: Six series is the most for any Dungeon-dwelling character, and Hordriss clearly showed his series-specific adaptability in this time. Like Merlin, he made it clear that he had a lot of power over quests, and would only help out if he felt like it. His own personal development and growing power base in the Dungeon were made clear as he turned from warlock to wizard to mage within three series. Hordriss clearly had other interests outside the Dungeon, as his daughter Sidriss appeared in series six.

Disadvantages: Despite his claims to power, Hordriss was often easily overpowered by Lord Fear. From the end of series six (when he joined the Powers that Be) onwards, Hordriss mostly appeared in stories that involved him needing to be saved from Lord Fear in some way. In a skirmish with Grimaldine, Hordriss again came out the loser. Even Lissard managed to trap him in a body-cage during Dunston's quest. He also seems to have failed in his duties as a father, doing little or nothing to protect Sidriss from the dangerous Dungeon world she inhabits.

My favourite Nightmare wizard is and always has been Merlin; I was devastated when he didn't turn up in series five. Still, I have found myself growing fond of Hordriss as I've re-watched the show over all these years...

PUZZLE ANSWERS

1. Four.
2. David.
3. Nicola I, Alan and Dunston.
4. Skarkill.
5. Cavernwraith.
6. Play Your Cards Right.
7. January.
8. Julie I.
9. Simon III.
10. Vicky. She lived in Wymondham, a few miles down the A11 from Norwich.

11. Four.
12. Oliver.
13. Cliff, from Felixstowe, and James, from Ipswich.
14. Mogdred.
15. Miremen.
16. The Causeway.
17. Neil.
18. Jamie and Nicola I.
19. Alistair.
20. Gavin. He came from Uddingston, a suburb of Glasgow.

NEXT ISSUE

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The Eye Shield returns in March, so keep your eyes peeled for it then. Find out more about My Nightmare Story, read the continuation of Laurie's The Path Opens and enjoy a very special Creature Feature written by one of you lot. Make sure you don't miss the first TES interview for a very long time: the subject is a vital part of Nightmare's continuing popularity. There'll also be more from your regular favourites, including my analysis of The Forbidden Gate in I Think I Read Somewhere, and the continued adventures of Nick in Adventure Time. And what of Carl Bateson; will A Last Resort find its home here in TES once again? Join me again in March for The Eye Shield issue 14, unless, of course, you dare to miss it!