

# alternate REALITY

## NEWSLETTER

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Volume 1

Issue 5

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### Greetings Alternate Reality Adventurers!

This issue brings the tales and adventures of The City to a nice closing. With **The Dungeon** on the way, it seems only natural to continue the newsletter with information concerning the long-awaited second scenario of Alternate Reality. Send in **The Dungeon** product Registration Cards to renew your membership and continue receiving the newsletters. Don't forget to write in with any hints, questions, stories, or suggestions on **The Dungeon!**

The contents of this last issue are, quite appropriately, the following "Honorable Mention" stories (edited for space) from the Awesome Character Contest, as well as a humorous story recently sent in by John M. Morrison of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They're bound to keep you glued to the page!

#### **Lady Pat**

by Patricia Smith

Walking to work one morning, I was suddenly hit by a bolt from nowhere. I awoke to a strange and hostile world in which I was ill-equipped to survive. I was repeatedly attacked by almost everyone and everything I met. Only the poor did not assault me or steal my few possessions. Wandering aimlessly at first, I nearly died of fatigue and starvation. Slowly I grew stronger and bolder. I crept around The City Square, fighting for a meager bit of food, a drink of water, and a place to sleep on the floor of the meanest Inn.

Drenched and disoriented by the frequent thunderstorms, I was lost; I wandered The City for days. My personality began to change; a doctor in real life, I had never been aggressive, preferring intellect to aggression and healing to hurting. In fevered moments, I began to kill frequently. The more I killed, the better I felt. I was able to eat and sleep when necessary and put a little money in the banks. My medical training helped me learn the use of 50 potions and I became even stronger. The thin line between good and evil had become blurred.

For research on potions, I captured weaker life forms in isolated parts of The City and sat on them, pouring potion after potion down their throats, dispassionately observing the results. I even cured some creatures of disease and poison, but most were not so fortunate. I fear there are some of the inclinations of a Dr. Mengele in me.

Since it was several months before I could afford a room with a bath, it was no wonder citizens were offended by my presence. My crystal plate armor is necessary, but I got pretty rank staying in it for weeks at a time.

I faced the fact that I was no longer one of the good guys. Now I don't care and only the paupers are immune to the piercing 'byte' of my magical longsword. My magical tower shield and magical battle hammer have been paid for by the blood of others.

I don't consider myself awesome, but The City has turned a basically decent, hard-working, young woman into a ruthless, cold-blooded killer. I started out as Lady Pat, but many have learned to fear my name, as I am no Lady now. I used to dream of home and how I could use magical potions for the sick and injured there, but I will never go home. There is no place on earth for me now.

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#### **Why Me?**

by John E. Boyle

I really don't know why I am bothering to write this down; nobody I care about is ever gonna read it. Maybe it will help *me* to put some of what has happened to me down on paper. Or maybe someone else in the same spot can get some help out of it. Whatever.

Back home (Earth), I was just a dime-a-dozen computer operator in a little college town in Pennsylvania. I had settled into a quiet, dull kind of life after graduating from Penn State; a few friends, no enemies. I sometimes wished for a more exciting life. They're right when they say you should be careful what you wish for!

I was walking in town to the Post Office just after lunch one day. I remember hearing this hi-pitched hum and I blacked out. When I came to, I was standing in front of this big door with a bunch of spinning numbers above it, like I was in the mouth of a big slot machine. I heard this voice say, "Choose carefully, and step through." I still wasn't thinking clearly at this point, so I did what the voice said. I don't see what else I could have done; but ever since, it's been open season on you-know-who.

What really gets to me is, whoever did this to me never even knew me. I've run into a few other Terrans here and they all say the same thing: Someone came out of nowhere, picked them up at random, and plunked them here, in Xebec's Demise (some name, how would you like your home town to be named something like "Reagan's Death", hum?).

Whoever they are, they've ruined dozens of lives just on a whim. I've seen an awful lot of Terrans not live past the first week. Someone better have a good explanation.

Anyway, when I came through the gate, I wasn't the same as I'd been before. I was stronger and could pick up things quicker than usual; but that dingy loincloth was all I had to wear. That's another gripe I've got: How could I expect help from anyone if I looked like a thug and was dressed in only a dirty bathing suit?

Since then, I've needed every ounce of strength and wit to survive. I have fought my way up the ladder in this society, while crisscrossing The City from one end to the other. My arms and armor have been taken from the dead bodies of my enemies, and the money I looted from them keeps me fed and rested. I try never to pick a fight with any of the lawful people around here, but I never back away from the locals, either. I've become familiar with this city, but there are still places I've never seen. They say there are 12 guilds; I've only found 11. If that 12th guild is harder to find than the Star Wizards' place, it can stay lost.

I've been in Xebec's Demise less than a year, but things have changed. I'm not a barely-clothed, unarmed bum anymore. I must have more than 250,000 coppers scattered among the three banks in this town, plus what I carry on me. As for my weapons, I have a magic longsword, a magic shield, and a tower shield, but my favorite is the flame sword I picked up off of a Knight who attacked me on my way to the Tavern. I don't know why he did it, but he beat me around pretty good before I finally dropped him. Since then, dragons can be cut down like grass and I've even killed two Nightstalkers as well as a master assassin. The only character I can't handle is the mage, which my flame sword can't seem to touch.

So, that's about it. Here I am, sitting on my duff in the Tail of the Dog, writing down a story that nobody is ever going to believe. But that's not the end of it. I'm

tired of just living from day to day. I want some answers, and I think I know where to go. I found a locked door that seems to lead to passages under The City. As soon as a dwarven friend of mine makes me the right key, I'm going through that door. I have a hunch that a big part of the puzzle is somewhere down there and I'm going to find it. I'll figure out who put us here and why. They'd better have a good explanation. They're probably pretty powerful to have done all this, but I figure if I live long enough to find them, I won't be any pushover myself!

Well, all that's in the future. In the meantime, have a drink on me. Good Health . . . and watch your back!

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**Who Cares?**  
by Marlene Bird

I thought I had it made. I can remember growing up the third child of a poor family. We all scrimped and saved, like many others in our neighborhood, just to make ends meet. I somehow survived the embarrassment of wearing hand-me-down clothes all the way through high school. I guess it did help teach me to hold my own in the verbal and physical confrontations that followed the teasing.

This self confidence stayed with me after high school and I was determined that any family I had wouldn't have to go through the same agonies. I resolved to go on with my education and get a job that, if it didn't put me on easy street, at least put me on one of its tributaries. I enlisted in the service and saved my pay. With that and the G.I. Bill, I got a Master's degree in computer programming at a good university.

I was offered a position with IBM in Research and Development at a salary that was beyond even my dreams. I signed the contract for the job and started towards my fiancée's to share the good news. I noticed a funny-looking beam of light moving down the street; then. . . *nothing*.

The next thing I knew, a voice was asking my name and I felt like I had the great-granddaddy of all hangovers. In hopes that the voice would go away and let me die quietly, I responded with the first thing that came to mind. "Who Cares?" I groaned. Everything went black again. Sometime later, the voice was back. "Who Cares, you will be leaving through the portal in 30 seconds."

Through fuzzy eyeballs, I dimly saw a large arch covered with dials and gauges. There was something on the other side, but it was blurred, as if through water. I had no intention of going anywhere, but I felt the surface move towards the arch. No matter how I struggled, I was somehow secured to the surface. I entered the arch; there was a coldness, a sense of vertigo, and there I was, standing on a street. I was free, but where was I?

Three and a half years later, I still don't know the answer to that question. I've seen and done a lot; but I don't seem to be any closer to figuring out where I am and, more important, how to get home.

I've explored The City from one end to the other and can account for every square inch of it. There are lots of gates that I haven't yet figured out how to get through. I haven't a clue as to who brought me here, but you can bet I'll find the way out, or meet one of my kidnappers and, when I do, I guarantee you'll find out Who Cares!

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**Lar of Carlstadt**  
by Larry Schwartz

The bartender leaned out the service entrance. "Looks like rain again tonight," he thought. Out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of a man dragging a huge carcass. "Lar!" he called. "No more dragons! This makes the third one this week. I have roast dragon, fried dragon, dragon fricassee, cream of dragon on a shingle . . ."

"Don't want to see good meat go to waste, Sid." The burly adventurer scooped up the carcass in massive arms and tossed it onto the loading dock.

"If you'd just listen to me and settle down," Sid lectured, "you wouldn't be out every night chasing dragons. Have you seen a picture of my Emma? Good girl . . . nice personality . . ."

Lar just smiled and entered the Tavern. The Lost Tears Tavern was teeming with activity. Many strange faces in gray cloaks were gathered around the bulletin board. "The threat of rain always brings in newcomers," Lar thought. Curious, he grabbed his drink and walked over to join them.

The new Earthers scattered, intimidated by the clank of armor and the glint of a longsword. Bold letters on the top of the parchment caught Lar's eye. "BOUNTY - 1000 PIECES OF GOLD." His interest piqued, he read on, "for the head of the NIGHTSTALKER!" The echo of his laughter resounded throughout the tavern.

"A bounty on a creature that doesn't exist!" Lar chuckled, part of his drink spilling to the floor. He turned to the group of gray-cloaked men. "Would you like to meet the Nightstalker? I'm sure I could arrange it. He could have you over . . . for dinner!"

One of the strangers passed out. As Lar quaffed his ale, the sight of this sent him on another laughing jag. The drink permeated his nasal cavity and ice-cold ale shot through his nose. Half choking, half laughing, he stumbled out the door.

It was raining. The damp night air brought shivers down his spine. Lar buttoned the hood of his cloak and headed toward the inn. It stood silent in the shadows. gleaming white eyes watching, waiting for the moment to be right. Just a little closer, closer. It struck! Razor-sharp fangs pierced magical plate mail. Lar screamed, the life being sucked from his body. Only brute strength and the swift reactions of a combat veteran enabled him to finally break free. Lar spun around to face . . . the Nightstalker!

Over eight feet tall, it stood ready to strike again. Blood was dripping from its gaping jaws. In some sick, perverted way, it seemed to be laughing. Again it attacked, this time with huge claws. Lar batted them aside, parrying with his magical longsword. He thrust out with hardened steel, striking the monster square in the torso. Putrid green ichor spurted from the wound.

Sensing victory, Lar took the offensive. With both hands firmly on the weapon, he lunged forward and swung. Blade met flesh at the nape of the neck and sliced clean through. The head, somersaulting through the air, hit the ground with a thud. The body writhed spastically, like a thousand-pound chicken fresh from slaughter.

The rain subsided. Lar ripped the hood from his cloak, wrapped the prize, and secured it to his belt. He walked on, letting his mind wander. As always, Lar's thoughts turned toward home. Life in Carlstadt, New Jersey, was mundane at best. Lar had seemed happy enough. He had friends to comfort him, menial work to keep him busy, safety, security . . .

"Who am I kidding?" he muttered aloud. "I couldn't stand it! Back on earth, I was nothing, a nobody. Life was dull, boring. Here . . . here, I slay dragons. I fight evil. I find great treasures. Here, I am an Adventurer!" Lar stopped in his tracks and raised his sword to the sky. "I'm glad you took me!" he shouted. "Glad, do you hear me?" Something did.

A wandering ghost, alerted by Lar's cry, decided to answer. A sudden flash and bolt of lightning knocked Lar to the ground. Frantically, he ripped burning clothes from charred flesh. The ghost attacked again, but this time the bolt vanished before hitting its destination. Lar regained his senses.

He ran to the burning pile and drew out his battle hammer. One swing of the mighty weapon was all he needed to dispatch this foe, but the damage had been done. Lying in the smoldering heap, burned beyond recognition, was the head of the Nightstalker.

. . . The bartender leaned out the service entrance. From the corner of his eye, he spied a man dragging a huge carcass. "Lar!" he called. "How many times must I tell you? No more dragons!" Lar just smiled and entered the tavern.

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**Ah Clem**  
by Fred Bussell

You think it could never happen to you, then WHAM, there you are face to face with the Nightstalker. The reek from the creature turns your stomach and burns your eyes as it edges closer with drooling fangs . . .

The first time I met one of these beasts, I was very fortunate indeed. The setting sun was just turning orange as I left the Flaming Dragon, when I heard a noise coming from behind the tavern. Peeking around the corner, I saw a Nightstalker pawing through some barrels. Its back was to me. Quickly, I pulled a short sword from my belt and wedged it between two heavy blocks in the wall next to me. Standing in front of the sword, I gave out a loud scream. Instantly the beast turned and lunged at me. I stepped aside at the last moment and he buried my sword in his chest as he slammed against the wall. The trick had worked. I was overjoyed and feeling very proud. I started to go tell my friends in the Flaming Dragon when this sucking noise caught my attention. Turning back to the Nightstalker, I saw it pushing itself off of my sword, blood oozing from the dent in its chest. Dumbfounded, I drew my best weapon, Jentu, a Magic Longsword. I braced myself as the Nightstalker stepped toward me. To my relief, it collapsed; the injuries finally taking their toll.

By now a crowd had gathered in the fading light and I had to muscle my way out of the alley. Feeling a tug at my belt, I looked down to see a young commoner pulling at my strings. I was in no mood to waste words on him. Again calling upon Jentu, I severed his hand from his arm. Normally I'm not so quick to punish one of the poor, but my nerves were on edge after the incident behind the tavern. A guard in the crowd gave me a dirty look, but did nothing, realizing that I could just as easily have severed the boy's head instead of his hand.

That incident was over a month ago. Since then, I have come upon a Magic Flamesword. With this weapon I now seek out the beasts of the night to rid The City of them and their spawn.

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**NIGHTTIME IN XEBEC'S DEMISE**

by John Morrison

It was one of those nights. I had just waded through the usual crowd of muggers, molds, and mutants; not the best of things to do on an empty stomach. Or with a hangover. And believe me, I had both!

Before I sauntered into the local dive, I rolled up a section of my simple white cotton tunic. Wouldn't wear the thing on a dare, but it made the closest thing to a cigarette I could find in this place. Wish the aliens that grabbed me knew there was such a thing as tobacco. Anyway, it made me look unique. Half the time, before

some bozo started slicing me up, he'd pause to ask why I had a flaming roll of cloth dangling from my mouth, which gave me time to introduce him formally to the old five of clubs!

It was a slow night in Mom's. I could tell that I'd only have to spend 110 coppers to buy a round of drinks. Not that I was about to. Unfortunately, as soon as I came in, the same old song assaulted my poor battered ears -- you know, the one about letting in the night. I hit a key real quick and it shut up in mid-note.

"Potion of inebriation, Ed," I muttered, as I found my usual private booth (I could tell by the smoky torch that Ed always kept there). Ed, by the way, is "Mom". He's kind of funny like that, but basically a good Joe (even if his name was Ed--or Mom). "And see if you can get the minstrels to play something else." He nodded and threw a betel nut at one. Like a rusty calliope in a second-rate circus, they launched into something I didn't mind as much.

"Hey, Sam!" Mom cried in his familiar blue-whale bellow. "Dame to see you." I didn't need to be told her gender. It shouted itself at me, from her gams all the way to her magic crystal breastplate. As she swayed through the bar toward me, bashing in heads attached to roving hands, I could tell that this was one Sheila that spent her time killing dragons instead of her liver. She sat herself across from me and dropped her magical adamantium flame sword in the corner. I paused to put out the grease fire it caused, then asked her business.

"Oh Sam . . . only you can help me," she cooed in a voice that would melt a Black Slime's heart. "Ever since I was grabbed by the flying saucers . . ." she halted. She seemed to be waiting for some sort of reaction. 'Too bad, sister,' I thought. You learn fast not to give yourself away in the magical crystal gumshoe biz.

After a second, she finished her sentence. "It's Thorex, the guy who came through the Gate with me. After we both got to 14th level, I haven't seen him at all . . . I'm worried!" My teeth ground on the cheap imitation coffin nail. Awesome Characters. . . they think they own the world. Now this floozy wants me to double the number I knew personally. "Who cares?" I spat out. But instead of getting the hint, she dried her tears. "You know my name! Then you *will* take the case!" she squealed, and slapped her ruby reds on my cheek. Unfortunately, she forgot that her strength was greater than most small cities and crushed the life out of me.

Fortunately, I had backed myself up. After a quick trip to Diversi-Copy Resurrection Services, I set out on what was to be the most difficult case of my 8 days here so far.

Shaking down the usual cutthroats and orcs was easy. For some reason, though, I could never get any

information from them; after a few good wallops, barely enough to loosen the tongue of an Earth goon, they usually died.

Around Acrinimiril's Gate, I was about to call it a night when an Imp popped up. I hate Imps. I want to be able to choose my poisons, not have them delivered to me. This one was juggling the two potions they always seem to carry and chuckling with evil glee. "Hey, Sam, old pal . . . wanna know about your buddy Thorex?" it sneered. Its breath could warp a floppy disk. "Maybe I do and maybe I don't," I snarled, matching it in tone. "Give or get lost, creep!"

"Oh, I'll tell," it said. "What do these have in common: 35N/38E . . ." Its voice got softer. I got closer. "10N/30E . . ." It was whispering now, to catch the final sentence, I stretched my head closer. "And 45-50N/34E," it cackled, sending its stinger into my forehead for one point of damage that I knew would add up to more later. I wanted to strangle the life out of the thing, if it had any. Pausing only to coldcock a passing zombie, I headed for the One Way Healers for some cheap preaching and expensive healing. Good thing that Awesome Characters had money to burn. Better thing that I had asked for my expenses in advance.

"I don't get it," Who Cares pondered as we shared a cup of 3-day-old java the next day. "I've been all over The City. Thorex isn't in any of those spots. But I finally found the Star Wizard's Guild. Thanks."

"It's not a *where*, it's a *what*," I explained. She still didn't get it. Wish these AC's would spend some time using their brains instead of their biceps. "All those places are Enclosed Spaces. It's obviously a clue. And I know where to follow it up, too. 61N/54E. The headquarters of the Enclosed Space Corporation (ESC)."

It took us until noon, a time of day I didn't like at all, to get there. Had to stop by the Green Boar flophouse and pick up some special equipment. I like the Boar. Folks there mind their own business. 'If they don't, they get a kick in the rump from Auntie, who ran the joint. Auntie's real name is Phil. I think he's related to Ed.

The time of day didn't matter when we got to the place. Inside the joint, it was dark as the coffee Mom brews. The kind of stuff that takes a pint of cream to lighten it up. Only I never drink mine with cream. The ESC had offices all over The City, but that didn't make them straight. In fact, it was fitting that they should have their main stable here, as close to the city's underworld as you could get. I searched for a match to illuminate the joint, when suddenly, torches were lit all around, making it somewhat of a moot point.

"Ah, Mr. Staid, we meet at last," the fat man at the head of the crowd chortled. Everything he was wearing was mostly white and fur-lined. I wondered how he stood it, since this was the month of Suntans. "Mister Big, I presume?" I guessed out loud.

He looked pleased at this. "Not the head man, my fine detective friend, merely a lieutenant." "I wasn't referring to your rank," I replied, "just your shirt size." He looked less pleased. "You've got a smart remark for everything, haven't you?" he snarled. "Prepare for the shock of your life; prepare to meet the *real* head of organized crime in Xebec's Demise!"

"Shock?" I asked before he could continue. "I think not. Show yourself, Thorex." I savored the look on the fat man's face. It was like a balloon had just burst. While he was still gaping, the curtain drew aside to reveal a guy dressed much as Miss Who Cares . . . tank armour, magic weapons all over the place, bulging coin pouches. I didn't count, but I knew at a guess that he had 255 potions. 255 seems to be a popular number among Awesome Characters.

"Well done, Mr. Staid. But how did you know it was me?" Thorex asked in his silky hiss, while his dame, my client, stood wide-mouthed like a fish due for the soup of the day.

"Simple: power corrupts. You get to a point where nothing on Earth--or wherever--can harm you and you set yourself above the masses. You begin to realize that commoners carry a few coppers and they die as easily as goblins. So what if guards come after you? Two quick chops and they're dog food, too. Reputation doesn't matter to you any more . . . just numbers. In my book, that makes you more evil than the Dark Wizards."

"You mock me, Sam Staid, but your words have a ring of truth. It is destiny that sets me apart from the masses of human scum, just as you would feel superior to a green mold. It is only right that commoners, couriers, apprentices, and their ilk fall to me, as do dragons and wraiths. All are but experience point and copper "plants" . . . and we must harvest them!"

"It's lonely at the top," he continued. "I am glad you brought my co-ruler. Come with me, my dear, and we will rule the town together." I felt the space to my left suddenly empty as Who Cares rushed to join her fellow *ubermensch*. Dames and Awesome Characters--can't trust 'em.

The head honcho wasn't finished yet. "There is one more space on the seat of power, Mr. Staid. Come and join us. Your quick wit will make you a valuable asset when we are able to learn spells."

"With you?" I growled. "No chance, pally. The Green Boar smells bad enough. It, I can take; you, I can't. And *you* forget the first rule of those cards: a Smith & Wesson beats five aces," I quipped. Only it wasn't a Smith & Wesson, but a Government Issue Colt .45 Automatic, that I drew from my trenchcoat (simple, wool, brown). If Uncle Sam couldn't take it away from me after the Great War, a bunch of Alien creeps sure couldn't. I drilled Mr. Awesome through his swelled head and blasted his moll before she could work her

feminine wiles on me. Then I sprayed enough lead poisoning around the room for his goons to collapse into utter chaos.

I slipped out the back. I wasn't worried about all the magic weapons that were lying around; as soon as you dropped something in this crazy burg, it disappeared anyway. And the coins the lady had paid me to locate her boyfriend would be enough to set me in the black--not to mention the sum I had picked from her money pouch on the way up. Poor misled gal. I hated icing a broad--such a waste. But I closed the book on a bunch of creeps who deserved it. Things almost looked good, for once.

Since I hardly wanted to go through it all again, I hit (S) to save myself and as the disk drive whirred, I said 'so long' to another day in the town of three-masted ships. Nighttime in The City has a million stories. This is just one.

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The following is a sneak preview of an adventurer's experience in **The Dungeon**. . .

I was at my usual table in Der Rathskellar (the only place for real food in The Dungeon), when I saw him. It was obvious he had just come from The City. He looked ridiculous! He was wearing magical crystal plate armour and had a magical flame sword (patent pending, you know the type) stuck in his belt. He was holding a torch in one hand, and struggling with a rattling sack full of potions in the other. He probably didn't even know what any of them were. On his back were bags which I figured to be what remained of his life savings. I could tell a couple of the shadier characters in the place had noticed him also, mentally painting a target on him. From the **AC** (Awesome Character) button on his chest, I could tell that The Dungeon was going to be a bigger shock than he had imagined. I bet he even tripped coming down the stairs and broke most of his good stuff.

He looked around trying to appear casual, and I couldn't help visualising a guy with ten cameras around his neck and a hat full of fishing lures on his head. He glanced in my direction and I waved him over. The lit torch he was carrying reminded me of people back home, who would drive for ten miles with their left-turn signal on. I gestured at the torch. He looked embarrassed and dropped it in a spittoon by the bar. Of course, he reminded me of myself a few months back, when I first walked in.

The man that waved me over back then introduced himself as Salin. Even then, the name meant something to me. Few adventurers in The City had not heard of Salin Wauthra. But this guy couldn't have been him, he looked like any other mediocre adventurer. A simple brown robe covered his tall slim frame.

A servant came over, delivered Salin's meal, took my order, and left. Being new here, I ordered the special;

it couldn't be worse than the slop they served at The Lost Tavern. Anyway, I decided to check this guy out.

"Just arrive?" he asked.

"Yeah."

"I think you'll find life here quite different from the surface world."

"How so?"

He looked down at his rare steak and shook his head. "They only know blood-rare and well-burnt, here. I prefer medium-rare," he said, as he drew a nasty looking knife from his robe. He stared for a moment at the blade. It burst into flame and Salin began cutting his steak. I nearly choked. This was the first time I'd ever seen a spell cast. Suddenly, my magical flame sword didn't seem as precious. I did my best to pretend I hadn't noticed.

The servant came back and plopped down the day's special in front of me. I'd killed more appetizing slime in The City.

Just then, the words "Greetings from the Dark Wizards, Salin" floated above my head from no apparant source. Salin was already moving, but not fast enough. A dagger hit squarely in the middle of Salin's back. Well, almost. It stopped an inch away and fell to the ground, the poison already eating its way into the floor. The dagger was all Salin needed to get his bearings on the assassin. He spun and produced a small crossbow pistol from under his robe. The bolt flamed as he shot it and hit the assassin was closing in fast with a kris-knife. By now, my flame sword was out and ready. Salin was faster than both of us, unnaturally faster. He made a gesture to the second assassin and the guy suddenly turned simple. He just stopped in his tracks with a dumb look on his face.

"Hey, no swordplay! Not even you, Salin. You know the rules, outta here--*both* of you!" said a voice from the bar.

"I've been thrown out of better places than this!" I answered. It was true, too--most of The City taverns. We left.

Outside, I was still eyeing the crossbow pistol. "Dwarven," Salin said. "Best armourers in the world. You shouldn't have gotten involved, but thanks." He held out his hand and a key appeared in it. "Take this, you may need to dodge through a locked door sometime. Try not to make too many enemies, assassins are cheap. Good luck." He turned and left, blending into the shadows on the first step. More magic. I noticed he wasn't holding a torch either.

I tucked the key away, lit a fresh torch and started down the hallway, grateful that my first lesson ended painlessly.

## RESUME

WAYNE "WIDENOT" BORKOWSKI  
5 HAVEN TERRACE GREEN BOAR INN  
PARLIN, NEW JERSEY 08859  
XEBK'S UNKNOWN UNKNOWN  
DEMISE

HEIGHT : ~~5'6"~~ 5'0" *LOST HEIGHT DUE TO TIGHT  
QUARTERS ON ALIEN  
CRAFT*  
WEIGHT : 475- 585 -- *LOVE THAT DRAGON!*  
BIRTHDATE : JAN. 1950  
TELEPHONE : ~~(211)555-3333~~ NO PHONE

STATS: STA-21 CHR-47 STR-112 INT-61 WIS-22 SKL-26 HP'S-137  
MONEY: LOTS IN THREE BANKS

### EDUCATION

GRAMMAR SCHOOL - GRADUATED 1963  
HIGH SCHOOL - GRADUATED 1967  
COLLEGE - GRADUATED 1971  
GRADUATE SCHOOL - ~~GRADUATED 1986~~ WAS ZAPPED; DIDN'T FINISH

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

1967-1971 - ODD JOBS TO WORK MY WAY THROUGH COLLEGE  
July 1986  
1971-PRESENT - COUNTY GOVERNMENT (THERES GOES MY PENSION)  
July 1986- PRESENT - WORK ALLOCATION IS LEISURE.

### GOALS

TO EARN LOTS OF MONEY AND TO BE THE BOSS TO FIND THE ALIENS WHO  
KIDNAPPED ME AND RETURN TO MY FAMILY ON EARTH; OR  
TO BE THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE OF ILL-REPUTE.

### HOBBIES

PLAYING COMPUTER GAMES <sup>OK</sup>  
COLLECTING STAMPS GEMS, JEWELS  
SLAYING DRAGONS  
AVOIDING ASSASSINS AND WRAITHS

### INTERESTS

BOWLING, TENNIS FINDING POTIONS, BAR HOPPING  
TO ENTER THE DUNGEON, THE PALACE, THE ARENA,  
THE WILDERNESS, AND PARTS UNKNOWN.

### REFERENCES

PROFESSOR SMITH - I.C.U. STATE IGOR - BARTENDER AT MOM'S BAR  
PROFESSOR JONES - DRUNKEN STATE SLEEPY - INNKEEPER AT GREEN  
BOAR INN

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