

A SINGLE-CHARACTER ROLE-PLAYING ADVENTURE!

PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW™



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Each of our games undergoes extensive playtesting prior to its release. Through this process we hope to uncover and correct any errors in programming. However, due to the complex nature of our simulations, some program errors may go undetected until after publication. In addition to errors in the program, there are occasionally problems with the disk itself. We experience the industry standard of approximately a 3 to 5% failure rate of duplicated disks. Before assuming that a disk is defective, make sure to check your disk drive. Up to 95% of the disks returned to us as defective will run fine on our computer systems. Often the problem is with a disk drive that needs servicing for alignment, speed, or cleaning.

Should you have a defective disk, please return the disk only (keep all other parts of the game) to our Customer Support Department, along with a note describing the problem you have encountered. A replacement disk will be provided upon our receipt of the defective disk.

Should you uncover an error in the program, return both your game disk and any "save game" disks to our Customer Support Department. Please enclose a description of what was taking place in the game when the error occurred. Upon correction of the program error, we will return an updated disk to you.

Always make sure to include your name, address, and daytime telephone number with any correspondence. We will do our best to see that any problems are corrected as soon as possible.

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QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?

Our main business number is (408) 737-6800. If you encounter disk or system related problems you can call our Technical Support Staff at (408) 737-6850 between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, holidays excluded. NO GAME PLAYING HINTS WILL BE GIVEN THROUGH THIS NUMBER. If you need hints, call our Hint Line at 1-900-737-HINT. Recorded hints are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you don't hear the information you need, please write to us at Hints, Strategic Simulations, Inc., 675 Almanor Avenue, Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (include a stamped self-addressed envelope for reply).

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the wonderful world of story based computer adventuring. In this game you will be an active participant in an unfolding story. You assume the role of a character at a predetermined starting point and put together the rest of the story as you go. Like a puzzle, you will have to put the pieces of the story together to see the big picture. The picture you see at the end of the game may be like no one else's.

Along your journey you may find magic items and loot. But more importantly, as you adventure, you acquire information that helps you find your destiny. Although your survival is essential to progressing in the story, becoming the most powerful creature on the planet should not be your mission. Your goal is to find what your purpose is in this world.

You will be taking the role of a character that is under the tutelage of Larkin of Bannerwick. The world your character is in is very different than ours. Here, magic fills the air, but magicians are hunted by a ruthless tyrant. Survival is an effort in itself. Only a wise and skilled player can hope to unravel the mysteries of this strange land.

WHAT COMES WITH THIS GAME?

You should have the following items in your game box:

- Rule Book
- Disks
- Data Card

This Rule Book shows you how to play this game and it gives you important background information about the story.

The Disks contain the game in a compressed format. You must install the game before you can play it.

The Data Card explains, in detail, how to install the game onto your specific computer system.

Before You Begin Playing

Your PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW game disks have no physical copy protection. To assure that you have a legitimate copy of this game you will be asked for a particular word out of this manual before playing.

CREATING A CHARACTER

At the beginning of the game you must establish the characteristics of your character. You will do this by selecting personality traits. The computer generates the character's attributes based on these personality traits. (Sex is not a factor in attribute generation.)

Play With Thy Friends
Study Thy Books
Balance Both Pursuits

Play With Thy Friends adds points to health and agility.

Study Thy Books adds points to magic.

Balance Both Pursuits adds points to health, agility, and magic, but to a lesser degree.

Fight The Bully On Thy Own Terms
Learn To Avoid the Bully
Thou WAST the Bully

Fight The Bully on Thy Own Terms adds points to health and agility.

Learn to Avoid the Bully adds points to magic.

Thou Wast the Bully adds many points to health but at the cost of magic points.

Playest The Game of Baseball
Learnest to Play Chess
Try Thy Hand at Juggling

Playest The Game of Baseball adds points to health.

Learnest to Play Chess adds points to magic.

Try Thy Hand at Juggling adds points to health and agility.

Character Profile

The character profile lists all of the specifics of your character. It is also where certain items are kept, such as arrows, food, and silver.

Ike Theurgist
Health: 53
Agility: 42
Magic: 38
Arrows: 0
Silver: 38
Food: 0
Lamp Oil: 1
Torches: 3
Item In Use:
Dirk

Health

Health can be thought of as a combination of strength, stamina, fortitude, and vigor. When health reaches zero the character dies. Resting is a good way to restore lost health. Healthy characters do more damage and hit enemies more easily than frail characters.

Agility

Agility is your character's ability to successfully attack and dodge enemy attacks. It is a combination of hand-eye coordination and overall nimbleness. The higher the agility, the easier it is to dodge attacks. Agile characters hit enemies more often than clumsy characters.

Magic

Magic is the amount of energy that your character can call forth in the form of spells. This is by far the most elusive of the traits. Many individuals have high magic potential, but never know it. Without spells and catalysts, it is as useful as a lock with no key. Although magic points are lost whenever spells are cast, their loss is only temporary. Stay fed and magic will gradually return. Resting will help restore lost magic points. Magic points do not determine how effective spells cast by that character are, unlike agility and health.

Raising Ability Scores

After the character is generated, practice increases ability scores. Practice involves using your skills. Each time a weapon is swung or a spell is cast there is a small chance of an ability score increasing by one point. A message stating that your character's skills have improved appears in the text window when this happens.

WORKING WITH THE INTERFACE

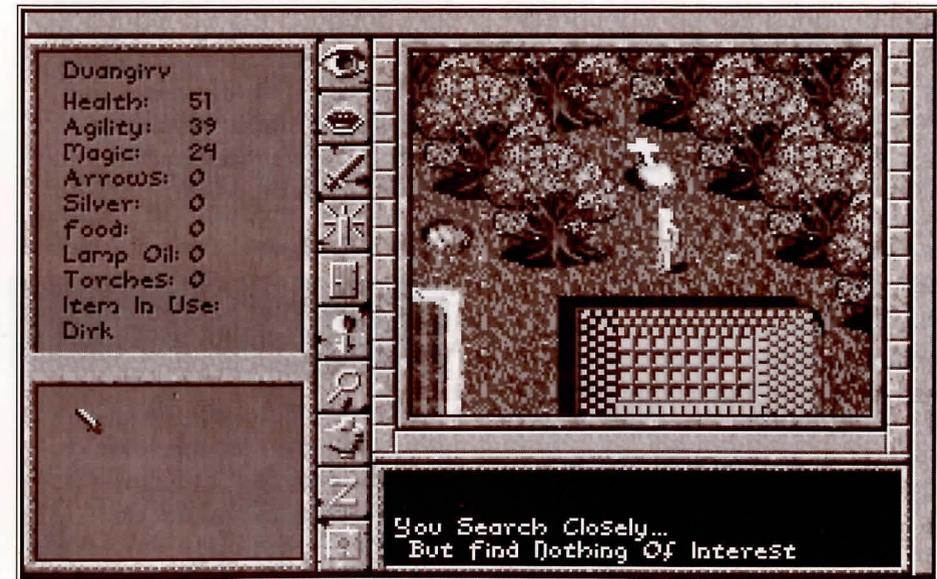
The interface is the tool that you and the computer use to communicate with each other. It is divided into five areas. They are the character profile window, adventure window, text window, inventory window, and action buttons.

Character Profile Window

Health, Agility, and Magic: Definitions for health, agility, and magic can be found under "Creating a Character."

Arrows: This refers to the number of arrows your character is carrying. A good supply will be a great help on your journey.

▼ Interface



"Working with the Interface" continues...

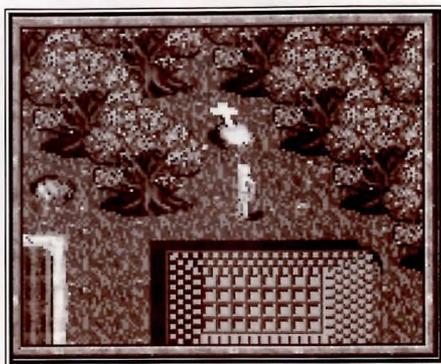
Silver: Silver is a universal monetary item in PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW. It can be used to purchase many of the necessities of adventuring. Besides finding silver on fallen enemies, it can be earned by working in some establishments.

Food: Food can be found on fallen foes or bought in several stores. Without food, health and magic cannot be regained. Even the most powerful of wizards must eat.

Lamp Oil and Torches: Lamp oil and torches provide an adventurer with the necessary fuels to perpetuate light underground. Because most adventurers find that they must explore underground at one time or another, and few are mages with the ability to cast spells for light, it is wise to keep a supply at hand. Lamps are usually favored over torches since they tend to last longer.

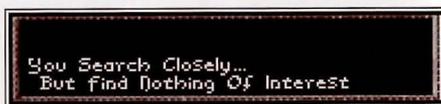
Item in Use: Only one item at a time may be used. If an item is in use, its name is found in the character profile under "Item in Use:". Unless an item is necessary to perform a task, such as using a key to open a door, it is wise to keep a weapon as the item in use. Usually, only items that may be used more than once have to be placed in use. For example, drinking a potion does not require that the potion first be in use.

Adventure Window



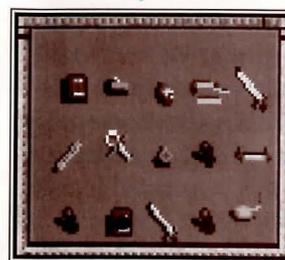
The adventure window shows your character's immediate surroundings. Your character is always in the center of the adventure window. You will be required to travel extensively to complete the game. By wandering around, you can gain valuable information about the world.

Text Window



The text window prints what the effects of the environment are on your character. By reading the text window you can find out the specifics of a combat, when healing has occurred, and the name of other creatures. For example, it prints the effects of the character's and enemy's attacks, be they weapon or spell.

Inventory Window



The inventory window displays icons of all the items in your possession.

You can access items either with the mouse, by clicking on them with the left mouse button, or by selecting the "Use Item" action button and the item that you wish to use. Only 15 items may be kept at one time.

ACTION BUTTONS

Action buttons allow you to do a specific task based on what button you select. Thoroughly familiarize yourself with what these buttons do before going very far into the game. Some actions must be done in specific locations in order to trigger an event. For instance, treasure may not be shown on the adventure window until you "Search" at the area.

Look

 This button allows you to take a closer look at the surroundings in the graphics window. After selecting this button, select the specific area in question on the adventure window and a line of text will tell you more about that area.

Talk

 This button allows your character to attempt communication with anyone you're standing near. Keep in mind though, some people or things will not want to speak with you. This is also the gateway into the use of vocabulary. See "Using Vocabulary" for more details on talking.

Attack

 This button allows you to attack enemies. Anything can be used to attack enemies that are adjacent to the main character. Missile weapons can be used to attack enemies further away. If the item in use is anything but a weapon, you will make only feeble attacks. See "Attacking" for more details.

Weapons

MELEE WEAPONS	DAMAGE
Hand	1-2
Dirk	2-6
Rapier	4-14
Long Sword	8-20
Great Sword	10-30
MISSILE WEAPONS	DAMAGE
Sling	2-8
Composite Bow	4-16
Great Bow	5-25

"Action Buttons" continues...

Magic

 If the item in use is a catalyst and you have learned some spells, you may use this button to cast spells. For a description of spell effects, see "Spells." After selecting the spell you wish to cast, its effects determine if you need to do anything else. For example, if you cast *incindiere*, you will need to target it. This is similar to attacking.

Enter

 Use the door button whenever you want to exit the area you are in and enter a new one. If there is no way to exit the area you are in, you are told that. Examples are when you wish to enter buildings, climb stairs, and descend into mines. You may need a specific item or group of items before entering some areas.

Drop Item

 This button allows you to drop items. After selecting this button, you are asked to specify which item you wish to drop, and then where you wish to drop it.

Search

 This button allows your character to search the immediate vicinity. You may only inspect adjacent squares. When you "Search," it is assumed that all adjacent squares are searched.

Use Item

 Select this button when you want to use an item in your inventory. Only one item may be in use at one time. However, the lantern may be lit and the flint and steel may be used without actually making them the item in use.

If you are talking to an NPC, you may "Give" them an item by selecting this button.

Rest

 This button allows you to rest if you are in a safe place. Sleeping will restore a limited amount of lost health and magic. Sleep whenever you can so that you are at your best at all times. Note that you may not rest unless your character is tired. Only by attempting to sleep do you know if you can.

Game Options

 This allows you to: access game options, save your game, restore a previous game, exit the game, and find out about PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW.

USING A MOUSE

Using a mouse makes playing PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW much easier. A mouse provides quicker access to the action buttons and makes movement in the graphics window easier. The mouse pointer has several different shapes depending on the actions you perform. If a mouse is active on your computer, a yellow cross appears in the adventure window.

Look

To look at specific features in the adventure window, hold the right mouse button down, move the mouse pointer to the area that you wish to look at, and release the button. This is useful to familiarize yourself with the vocabulary used to describe various areas and items in PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW. The mouse pointer takes the shape of an eye when the right mouse button is held down.

Talk

To initiate a conversation, hold the right mouse button down and move the pointer over the person that you wish to speak with. The mouse pointer will be in the shape of an eye, but will change into a mouth once over the person you wish to speak with. Releasing the mouse button initiates the conversation.

Attack

To attack an enemy, hold the right mouse button down and move the mouse pointer over the enemy that you wish to attack. The mouse pointer takes the shape of a sword when held over an enemy. Releasing the mouse button initiates combat and the computer continues to attack for you until either your character or the enemy is dead, or you initiate some other action.

Use Item

Any time the mouse pointer is not in the graphics window it takes the shape of a sword. When the pointer is over items in the inventory window, the name of the item that it is over will appear at the top of the inventory window. By pressing the left mouse button, the item named will become the item in use. Items that have a particular effect do not become the "Item in Use." See the "Item in Use" section for more details.

Drop Item

Dropping an item is similar to using an item except the right mouse button is pressed instead of the left. When the right mouse button is pressed a gray square appears in the graphics window. Move the pointer to an area in the graphics window where you wish to drop the item previously selected. Press the right mouse button again to drop the item.

"Using a Mouse" continues...

Movement

To move, hold the left mouse button down and move the mouse pointer toward the edge of the adventure window in the direction that you wish to move. While moving, the mouse pointer takes the shape of an arrow pointing in the direction that your character is moving.

USING THE KEYBOARD

PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW can be played solely with the keyboard. You should familiarize yourself with the keyboard commands, especially how to attack, before you get too far into the game.

▼ Keyboard Commands

KEY	COMMAND
TAB	This places a cursor around an action button. The cursor may be moved to different action buttons. Press return when the desired action button is highlighted to activate it.
ESC	Lets you escape out of a window.
L	Activates the "Look" action button.
T	Activates the "Talk" action button.
A	Activates the "Attack" action button.
M	Activates the "Magic" action button.
E	Activates the "Enter" action button.
D	Activates the "Drop Item" action button.
S	Activates the "Search" action button.
U	Activates the "Use Item" action button.
G	Allows you to give an item to the person you are talking to.
R	Activates the "Rest" action button.
SHIFT G	Activates the "Game Options" action button.
SHIFT S	Activates the "Save" option.
ARROW KEYS	Allows a cursor to be moved in the direction of the arrow.

SPELLS

Spells are arguably the most powerful force that your character possesses. Spells use the force of chaos to change the environment. The catalyst used in the process of casting a spell determines how much area is affected by the spell. Lead used as a catalyst allows the user to cast only the most basic of spells. More powerful spells require more powerful catalysts. These catalysts have been forgotten due to their disappearance, and may never be known again.

Note: You can cast a spell when out of magic points. However, doing so will borrow from your health. Should your health reach Ø, you will perish.

* *Cremare Magnus*

A mage casting this spell briefly causes the effects of a small erupting volcano to come into being at a predetermined site. Nine squares in the adventure window are affected. A wise magician does not target the ground beneath him or pass through such a site.

* *Curare*

This spell is used by mages to heal themselves. It heals health with each casting.

* *Incendiere*

This spell causes a sphere of fire to appear in the caster's hand and may be thrown at one target. All creatures visible in the graphics window are within range.

* *Inlustare*

This spell causes light to spring forth from the very air itself. An entire level is affected by *inlustare*. If the mage leaves the level that the spell is in effect on, the spell wears off. The absence of the mage causes the forces of Law to once again take control of the area. The duration of this spell is four times that of a torch.

* *Lamia*

The *lamia* spell allows the mage to take a little of the life force of another living creature and use it to heal himself.

* *Memoria*

This spell is used by a mage to bring chaos to the area around him so that later, he can sense it and teleport back to the location of the chaos. The location this spell is cast at is remembered by the mage until it is cast at a different place.

"Spells" continues...

* *Oculorum*

By means of this spell, the mage is able to project his powers of sight directly above himself. This allows a greater area to be seen in the graphics window. This spell only works outside.

* *Repetere*

This spell allows the mage to teleport back to the location where a *memoria* spell was cast. This spell only works if a *memoria* spell was cast prior to *repetere*.

* *Nictare*

The *nictare* spell allows the caster to be transported to any location on the adventure window. This is particularly useful for traveling between one room and another when troublesome walls block your path.

* *Tempestas*

This powerful spell allows the mage casting it to operate outside the normal parameter of time. Others are not aware of the caster's actions until the spell's duration has passed. Simply put, time stops for everyone but the mage.

* *Terrae Motus*

The casting of this spell causes a minor earthquake. All creatures, including the caster, are damaged by the effects of the earthquake.

* *Umbra*

This spell causes the caster to become but a shadow in others' eyes, effectively rendering the mage invisible.

BESTIARY

Feral Rats



Feral rats are aberrations of their smaller cousins. They attack anything they encounter.

Feral rats make their homes in subterranean locations. However, they can also be found in deserted buildings and the like.

Dire Wolves



These beasts are an evil form of wolves. Being somewhat larger and smarter than their

cousins makes dire wolves extremely dangerous. They waste no time in attacking humans for food. Some say that they actually have a fancy for fresh human meat.

Giant Spiders



Giant spiders are a quite lethal variety of normal spiders. Giant spiders inhabit all regions and climes. Luckily, there aren't too many of these creatures, but their numbers do seem to be slowly increasing.

Gnomes



Gnomes are nefarious little creatures that inhabit the world. The evil in their nature seems to be

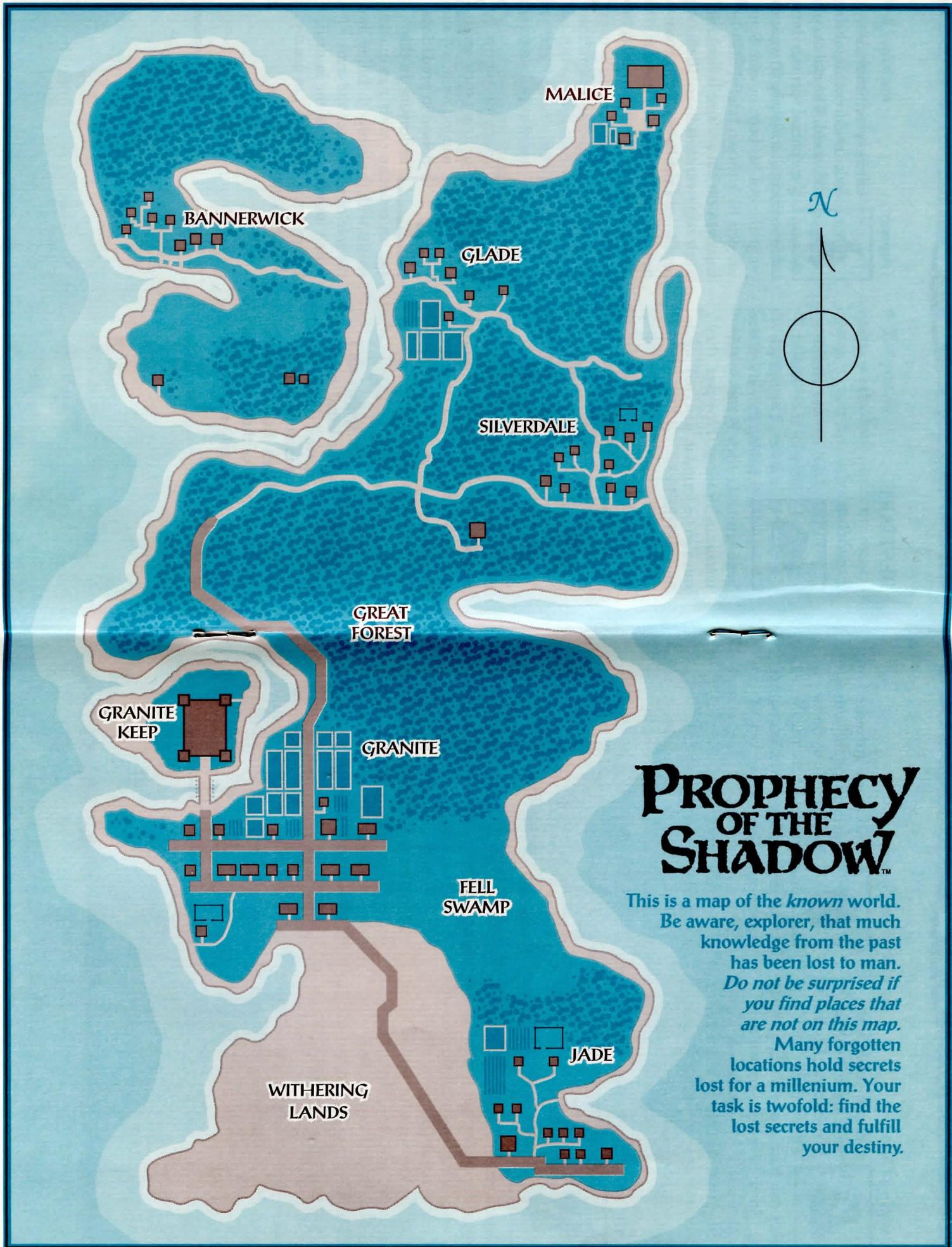
quite instinctual, for every attempt to purge the evil has been in vain. Some subjects have shown brief periods of improvement but a relapse is inevitable. Their origins are unknown. In the past, some cities have offered bounties for extermination of gnomes. However, since Cam Tethe has come to power there have been no bounties allowed and the gnomish population is on the rise.

Morgoth

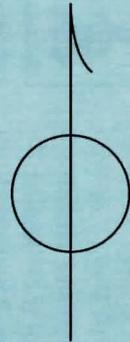


Morgoths survive by utilizing their speed, winged mobility, and poison in predacious endeavors. In this age, an encounter with man quickly results with the morgoth falling into the role of the hunter and man falling into the role of the hunted. Escape is the best man can usually hope to achieve.

"Bestiary" continues...



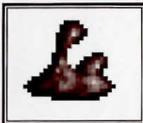
N



PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW™

This is a map of the *known* world. Be aware, explorer, that much knowledge from the past has been lost to man. Do not be surprised if you find places that are not on this map. Many forgotten locations hold secrets lost for a millenium. Your task is twofold: find the lost secrets and fulfill your destiny.

Creeping Ooze



Creeping ooze is the term applied to the various amoeba-like slimes, oozes, and jellies that have grown to gargantuan size. Some have been known to acquire a sentient intelligence with their growth but this is very rare. Their only concern is acquiring a new source of sustenance.

Torloks



These creatures are the only known successful(?) experiment of a late wizard. They appear to be a cross between a human and some beast of unknown origin. Apparently this wizard wanted to make a low maintenance machine of war that was able to reproduce itself. Torloks were his answer. Once the wizard was dead, these abominations developed a will of their own and have resisted all attempts to eradicate them. They have even developed a crude culture based on hunting and gathering. It should be noted that a torlok hunts anything that moves and gathers anything that doesn't.

Wild Gazers



Wild gazers are quite independent and lethal. Their ability to throw spheres of fire usually results in death for all who encounter these beasts. Due to their lack of interaction with man, it is not known if these creatures have a culture, or an intelligence for that matter. They do seem to have quite an appetite, though. Their ichor is prized by magicians for its magical properties.

Zombie



This term applies to life that has died and been reanimated through the use of magic. Unfortunately, the organism brought back has only instinctual thoughts and no memory of any sort. A human brought back from death will be quite stupid and remain that way. This means that a fully functional human zombie will try to feed its hungry stomach. Research into this kind of magic is strictly forbidden by the council of magicians. Some say, however, that work is indeed being done in this field and there may be some advances in this field since this writing.

JOURNAL

This journal was written by your character while being raised by Larkin of Bannerwick. It reflects the attitudes of the character as well as the prevailing attitudes of the people. It provides insight into the past and clues as to what the future holds.

I'm writing this journal so that the people of the future will know something of what life was like in this age. From here on out I will write as if I were speaking directly to you. Since this is the story of my life, you might as well feel as if I'm telling it to you first hand.

I'm not writing this so much because I feel that my life is of significant note, nor that it will be. I'll be honest, I'm writing this mostly because I want to make use of my ability to write. My Master spent many hours teaching me and I spent many more practicing. It would be a waste for me not to use my talents – few as they may be. My Master says that he keeps a journal simply to aid him in remembering what he has done. He says that you can have an accurate understanding of the present only if you have a clear understanding of the past. I think he writes in his journal just so I'll write in mine. His is probably filled with doodles.

I really don't know where to begin. I think I'll begin with a description of my Master and go from there.

My Master, Larkin of Bannerwick, is a man that is neither rich nor powerful. As the island's healer, he enjoys a certain amount of impunity, but that's about it. It is probably because of this alone that the town tolerates my presence. My Master has a small garden and a few animals with which we put food on the table. In fact, I put the majority of the food on the table, for my Master spends most of his time roaming the island looking for rare herbs and other ingredients for his healing ointments and concoctions. When I'm caught up on my work, studies included, I like accompanying my Master on long walks. We search for the rarities that the island holds and have long discussions about everything.

It is on these walks where I receive most of my education. It is, by far, where the best discussions we have are held. You see, my Master is a very intelligent man and his thoughts are not clouded by the superstition that fogs most of the

island's inhabitants. I often wonder why we have to be walking before my Master will introduce a particularly juicy topic for discussion. The house has all the amenities for a good education and none of the distractions of the outdoors. My Master says that my "amenities" stop at the four walls, where my education does not. He says that the house acts as a container which limits the growth of the mind. Only by placing the mind in an uncontained environment may it grow in any and all directions, with only its perceived limits stopping it.

I don't know if I believe this. I sometimes think that the reason we go outside is so that the sun can warm my Master's old and tired body, and that the walks are to shake the arthritis from his bones. There are a few places on the island that I haven't been to. My Master forbids me to go to them. He says that no ingredients can be found in these areas and that they only hold undesirables such as bandits. The town is also one of these areas and I don't know why. Surely there aren't any bandits there? In any case, he is The Master and I am not.

Our relationship with people is peculiar. Most people will avoid him if they can. My Master is viewed by most to be someone as close to magic as one can be without actually being a magician. In these times, even the mere mention of magic draws a strict penalty. Magicians are relentlessly persecuted by Cam Tethe. He's the ruler of the land, but more about him later. My Master says that he doesn't know any magicians, but I don't believe him. He knows too many people not to have an idea where one is. Anyhow, people avoid him. I guess it's because they fear that one day Cam Tethe's men will someday come for him and don't want to be around when they do.

I will tell you this, though. When one of their children is sick, or like last week, when Mrs. Grovesner fell from the hay loft, the whole town rushes to get him. He always comes, and my Master does whatever he can to help them. He was too late for Mrs. Grovesner. When he's done, the people thank him and I think they're sincere. The next day it's as if the dark clouds of fear return and things are back to the way they were.

My Master doesn't seem to mind and I have asked why. He says that he doesn't, and that I should not either. He says the reward should come from the act of helping people. I understand all that, but what really makes me cynical is that they treat him like a leper when they don't need him and when they do, we're their best friends. My Master says that this is not the way the people want to be. They avoid him during the good times because the chains of fear hold them back. Only in times of need may the people break their chains and come to him. When the time of need has passed, the chains return and life goes on. My Master says that this is Cam Tethe's doing and there are only a few left that aren't securely chained by Cam Tethe.

As you can see, my Master is indeed a brilliant man. I only hope that when he's gone, I'll be able to heal the people as well as he does. He tells me not to worry about that – that I'll do fine. In any case, I hope he doesn't die any time soon.

Magic – now that’s a topic that I hope you hold to be as interesting as I do. Whenever I can I try to twist the discussions toward the topic of magic. I think my Master can sense this and often tells me that if I put as much effort into the garden as I do into learning about magic, we’d eat like kings. The mere fact that I may hold any talks about magic with my Master tells you something about him.

My Master says that there was a time, long ago, when magic was as abundant as tax collectors are today. Now, he says, magic is as rare as some of the herbs that we find but once a year.

I once asked him if he was a magician, but he avoided answering me. He only said that some people thought he was and others thought he wasn’t. I don’t think that he is really a magician, but I have seen him heal some people that might as well been fungus food. To this my Master simply says that magic is not something that grows in the ground, but rather grows in the individual. That

magic does have the capability to heal people and a great deal more. Remarkable recoveries made by some people are due to magic, yes, but it came from them, not him. It was their will that called the magic and my Master’s potions that channeled them. It is true, however, that the people don’t and won’t believe this, preferring to believe that it is purely my Master’s doing.

I do know that real magicians carry what is called a catalyst. This catalyst reduces the energy required to channel magic through the magician by channeling it through the catalyst. The energy required to channel magic would completely consume the magician if it were not for the catalyst.

Some catalysts work better than others. This is why my Master gives different potions to patients for different needs. Since the ingredients are so rare, he only gives patients the minimum amount of catalyst according to their need.

My Master says that real magicians use heavy metals for catalyst. They are supposed to be the best catalysts. However, of all of the heavy metals, only lead is left. The others have been used in the previous ages and are now nothing but memories. Since the ingestion of lead results in the death of the patient, none can be used, even if my Master had any. Often, when we are scouring the island for ingredients, I keep my eye open for a trace of lead. I think that my Master knows this and is amused by it. Someday, when I find some, I'll have my laugh.

In fact, my Master says that many of the ingredients of his potions are becoming rarer. He doesn't know why these organic catalysts are in decline, but it is a matter of great concern with him. He is certain that it is somehow intertwined with the Withering. I'll fill you in later about the Withering.

Now, about Cam Tethe, he rules as regent in the princess Elspeth's place. Princess Elspeth is the sole heir of the throne. Recently, the princess disappeared. Cam Tethe will continue to rule in her place until she returns. He blames the rumored council of magicians. My Master says

that if there is a council of magicians, they would have to keep their identities secret in order to protect themselves and their loved ones. He doesn't believe that the council had anything to do with the disappearance and neither do I. Cam Tethe spends more resources searching for the council than he does the princess. He says that once the kidnappers are brought to justice, the princess will turn up. With each new death, Cam Tethe says that he is closer to the princess. I don't think he understands that if the council didn't kidnap the princess, he will have wasted his time and killed the wrong men in the process. Surely he must know the risk he's taking.

Not too long ago, one of Cam Tethe's agents burned the ferry to the mainland in order to keep a suspect from escaping. It was all quite exciting at the time, but now there's no ferry and no way to trade with the mainland.

My Master gets infuriated at Cam Tethe's lack of foresight. He wonders how much this lack of foresight is responsible for the Withering. That's right, I haven't written of the Withering have I? Then I will do so now.

The Withering is the term people use to describe the decaying of the land. Older farmers are always complaining about how small their crops are now compared to how big they used to be. My Master thinks that the land is dying because of the diminished presence of catalysts. He thinks that with the extinction of catalysts, the world withers and dies. He describes it like this. If life on this world is like the heat of a light candle, then when the wick runs low, the candle will slowly cool and finally with the end of the wick reached, the candle goes out – never to be lit again.

As for myself, my Master tells me that the town found me as a babe, half-drowned, washed up on the shore. My Master took me into his house to see to my quick return to health. He had no initial intent to keep me. However, upon my return to health, he found that the town had come to think of me as sort of a curse. They didn't know how a babe could have survived the ravishes of the ocean long enough to wash ashore. And after seeing the shape I had been in, the town believed that

only through the use of magic was my Master able to save me. The town felt that my Master was best suited to raise an orphan child. This is probably the reason that I'm not allowed to visit the town. My Master worries that the townsfolk will persecute me if they can. I think he worries too much. In times of anger he doesn't forget to let me know what kind of burden I've been to him, but deep down I don't think he'd have had it any other way.

Well, that's about it for now. I hope I've caught you up a little bit. I'll write more tomorrow night. Tomorrow, my Master and I are traveling to Bannerwick, me for the first time, to buy some supplies. It usually doesn't take him too long, but with this being my first time I suspect that it might take awhile.

CREDITS

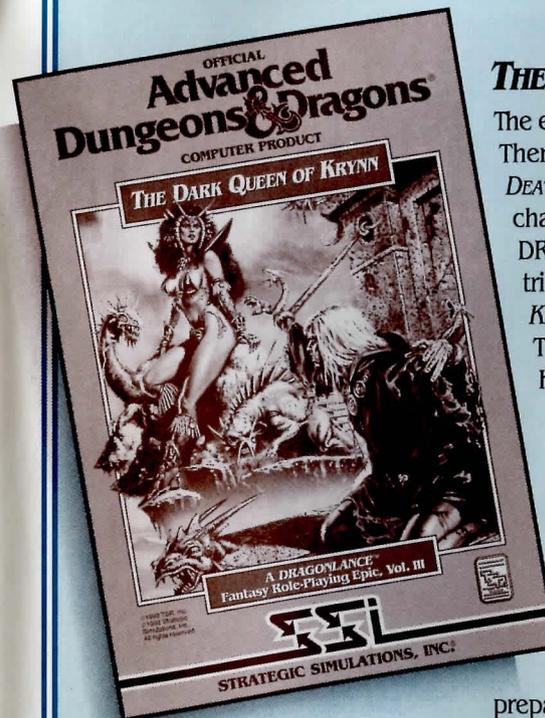
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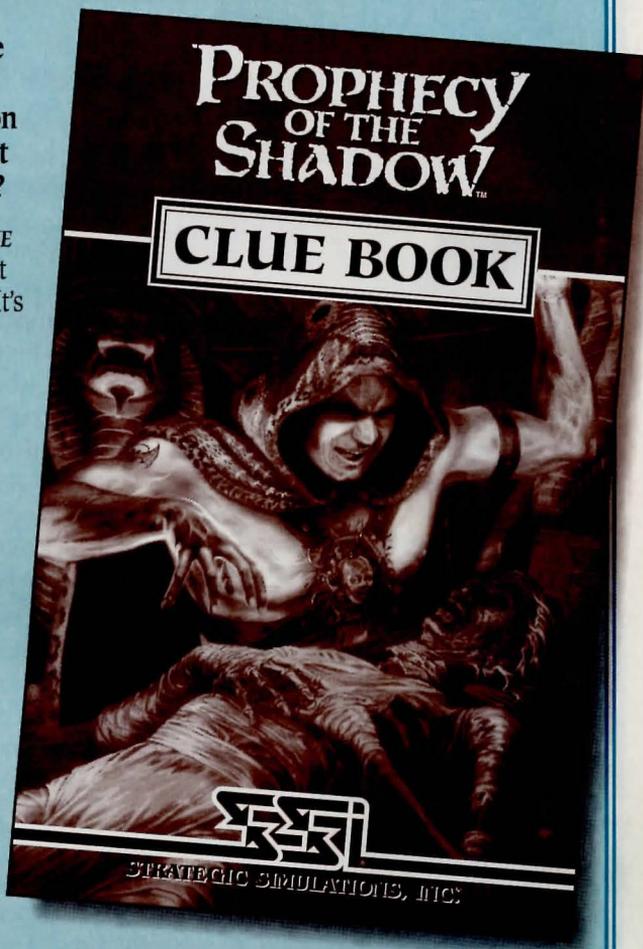
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