


THE EYE SHIELD



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MESSAGE FROM ME

Welcome to issue thirty-four of *The Eye Shield*. This issue, as requested, I provide some factual information about the Knightmare Dungeon and its origins in *Deconstructing the Dungeon*. The two current Eye Shield stories continue to progress into stirring accounts of brave adventures through the realm of Knightmare. Fans of the original *Adventure Time* format will rejoice when they learn that this section takes on once again its traditional role as the chronicles of continuing quests through the Knightmare Dungeon from this issue. We make our final visit to Castle Acre Priory in Norfolk. Plus, of course, all your regular favourites are waiting for you, so get reading!

CORRESPONDENCE

Here are some more contemplations from Joe Grocott-James. This time he turns his attention to the Knightmare books.

Dear Eye Shield.

With the Knightmare books, I thought that the first book, while simple, was more true to Knightmare than the rest, which were labelled Knightmare and had Knightmare characters in them, but their design was not all that true to the programme. In *The Labyrinths of Fear*, I thought the golden key must be important, as you can use it to unlock a door and find a coin with Arawn on one side. I thought that the coin must be important, but it is not used. I never realised this until you mentioned it in TES. Is the key a total red herring? Even with true Knightmare challenges like your *Adventure Time*, it is surprisingly difficult to complete the adventure first time. The only series-by-series *Adventure Time* I completed on my first attempt was series 4. The problem with written challenges is that it is tedious to go through everything again up to the point where you made the mistake. With *Adventure Time*, I think that, after series 8, you should go back to the original format.

There are loads of red herrings, like the key and the coin, in The Labyrinths of Fear, and, as I've mentioned before, it's actually very hard to complete. I'm glad you've been attempting my series-by-series quests, but I'm sure you'll be pleased to see that Adventure Time is back to normal this issue.

As you know, readers, I always jump for joy like a demented kangaroo when I receive an e-mail from an original TES reader. Happily, that rare but welcome occurrence has happened to me once again. Way back in the mists of time (1995 and 1996) Catherine Jackson provided the *Dragon Queen* stories for the first three issues of *The Eye Shield*, and was the first ever illustrator for *Art Desk*. Here is what she had to say about TES.

Dear Eye Shield.

I have been an avid reader of The Eye Shield since it began. I have been thinking about doing another *Dragon Queen* story; what do you think? I like the Adventure Time quests you have been running in the last few issues. I found them quite a good read.

I am pleased that you enjoyed my interactive quests, Catherine. I put a lot of time and hard scrutiny into those, so I'm glad at least some readers have been trying them out. I will be very pleased to include the third Dragon Queen story in future issues of TES. Thanks for getting in touch – it's always a particular pleasure to me to hear from a fellow Eye Shield veteran. Keep reading.

Challenge question: Which three characters - two played by Clifford Norgate and one played by Zoe Loftin - did not speak their first words during their first appearance on Knightmare?

REMEMBER THIS?

Series 3. Level 3.

FELINE FIRE

This puzzle only appeared twice in Knightmare; for Martin and Leo, deep in level three during their high-quality series 3 quests. Despite its distinct lack of appearances, Feline Fire is a very memorable puzzle, and was one of the few aspects of the first three series I was able to remember between 1989 and 1996, when I could not watch any series 1-3 episodes. I think this is because the puzzle fitted so perfectly into series 3. The third level was eerily quiet and mysterious, but also clearly very dangerous. After the high drama of the first two levels, the team were forced to slow down and really think about what they were doing, and Feline Fire is perhaps the best example of the unique atmosphere that this phenomenon created.

For a start, the room looked very impressive. It was lavishly decorated in the style of an Ancient Egyptian burial chamber, and its eerie silence was disturbed only by the occasional sound of a bolt of energy shooting from the eyes of two large cat statues that sat astride the path. There was a hole in the floor between the two cats, which was covered every few seconds to make a pathway to the door. The cat statues both wore collars, which had pendants on them. These pendants changed colour from green to amber to red, just like traffic lights. When

the light was red, the cat was about to shoot a laser beam. Clearly, this would have been deadly to anyone who got hit by it. The challenge was to cross the cats' path at a time when they were not about to fire, and the floor was intact.

In fact, this did not prove very difficult for either Leo or Martin. There came a point where both cats' collars were green and the floor was completely covered, and neither Leo's nor Martin's advisors missed this golden opportunity to send their dungeoneer running across to safety. However, the relative simplicity of the challenge was not what made it so awesome and memorable. It was the impressiveness of its presentation, its lingering menace, and its quiet, brooding authority over life and death.

Difficulty: 6 Simple to comprehend, but very nerve-wracking.

Killer Instinct: 2 Never really likely to bag a victim, I'm afraid.

Gore Factor: 5 May have been a nice explosion if the lasers hit their mark.

Fairness: 8 Fitted very well into the level and series, but not too tough.

ADVENTURE TIME

In this age of heroes - which began in December 1995 - the score is Dungeon 9, Humans 4. Now let's see what further challenges await our bold adventurers in the Dungeon depths.

The next dungeoneer is called Toby. His quest begins in a small room with two doors. There is a table between the doors, upon which Motley is standing.

"Hello, Helmet Face," Motley grins. "Welcome to the Nightmare Dungeon. It's pretty scary, isn't it? Are you sure you wouldn't rather go home?"

"No thanks, I'm fine," Toby replies.

"Well, don't say I didn't give you the chance," Motley says with mock severity. "Now, listen up. *From where you're standing, facing me, turn widdershins ninety degrees. Now turn right by half a circuit, then it's time to freeze!*"

With that, Motley freezes stock still on the table, like a living statue. He has said all he is going to say.

"Well, team, you've had your clue," Treguard prompts the team. "Now make your exit as quickly as you can!"

By turning left ninety degrees and then right by one hundred and eighty degrees, Toby finds that he is facing the right-hand door. He exits through this, into the level one clue room. Here there is a table containing a firestone, a bar of silver and a small mirror. Toby is directed around the back of the table. As he begins to examine the objects, the wall behind him starts to metamorphose into a very ancient and powerful face.

"Don't touch yet, Toby," Treguard warns. "All these things must be earned."

"Turn, intruder," the wall monster commands. "Turn and face me, for I am the Brangwen she, and none passes here without pleasing me. I have three mysteries, and here is the first. It runs much smoother than any rhyme; loves to fall, but cannot climb. What is it?"

"Water," replies Toby, when his teammates have worked out the answer.

"Truth accepted," returns Brangwen stonily. "Here is my second. I turn around in continuous circles, but always travel straight ahead. What am I?"

The team discuss this for some time, and finally venture an answer.

"A ballerina," Toby says, somewhat dubiously.

"Falsehood," Brangwen almost chuckles. "A wheel was the truth I sought. Here is my third. You see me in the ocean and in the sky; sapphire, navy and royal am I."

"Blue," Toby replies at once, before his teammates can mess it up for him.

"Truth accepted," says Brangwen. "Two is the score, you may learn more. Fire will feed the wyrm. Remember, the first step is clapping, but it is not the next step. The quest is for the Talisman, yet you may not hold it. The walls await me."

Brangwen disappears. Toby picks up the firestone straight away, and he suggests to his team that the mirror might be better than the silver, because it is unusual. They agree, so Toby takes his two objects and is directed out. The next room contains a large pit, from which a green reptilian head protrudes.

"Ah, a dungeoneer," Smirkenorff remarks languidly. "Greetings, insignificant human. What is your name, and what do you bring me?"

"My name is Toby, and I bring you this firestone," Toby replies.

"Delightful," Smirkenorff approves, licking his scaly lips. "Leave it on the ledge, if you will. I'd probably crush you if I tried to eat it now."

Toby puts the firestone down, and then takes a few steps back before staring expectantly up at the dragon.

"Ah, there really is no such thing as a free lunch, is there?" Smirkenorff sighs. "All right, then, listen up. You'll need to find the portal to reach level two. When you get to a dead end, it'll be there somewhere, if you know where to look. The password for this level is *eminence*. Now, be on your way, and make room for a hungry dragon."

As Smirky begins to enjoy his meal, the advisors direct Toby out. He finds himself in the chamber of Queen Kalina. The sorceress smiles softly when she sees him, and beckons him over to her throne.

"This is Kalina, team, the supposed ruler of the first level," Treguard chuckles sardonically. "Don't take any notice of her airs and graces, but make sure you get what you can from her."

"Hello there, young man," Queen Kalina greets Toby regally. "And just who might you be?"

"My name's Toby, and I'm looking for the Talisman," Toby replies.

"I am Queen Kalina, the ruler of all in level one," Kalina proclaims. "And, let me assure you, there is no supposition about it, as some would have you believe. Now, before you leave my chambers, you must present me with some lovely thing."

Toby hands the small, delicate mirror to her, and she accepts it gracefully.

"Thank you, my dear," Kalina simpers. "In return, I have spell for you. Its name is WELL, and it will reveal something you need desperately. The second step is finger snapping, but it is not the next step. Now, you are dismissed."

Toby's advisors direct him out. He emerges into a red room that is dominated by a silver wall. As the team watch, the wall grates forward and forms a colossal face, completely blocking the exit.

"Password!" the blocker demands.

"Eminence," replies Toby.

Once the blocker has disappeared, the advisors direct Toby out. He now stands in a small cave that is completely devoid of anything, including doors.

"Problems, problems, team," Treguard chuckles. "You appear to have reached a dead end."

However, the advisors are not flummoxed; they know what to do.

"Spellcasting:" declares the spellcaster. "W-E-L-L."

A stone wellway appears in the corner of the room. Toby is taken over to this and he climbs inside, allowing him to descend into level two.

It's a flying start for Toby, but how long will his luck hold? Read the next Adventure Time to find out.

PUZZLE PAGE ONE

From Beginning to End I

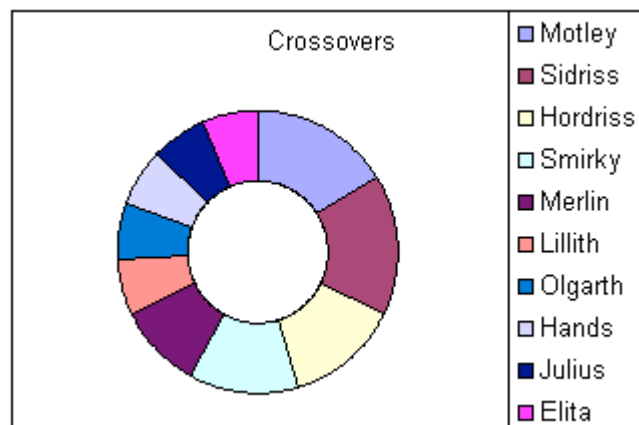
Identify the memorable Knightmare character from their **first episode**, **first dungeoneer encountered**, **first words**, **last episode**, **last dungeoneer encountered** and **last words**. It couldn't be easier!

- 1.) **Episode 101. David.** "Welcome, watchers of illusion, to the castle of confusion." **Episode 810. Oliver.** "Lord Fear, are you ready to surrender?"
- 2.) **Episode 103. Simon I.** "Dear oh dear, what a splitting headache!" **Episode 416. Giles.** "Do the honours, will you, Dungeon Master?"
- 3.) **Episode 401. Helen II.** "Pleasure, Master, pleasure. Mirror, mirror on the wall, show the first brave stupid fool." **Episode 615. Chris IV.** "The red dragon, that's gone, too!"
- 4.) **Episode 304. Simon II.** "Stop! You really cannot pass, you know." **Episode 810. Dunston.** "My pleasure. Boys, follow me."
- 5.) **Episode 301. Cliff.** "Out the way, come on, move aside for a VIP." **Episode 810. Oliver.** "And that is positively the last time I let you practise on me, you useless magicienne, you! Ooh, I'm off!"
- 6.) **Episode 701. Simon IV.** "Not true! I am a girl so get your filthy hands off me." **Episode 810. Oliver.** "So you never give up, ever?"
- 7.) **Episode 203. Chris I.** "My, my. One of the bold ones is with us, I see; one of the bold yet brainless ones." **Episode 416. Giles.** "You have firm ground for taking this chance, I suppose. Somehow, I think not!"
- 8.) **Episode 501. Catherine.** "Away, you mindless bits of metal!" **Episode 810. Oliver.** "What? Me, surrender? You must be absolutely out of your tiny mind!"

KNIGHTMARE TOP TEN

This is a list of the top ten characters with single appearances that take place over two episodes. In other words, they are the characters whose scenes coincided with temporal disruption most often.

Position	Character	Crossovers
=1.	Motley	5
=1.	Sidriss	5
=3.	Hordriss	4
=3.	Smirkenorff	4
5.	Merlin	3
=6.	Lillith	2
=6.	Olgarth	2
=6.	Sylvester Hands	2
=6.	Julius Scaramonger	2
=6.	Elita	2



The Tower of Time

By Rosey Collins

There seemed no end to the thick forest of trees surrounding them on all sides, and Curran couldn't get used to the baying of the invisible wolves.

"Laurel," he ventured, after a while. "We're getting nowhere!"

"Ssh!" Laurel hissed suddenly, grabbing Curran's arm. "I think we're being followed."

"This is a wild goose chase if you ask me. There's no way anybody can bring back the dead."

"Shut up!"

Curran obediently shut up, and listened. A shiver ran down his spine as he became aware of footsteps crunching quietly in the leaves behind them. He turned round, and cried out in surprise and anguish when he saw a dark cloaked figure bearing down upon him with a shimmering blade.

"Be gone, you Heathen piece of scum!" a strange voice suddenly bellowed from the trees, which astonishingly seemed to scare the attacker away.

"Th-thank you," stammered Laurel, as a portly man dressed in the habit of a monk wandered leisurely out of the forest.

"What was that?" added Curran.

"An assassin," the monk fairly spat. "They're quite human, young man. They just follow an extremely unholy order. Honestly, you fight them for a scrap of land in one little crusade..."

"They follow the Islam faith?" queried Laurel.

"Indeed," the monk nodded grimly. "Heathen scum, as I say. But never mind him," and his expression suddenly brightened into a broad smile. "He's gone now, and no harm done. My name is Brother Mace."

"It's very nice to meet you," Curran muttered sarcastically.

"I'm Laurel," offered Laurel. "This is my friend Curran. We're on a quest."

"A quest?" echoed Mace. "Marvellous, marvellous. Well then. Where is it you're trying to get to?"

"Dungarth," replied Laurel, remembering the information that the barmaid Mellie had given her. "Can you tell us if we're on the right path?"

"You are indeed, my dear," Mace smiled encouragingly. "The ruins of Dungarth are just through those trees," and he pointed. "It's a

terrible state in which to find a magnificent old place like that, but what can we do? I suppose you're going there in search of the entrance to level two."

"That's right," confirmed Laurel.

"Well, you can get there via the wellway hidden within the ruins. Obviously a place like that is never left unguarded - there are forces within this dungeon that would try to stop you from reaching level three."

Curran began, "We don't want to - "

"However," Mace went on, oblivious, "I see that you took the dryad's advice. The object you carry contains magic, and will serve you well" - he gestured towards the egg timer in Curran's hand - "but make sure you use it wisely. Farewell."

"Free help," remarked Laurel, as Mace wandered off into the woods, smiling enigmatically. She began walking in the direction the monk had indicated, and Curran followed. "It's a relief to know we made the right choice in taking that egg timer. I did wonder if there might be more to Oakley's clue than meets the eye, as we're going to try and manipulate time. It sounds like a really bad idea when you say it out loud, doesn't it?"

"Well, I'm not convinced it'll work," remarked Curran, as they finally stepped out of the woods and into some daylight. "At last! Mellie was right: you can't exactly miss it."

Suddenly feeling a renewed sense of hope, Curran took the lead and strode towards the tall arch looming over them in the distance. As promised, the place was in ruins, though a small building to the right of the arch looked to be intact.

"Stop!" hissed Laurel, when she caught sight of three small, bronze-coloured creatures hobbling aimlessly around underneath the arch. "Well, Mace said it would be guarded."

"What are they?" asked Curran.

"They look like goblins."

"Stupid is what they look."

"But not harmless."

Laurel gasped as one of the goblins caught sight of them. The creature immediately stood to attention and whipped out a horn, which filled the air with a deafening wail as the goblin blew into it. Its two companions looked up sharply, and then all three of them started lumbering towards Curran and Laurel, each swinging a heavy looking club at its side.

"Curran, use the egg timer!" Laurel exclaimed urgently.

"They're not eggs!" objected Curran.

"Oh, Mary mother of God - give it to me!"

She grabbed the egg timer, flipped it over and set it down on the floor. Thankfully the goblins stopped in their tracks; they seemed to be frozen.

"Thank God," sighed Laurel, grabbing Curran's arm and dragging him up the pathway towards the arch. "There wasn't a lot of sand in that thing - we need to hurry."

"How did that happen?" Curran wondered out loud.

"The monk said the timer contained magic. He was right - we've frozen time. Or something. Do you still think this Tower of Time won't be of any use to you? If one little egg timer can stop three goblins, imagine what an entire fortress can do."

She stopped short as the goblin horns started wailing again. Laurel looked desperately around her, seeing nothing but useless stony stumps, but then she felt a hand on her arm and Curran dragged her towards a doorway, hidden in darkness.

"It smells like pigeon poo in here," complained Curran, as they wandered blindly through a dark passage. "I hope there are no more goblins on the other side."

"There shouldn't be," Laurel decided. "They only guard the entrance, and our job is to try and get past them. We've done that. The Dungeon wouldn't give us any more obstacles without any defence - it's not fair."

However, when they finally blundered into a dimly lit stone room, they saw that there was a guardian - or someone - standing in front of the wellway.

"Well?" murmured Curran.

"We'll obviously have to deal with him," replied Laurel. "I guess we'd better approach."

Curran took a deep breath, and stepped towards the figure. He wore what looked like a monk's habit, which was faintly reassuring, especially after their friendly encounter with Mace. However the hood obscuring all of his face but an ashen chin, and the powerful looking staff he wielded, gave the man a sinister air about him.

"You say you are not trying to reach level three," a low, monotonous voice emanated from the hood. "Where, then?"

"The Tower of Time," Curran replied warily.

"Therein lies the entrance to level three."

"It's as far as we want to go. We hope to find something else."

"Curran!" hissed Laurel. She didn't trust this stranger, and therefore didn't want to give him any information.

"There is much to find," the man remarked. "Know that it is an extremely magical place, and you may find more than you bargained for. However, it holds the key to a great power."

"Which is...?" Curran asked carefully, oblivious to Laurel's frantic tugging on his sleeve.

"What you want, boy," the stranger rumbled slowly. "Very well. You may pass. But if you have doubts, young lady, I would leave now."

"I go where he goes," Laurel replied evenly.

"Very well. Continue on this path. I grant you the gift of a spell: it is called 'TWIST'. You will only need to use it once."

He didn't wish them luck, or farewell, but simply vanished into thin air.

"Whoa!" exclaimed Laurel. "Curran, not any old Tom, Dick or Harry can do that. He must be a powerful magician. What are you doing?"

"I'm getting into the wellway," Curran stated the obvious. "You said you'd come with me, but you can turn back if you want to."

"I didn't think that was allowed."

"You have the gracious approval of your powerful magician. And his could be just the kind of help I need. Didn't you hear what he said?"

"Yes," Laurel replied grimly, "and I don't trust it."

"We've had free help before," Curran reminded her. "And it was from a monk that time, as well as this. You didn't question it then."

"That was different. He saved our lives, at no cost to himself, and then he just offered some advice. We've just been given a spell, free of charge, and a nasty sounding one at that. The Dungeon doesn't work like that, Curran."

"He said I could find the power I wanted in the Tower of Time. He practically told me I could bring my father back!"

"That's not all he said!" argued Laurel. "He also said that we may find more than we bargained for, remember? It's too risky, and he can't be trusted."

"So my father's not worth it?"

"I didn't say that."

"I'm going," Curran said decisively. "Go back if you want to, but I finally have some guarantee that this is going to work. I'm not giving up now."

Laurel watched, disheartened, as Curran flung his legs over the side of the well and disappeared into the darkness below. Sighing, she remembered her words to the mysterious stranger, which she had meant wholeheartedly. Curran would never get through this without her, besides which the journey wasn't over yet: she might still be able to

persuade him to change his mind. Her heart heavy, Laurel climbed into the well and followed her foolish, headstrong friend down into the unknown.

This mysterious magic monk seems very suspicious to me, readers. What is his significance to Curran's quest, and what will be waiting for him and Laurel at the Tower Of Time? Find out in the next issue.

CLASSIC QUEST

Series 7

Quest: The Shield.

Dungeoneer: Sumayya Khan.

Advisors: Raminda, Carmony and Zarminah.

Home town: London.

Team score: 4 out of 10.

A strange but amusing quest from series 6 this time, that never fails to entertain.

Level One: Sumayya meets Sidriss in the dwarf tunnels. They journey together to a clue room, where Sidriss uses a spyglass to eaves-drop on a conversation between Lord Fear and Sylvester Hands. When he discovers that she is spying on him, Lord Fear freezes Sidriss. Treguard and Pickle make it clear to the team that it is up to them to ensure the rescue of the accident-prone trainee sorceress. From the clue table, Sumayya collects a bar of gold and a horn. In a courtyard, Elita is performing a ritual. After being rude to Sumayya for a while, the cavern elf informs the dungeoneer that the only hope of rescuing Sidriss is to enlist the aid of Hordriss, her father, for which a summoning spell will be required. Elita also reveals the causeway code, which is needed in the next chamber. Sumayya then arrives in Wolfenden, where Ah Wok sells her a summoning spell in exchange for the gold. Of course, viewers of the previous two series of Nightmare already know how to summon Hordriss - by calling "Malefact" three times. On an open area of grassland, Sumayya manages to summon Hordriss - despite some annoying and silly confusion over the calling name - and she informs him of Sidriss's plight.

Hordriss reveals the password for level one - *palladin* - and he also informs the team that Smirkenorff can be won over with flattery, before going off to rescue his daughter. Sumayya meets a blocker next, but there are no complications with venturing the password. At the end of the level, Smirkenorff is waiting. Once Sumayya has played to his vanity a little, the dragon is won over, and completes the customary flight to the next level.

Level Two: In the clue chamber (or courtyard, I suppose) there is a scroll that tells Sumayya to be an "ambler gambler" and it is here that the fatal mistake is made. Rejecting the witch amber that is on offer, the team decide to take a firestone and a *Shield* drink. In the next room, a spyglass sequence reveals Lord Fear instructing Skarkill to intercept Sumayya at the Rocks of Bruin. As she enters Witch Haven, Sumayya is bombarded with fireballs by Peggaty the witch. However, the *Shield* drink allows her to pass through the chamber unscathed. A meeting with Ridolfo follows. In exchange for the minstrel revealing the causeway code, Sumayya sings him a song - Ring-a-Ring-of-Roses: "*Hey, with a bit of training and the right lights, you could make it big!*" - **Ridolfo**. Next, Sumayya meets Heggaty. Without witch amber to win over the diminutive witch, Sumayya is forced to depart empty-handed and, more importantly, without vital knowledge. In a vast open chamber, Dreadnort blocks Sumayya's path. She has no password to give him, so the quest is brought to a merciful - if slightly overdue - end: "*With no word, you have reached journey's end!*" - **Dreadnort**.

Summary: A pretty bad team, really, but they were good for a laugh, and never boring.

CREATURE FEATURE

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

GIANT AMPHIBIANS

Yes, here we are again - the old enlarging real animals with camera-tricks trick. Like the giant reptiles, Nightmare's giant amphibians were not a physical threat to the continuation of the quest, but rather a piece of

technological wizardry, included in the programme in order to entertain and impress us, the enthralled viewers.

Having said all that, the first giant amphibious creature on Nightmare was not an enlarged animal, but rather a piece of primitive animation called a toadadile. It was a large green creature that sometimes floated around at the far end of the Corridor of the Catacombs in series 2, and was apparently a threat to dungeoneers. However, as with many early monsters, it was only for show, and could never really have done any real harm. Folly and Cedric were both forced to "hold off" toadadiles during the course of series 2 so that the dungeoneers they had been escorting could escape, but it was really just an excuse for the partnership to come to an end. Interestingly enough, the toadadile was seen again six years later in Virtually Impossible, as a more tangible CG threat for the contestants in an area called Castle Future.

The first enlarged amphibian was seen twice during the Cavern Range in series 3. There is some debate over whether the animal was, in fact, a frog or a toad, but it was seen behind the hanging stalactites where there was usually a pit. There was absolutely no reason for this creature's existence, as Leo's team discovered when they tried talking to it and got no response whatsoever. Later in the series, Julie's team did not even bother to try and initiate verbal contact, but who can blame them, quite frankly?

The only other enlarged amphibian on Nightmare was a giant toad in series 7. This was, in fact, Fidjit, who had been accidentally turned into a toad by Sidriss. It was up to dungeoneer Alex to find a spell to turn Fidjit back to his true form, which he duly did, ensuring his escape from the level.

Fear Factor: 4 That toad (or frog?) in the cave was slightly menacing.

Killer Instinct: 0 Not their function, however you look at it.

Gore Factor: 5 Depends on how you feel about slimy amphibious lifeforms.

Humanity: 2 Another vertebrate group.

DECONSTRUCTING THE DUNGEON

Knightmare fans blithely talk about it all the time - the Dungeon, that magical world where all the quests were carried out. Stop and think about it, however, and you will realise that the Nightmare Dungeon has very little in common with the traditional image of a castle dungeon. Instead of rats and beetles, there are dragons and elves. Instead of dark and gloomy cells, there are lavishly decorated palaces inhabited by haughty queens. Instead of a few spots of stagnant water dripping from the walls, there is a fully-operational sewer system. So just how did the dungeons below Nightmare Castle come to be the immense world of monsters and mystery that we all know and love?

The answer to this, of course, is magic. As we know from the Nightmare books, the dungeons below Dunshelm were once very much like the dungeons below any other castle. However, when the evil *Gruagach* took residence in Dunshelm, he used his magic to warp and metamorphose the dungeons into his own little playground, where he set up a challenge to test the chivalry of young knights errant. This involved not only increasing the dungeon vastly in size, but also dissolving the boundaries between it and all kinds of other worlds full of faerie creatures and monsters, some of which set up home in the dungeons below Dunshelm.

And so it was that the Dungeon became a place of magic, transformed by evil sorcery into its own supernatural dimension. Because of the *Gruagach*'s evil, all the knights who came to answer the Dungeon's challenge were killed by the evil monsters within it, thus earning Dunshelm its new name of Nightmare Castle. However, when Treguard regained Nightmare Castle from the *Gruagach*, he turned the challenge on its head, creating a fair test that some knights could survive, if they were made of the right stuff. However, the Dungeon was still controlled by the magic of the *Gruagach*, even though Treguard was now in charge of it as the Dungeon Master. The magic meant that the Dungeon continued to shift and change itself constantly, confusing those who dared to challenge it with its tricks.

As the magic of the Dungeon began to grow and intensify, it began to need to shut down for several months on end in order for the entire Dungeon to regenerate and reform, like Dr. Who does every so often. Thus the "phases of the Dungeon" developed, demarking the different series of Nightmare that we know today.

As the magic became more and more powerful, the Dungeon swelled so enormously in size that it broke out of Nightmare Castle and into the surrounding woodland, thus extending the Dungeon dimension out into the

forest, as Treguard explained at the beginning of series 4: *"The Dungeon which you challenge is constantly growing, and now it has become so great it can no longer be accessed only from this castle."* - **Treguard**.

By way of the magic ley-lines extending throughout the woods and forests of England, different areas - such as Dunkley Wood, Wolfenden, Grimdale, Witch Haven and Winteria - passed in and out of Dungeon dimensions during different phases. Some Dungeon rooms remained as well, thus setting up two different areas in the Dungeon dimension - the Dungeon and the Greenwood.

When Lord Fear set up residence in the Dungeon, he began to use his own brand of magic to metamorphose parts of it for his own evil purposes, thus reducing the quantity of outside areas that were able to pass within Dungeon dimensions. This culminated in the Dungeon's final phase, when there were no Greenwood areas left at all in the Dungeon dimension, but plenty of Lord Fear's techno-magical innovations.

Lord Fear used modern technology to aid his magical manipulation of the Dungeon, by creating puzzles and traps to floor dungeoneers. He also attempted to sculpt the very substance of the Dungeon for his own ends, which began with the inclusion of Mount Fear in level three, moved on to the world of Goth, and finally culminated in the erection of Linghorn and Marblehead in the Mire World. During the Dungeon's final phase, two of the three levels were completely overwhelmed by techno-magic, and level one was looking distinctly like it was about to go the same way. If there had been another phase, who knows how much Lord Fear's magic would have obliterated the Gruagach's from so long ago?

All of this, of course, is complete fantasy, just like the world of Knightmare itself. However, if you're looking for factual information about the Dungeon, that's the best explanation I can come up with. If anyone has anything to add to that, or anything they do not agree with, then they should know by now what to do about it...

REMEMBER HIM?

Series 7/8. Level 1/2/3.

BROTHER STRANGE

Brother Strange, played by Clifford Barry, is one of Nightmare's most mysterious characters. His function was basic enough; he was Nightmare's third monk, following Cedric in series 1 and 2, and Brother Mace in series 4 and 5. But there was more to this monk than foul language or a drink problem.

Brother Strange wore the friar's habit previously sported by Cedric, as well as both Merlin and Mogdred on occasions. The monk's face could not be seen at all, and his commanding, authoritative voice emanated from behind a mysterious cowl. Brother Strange was nearly always encountered in dark, shadowed places - like dwarf tunnels - which added to his sense of mystery. He was a figure of great authority, asserted only by the occasional gesture with the monk's magic staff, and his shadowy appearance. Strange was the first to admit that people found him to be "a little odd", hence the name: *"He's an odd fellow; a monk. Carries a big stick, and he collects poombs."* - **Sylvester Hands**.

What Hands meant by this, of course, was that Brother Strange collected proverbs. This was revealed towards the end of series 7, when Barry had to provide a proverb in exchange for a spyglass. Strange made him offer a total of four proverbs before he had learned a new one for his collection, and this storyline was continued in series 8. The advisors and watchers were soon encouraged to find humour in the monk's odd hobby of collecting proverbs and writing them in a book: "That will go on the last page of my book: page eight thousand, four hundred and ninety-three!" - Brother Strange. However, this did not detract from the character's cool authority and commanding presence.

As well as spyglasses, Brother Strange sometimes provided dungeoneers with spells, or useful information about characters, objects and combinations. During his first appearances in series 7, the monk required little or no recompense for this help - he was more of a mystery benefactor than anything else, almost like a guardian angel. Brother Strange always made it clear, however, that he was an enemy to the forces of Lord Fear, and was prepared to help dungeoneers in order to see the Opposition suffer: "If you are one of the Opposition, know that though I carry no weapons I am far from powerless." - Brother Strange. He clearly had his own reasons for fighting against the Opposition, but we can only speculate about what they might have been.

Fear Factor: 7 You wouldn't want to make an enemy of him.

Killer Instinct: 2 Under certain circumstances, perhaps...

Humour Rating: 3 Known to have the very occasional laugh.

Oscar Standard: 8 A convincingly mysterious performance.

KNIGHTMARE LOCATIONS

Castle Acre Priory, Swaffham, Norfolk

Castle Acre Priory. Vital Statistics:

Location: Swaffham, Norfolk.

Century of Origin: 13th.

Also Known As: Dungarth.

Series featured in: 4, 5, 6 and 7.

These pictures were taken by me, Jake Collins, in August 2002.



Here we can see the front entrance from a different angle, and also Giles's alternate entrance.

Below is the room with a fireplace, featured in series 4, 5 and 6. This can be found upstairs in Castle Acre Priory.



This door - also located on the upper level - was used as an exit in eye shield sequences right up until series 7.

Next Issue: The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum.

PUZZLE PAGE TWO

From Beginning to End II

Identify the memorable Nightmare character from their first episode, first dungeoneer encountered, first words, last episode, last dungeoneer encountered and last words. It couldn't be easier!

9.) Episode 103. Simon I. "Hail to you, adventuring cur." Episode 215. Steven. "It's called defender, for what use it is. Off you go!"

10.) Episode 402. Helen II. "Wait up a minute there, I said wait up! Apart from anything else it's silly to hurry along when you can't see where you're going." Episode 514. Chris III. "Well, you might as well, yes."

11.) Episode 706. Alex II. "Greetings, traveller. I wish you no harm. For what do you search?" Episode 807. Rebecca. "The order of opening for the rune puzzle on this level is 3, 6, 1, 5, 4, 2. Good luck with your quest."

12.) Episode 102. Mave. "This one is most definitely not called Olgarth!" Episode 216. Karen. "The blood stone will only lead to bloodshed. Rock I was, and rock I now become."

13.) Episode 701. Simon IV. "Alarms, your Lordness! They're coming! Make ready the frightknights; wake the goblins!" Episode 810. Oliver. "The real one, Lordness, is the one on..."

14.) Episode 104. Daniel I. "Oh, hail, Master!" Episode 214. Steven. "The door's before, the quest's below; get you gone, and off you go!"

15.) Episode 701. Simon IV. "I hunger. Why don't you feed me?" Episode 715. Barry. "Tell me things, talk to me, I have so much to learn."

16.) Episode 501. Catherine. "Ah, it's harsh words. It's unkind, unchristian and uncalled for." Episode 807. Rebecca. "But I don't know any verbs, your worship."

THE LORD OF DREAMS

Part II

In Fetlock Forest, Lily has been grabbed by a branch and pulled into the wildwood.

"After her!" Mona cried, ploughing into the midst of the trees.

"B-but..." stammered Charley. "The path!"

"We have to save Princess Giant!" called back Mona. "Come on!"

Charley and Fang followed her. Through endless trees they ducked and dived, following the flitting blur that was Lily. After what seemed like an age, they emerged into a clearing. There stood a colossal hollow tree, but it was emitting an eerie screeching and had a gnarled face, all of whose orifices were glowing green. Many branches sprouted from its hollow top, all of which were winding in and out of one another. Trapped in one of these, Lily was being pulled closer to the thing's mouth.

"A dryad!" Mona exclaimed. "Quick, zap it, Zapman!"

Charley took out his zap gun. Although a toy at home, in Nightmare it became a deadly weapon. The dryad screamed in pain as the energy rays made contact, but still it kept hold of Lily.

"Keep zapping!" ordered Mona, and she leapt onto the branch that was holding Lily. She held a piece in her hands and sank her fangs into it. She retched at the foul taste of the sap, but tore at the branch until it broke off, releasing Lily. The dryad tried to grab for them with its other branches, but Charley turned his gun to full power. With a bellowing scream, the tree exploded.

"Whoa, thanks" said Lily. "What a horrible creature!"

They crowded around the steaming hole, aromas of burning leaf-litter overpowering them.

"That dryad has drawn us into the heart of the wildwood" Mona realised. "Goodness knows how we're going to get out of here."

"You cannot escape from the wildwood."

The voice was a whisper on the wind.

"Who's there?" called Charley, anxiously.

A tall figure appeared in front of them. Dressed in satin robes and armed with a spear of ice, he appeared to float on a blanket of leaves.

"I am Sir Linden, a knight of the Elf King" he proclaimed. "You have entered the realm of the elf kin. You must die!"

"Why?" asked Mona.

"Why?" repeated the stranger, stumped. "Because Arawn says so!"

"Well, Sir Linden, you can tell Arawn that it's time to change his laws" said Mona. She bolted off in the direction from which they'd come, the others following fast behind.

"Stop!" cried Linden as he gave chase. "Your death has been commanded! Stop, in the name of the Elf King!"

Scouring the forest ahead of her, Mona soon found what she was looking for.

"A crossroads!" she cried. "Come on!"

They emerged onto a crossing of two forest tracks, deserted save a single thrown horseshoe. Mona planted herself in the middle of the cross.

"Now we're safe enou..." she began, but then stopped short and fell to the ground.

"What's going on?!" squeaked Lily.

"It's the sign of the cross" realised Charley. "Mona must have meant it to confuse the elf, but..."

"...she forgot that it's even more harmful to vampires" Linden finished as he appeared, grinning with evil glee. "Excellent!"

He crept over towards Mona, his spear raised.

"In the name of Arawn, die!" he cried, but he stopped short as he felt a pain in his leg.

"Aah!" he cried. "It burns!"

Charley and Lily looked down to see Mona pressing the horseshoe to the elf's ankle. Rushing forward, Charley took it from her and flung it into Linden's face.

"Curse you, mortals!" he cried, before disappearing in a flash.

Charley and Lily helped Mona to stand up.

"Why did the horseshoe hurt him?" asked Charley.

"Didn't you wonder why his spear was made of ice and not steel?" Mona replied. "Faerie beings cannot stand the touch of iron."

"Well, great, but how do we get out of here?" asked Lily.

"We'd better follow one of these paths and see where it goes" said Mona.

"But which one?" asked Charley.

"Justice lies on the right," said Mona. "Come on, this way!"

The track led back to the elf path, much to everyone's relief. Soon enough, they reached the edge of the forest.

"Hooray!" cried Lily. "We made it."

She rushed to the final line of trees, beyond which Knightmare Castle was visible. A glittering golden path led towards the fortress, so the four companions followed it out of the forest and up the mountain, right to the great wooden doors of Knightmare Castle.

"Are they open?" asked Lily.

"One way to find out" said Charley.

He pushed one and it flew open, revealing a stone room beyond, which began to light up.

"What's doing that?" wondered Lily.

"Daylight!" realised Charley. "The sun's coming up already!"

"But it was pitch black a moment ago!" exclaimed Lily.

"The darkest hour is just before dawn" remembered Mona. "Come on, let's get inside."

Charley, Lily and Fang went in, but Mona could not.

"Oh no!" she cried.

"What are you doing?" asked Lily, surprised.

"I've just remembered," said Mona, as she felt the ultraviolet rays begin to burn into her back. "I can't come in unless I'm invited."

"Hordriss!" exclaimed Charley. "But how do we...?"

"Call three times!" cried Mona with urgency.

"Malefact, Malefact, Malefact!" yelled Lily with confidence.

Hordriss appeared in a blinding flash.

"Ah, you made it" he smiled. "Capital. Goodness me, girl, what are you doing out there in the sunlight; you'll burn to death! For Heaven's sake, come in!"

Mona slammed the door behind her as she collapsed over the threshold.

The room was made entirely of stone. There was a large ornate fireplace to one side, beside which stood a wooden chair. In addition to the entrance door there was another dark portal on the opposite wall, and a large octagonal wooden table with

three large wooden stools. Hordriss indicated that they should sit on these, which they did. He turned the larger chair to face them and sat down. Fang curled up in front of the fire.

"Welcome" said Hordriss. "To the Great Hall of Nightmare Castle. Congratulations on getting this far."

"What do you mean *this far*?" asked Lily. "You mean we have to go further?" Hordriss nodded, and gazed into the fire.

"Up until about six years ago, a great many knights errant came to this place to test their mettle," he said, half as if to himself. "The Lord of Dreams would receive them here, and send them on a quest through the dungeons to try and earn the silver spurs of squirehood."

"Sounds exciting" Mona enthused.

"Yes indeed" Hordriss agreed. "And due to the magic of the Dungeon, nothing ever stayed the same; rooms and people shifted and changed, even this very hall, and the Lord of Dreams himself."

"What about you?" asked Mona.

"One has been here for eleven years" Hordriss recalled. "I was quite a nasty piece of work when I arrived, mainly because I did not acknowledge the difference between good and evil."

"But you do now?"

"One could not help it when one met Lord Fear!" said Hordriss with feeling. "What an evil fiend he is."

"What's all this got to do with us getting home?" asked Lily.

"One is coming to that!" puffed up Hordriss. "Anyway, since adventurers stopped coming, the Dungeon remained pretty much unchanged. Until last January!"

"Ah, the Millennium," smiled Mona. "Most important in supernatural circles."

"Indeed" nodded Hordriss. "Since then the Dungeon has been going through a kind of time warp; rooms and denizens from bygone years come and go every day, and nothing is ever the same; it makes me so nostalgic."

"I guess, then, that the Dungeon's magic is unstable" said Mona. "And the Lord of Dreams has situated himself in its heart as a power-centre to try and keep it together."

"Exactly!" Hordriss said. "You have cut me to the quick, Mona. Our Master Wizard, Merlin, says that the Dungeon should stop shifting in a few months, but until then the Lord of Dreams must stay in the deepest depths of his dungeons."

"I assumed that you were the Master Wizard" Charley said casually.

"I'm a mage," Hordriss said haughtily.

"Wait a second," said Lily. "Does that mean we're going to have to get through the Dungeon to reach the Lord of Dreams?"

"You're no fools" Hordriss commented. "That's right; all three levels."

"How're we going to survive?" Lily cried.

"The same way you did in the wildwood" said Hordriss, turning his eyes to Mona. "The same way you always do."

"Me?" asked Mona, taken aback. "With my supernatural knowledge?"

"Of course!" exclaimed Charley. "You know all about this stuff."

"Keep your wits about you and I have no doubt you'll make it" smiled Hordriss. "Your love of the macabre equips you perfectly for this; use it."

"Okay!" agreed Mona, exhilarated. "Let's do it!"

"You must journey through levels one, two and three" Hordriss told them. "The Lord of Dreams will be waiting for you to reach him, and he will send you home. To succeed, you may have to use magic, which you will find or be given. Remember, to

invoke a spell you must call out *Spellcasting*, followed by the letters of the spell in the right order. If you need to cancel it, call out *dispel* followed by the letters of the spell in the wrong order. Press on by any means possible, and look out for faerie enemies, but also potential allies. And remember this: the only way is onward; there is no turning back. There lies your way!"

Hordriss pointed to the dark portal. Mona, Fang, Charley and Lily steeled themselves in front of it, ready for the off.

"The best of luck to you" said Hordriss. "Now, face the Dungeon door, and step boldly forward."

As the four stepped forward, the blackness swallowed them up and bore them towards their first challenge.

They found themselves walking along a low tunnel of stone.

"Hmm, very interesting," said Mona as she looked around. "A dwarf tunnel."

"What's that?" asked Lily.

"Oh, just something that dwarfs build as part of their mine workings" answered Mona casually.

Their first Dungeon chamber contained a pit in the middle and four doors at the far end. Suspended above the pit was an iron grating, and on the floor in front of them was a luminous outline of a simple arched bridge shape.

"This must be one of the chambers Hordriss mentioned," said Charley. "It looks like some kind of... challenge."

"Yes" agreed Mona. "And not a very difficult one, by the looks of it. Doubtless the Dungeon is full of tasks like this for its challengers to complete. By treading on this luminous outline, we should be able to bridge the pit."

"Why is it so uncomplicated?" wondered Lily.

"This is level one," said Charley. "The first level of testing. I guess things are easier here than things in level two, that's all."

"Right" said Mona. "So let's do it."

As she walked across the symbol, the iron grating heaved itself down to form a bridge. Mona carried Fang across, due to the holes in the grate, and the others followed behind.

"Which way now?" wondered Lily.

"Far right" said Mona. "That should always be our strategy unless there's another clue."

They were again swallowed up by the blackness and it sucked them into another room.

The next chamber seemed to be a cave that contained the entrance to a mine, with a minecart set on the rails just outside. There was no other obvious exit.

"This must be where that dwarf tunnel originated," said Mona.

"I guess," said Lily. "But how do we get out? I don't much fancy the look of that mineshaft!"

Before Mona could answer, a shout caught their attention.

"Oi! You three! Stop right there."

It was spoken in a rough northern accent by a dwarf who had come out from behind the minecart.

"Rule violation" stated the little man. "Category A stroke B! Name yourselves!"

"Mona the Vampire, Fang, Zapman and Princess Giant" said Mona curtly. "Who are you?"

"My name's Bumptious, for all that it's your business" said the dwarf gruffly. "And I must tell you that we can't have vampires, princesses and, erm... whatever the heck

you're supposed to be, Sonny, just wandering onto an official mining site of HoGG. I suppose you're here to challenge the Dungeon?"

"That's right!" piped up Lily.

"Well you'll have to stand trial if you want to get out of here" Bumptious told them.

"What sort of trial?" demanded Mona.

"Under Category A stroke two paragraph B, I hereby declare this tribunal open!" stated Bumptious importantly. "Right, first question. We all know that dwarfs are great miners. Of course, Walt Disney had them searching for diamonds, but what do dwarves really like best?"

"That's easy," said Lily. "Gold!"

"Truth accepted," said Bumptious. "As in HoGG; the Honorary Guild of Gold-miners. Okay, second question. I like being a dwarf down a mine. I'd like being a human down a mine. I'd even like being an elf down a mine. But why don't I want to be a bird down a mine?"

"Oh, I know!" exclaimed Lily again. "The only birds that go down mines are canaries, and you wouldn't like to be one because they were sent down in a cage on a rope to check that the air was breathable, and they died if it wasn't!"

"Truth accepted" smiled Bumptious, visibly pleased. "I never thought you'd get that one! Okay, last question. You can challenge a dwarf. You can hurt a dwarf. You can even kill a dwarf. But what must you never do to a dwarf?"

Lily opened her mouth for a second, but let it shut. She turned to Mona.

"Finished your little spree, have you? Right" Mona said, turning to Bumptious. "You absolutely hate being robbed".

"Truth accepted," he said. "Well done. Three is score, so let's see if we can't do something about getting you out of here."

Bumptious went behind the cart again, and emerged with a stick of dynamite. He placed it against one of the cave walls and lit it.

"Cover your ears!" he warned them, and a colossal bang blasted an exit in the rock. They walked towards it.

"Thanks" Lily called back to Bumptious.

"No problem" he replied. "Oh, before you go, there's something else. I assume you'll be needing to get into level two?"

"That's right" said Mona.

"Then you'll need a small spell" Bumptious went on. "It's called SHIMMER. Now, on your way."

Whistling, he went back to his work, and the adventurers left the chamber.

Will Mona and friends make it to the end of level one? Find out in the third chapter of *The Lord of Dreams* next issue.

POETRY CORNER

Two level one deaths from series 2 this time. In both cases, it just goes to show that if you don't stop to read labels carefully then you're riding for a fall... or an explosion.

Martin's team of Geordie chaps,
Had a slight acumen lapse.
Folly clearly showed the way,
To follow Gretel and not stray.
Olgarth's challenge came thereafter,
Martin's team proved they were dafter.
The score was two and, as expected,
Alas! The frogs' legs were rejected.
Mildread's help was just not earned,
Then in a bomb room Martin burned.
Later on, Anthony tried,
To get Folly on his side.
The jester's laughter was the means,
The team knew not their reds from greens.
With Igneous the score was one,
The Bishop's challenge was undone.
With Olaf bribed by golden bar,
Lillith's patience stretched too far.
Ant was standing on the brink,
Without the potion for her drink!
Down he fell, and back to Hants,
The quest had been a load of pants!

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Challenge Question:

- 1.) Hordriss. (First appearance: Episode 304. First words: Episode 305.)
- 2.) Smirkenorff. (First appearance: Episode 501. First words: Episode 601.)
- 3.) Mellisandre. (First appearance: Episode 301. First words: Episode 302.)

From Beginning to End:

- 1.) Treguard.
- 2.) Merlin.
- 3.) Pickle.
- 4.) Hordriss.
- 5.) Motley.
- 6.) Majida.
- 7.) Mogdred.
- 8.) Lord Fear.
- 9.) Cedric.
- 10.) Brother Mace.
- 11.) Brother Strange.
- 12.) Granitas.
- 13.) Lissard.
- 14.) Folly.
- 15.) Brollachan.
- 16.) Sylvester Hands.