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Legends of the Lance™

Issue #8 - Holmswelt

The Herald's Report

The Latest News from Krynn

As a Keeper of the Word, I give you greetings and hope that this missive finds you in good health. Given the general state of the world, I fear you will need to depend on your health in the trying days to come.*

Rumors of the Green

Though I can hardly credit it, I hear that the green dragon Beryllintranox of the Qualinesti Forest has started looking at opportunities for evil outside her forest. One agent tells me that several cities in Abanasinia are gathering some form of tribute for her. I hope dearly that this does not rouse the Red Dragon Malystrixx from her own activities. She has been relatively quiet recently, and I dislike thinking she may intercede in worldly affairs again due to the Green's greed.

A New Culture?

Word has spread of an individual from a strange place visiting Palanthis. My sources state that he comes from the island south of Kothas that we call Elian Wilds. According to those who have attempted to watch him, he seemed rather adept at losing them in the streets of Palanthis. He has hindered efforts to find out what brings him to the city –sometimes using lethal means. Those who have interacted with him and lived call him a stalker of great skill. What brings him to our part of the world? All reports indicate he has a purpose, but it remains unknown?

Sea Elves

Some mariners have had occasion to talk to the elves of the deep recently. Evidently, the Dimernesti wish to establish closer contact with the outer world. They seek trade to better prepare themselves for some problem that threatens them. They state that they sense stirrings of an ancient force in their waters, though I haven't yet figured out what they mean. They use such vague words that it could be something living or something dead or something completely inanimate. I hope this has nothing to do with the sea dragon that once terrorized the elves. Some friends are looking into the matter even as I write this.

Crops Fail in Solamnia

Farmers in Solamnia fear for their next crop. Some foreign agent or strange magic has turned patches of formerly rich soil in Solamnia into dust. Since the patches occur randomly, I don't suspect that this is a dragon's attempt at magically changing the land. Instead, I fear that some evil is growing nearby, and the soil is just a symptom of the problem. Hopefully my people can find out the cause.

My next message will await your pleasure at the Hidden Bough Smithy in Solamnia. I hear that my predecessor was looking into the state of the elves around Thunder Bay. I shall continue that project with all haste.

*Your servant,
Evrem the Ear*

* **Keeper of the Word:** a bard who has devoted his or her life to studying the tales and storytelling techniques of the Herald.

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Darkhaven Clearing

By Eric Jwo

"Darkhaven Clearing is a forest clearing damned of the gods, set in a time of dragons, in a land without faith. Death is the only reward for those foolish enough to tread its cursed soil. Death, or, perhaps, salvation!"

--Attributed to Brael Loesmith, The Silver Sage, in 32SC

Deep within the free realm of Abanasinia, in a dark forest near Pax Tharkas proper, a sinister glade has grown infamous among the local woodfolk. Strange occurrences have plagued the forest for quite some time, ranging from disappearances of lumberjacks to the savage deaths of several well-known travelers. Even fearless, happy-go-lucky kender have become wary of the dread forest. This area of cursed wood has grown infamous among all travelers from Abanasinia to Pax Tharkas. Its ill reputation has caused it to be named the Darkhaven Clearing.

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Many have speculated on the origin of Darkhaven Clearing. Currently, this legend gains strength among the locals (though none will confirm its accuracy):

Curse of the Red Robe

Near the end of the Fourth Age, a powerful Wizard of the Red Robes named Rhakyl Kormoth lived and wandered the land. He believed himself so powerful that he felt certain he would be the next head of the Red Robes. His pride and joy, however, was a potent magical artifact known as the *Starsunderer*. None fathomed its limitless and awesome power, save Rhakyl, and he jealously tried to keep knowledge of this artifact's existence from anyone. Despite this secrecy, some savvy mages knew he possessed it.

When Chaos returned to Krynn, Rhakyl battled the daemon warriors and shadow-wights alongside others. His searing flames and thunderbolts destroyed many minions of Chaos. In the end, the battle was won, and Krynn was saved. However, salvation came at a heavy price. The gods abandoned their world forever, taking High Sorcery with them. Those who had reveled in the magic felt empty and hollow. So it was with Rhakyl Kormoth.

Grief-stricken, Rhakyl began to pore over his vast collection of magical tomes to find a way to rekindle the magic. Night after night, and even through the day, Rhakyl painstakingly searched for the answers that would restore his magic. Mages from the Tower of High Sorcery in Wayreth Forest checked on him from time to time, though only one or two ever discovered the path he was following. After diligent

years of research, Rhakyl found the solution he had been searching for. Though Aran Glowstrider, a former Red-Robed Mage, attempted to prevent Rhakyl from following through on the discovery, Rhakyl turned on him and knocked him unconscious. To this day, people want to know what Rhakyl discovered, but only Aran knows. Since he won't tell, some folks suspect he brought Darkhaven Clearing into being.

DM's Notes

On a dark and dreary night, when even the pale moon of the new age hid itself from view, Rhakyl entered the forested mountain area near Pax Tharkas. Bearing the *Starsunderer*, Rhakyl prepared to embrace the magic he believed he had discovered. In an arcane ritual, Rhakyl pricked his finger, and let a drop of his blood land on the surface of the *Starsunderer*. As the crimson droplet sizzled on the surface of the artifact, the forest filled with a white light. The *Starsunderer* began to crackle with magical energy, and the forest clearing literally pulsed with life.

However, the energy was too intense for the powerless mage to control. The artifact pulled Rhakyl's very life into itself and, with Rhakyl's last heartbeat, the *Starsunderer* exploded.

The land was charred and blackened by the magical blast, and the energy infused itself into the very essence of the glade. From that moment on, the woods where Rhakyl had given his life became damned. No animal would ever enter the spot, and the plants became hollow, skeletal remnants of their former selves.

How to Use Darkhaven Clearing

Darkhaven Clearing may be placed anywhere within a forest in the Kharolis Mountain region. It may even move from place to place, much like the Tower of High Sorcery in Wayreth Forest. All of this depends on the will of the Dungeon Master. The forest clearing itself may also be of variable size.

The trees and plants of Darkhaven Clearing are all dying or dead. It resembles the Silvanesti Forest during Lorac's nightmare to a lesser degree. Blood may run down the trunks of trees, and sunlight might not reach the forest floor, but decaying heaps of bodies and constant ruin and devastation would be out of place. No animals dare to enter the clearing, and few monsters would take such a chance.

Several streams run through Darkhaven Clearing, but these all have a reddish taint. Anyone who drinks from these streams is poisoned and must succeed in a Fortitude saving throw [*challenging Endurance* action] or suffer the same effects as id moss poisoning (see [Dungeon Master's Guide](#), page 80). [Saga characters lose 1 point of Reason each minute, and another *challenging Endurance* action is allowed after five minutes.] Only magical healing can negate this particular poison. Even if the hero does succeed in the action, he or she still retches for several minutes, reducing all abilities by 2 points for ten minutes.

If the heroes visit the clearing, perhaps in search of a missing person, they encounter the ghost of Rhakyl after ten minutes have passed. Dungeon Masters can bring him into play sooner to keep the adventure pace interesting.

Rhakyl Kormoth, male human ghost Wiz7; CR 9; Medium-size undead (incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 67; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 11 (+1 deflection); Atk +3 melee (1d4, incorporeal attack); SA Corrupting gaze, malevolence; SQ Undead, incorporeal, manifestation, rejuvenation, turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 11, Con --, Int 18, Wis 9, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +14; Concentration +10, Craft (blacksmithing) +14, Craft (weaponsmithing) +14, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +8, Search +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +8; Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative.

SA—Corrupting Gaze (Su): Rhakyl can blast living beings with a glance, at a range of up to 30 feet. Creatures that meet his gaze must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 2d10 points of damage and 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain.

SA—Malevolence (Su): While ethereal, Rhakyl can merge his body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, except that it does not require a receptacle. If the attack succeeds, Rhakyl's ethereal body vanishes into the opponent's body. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 16). A creature that successfully saves is immune to Rhakyl's malevolence for one day.

SQ—*Manifestation (Su)*: As an ethereal creature, Rhakyl cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When he manifests, he becomes visible but remains incorporeal. He can strike with his touch attack (or a with ghost touch weapon). While manifesting, he remains on the Ethereal Plane but can be attacked by opponents on both the Material and Ethereal planes.

SQ—*Incorporeal*: Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armor. Always moves silently.

SQ—*Rejuvenation (Su)*: 2d4 days after being destroyed, Rhakyl might rejuvenate. He must succeed at a level check to do so (1d20+3, DC 16).

SQ—*Undead*: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

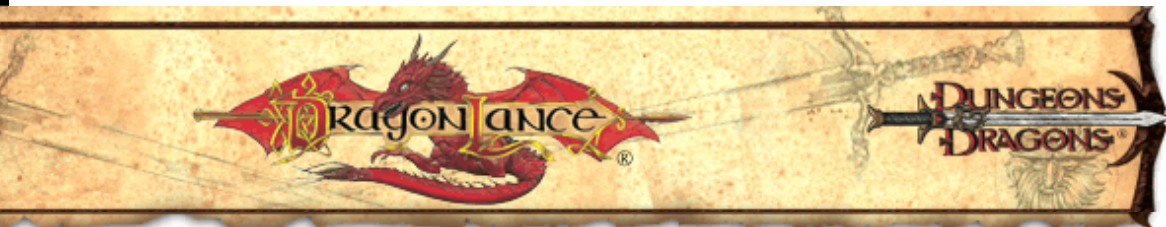
SQ—*Turn resistance*: Ghost's +4 resistance to turn attempts.

[Rhakyl Kormoth: Ghost. Co 5, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also fear aura, drain Spirit.]



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Issue #8 - Holmswelt



Crafters of Early Krynn

An Interview with Paul B. Thompson and Tonya Cook

By Miranda Horner

With the release of the **Dragonlance** novel [Children of the Plains](#), we decided to get in touch with authors Paul B. Thompson and Tonya Cook. Paul and his wife Elizabeth live in North Carolina, where he writes on everything from nonfiction military history articles to fantasy novels. Tonya and her husband Greg also live in North Carolina. When she's not writing her newest **Dragonlance** trilogy--The Barbarians--with Paul, she does freelance copywriting for a university press and takes trips with her husband.



Legends of the Lance: So, how did the two of you start on your writing careers?

Paul Thompson: While still a graduate student in the early 1980s, I began writing magazine articles on topics that interested me. I did very well with these, selling every one I wrote, so I thought fiction would be more fun and pay better . . . but success in one field did not mean success in the other! For four years I tried writing fiction--mostly SF novels and some historical fiction--without any success at all. It wasn't until 1987 that I sold my first novel. I still regard myself as a historian by training and a novelist by vocation.

Legends: How about you, Tonya?

Tonya Cook: I've been writing since I was a child. I began writing longhand in many small notebooks. Professionally, however, I began writing in college. I'd written a fantasy novel--well, more of an outline for a novel--and Paul and I expanded it and submitted it to several publishers. It didn't sell, but TSR did send us a very nice rejection letter (yes, there really is such a thing). TSR said the novel didn't really fit their list but then went on to tell us the sort of thing they were looking for. We promptly wrote *Red Sands*, our only published non-**Dragonlance** collaboration.

Legends: How did the two of you come to start working together?

Paul: Tonya and I met in 1982. We were members of the science fiction club at the University of North Carolina. When I was trying to write historical novels (circa 1984), she was my first reader and critic. Not long after she began writing a fantasy novel of her own called *The Helion Pendant*. She wanted

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some help working out certain elements of the plot, and from that it blossomed into a full-fledged collaboration--our first. We then wrote a mystery play for one of those "murder mystery weekends" put on by a resort hotel, and by 1987 we were writing the novel that became *Red Sands*, which was our first novel sale to TSR.

Tonya: Yes, Paul really encouraged me to finish *The Helion Pendant*. Our work on *Red Sands* just grew very naturally out of that.

Legends: So, you have been collaborating for quite a while now. How would you describe your work relationship?

Tonya: Exciting, thought-provoking, nerve-wracking . . . just kidding about that last one. Actually, our collaboration seems to work quite well. People always want to know if we have lots of fights. They're usually terribly disappointed to find out that we don't. We get along amazingly well, aside from the occasional free and frank exchange of opinions.

Paul: I do say "Yes, Toni" a lot. But seriously, folks . . . I don't know how it is for other teams, but Tonya and I complement each other very well. I tend to write more action-oriented, plot-intensive parts, while Tonya is more rigorously logical and descriptive. In practical terms, we hammer out a plot, then I write the first draft and Tonya rewrites it as the second. This has worked very well for us.

Legends: What other strengths do each of you bring to the collaboration?

Paul: Our strengths are not divided along stereotyped lines. I'm facile--I write fast and hard, pages and pages and pages . . . Tonya is more painstaking, more logical. I do favor action over description, but she usually fixes that. I tend to be rather cold-blooded about my characters, while Tonya cares more about them. If you want an example of this, compare my solo novel [Nemesis](#) to our new collaboration [Children of the Plains](#), and you'll see what I mean.

Tonya: Paul is definitely your "battle scene" go-to guy. I'm more of the description and detail person, and I love to make the language flow. I do think I help with characterization issues--figuring out what a character would do or say or how she would act in a given situation.



I think Paul also has a great facility for plots; tell him you need a short story and he'll come back with five ideas in ten minutes. But before he gets too much of a swelled head about that, I'll just remind him of the time he wrote an entire fight scene with Riverwind and forgot there was supposed to be a gnome at Riverwind's side. At the end of this scene, which was way back when we used to *type* our stories on typewriters, I found a note: "Toni, forgot the damn gnome!"

If major plot questions or problems arise while we're writing, we settle those together and move on.

Legends: How long has it been since you both started working in the world of Krynn?

Tonya: About twelve years now. Wow. A long time. The project itself was the short story "The Exiles," recently reprinted in [The Best of Tales](#), about the boy Sturm's flight from peasant uprisings in Solamnia. Paul and I were chomping at the bit for TSR to "go ahead and publish *Red Sands* already!" so they asked us if we'd like to write a **Dragonlance** short story in the meantime. I think they wanted to keep us busy and get us out of their hair for a while. [Smiles] It was originally published in the anthology *Love and War*.

Legends: What resources did you use to prepare for this first project?

Tonya: I've always been a history buff, especially medieval history, so I think that was a good background for the world. First and foremost, of course, we used the original Weis and Hickman novels, and we used a whole set of Krynn sourcebooks from the 1980s--*Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home*, *The Atlas of the Dragonlance World*, and *Dragonlance Adventures*.

Paul: I still use the original Krynn sourcebooks I've had since the late 1980s as well as the [Dragonlance: Fifth Age Dramatic Adventure Game](#). For our most recent novel, Tonya and I also consulted with the folks at Wizards about setting a story in the very remote era of 4000PC. Our synopses were reviewed by Wizards editors and by Margaret Weis. We also had some "historical" input from [authors] Chris Pierson and Stan! early on.

Legends: With all of the time you've both spent in Krynn, what do you like most about it?

Paul: I like the scope. As a historian, I like the idea of the sweep of history. In a fantasy world like Krynn, you can recreate or experiment with historical patterns from our own past, blending and synthesizing culture, religion, technology, and so forth. All while telling an exciting story, of course!

Legends: And you, Tonya?

Tonya: Adventure. And the equality. I enjoy the rousing adventure, but I also very much like the fact that the "girls" get in on the action, too. Female characters aren't relegated to subservient or secondary roles, and they're not all goody-goody either. Go Kit!

Legends: Speaking of Kit, do you have a favorite **Dragonlance** character or race?

Tonya: I'm rather fond of the gnomes. In *Darkness and Light*, Paul and I had Sturm and Kitiara encounter a bunch of gnomes. The contrast between serious Sturm, practical Kitiara, and those nutty gnomes was just too good to pass up. I've only started reading the **Fifth Age** books, but I'm developing a liking for Steel Brightblade.

Paul: I'm partial to gnomes, too, after having them in the novel Tonya mentioned. In the near future I'll have a gnome-centered short story coming out called (tentatively) "Go With the Floe." I like gnomes because I love the idea of skewed technology in a magic-centered world.

I also like elves. Tonya and I wrote two of the Elven Nations books, and they allowed us to work in the high, operatic world of the elder race. I ended up not seeing elves as ethereal creatures but as a sort of faded, vaguely decadent race, halfway between Tolkien's angelic beings and historical falling empires like Byzantium or Sung dynasty China.

Legends: You mentioned earlier that you were working on a story set in 4000PC. How did you settle on this era?

Paul: As I recall, the basic notion--a trilogy set in Ansalon dealing with pre-civilized humans--came from the editors at Wizards. Tonya and I had already done two volumes of the epic Elven Nations books set in the same general period, so I guess it was natural we should come to mind to write the humans' story.

The trilogy takes place over a forty- or fifty-year period around the year 4000PC. Most of the action takes place on what would later be called the plains of Solamnia, though there are side visits to Silvanesti territory, and even a chase around the world!

Tonya: We were really intrigued by the notion of a world that was Krynn, yet not exactly the Krynn we've all come to know and love.

Legends: Now, let's go back to your last book a minute. Did you face any particular challenges while writing *Children of the Plains*?

Paul: There were several. One is that these novels are set before so much of the landscape of Krynn has been established. It's pre-Graygem, so there's no "free" magic. There are no kender, or dwarves, or human nations at all. We had to convey the lives of the barbarians in convincing terms without making the book read too much like the old movie *Quest for Fire*!

Having dragons as active, speaking characters was another challenge. We did a dragon briefly in *Darkness and Light*, but none since. I have this tendency to think of **Dragonlance's** good/neutral dragons as urbane, sophisticated creatures. After all, they're so powerful, they consider humans little more than amusing animals. But Noel Coward-esque dragons don't make for serious adventure, so I had to tone down the banter and make our bronze dragon more mysterious and dangerous. And our green dragon! He is one evil character, as the readers will discover.

There's a plot point in *Children of the Plains* we thought might prove controversial, but so far it has not. I won't give it away here, but it should be pretty clear once the novel is out there.

Legends: How did you overcome the problem of making this early time period reflect Krynnish elements instead of just prehistoric elements?

Tonya: Blood, sweat, toil, and tears. We try to make the land almost a character in the book--the geographical features, the weather. And bringing in references to the elves and events in Silvanesti is always helpful.

Legends: Now that you've finished this novel, who is your favorite character and why?

Tonya: I'm going with a two-part answer: Karada, the nomad chieftain, and Duranix, the bronze dragon. I love Duranix, but when Karada bites the head off that snake. . . .

Paul: I also like Karada. You gotta love a woman who can kill a deer with her bare hands!

Legends: So, will the trilogy deal with the same characters throughout, or do you develop different people in each book?

Tonya: A few of the characters continue through the trilogy--Karada, Amero, Duranix, Sthenn (the evil green dragon), and some others. But many decades pass from the beginning of the first novel to the end of the third.

Legends: Since you've written **Dragonlance** novels and stories before, I have to ask this: Are there any returning characters from your other novels?

Tonya: Unfortunately, no, since this trilogy takes place so very early in the chronology of Krynn. But we do use Balif, Silvanos's general, who's mentioned in other sources.

Legends: Before we part ways, do you have any advice for aspiring writers out there?

Paul: READ, READ, READ! The more you know, the better you will write. If fantasy or SF is your goal, read NONFICTION and learn as much as you can about history, science, anthropology, and so on. Don't derive your knowledge or ideas from fiction. Synthesize your own ideas from the world around you, past, present, and future.

Tonya: I agree. Write and read. Yes, it sounds flip, but it's true. Reading both nonfiction and fiction helps exercise the brain and stimulate ideas, and writing is the way you practice the actual craft. You don't have to be published to be a writer. The only requirement for a writer is that she write.

Paul and Tonya are busily working on The Barbarians trilogy's second book, tentatively titled Brother of the Dragon. You can purchase Children of the Plains in September at a store or hobby shop near you!



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Krynnish "Mad Libs"

So, after reading our [101 Adventure Hooks](#), you're still not satisfied? Well, this week, we provide you with literally countless new ideas in a single feature: our "Mad Libs" style adventure hook generator. Simply fill in the blanks below with adjectives, nouns, and verbs of your own choosing. For the grammar impaired, check out our [cheat sheet](#) below. Then hit the "Go" button, and you'll have generated the starting point for your next game session. Note: Wizards of the Coast claims no responsibility for the loony adventure hooks sure to result!

Adjective:

Noun:

Noun (all caps):

Place in Ansalon:

Adjective (all caps):

Verb (past tense):

Noun:

Adverb:

A Krynnish god:

Noun:

Adjective:

Number:

Noun:

Adjective:

Proper Noun:

Name of Dragonlance character:

Adjective: <input type="text"/> Noun (plural): <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="GO"/>

Grammar Cheat Sheet

If you didn't watch enough *Schoolhouse Rock* as a kid, here's a brief recap:

Adjective: A describing word. Fits in the sentence "It is very _____."

Adjective (all caps): Write your selection all in CAPITAL LETTERS.

Noun: A person, place, thing, event, or idea .

Noun (all caps): Write your selection all in CAPITAL LETTERS.

Place in Ansalon: Anything from Solamnia to the Tower of High Sorcery.

Verb (past tense): An action verb where the action is completed, like "walked" or "slept."

Adverb: A describing word, often ending in "-ly."

A Krynnish god: You know. Paladine. Takhisis. Those guys.

Number: Use numerals (8, 34, or 120, etc.).

Proper Noun: A *specific* person, place, thing, event, or idea (George Washington, Seattle, etc.)

Name of Dragonlance character: You don't need to cheat for this one.

Noun (plural): Feet, people, cars... you get the idea.

NOTE: Cookies need to be turned on in order to view Mad Libs



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One Hundred and One Krynnish Adventure Hooks

Contributors: Morten Brattbakk, Weldon Chen, Dragonlancelot, Matt A. Lynch, Doug Meerschaert, Matthew Pittard, Stefan Schoberth, Andrew Solow, Rohan Tolstrup, and Dominik Zentarra.

Compiler: Miranda Horner

So, you need an episode to help the characters in your **Dragonlance** campaign kill some time between heroic super-adventures. Or perhaps the heroes are resting on their laurels in a cushy Palanthian inn. If you want ideas for activities to fill in an adventure gap or want something to get the heroes motivated again, you've come to the right place. With the aid of fans from across the globe, we've compiled a set of 101 adventure hooks to use in your **Dragonlance** campaign! Whether you play in the classic period of Krynn or in the current age, all you have to do to get started is choose your favorite and flesh it out in a manner that best suits your own personal game.

1. **Servant of Good or Evil?:** A servant of the Good gods found herself trapped on Krynn, and now Evil cultists want to use her to power their magic. Possible solutions include locating a portal from Krynn, battling the cultists, or finding a way to relieve the servant of her powers, making her an ordinary mortal. What choice do the heroes make when helping her? Does it work?

2. **A Robe of Any Other Color:** A White-Robed mage from the Fourth Age has taken to practicing Evil deeds in the absence of the gods. He blames the deeds on a nearby Black Robe, who is blameless. When the heroes investigate this dispute, what do recommend? How does the White-Robe react?

3. **Dragonbait:** A young metallic dragon hiding from a Dragon Highlord is starving and dangerously close to discovery. The heroes have to lure her out and find a way to get the dragon to fly to safety. Do they succeed?

4. **Fiendish Cult:** A servant of the Evil gods stuck on Krynn is maneuvering a cult. The heroes have to find a way to banish the fiend -- anything from pointing out the cult to a Dragon Highlord (VERY dangerous) to slaying the fiend directly (which requires weapons with magical power).

5. **A Bit of Banditry:** Bandits ravage the countryside around a town or city, and the heroes have to flush them out and bring them to justice. How do they draw the bandits out? This adventure hook is simple, old-school hack and slash.

6. **Gate to Pleasure or Pain?:** The heroes discover a tropical valley in the middle of a desolate region (for example, Nordmaar or the Plains of Dust). Investigating further, they find a magical gate. Where does it lead?

7. Foresight: The heroes arrive at a town and discover a peculiar thing. Everyone responds to their questions or comments before the heroes even say a word. They find that the townsfolk have opened a new mine with a strange metal vein. Can these two things be related?

8. Baleful Books: In a forgotten alcove in a disused part of the Great Library of Palanthis, something vile and noisome is slowly coming out of a book. What fell magic seeks to destroy the library, and who is behind it?

9. Aim High: An Aurak and a village of gnomes have teamed up to make a flying machine. The gnomes need some test subjects . . . errr . . . heroes to fly the machine. The Aurak wants to use the device to kill the heroes, though the heroes can find this out from a gnome if they're cautious and ask questions. What do the heroes do if they find out the Aurak's plan before they serve as test subjects?

10. Beauty and the Baaz: A Baaz wants to woo a female. He simply hasn't got a clue how to go about doing it. He asks any romantically successful heroes for help. What advice do the heroes give, and does it actually work?

11. Mine Enemy, Mine Friend: Some Bozaks have kidnapped an elven princess and are holding her for ransom. Weeks go by before the heroes are even asked to help recover her. When they come across her, she sympathizes with the draconians and their plight. Can the heroes get her to leave her captors?

12. A Sucker Is Born Every Minute: A Kapak peddling elixirs of longevity is really bottling his own saliva and robbing his paralyzed customers. Now he's aiming for the heroes. Do they discover his plot in time?

13. This Hurts Me More Than it Hurts You: Near the heroes, a group of draconians hunts down a Sivak so they can kill and dissect him. The autopsy should help the draconians discover how they can make dragonspawn with the help of any dragon. The Sivak puts the heroes between himself and his hunters. How do the heroes get themselves out of this situation? Do they help the Sivak?

14. Kapak Camp: Dark Knights are holding a group of Kapaks in very bad conditions near the heroes. As the heroes find out, the Kapaks are being kept for their paralytic saliva, which the Dark Knights bottle up in small vials and ship to their leaders. What will the heroes do -- rescue the Kapaks or destroy them?

15. I Do?: The Solamnic Knight (or other honor-bound hero) of the group becomes betrothed to a person of high intelligence but terrible manners and bearing. The Dungeon Master should set up a situation specific to the hero so that it tickles the hero's sense of honor to refuse the marriage. (Perhaps family members have arranged the match.) Will the marriage occur?

16. Oh, Dear: The Solamnic Knight (or other honor-bound hero) of the group becomes betrothed to a person of comely appearance and genteel manners, but the person is a terrible dunderhead. The Dungeon Master should set up a situation specific to the hero so that it tickles the hero's sense of honor to refuse the marriage. (Perhaps someone close to the Knight set up the match.) Will the hero go through with the marriage?

17. Runaway: A young female half-ogre has run away from home to see what the outside world has to offer her. The villagers around her current residence are up in arms and swearing to kill an "evil magic-wielding ogre." Her human father wants to find her before she gets herself killed. When the heroes finally meet up with her, she immediately takes a liking to one of them.

18. Bardic Insults: A bunch of Solamnic Knights want the heroes to help them find a bard who has been disseminating lies and propaganda about them. While the Knights are busy searching their chosen area of the city, town, or countryside, the heroes run across the bard, who has switched to mocking the Knights of Takhisis. Dungeon Masters can have the bard fight any attempts to capture her with opinionated and loud insults, let her escape to lead the group on a merry chase throughout the area, or allow her to acquiesce quietly.

19. The *Gruesome Glaive* is a powerful artifact that bearers use to slay Dragon Highlords and gives the wielder an ego-boost. However, the primary magic of the glaive makes the bearer *think* it can do these things. An investigation proves that the unbalanced item is cursed, in that it throws off the wielder's attack swings. What happens to the hero bearing this cursed artifact? Does he or she depend on it during a dangerous situation? Does the artifact lead them into a dangerous situation due to the ego-boost the bearer receives?

20. Relics of the Gods: The heroes come across a peddler selling "bones from the dead dragon gods Takhisis and Paladine." In fact, the bones have the telltale signs of being magical. Are these really the bones of Takhisis and Paladine? What is the magic aura hanging around them? Where did the peddler get the bones?

21. Plague Strikes Palanthas: A plague with the same symptoms as those seen in Sanction recently appears in Palanthas. The symptoms include splotchy skin and extreme dehydration, and victims live for only two days. Rumor has it that Hogan Bight of Sanction found the cure for this plague recently. The heroes must seek out Bight and ask for his cure. Will Bight tell the heroes what they need to know? And where will the knowledge lead the heroes? (Enterprising DMs can pick up [Clandestine Circle](#) and use some of the threads within to flesh this hook out fully.)

22. Kender Convoy: Several kender wish to visit the Tomb of the Last Heroes by way of the Qualinesti Forest. Can the heroes, who have been traveling with the kender, persuade them to skip the tour of the forest and go straight to the Tomb? What happens if they meet up with Beryl's forces despite their precautions?

23. Vengeful Dead: While the heroes are in a town or city, they hear that a vengeful spirit has entered the settlement and started defiling anything related to the gods. If the heroes investigate, they discover the ghost of a Knight of Solamnia, who is angry about the departure of the old gods. What do the heroes do? Calm him down and send him to his rest peacefully? Or do they destroy him?

24. Mistaken Suspect: One of the heroes must listen to a local case, perhaps as a favor to a Knight of Solamnia. A local man was murdered in his sleep, and the townsfolk have already set up a makeshift gallows. They fully believe a local entertainer must have done it. However, they are ignoring the fact that a well-to-do man was seen leaving the murder victim's residence that next morning just before the murder was discovered. The accused woman also has an alibi, but the person she was with refuses to substantiate it. Can the heroes help bring justice to the small town?

25. The Egg Caper: A Legionnaire asks the heroes to rescue some brass eggs from a thieving green dragon. She can't involve herself personally because she can't afford to break cover. As it turns out, the person the Legionnaire reports to doesn't trust the heroes and tries to send out her own people (excluding the original Legionnaire). Do the heroes successfully steal the eggs from the dragon despite the interference from the other Legionnaires? Or do they persuade the Legionnaires to aid them? What of the mother of the eggs? Does she get involved? (Enterprising DMs can allow the brass to involve herself as a human or elf.)

26. Down on Your Luck: When the heroes are suitably lacking in funds, they happen across a couple of dwarves who have found a rich vein of black opals in a nearby cave. The dwarves want to get a mine going, but they need a few more hardy souls to help them get started. They're quite willing to pay . . . in opals! Unfortunately, the local folk don't like dwarves, and the nearby elves have planted a sacred tree whose roots are near the vein of opals. The elves don't want undue attention drawn to the area, and they definitely don't want dwarves digging a bigger hole in the hill under their sacred tree. On top of all of that, rumor has it that an elf haunts the cave. If the heroes investigate, they find that this rumor is true. Do the heroes help the dwarves? Do they help the elves? Do they help both by defining the area that the dwarves can dig into without ruining the tree? And what about that ghost?

27. The Past Returns: Three nights ago, a haggard wanderer entered town speaking fanatically about a battle between the Red Dragonarmy and the town's militia, which happened more than 70 years ago and resulted in most of the town burning to cinders. The innkeep refused to let the raving man stay in his inn. The heroes discover that the wanderer has not been seen since. However, the last two nights a phantom Red Dragonarmy attacked the village for 15 minutes, doing some damage to the town. What is happening? How can it be stopped?

28. Lizard Trouble: A group of bakali from Sable's swamps have escaped from her cruel grasp. Pursued by her minions, they seek refuge in a small town in the Plains of Dust. Is this an elaborate plot of Sable's to attack the town, or are the bakali good natured?

29. Return to Past Days: A group of afflicted kender finds an object that restores their jovial, fearless nature. They recovered the object from a ruined temple of Morgion. They now plan on helping the other afflicted kender. Is this an object of Evil corrupting the kender? Would an afflicted kender in the group want to restore her resistance to fear? Is anyone else behind this?

30. Silver Wrath: A blue dragon severely wounded in battle by a silver dragon seeks some protection from the vengeful silver. The blue recently killed the silver's mate in a battle between their riders (the

blue's rider died, the silver's rider survived). The blue has an object of importance to them that he says he'll give them if the players get the silver to relent. In addition, he wants to return to his own mate, who is currently hidden away with a clutch of eggs. Do the heroes accept the object?

31. Thinker vs. Tinkers: A group of gnomes has almost finished creating a time travel machine. They wish to study past and future gnome inventions and perhaps stop the events that caused the Summer of Chaos and the departure of the gods. One thinker gnome realizes a flaw in the design could cause an explosion that would destroy an area roughly the size of Northern Ergoth and needs the heroes' help to prevent this possible catastrophe. The other gnomes (all tinker gnomes) refuse to listen to her. How do the heroes prevent this project from coming to fruition?

32. A Trying Companion: An honor-bound hero (cavalier, Solamnic Knight, and so on) is charged with escorting the local lord's daughter (or son) to an event on behalf of the city. When the two are finally alone, the young noble proves to be a bit flirtatious and insistent. If the hero refuses to kowtow to the person's every whim, he or she threatens to stain the hero's honor with the father. What's a hero to do?

33. A Trying Companion Goes Hunting: The hero must escort the young noble from the previous adventure hook on a trip into the woods the day before the event. However, the hero's charge is highly accident-prone and insists on going after a boar or something else dangerous. How long can the hero keep his or her sanity and temper while keeping the noble safe?

34. The Search for Knowledge: A tribe of normally peaceful hill giants attacks all who come near a prominent city or town in the heroes' area. The heroes are asked to stop the group using any means necessary. However, once the heroes accept, they are anonymously informed that one of the tribe's children was kidnapped by a local sorcerer/mystic/bard (whatever is appropriate), who happens to have a fetish for research through taxidermy. However, this particular person holds a high position of authority in the area and is very popular. Is the note true? Who wrote it? Who is right, and who is wrong? What do the heroes do?

35. An Old Acquaintance: The heroes are staying in a small town on the outskirts of a wilderness. While there, they hear tales about the local ruler--a jovial, older man who is very popular with everyone in town and never has a bad thing to say about anyone. The heroes see this man, and one of them (potentially an elf or half-elf) recognizes him from a long time ago as someone involved with either the Knights of Takhisis or one of the dragonarmies. How do they react? Does it matter that he has changed when he was responsible for the death of a close friend or relative of the hero?

36. Death Foretold: A crazy-seeming old man wanders into the town the heroes are in and opens up shop as a soothsayer. All of his prophecies come true within a few hours after he makes them. However, all of the prophecies are relatively minor things that have major effects on the lives they happen to, and all prove beneficial. Then, he foresees the death of one of the heroes, but does not know how the death comes about. What do the heroes do? Who is the old man? How can he tell the future so well? Is death looming around the corner? If all of the other prophecies bring about good, does this mean that if the hero lives despite the prophecy, the greater good is not served?

37. Local Legends: While at a coastal village, the heroes discover a dead flying-lizard (dinosaur) washed up on the beach. Local fishermen reveal that this happens occasionally and speak of a legend of an island filled with similar beasts far out to sea. Do the heroes try to find the island? What do they discover if they go?

38. Mystical Market Disappears: Every year at the dawn of Midyear Day (summer solstice), the mystical Shinara River Market appears out of the mists at the confluence of two rivers. Merchants come from all over Ansalon to buy and barter for the wondrous items being sold by the strange stallholders. However, one year it doesn't show up, and in its place appears a simple gold ring. Though it doesn't detect as magical, its nature or past cannot be determined by divination or identifying spells of any kind. What happens when a hero puts it on?

39. Death of a Dragon: One morning, the residents of a small town wake to discover a dead dragon (kind of dragon is DM's choice) lying in the town square. No one heard anything during the night, and it appears unharmed with a golden collar around its neck. The heroes are asked to investigate this strange occurrence and find out how the dragon died, what the collar signifies, and whether the town is in danger from dragon attack or the thing that killed the dragon.

40. Cloudcatcher: The heroes notice that although the wind is blowing in the opposite direction, all the clouds are moving towards Mt. Nevermind. What insane device have the gnomes invented now? Will it blow up and destroy Ansalon, or will it simply cause the gnomes to lose all their facial hair?

41. **The Past Intrudes:** During the night at an old Solamnic castle, a young Knight relieves another of his watch. However, the other Knight doesn't seem to hear him, and when he is touched, the Knight falls to the ground to reveal empty armor. Upon closer inspection, the armor appears to be of a style from long before the First Cataclysm! The heroes can help investigate, but what do they find?
42. **A Mage's Duplicity:** When the heroes enter their destination town, they soon notice that no one notices them. Soon they realize that they must be completely invisible . . . and maybe even noiseless. At the same time, the heroes feel lethargic and barely have the will to eat and drink. The only person who sees them in this state is a former Black-Robed mage (now wearing nonaligned colors), who believes a magical item in the Desolation may help them. He sends the heroes after the item. Since they are invisible and noiseless, they shouldn't have a problem going in and out of Malys's realm unhindered, though they may find themselves challenged by their current weakness. In truth, this former Black-Robed mage searches for items of power and needs heroes to find them for him. He was the one who put the spell upon them, with the help of a magical item he found some time ago. What do the heroes do? Do they discover the mage's plan, and do they succeed in getting the item needed? Do they lift the magical effect shrouding them?
43. **A Strange Egg:** The heroes find a strange, large egg near a tiny village. Is it the egg of a dragon, or does it come from some other creature? Should they let it remain where it lies? Maybe the village would be in danger if an Evil creature issues forth from the egg? Should they destroy the egg or take it with them? Where is the mother of the egg?
44. **Kender-Herders:** A village is "terrorized" by kender, who have made this town their personal playground. The people beg the heroes to help them get rid of the little pests. Should the heroes take the risk of dealing with kender and maybe losing all their possessions? How will they get those little playful creatures out of the town? Do the heroes escort the kender back to where they came from? Maybe they can find another more interesting playground for them?
45. **Dragon Summoning:** A wealthy Silvanesti elf hires the party to escort him to the Silvanesti Shield. Unknown to the heroes, the elf is mad and has acquired a special magical device that summons Onysabet. He plans to summon the Great Dragon to help him break down the shield. Sable, for her part, plans to activate a disease the elf is carrying by exposing him to a catalyst: a magical gas sealed in a tube. She won't come herself, so she sends a minion. What kind of disease is this? Will the heroes be affected? Where can the heroes find a cure?
46. **An Ancestor's Blessing:** The party is invited to a coming of age ceremony for the son of a Solamnic Knight at his family's ancient castle. Unknown to all, the traditional ceremony is really a magical one that allows the spirit of an Evil ancestor to possess the body of the adolescent boy. Several servants and guests are in on the plot. Working through intrigues and secret passages, the heroes have to stop the evil ancestor before it's too late. (And if it is too late, that opens some hooks as well).
47. **Sky Stones:** The heroes somehow acquire a perfectly smooth, round, blood-red stone. If a sorcerer carries the stone, her magic is radically boosted, but each time she uses the stone, her alignment shifts toward neutral. Rumor has it that a similar, but smaller, black stone exists, and a bigger white one, also. They are said to have fallen down on Krynn from the sky during the final stages of the Chaos War.
48. **Anaya's Tree:** The heroes are asked to take several seeds from Anaya's Tree in the Qualinesti Forest and bring them to the Wayreth Forest and Jenna's shop in Palanthas. Along the way, the heroes can interact with troops belonging to Beryl, Porthios, or Gilthas, and confront other possible problems during the journey between the locations.
49. **Solamnic Dealings:** A Solamnic Knight wishes to send the heroes to Sanction and investigate the "Circle" there. The Knight won't tell them what the heroes are looking for, but she does mention that there has been a recent upheaval in the city and the Knights fear that their resources there are "compromised." What do the heroes find there? If they discover something wrong, do they tell the Lady Knight? Or do they try to figure out how to fix the situation themselves. (Enterprising DMs can pick up [Clandestine Circle](#) and use some of the threads within to flesh this hook out fully.)
50. **A Citadel Escapade:** The heroes take the trouble to escort a wild talent to the Citadel of Light only to discover him missing in the middle of their first night at the Citadel. Where did he go? Did someone kidnap him? Why would anyone kidnap the boy, if so? Or did his wild talents allow him to leave?
51. **Angry Minotaurs:** A village has been suffering attacks by a force of minotaurs, but they don't really know why. They have nothing of any value, they believe. The heroes must discover the reason behind the attacks, which just might have something to do with the ancient, yet nicely preserved minotaur

horns that the village's priest keeps in a secure chest hidden under the altar of the village's small church.

52. Crisis of Faith: A young Knight of Takhisis (or Knight of Neraka) defects near the heroes and comes across them while being chased by her former fellow Dark Knights. The heroes can either allow the chasing Knights of Takhisis to take the Knight back into their fold (and get out of the way) or intercede. If they intercede, once they reach relative safety, the young Knight explains that she feels that the Knighthood is false. (In the case of the Knights of Neraka, she feels strongly that they are following a path not ordained by the gods.) She also admits that her faith in the gods, while strong, made her do very bad things, and now her guilt is so strong that she wished to become a follower of Paladine to make up for it. Do the heroes believe her? If so, how do they help her follow the path of Paladine? (She can also provide the heroes with information about the new Knights of Neraka, if the DM so wishes.)

53. Clothes Make the Man?: A young man asks for the heroes' help before they journey onward. He has reason to believe that an ancient suit of Solamnic armor resides at a nearby battleground, and he wants to retrieve it. He mentions that the source of his information was a dream he had. If asked why he wants the armor, he states that he believes that if he wears the armor, he will start down the path to becoming a Solamnic Knight. Do the heroes help him? Do they tell him more about the Solamnic Knighthood?

54. Diplomatic Immunity: While escorting an elven ambassador to a trade conference in the Ergothian lands, problems arise when the ambassador is murdered. All clues point to one of the heroes being the prime suspect. Who really killed the ambassador? Why? And can the heroes find the real murderer before one of their own confronts the wrath of the elves?

55. Malystrixx's Demise?: The heroes hear about a new oracle somewhere in or near the Desolation. They also find out that this oracle is prophesying Malystrixx's demise. One of the heroes' acquaintances asks that the heroes visit this oracle and find out more about this prophecy and whether it is just wishful thinking. Once there, the heroes find that the oracle is an ogre protected by an unusual creature called an [ogre titan](#). Can the heroes win past the ogre titan and visit the ogre oracle? And is she an authentic diviner of the future? What *is* the prophesy relating to Malys's Demise?

56. Curse of Orneriness: The heroes find themselves in the middle of a family crisis one day. The young daughter of a man or woman that they know strongly requests that one of the heroes come to her house to settle a family argument that has gotten a bit out of hand. When the heroes get there, they discover the family in the middle of a domestic dispute. The instigator of the dispute appears to be the daughter's older brother, but before the heroes can start calming everyone down, he suddenly gets very quiet and refuses to say another word. The mother is white-faced with anger and fear. If the heroes investigate further, they discover that the mother fears that her son has fallen under the family curse of "orneriness." The father (or other older relative) states that as far as he is concerned, the boy has been replaced by a draconian, what with the way he has been acting these last few days. The son himself remains mute. What is going on here? What is this curse of "orneriness" that the mother speaks of? And is the father jesting?

57. Family Inheritances: The heroes come across a man (or woman) working on the docks who wears a gold medallion prominently on his chest. They notice that all the seafaring minotaurs nearby actually defer to this man when they pass him by. If asked, the man tells the heroes that the medallion is the one thing he has left of his father, and he's pretty sure that this medallion is what causes the minotaurs to defer to him. How do the minotaurs know the medallion, and what does it have to do with his father? (Dungeon Masters can also make the medallion-bearer a minotaur male or female, but the heroes will need heightened perception to notice the deference given to a minotaur male.)

58. Missing Cell: The Legion of Steel tried to establish a new cell, but never heard another word from the five Legionnaires they sent out. The heroes are hired to find out what happened to the five stalwart men and women without giving away their employer.

59. The Master Storyteller: As the heroes relax somewhere familiar and public, a storyteller comes in and settles down in a corner. After getting an ale, she starts telling a story involving someone the heroes know. The end of the story involves the death of the person, which is something the heroes hadn't known about. When the heroes check, they find out that the person in question is still alive, but that he or she is currently following the road to death that the storyteller had detailed in her tale. Can they stop their acquaintance from getting killed? Who is this storyteller? Are all of her stories also foretellings?

60. **Falling Waters:** The heroes are passing through a natural setting when they hear the sound of a waterfall nearby. As they near the area of the falls, they notice that the terrain is completely torn up. In fact, it looks like someone took a giant hoe and dug a furrow into the ground, uprooting trees and the like. Water from a nearby lake found its way to the newly formed furrow and now falls into the latter part of the furrow. If the heroes explore further, they discover that the water follows the furrow into a hole in the ground. What caused this furrow to happen? Why is it there?

61. **Religious Fervor:** The heroes are visiting a small village when the villagers get it into their heads that all magic is evil. As a result, they start forming up bands to get known sorcerers, mages, mystics, and any other person with some form of gift (even nonmagical). The heroes themselves come under suspicion. Upon investigation, it seems that this fervor emanates from a very persuasive local who just left the village to "spread the word" of the evils of magic. What is going on here? How can the heroes save this village from itself? Can they stop the person who intends to spread this fervor into other areas and possibly set the whole country up against itself?

62. **Aura of Peace:** After a particularly dangerous mission, the heroes come into possession of a clear globe of amber-colored glass that contains flecks of blue. If the heroes stare into the globe, they feel a sense of well-being fall over them that lasts for about an hour. They can perform any actions they wish during this time, but they remain completely tranquil while doing so. Once the tranquility ends, any wounds the heroes have sustained look as though they have been disinfected and have healed for a week. The heroes also feel alert and prepared, as if they had slept comfortably and well. At the same time, however, they also feel a call to visit some old ruins nearby. What is this globe? Where did it come from? Why does it call them to the ruins?

63. **Sparkling Sunset:** At sunset one day, the heroes notice that the sun appears to glimmer and sparkle, with occasional flares of light. It's a majestic display, but what is causing it? At the same time, all of the night creatures feel the need to wake up, so the heroes see owls, night rodents, and all manner of night-creatures (even undead) waking up to view the sunset. If the heroes investigate, they discover that the Silvanesti records contain reference to a month of such sunsets in the past. The elves, fearing that the night creatures would be unbalanced in their routines by this display, stopped it by singing a certain song and activating a certain device. The heroes can find the song in Palanthas, and the device was last seen by kender in Kalamán. (Dungeon Masters can choose a relevant place in each area, or shift the items to other locations completely.) Will the heroes find these two pieces and use them to stop the unusual sunsets?

64. **Zombie Skin:** A local healer asks the heroes to acquire pieces of ogre zombie skin. He believes that ogre zombie skin has the power to battle diseases, and he wants to test this theory. However, this is a ruse. The healer wants the ogre zombie skin so that he can send it to Onysablet. Will the heroes do this? And do they believe the healer's reason for wanting zombie skin?

65. **Sea Elves:** The heroes are met by a sea elf while at a port. The sea elves are very concerned about what is happening on the surface, for they have heard and divined all manner of omens. They also are missing a highly-placed representative of their people, and ask the heroes for aid in finding her. Do the heroes help the elf by informing him of current events and by finding the lost representative?

66. **Altar of Belief:** At a local temple, the altar has started doing strange things. When the heroes investigate the vague rumors, they discover that the altar cloth changes color every day. The colors vary from black to red to white to red to black, and so on. During sunrise to noon, the color is white. From noon to just after sunset, the cloth turns red. Then, from just after sunset to just before sunrise, the cloth turns black. People who attend the temple receive a blessing, but not consistently. (Some receive blessings during the black phase, some during the white phase, and some during the red phase. Some don't receive a blessing at all.) Why is the altar cloth changing color like this?

67. **Balm for the Sleepless:** A local mystic has his heart set on a certain commodity: Wax from giant bees near some local ruins. He claims that this wax contains an element that he wishes to identify. He created some lip balm from this wax once, and he discovered that it tingled nicely and refreshed him as if he had slept for eight hours. However, he doesn't want to brave the giant bees again, so he has hired the heroes to do it for him. They aren't allowed to destroy the hive while gathering the wax. Do the heroes help him out? What do they find at the beehive to help him identify the wax's unusual properties?

68. **Search and Recovery:** A trusted associate asks the heroes to search for and recover a lost book. The book is in an enemy's library, and the associate asks that the book be taken quietly so that the

enemy doesn't even know the heroes were there. Do the heroes take on this assignment? How do they breach the enemy's abode without tipping off the residents?

69. Music of the Heart: A local bard's song seems to have the power to heal, and local mystics wish to have her come in to be investigated. However, the bard refuses to even talk to mystics for reasons she won't disclose. Why is this? Can the heroes make her open up to them?

70. Lack of Taste: A nearby village is complaining because of an unusual phenomenon: They can smell better than before, but all of the food they eat is tasteless. When the heroes investigate, they discover that all of the people affected are drinking out of a newly dug well. Is it something in the water? If so, what is it? Can the heroes figure out a way to remove the offending substance from the water?

71. Mirror's Reflection: The heroes are called in to help with a puzzling situation: Jenna (or another vendor in another town) has a new mirror in her possession. She received it from an anonymous source. The strange thing about the mirror is that it reflects people who aren't there. The best theory she has heard so far is that it reflects nearby unseen spirits. It even reflects back those who are invisible. Who gave this to her, and why?

72. Castaway: The heroes are on a ship heading north when they come across a woman clinging to a piece of wood. The captain of the ship brings her in, asking for the heroes' help in healing her. Once the woman is rested, she can tell them her story. She was on a ship heading to Kalamian when a wave broke her vessel in half. She didn't see what happened to the rest of the crew or passengers, but she did see several dragons in the area. She believes that most of the people on her ship are still alive. The woman also insists that the dragons were metallic and that they were fighting something. What were they fighting, and where did the other passengers go?

73. Dreams of Stained Glass: The heroes start having strange dreams in which they enter a hallway with stained glass windows, whose images they cannot remember upon waking. A strong light glows through the windows, causing the floor to be speckled with images. The pictures on the floor then come to life, beckoning to the heroes, and in the background, the heroes know someone waits with bated breath. When the heroes wake each time after this dream, they're holding a colored piece of glass with smoothed edges. What are these pieces of glass? Who is the waiting person? (Intelligent heroes might try to put the pieces together to form an image. If so, what image does it form? What does it mean?)

74. Steeple Chimes: The local town has a church or temple with a newly-created steeple. However, whenever the bell is rung to call people to service, the bell doesn't make a sound. When taken out of the temple, the bell works perfectly. What is causing the bell's chime not to sound while in the temple? Does this signify anything important?

75. Gnomish Antics: A local group of gnomes have gotten a bit silly while looking for a part for a device they're building. They inadvertently created a distillery earlier that day and drank the fruits of their labor. Now stupidly drunk, they want to continue their search for the missing part. They try to hire the heroes to help them. Do the heroes accept the offer? Or do they allow the gnomes to carry on without guidance (and with possible dire consequences for any near them)? Most importantly, do they try out the still?

76. Head in the Clouds: The heroes are asked to take on another companion: a dwarf with a particularly nasty sense of humor. She points out every failing in a person, and rarely rewards people with praise (unless it highlights other failings at the same time). The dwarf stays quiet and unsmiling during the initial phase of the journey, but then begins to talk, which is worse than the sullen stillness. If the heroes ask why the purpose of her journey, she refuses to answer, saying merely that she is on a quest. Should the heroes stick it out with the dwarf, they eventually might learn that she seeks a dragon who can teach her how to change into a dragon form. Then she can transcend her earthiness and fly among the clouds.

77. Library of Ideas: A local scholar has heard of a wondrous, mythical place called the Library of Ideas. He believes that it is on a continent unknown to them thus far. He hopes that the heroes can find an ancient Irda tome that talks about this Library, so he offers them a reward for entering one of the Irda ruin sites (DM choice). If the heroes investigate and succeed in their mission, they discover a tome with the lettering the scholar drew out for them. When they return, what does the scholar find about this Library of Ideas? What is the library, really? Does it even exist?

78. Cursed Words: A small village has formed on the site of some lost people, though nobody knows for sure what race lived there. The only remains of the original residents is a fountain with unusual designs scrolling throughout the stonework. The water runs clear and crisp. If the heroes drink of it,

they discover that they cannot curse in any language. Their tongues stop before they can begin to form the words. What is causing this to occur? Does the effect wear off? Does it happen only within the area around the fountain?

79. Birds Gather: An unusual phenomenon is happening near the heroes: The birds are gathering in all of the trees nearby with nary a twitter among them. Into this silence, a form settles: a large owl. What is this owl? What happens if the heroes investigate?

80. Burial Rites: While investigating a cemetery, tomb, or old graveyard, the heroes come across an unusual marker. The marker is in the ancient Silvanesti writing and says "The One Who Stood Between." Inside the grave or sarcophagus lie the bones of a small elf, perhaps a child. Who is this child? Why is he buried here, if he is an elf? What is the significance of the words?

81. Dryad's Journey: The heroes come across a beautiful woman traveling alone. She has the look of an elf about her, yet she has strange coloration that reflects the foliage of the surrounding trees. If the heroes ask her about herself, she reveals that she is a treeless dryad in search of the Heart of Wood. What is the Heart of Wood? How is it that she can leave her dead tree?

82. Satyr's Dance: As the heroes go through the local village, they hear the sound of pipes. If they investigate the toe-tapping music, they find a satyr producing it. As the music continues, the satyr picks up the beat, causing all around to start dancing. Not long after, people start coming with wine, beer, and all manner of foodstuffs. An impromptu party has formed. During the evening, the heroes learn that the satyr has been staging parties like this one every night for the last two weeks. The locals are so exhausted from the nightly festivities that they sleep all day, leaving fields untended and businesses closed. If the heroes stay alert, they notice when the satyr finally gives up his playing, and can talk to him before he leaves. Meanwhile, all of the partygoers either conk out right there or return to their houses to sleep. What is the satyr here for? Why does he stage parties for these people? How much more fun can the town take?

83. Sundial of Shadows: The heroes attend a local gathering, where they notice an unusual feature in the garden: a sundial. As it is evening, the sundial shouldn't be working, but it actually does! The shadow continues to point to the time accurately. Is this item magical? Where did it come from? Dungeon Masters should also pick a hero and allow him or her to see faint runic markings in the light of the moon. What do the runes say? Are they the maker's marks, or do they relate some dark secret?

84. Gilda's Gleeful Giggle: A dwarf named Gilda thinks she has developed a rather amusing new spell that she calls Gilda's Gleeful Giggle. It causes the target to start giggling and keep giggling until nobody in the target's line of sight and range of hearing is smiling or laughing or giggling or generally being happy and amused. Unfortunately, this effect isn't actually a spell, a local scholar points out. Gilda has a brooch on her chest that activates whenever she says a specific word (the verbal component of the "spell" she has created) and causes the effect mentioned above. What is this brooch? Does it have other powers? (The enterprising Dungeon Master can write up the effect into an actual spell and give it effects that reduce the target's combat ability and concentration.)

85. Cats Galore!: The local cats are congregating around a specific kender, who finds it rather curious. They follow him around wherever he goes, and more come to him each day. Why does the kender attract cats like this? He doesn't smell like fish or other kitty-food favorites. Could it have something to do with the interesting tiger's eye agate button on his shirt?

86. Fitness Regime: The chubby local lord or lady wishes to get back into shape, and he or she asks the heroes to help out. The heroes can set up a diet and exercise program, but, after about a week, they see that the person hasn't improved. In fact, the lord or lady is gaining weight and bulk! What is happening? Has someone cursed the person? What do the heroes do about it?

87. Runaway: A young child has run away from home, and the wailing mother asks the heroes to help her find him. If the heroes look into this matter, they discover that he was last seen near the docks, and he hasn't been seen since. Did he fall into the water? Did he hide away on a ship? What do the heroes do to help find the boy?

88. Art Imitates Life: The heroes pass by an artist sketching an action-oriented scene. If one of them looks at the scene, he or she discovers that the scene is one the group just lived through about a week or so ago. Should the heroes ask the artist about the scene, they discover that the artist has dreams occasionally, and keeps seeing them in the dreams. What's the connection between the heroes and the artist? Can they make use of this link, or do they wish to break it?

89. Sculptures: In the local village, a young woman - who has never been artistically inclined suddenly feels the urge to grab some clay and start making clay models. As she finishes her clay model, the model animates and runs off. The young woman is puzzled and frightened by this gift, so she turns to the heroes for help. While they're investigating, she takes up marble sculptures. Before she finishes her current work, which resembles a dryad, the young woman can tell the heroes that she now remembers an old woman who had passed through town a few weeks ago. She touched various people and granted wishes. Everyone had thought that she was crazy at the time. Is this the clue the heroes need to get started? Who else made a wish, and has it come true?

90. Master Scheduler: A local business has a new owner, who is getting all kinds of complaints from his workers. One of the workers finally approaches the heroes and asks for help. If the worker shows up later than scheduled or has changed shifts with another, something strange happens. The worker finds himself getting ready for work at the appropriate time and showing up at the time that the owner placed on the schedule. What do the heroes find out when they talk to the manager?

91. Rose-Colored Glasses: During a crisis, the heroes come across a person who completely ignores the situation. (For example, if a fire is destroying a building, the person walks on by calmly, ignoring the demands for her to join the bucket brigade.) The woman is wearing a set of glasses with a rose tint to the lenses. If asked, she points out that all is well with the world, and she is feeling the best she ever has felt! Does she not see the crisis? Does this have something to do with the glasses she wears?

92. Cries from Nowhere: The heroes are passing through an area when they hear cries for help. If they investigate, they find nobody. However, they do find a cairn of stones nearby. Do they pull apart the cairn? What do they find if they do?

93. Miracle Grow: The heroes visit a village where lush vegetation grows everywhere they look. In fact, they can see the grass growing! The people in the village are absolutely exhausted trying to keep up with this fast growth. Do the heroes help them stay on top of it, or do they investigate? What happens when they find that the culprit is a person with a wild magical talent?

94. Altered States: A young man approaches the heroes and asks for their help. When he pulls off his hood, the heroes see that his face changes constantly from one race to another. If asked, the man states that his body is in a kind of flux between elf and human. He is, in fact, a half-elf normally, and he doesn't understand what is going on. Do the heroes help him out? Is the young man a wild talent?

95. Staff of Stuff: The gully dwarves in the area are congregating for a meeting of some sort, and the other races around them are suspicious. This has never happened before! If the heroes investigate, they discover that someone has stolen the sacred gully dwarf Staff of Stuff. The staff usually remains in the hands of the local gully dwarf leader, but someone stole it yesterday. What does this staff look like and what can it do? Who is the thief? Do the heroes help the dwarves find the Staff of Stuff?

96. Ghosts or Goons?: The heroes hear of a haunted village nearby. If they visit it, they discover that the inhabitants fear for their lives. Every evening, something goes around the village and knocks on each door. Those who looked the first evening swore that they saw a ghostlike figure hovering outside the door. Ever since, they villagers have cowered in their houses and huts. If asked, they mention that something goes missing each night, too. Do the heroes investigate this haunting? What do they find? Is it a ghost, or is someone pulling a trick on the villagers?

97. Ghost Ship: If the heroes are traveling by ship, they find themselves in a bit of a quandary. Two days after they leave port, the crew mysteriously vanishes, and the ship around them takes on the look of a ship that hasn't been maintained for a long time. What has happened? Are the heroes aboard a ghost ship? How can they get home?

98. Special Delivery: The heroes receive a message containing a bunch of nonsense words from someone. The only thing that makes sense is the salutation, which says "Greetings, Heroes of the Arcane Order!" Who sent this message? What does it really say? What is the Arcane Order?

99. Secret Admirer: One of the heroes starts receiving small gifts and bouquets of flowers (or something else appropriate). If the heroes look into this and discover the admirer, not only is it someone rather surprising, but the admirer goes missing before the hero can talk to him or her. What happened to the person? Did he or she leave out of embarrassment, or was he or she kidnapped?

100. Gift Horse: As the heroes are traveling, a horse joins their group and refuses to leave them. It won't allow itself to be saddled or handled in any way. However, the heroes can see a strange brand on its hide. Can they figure out where this horse came from? If so, do they return it?

101. The Play's the Thing! The heroes enjoyed an evening's performance by a traveling troupe of actors. The play, a comedy, dealt with a plot by a trio of women to kill their boorish husbands. The only problem is, that night the local officials receive reports of several assaults on the men of the town -- by their wives! The heroes can become a part of the investigation when their innkeeper almost becomes a victim. The wives, all of whom attended the show, can't explain what drove them to violence. They cite only their husbands' annoying habits as justification. And the actors? They're nowhere to be found. . . .

Thanks goes out to the [Dragonlance mailing list](#) subscribers for submitting adventure hooks! If you're on the list, you might get a chance to participate in another project like this in the future! To join the list, visit <http://www.wizards.com/lists/Welcome.asp>



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Legends of the Lance™

Issue #8 - Holmswelt



Mary H. Herbert: From Dark Horse to Dragonlance

Mary H. Herbert started writing short stories in high school, where she and a friend swept the fiction and non-fiction categories of a school-wide writing contest. This success showed her that she liked creating stories, and she continued to write all sorts of things through college. After high school, she attended various universities and spent some time at the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Oxford, England. She wrote her first full-length novel about eighteen years ago, and she has two **Dragonlance** novels available: [Legacy of Steel](#) (available now) and [Clandestine Circle](#) (available in July 2000). When she's not writing, she is a full-time wife and homemaker, and mother to a teenaged daughter and pre-teen son. She also spends time volunteering and taking care of their animals. We caught up with her recently when she had a moment to spare and asked her a few questions.

**Chat Schedule**

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Legends of the Lance: First of all, what was your first published work? What was it like trying to get it published?

Mary Herbert: The first work I had published was titled *Dark Horse* -- thanks to TSR and Mary Kirchoff -- more years ago than I care to remember. *Dark Horse* was not only my first sale, but it was my first attempt at a novel. It made the rounds of publishers for several years before it went to TSR, and they kept it for a very long time before they agreed to buy it. But I was busy having a baby and didn't really care at that moment what was happening with the manuscript. Then Mary K. called me one August day and said, "We'd like to buy your book. Are you still interested?"

Are you kidding?!? *Dark Horse* stayed in print for years and made the trade paperback best-seller list for a month or two. It just went out of print last year, but Doubleday picked it up again with its sequel, *Lightning's Daughter*, and reprinted them for the Science Fiction Book Club.

Legends: Looking back, what was the toughest part of writing *Dark Horse*?

Mary: When I wrote *Dark Horse*, I began with the idea for a short story. Months later it was 500 pages long. Probably the toughest part was (and still is) getting the ideas out of my head and onto paper in some coherent and entertaining form. The second toughest part is the editing. It is very difficult to look at your own "baby" objectively and even harder to have someone else do it for you (accompanied by lots of red or blue ink or pages and pages of suggestions). I rewrote *Dark Horse* seven times before it was finally published.

Legends: That's a lot of work! I've noticed that you enjoy including animals in your projects. Why is that?

Mary: I like to include animals simply because I like animals. We have all sorts around here: a dog, a bird, a guinea pig, fish, a hamster, and the occasional orphan duck or squirrel. I enjoy the company of animals and am interested in the relationships between humans and other creatures. I would love to have a Hunnuli horse or a dragon or an owl like Varia as a companion!

Legends: Over the last couple of years, you've made a transition into writing for the **Dragonlance** setting. What do you like most about the world of Krynn?

Mary: Krynn is a fascinating world. It is very rich and constantly changing, and I think it offers something for almost every reader (or game player) from unicorns to Lord Soth to kender to draconians. One of my favorite aspects of the world is its dragons, the good ones, the bad ones, and those like Cobalt who fall somewhere in between because of the relationship they have with their riders. Cobalt was fun to create because he was a blue dragon allied with a good character.

The interaction between human and dragon on Krynn is endlessly entertaining, and one that I use in different ways in all three of the **Dragonlance** books I've written so far.

Legends: Now that you've written several **Dragonlance** novels, what do you find that you enjoy most about working with this shared world?

Mary: I enjoy working with all the different characters the most. Working in a shared world can be tricky because you have to stay within the rules and boundaries of that world without irritating the readers, the game players, the creators, or the other authors. On the other hand, it opens up a whole new vista of ideas, characters, situations, and story ideas that I would never have imagined on my own.

Legends: Since you've mentioned characters several times, which **Dragonlance** character do you like the most?

Mary: If you asked my son that question, he'd immediately say, "Raistlin. And Tanis. And Tasslehoff. Oh, and Sturm. And Jasper. And . . ." I feel the same way. It is impossible to pick just one. I like Tika and Caramon for their longevity and their love for each other, Sturm and Linsha and the Knights of Solamnia, Sara Dunstan and Cobalt, Lord Bight, every kender (I wish I could write about kender the way Margaret Weis can! She makes them so funny.), the centaurs, Goldmoon, Ulin and Lucy, etc., etc., etc.

Legends: Do you have a character that you've worked with that you like better than any other?

Mary: It is too difficult to choose one favorite. Since each work takes so much effort and concentration, the characters become friends (or enemies). How do you choose one friend over another? There are a few of my characters I would love to meet face to face. Valorian (from the book of that name) is one. He has always been a favorite. I like Sara Dunstan, too. I can relate to her age and her love for her child. I wish I had her courage. Gabria and her daughter, Kelene and their Hunnuli horses are very dear to me as well. Like I said, how do you choose?

Legends: Looking back on your first **Dragonlance** novel *Legacy of Steel*, what was the toughest challenge you faced?

Mary: The greatest challenge I faced when I started writing **Dragonlance** novels was the fact that I'd never read one. I had no idea what Krynn was about; I didn't know about the dragons, the magic, the characters, or the history. I thought Mary Kirchoff was kidding when she asked me if I wanted to try writing a shared world book about a world I knew nothing about. I read a few of the books and anthologies and decided I liked the world, so I agreed. After that, I took a crash course on Krynn, **Dragonlance**, and dragons with the help of Margaret Weis, [former Dragonlance brand manager] Sue Cook, the game department, and anyone else I could track down to answer my endless questions. Everyone was very helpful and supportive, and with their help, *Legacy of Steel* was created.

Legends: What are you working on now for the **Dragonlance** setting?

Mary: *Clandestine Circle* is the most recent book to be printed, but I just finished the rough draft of my third **Dragonlance** book, which is tentatively titled *Dragon's Bluff*. What grabbed me the most about *Clandestine Circle* is the setting. Sanction with its volcanoes, its unique problems, and its very colorful lord governor held my imagination from the beginning. Very little had been written about the city itself

after Lord Bight's arrival, so I basically started from the rubble and a few game descriptions and rebuilt the city.

Legends: When you were writing *Clandestine Circle*, what resources did you have to develop Linsha?

Mary: As with Sanction, there was not much previous material about these two, particularly Lord Bight. I read what I could find and asked Margaret a lot of questions, and [the book editors] sent everything they could find at Wizards. For the rest, I just filled in the blanks. Linsha had the best character development of the two, so I added the talking owl, Varia, as Linsha's companion, taught her how to juggle, dumped her in the middle of a conflict of loyalties and let her true character shine through.

Linsha is trying to make the best of a difficult situation that only gets more complicated as the story progresses. She has lousy taste in men, but she makes good friendships, and I would like to see at least one of those friendships develop further in another book. We'll see if anyone else agrees with me.

Legends: I certainly hope so. It sounds like you had fun with Linsha. Was she one of your favorite characters to develop in *Clandestine Circle*?

Mary: Oh, the power of an author! While I enjoyed working with Linsha in this city, the character that I enjoyed the most was Lord Bight. I modeled part of his character after a friend of mine who has a very devilish sense of humor. Bight has a complicated personality and an interesting secret I am not allowed to reveal at this time! I hope one of these days, the powers that rule Krynn will let me write about Lord Bight and Linsha again.

Legends: So do !! Earlier, you mentioned your current project called *Dragon's Bluff*. Can you tell us a little bit about it?

Mary: *Dragon's Bluff* is about Ulin and Lucy and is set in Flotsam sometime after the destruction of the Academy of Sorcery. It's full of dragons and a pirate's treasure and rogues and a town with a big problem.

Legends: We have a lot of roleplayers out there reading this who may want to know if you roleplay. Do you?

Mary: No, I don't roleplay, although my son would like to change that. He wants me to learn so I can become a Dungeon Master and teach him how to play **Dungeons & Dragons**. Unless the days become 48 hours long, and I get struck by lightning and suddenly learn to like games, it probably won't happen.

Legends: Before we end this interview, what advice do you have to offer people who may want to write novels and short stories professionally?

Mary: If writing is something you really enjoy and you are willing to stick with it through those long, lonely hours in front of a computer, be patient, be persevering, and grow a thick skin to ward off those rejection slips and critical editors.

Look for *Clandestine Circle* [on our site](#) or in stores near you in July 2000.



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