

Iridia

role-playing games and miniatures, old and new
by Christian Walker

On Point

It's about 6 am. Morrissey is crooning away on the .mp3 player and the sky is starting to lighten. I'm scribbling away like mad and it occurs to me that this is not a bad way to start a Saturday. Not bad at all. In this issue I am going to resurrect and revise one of the random tables I wrote years ago. I hope to re-write the entire series eventually. Do be sure to e-mail me with any comments at Christian@IridiaZine.net.

Until next time, Christian

This, That and the Other Thing: A Night at the Campfire

random tables for your game

Adventurers spend quite a bit of time sleeping outdoors. The next time the party beds down for the evening, roll a d6 and consult the table below. In my own campaign, the party's 12 year-old lantern boy ended up in a fist fight with the goblin from entry 1. The lantern boy won after kicking it in the groin. Several entries (2, 3, 5, and 6) might provide scenario seeds if the GM wishes to develop them.

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| <p>1) Drunken Goblin: A drunken goblin stumbles into camp during the middle of the night. The little fellow carries a bucket of rotgut and appears only mildly surprised to find itself face to face with the party. It will even hold out the bucket, offering the characters a drink. The creature is armed, but is more pathetic than dangerous. It will soon pass out, collapsing face first onto the ground.</p> | <p>4) Popular Campground: The spot where the characters have chosen to make camp appears to be quite popular. There's a fire ring, with dried scraps of meat, broken bottles and gnawed bones laying about. Searching the ashes yields more bones and broken pottery. The area surrounding the campground is littered with desiccated excrement.</p> |
| <p>2) The Giant: As the players sleep, something massive stomps through the forest. It crashes through trees, snapping branches and trampling shrubs underfoot. It is either unaware, or uninterested, in the party's presence. The night is dark, so the party cannot get a glimpse of whatever is mashing about. The creature is moving fairly quickly, so the sound of its progress will soon fade. In the morning, the players easily find its huge footprints.</p> | <p>5) Ruined Temple: Scouting the area around the campsite reveals a ruin, which has been enveloped with vines and shrubs. Upon a 60' square foundation rest crumbling columns, a shattered altar and rotting wood. Runes and symbols carved into the altar and columns attest to an evil deity. That night, tortured faces dance in the flames of the campfire. Moreover, the party's food tastes spoiled and the wine bitter. Troubled dreams await those who sleep.</p> |
| <p>3) Lone Mount: A horse strays into camp. Lather covers the animal, evidence of a lengthy, strenuous run. The horse is saddled and the attached bags contain a map case, water skin, flint and steel, some salted meat, 20' of rope and a pair of manacles. A search of the area will not turn up the rider. <i>Speak With Animals</i> will reveal that the horse belongs to a rider who was thrown from the saddle while fighting a large, man-like creature (ogre? giant?). The horse fled in terror and has been running for at least an hour.</p> | <p>6) The Hanged Man: As the players are setting up camp or foraging for wood, they discover a body hanging from a tree. The body is badly decayed, with a host of vermin feeding on the remains. The rope around the man's neck is frayed and looks as if it will snap at any moment. If the party cuts the man down, they will be unable to find any clues as to his identity. He is dressed in common clothing and has no possessions. <i>Speak With Dead</i> reveals that the man is from a nearby village. He claims to have been hung by vigilantes for a crime he did not commit.</p> |

Iron Rations

basic d&d

Even though Devon Ashwood had studied the dwarven language, he'd never actually seen a dwarf until today. And judging by what he saw, he hoped to never see another.

The squat demi-human had emerged from behind a boulder as Devon was binding Abel's wounds and while Aithne searched the dead ogre. The dwarf immediately started screaming something about trespassers and claim jumpers. This angered Abel, who was always looking for a fight, no matter what condition he was in. The human fighter slowly got to his feet, then stepped forward, hand on the pommel of his sword.

"Listen, runt, I don't know what your damn problem is, but you need to shut the —."

A crushing blow from the dwarf's hammer to Abel's sternum ended the conversation rather abruptly. Abel dropped to the ground like a sack of potatoes, leaving Devon to wonder why all their fights began with the human incapacitated.

Balnor of Forge Coinhammer has very little time, nor patience, for anything but gold. He views everyone as a threat to his prosperity and will meet any perceived slight with aggression. Currently, he is prospecting in a rocky area that features thick veins of quartz, which might also contain gold. He's already had to contend with an errant ogre stomping about, so the last thing he needs are elves and a big-mouthed human.

After his temper dies down, he will explain to the trio that they are trespassing and had best move along. He suggests that if they really want to see something interesting, they should explore the ruined tower to the northeast. (See area map in Iridia 2.) At night, strange, colorful lights dance around the stones. Balnor would investigate the phenomenon for himself, but so far the lights haven't interfered with his work.

Balnor, Level 3 Dwarf; Alignment: Neutral; Abilities: Str 16 (+2 to hit and damage), Int 11, Wis 14 (+1 on magic-based saving throws), Dex 11, Con 15 (+1 hit points per die), Ch 8 (-1 adjustments to reactions); AC: 7 (leather armor); Hit Dice: 3; Hit Points: 19; Attacks: war hammer (1d6+2); Move: 90'; Languages: Common, Dwarvish, Gnomish, Kobold, Goblin; Special Abilities: Dwarf abilities; Possessions: leather armor, war hammer, 10 gp, 20 sp.

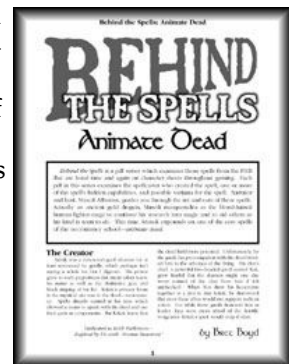
On My Bookshelf

things you need

Readers of this zine know that I love the undead. My Winter War campaign featured an undead invasion of a world that had never before seen necromantic magic. Mindful of this, Iridia reader Bret Boyd sent me a four-page .pdf supplement he wrote. Behind the Spells - Animate Dead, distributed by Ronin Arts, examines the origins of one of necromancy's core spells. In a narrative style, Bret presents the background of the gnoll shaman, Kritak, who labored to create an undead legion. Thwarted in his attempt to exact vengeance upon his enemies, Kritak the gnoll nevertheless created *Corpse Soldiers*, the predecessor of *Animate Dead*.

As an added bonus, the supplement presents a new weapon enhancement - Animating. Those slain by a weapon with the animating enhancement rise as undead under the control of the wielder. Wicked! Finally, Bret offers rules to allow a necromancer to wrest control of another wizard's undead. In a more amicable arrangement, there are also rules that allow a necromancer to transfer control of his undead minions to another wizard.

Behind the Spells - Animate Dead is an incredible value for only \$1. You get fiction, a new spell, a weapon enhancement and rules for controlling another wizard's undead. Do a keyword search for "Behind the Spells - Animate Dead" at RPGNow.com and download a copy today.



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