

# PARLAINTH<sup>TM</sup>

## ADVENTURES



FASA CORPORATION



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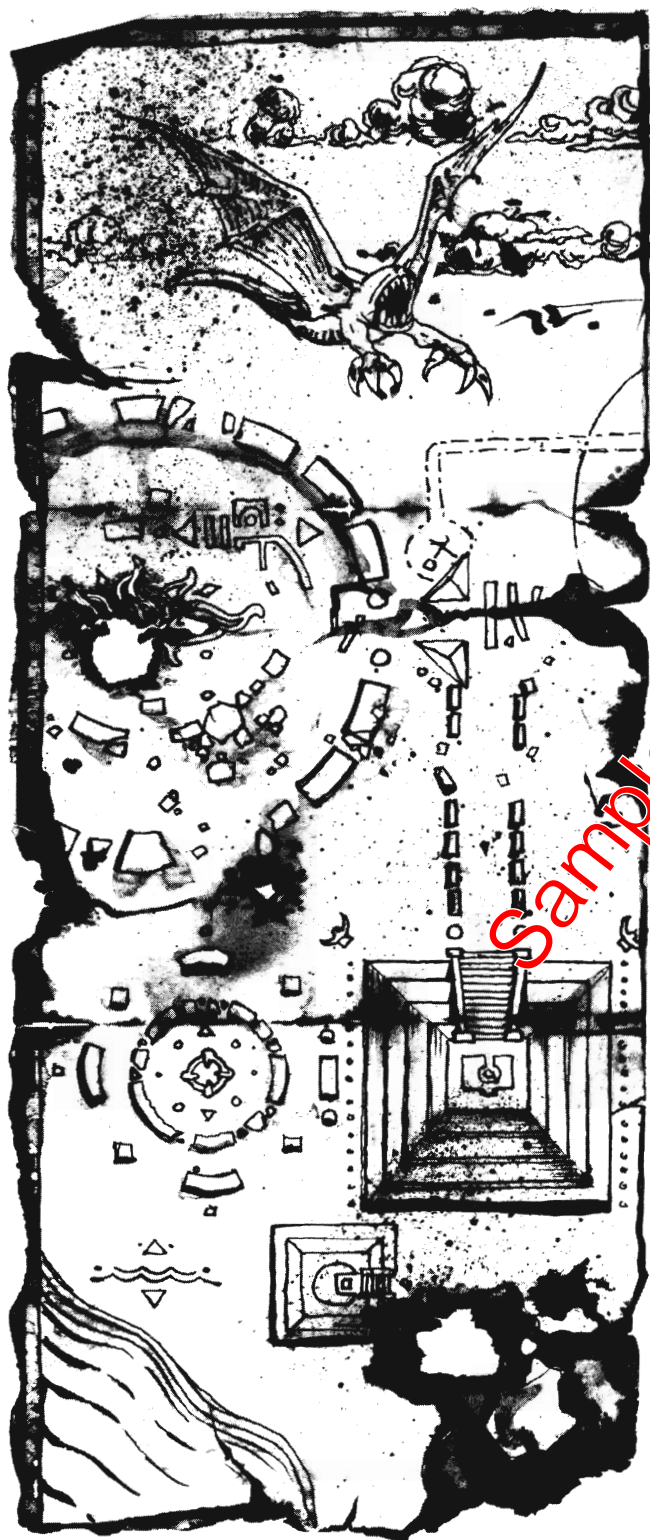
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## PARLAINTH ADVENTURES

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# INTRODUCTION



THOUSANDS OF YEARS ago there existed an age of magic and high adventure, the age of **Earthdawn**. The power of magic flowed freely through the world, and people could draw on magic to perform both wondrous feats and everyday tasks. But the dawn of magic also brought Horrors to earth, creatures from the depths of astral space that devoured all life in their path. For four centuries, the people of earth hid from the Horrors that devastated their land during the time that came to be called the Scourge. Now, the people of Barsaive have re-emerged from their sealed kaers and citadels to reclaim their world from the remaining Horrors and the oppressive Theran Empire. From all across Barsaive, bold heroes arise to explore the world, search for magical treasure, and slay the Horrors that still exist. Magicians spin the magical energies of the universe into powerful spells, and adepts use the magic to enhance their natural talents. Through magic, courage, skill, and daring, Barsaive's heroes strive to heal the world of the scars left by the Scourge and to build their own legends into the history of their land.

**Parlainth Adventures** is a collection of four short role-playing adventures set in the world of **Earthdawn**. Each of the adventures takes place in or near the ruins of the Forgotten City of Parlainth and the nearby town of Haven. **Blood Pact** takes the characters into the Twists, a portion of Parlainth's ruins where they must confront a Horror that can attack those who touch its blood. In **Dead Man's Hand**, the characters travel into the Eastern Catacombs, the region of Parlainth's undercity where the sinister Queen Twiceborn holds court over Parlainth's cadaver men. The characters must attempt to keep a friend from joining Twiceborn's kingdom of the animated dead. **Desire Box** is a lighthearted adventure set in Haven, in which the characters run across an ancient Theran magical item that brings them face to face with Chorrolis, Passion of Wealth. The final adventure, **Threads**, leads the characters into the magically active passageways of the Western Catacombs, where experiments performed centuries ago by Parlainth's magicians created a powerful Horror known as the Abomination.

## GAMEMASTERING NOTES

The adventures in **Parlainth Adventures** are linear—each follows a specific sequence. However, feel free to modify the adventures to suit your particular group of players. Though the encounters of each adventure progress logically, the gamemaster need not follow the adventure precisely as written to run a successful game. To run any of

these adventures, the gamemaster needs a thorough familiarity with the contents of this book, and both players and gamemaster should be familiar with the **Earthdawn** rulebook (ED).

All these adventures include clearly marked sections intended to be read aloud to the players. Adjust the text of these sections when necessary to accurately reflect events as they occur in your adventure; depending on the choices made by different groups of players, the assumptions in the existing text may not always be correct. All adventures in **Parlainth Adventures** are best suited for player characters of varying Circles; a brief introductory paragraph in each adventure suggests an appropriate number of characters and their recommended Circles.

## MAKING TESTS

Whenever player characters attempt to take actions such as casting a spell, swinging a sword at an opponent, tracking a Horror, or flirting with a barmaid, the gamemaster or the player rolls dice against a Difficulty Number to determine the action's outcome. These dice rolls are called tests. To make a test, the player or gamemaster rolls the appropriate Action dice based on the step number of the ability being used (see the **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 36, ED). If the dice roll result is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number, the test is successful and the character accomplishes his action. If the result is less than the Difficulty Number, the test is unsuccessful and the character fails to accomplish his action. In tests that deal with magic, the dice roll result often determines the duration of a magical effect as well.

Frequently, a test result determines not only success or failure, but the level of success. A test may have one of five success levels: Poor, Average, Good, Excellent, and Extraordinary. A Poor success level indicates failure that causes unpleasant side effects. An Average success—equal to or barely exceeding the Difficulty Number—means that the character just barely accomplished his action. A somewhat better dice roll yields a Good success, and a result close to double the Difficulty Number means an Excellent success. To achieve Extraordinary success requires an even better roll. Any success level greater than Average may give the character some gain for his actions or else valuable extra information. The amount of gain for each success level is determined by the gamemaster unless otherwise noted.

In many cases when the player characters must make a test, the required ability is noted, followed by the Difficulty Number of the task in parentheses. For example, a Perception (13) Test means that a player character must use his Perception ability against a Difficulty Number of 13.











## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Aside from the **Earthdawn** (ED) rulebook, this book contains everything required to run **Parlainth Adventures**. However, the **Parlainth: The Forgotten City** boxed set will greatly enhance the adventures. The boxed set provides much more detailed descriptions of the Forgotten City, its inhabitants, and its history. Gamemasters may also find the **Barsaive Campaign Set**, the **Earthdawn Gamemaster Pack**, and the **Earthdawn Companion** useful. Read the adventures carefully to familiarize yourself with the backgrounds of each before beginning the game. The gamemaster should be familiar with the basic outline of the plot of each adventure as well and know precisely which plot developments trigger later events. As always, be prepared to deal with the unexpected.

Each adventure begins with a prologue story and a brief introduction, followed by a **Plot Synopsis** that summarizes the story background and the most probable course of the adventure. Some adventures include a **Preparing the Adventure** section, which provides any special directions needed for setting up the game. The following chapters, called encounters, describe the situations and events the characters must deal with during the course of the adventure. Each encounter contains five sections: **Overview**, **Setting the Stage**, **Themes and Images**, **Behind the Scenes**, and **Troubleshooting**.

The **Overview** briefly summarizes the action that occurs during the encounter and describes the encounter's main conflict. The next section, **Setting the Stage**, contains a narrative description that the gamemaster reads aloud to the players. The narrative describes the player characters' location and what is happening to them as if the characters were actually there. Any special instructions for the gamemaster here are printed in **boldface** type.

**Themes and Images** helps the gamemaster set the mood and pacing for a particular encounter. It includes hints about imagery to use in the scene, emotions to convey, sounds, sensations, and so on. The information provided varies in form and content from scene to scene, ranging from general themes to specific sensory impressions.

**Behind the Scenes** explains what is really going on in each encounter. This section provides the gamemaster with all the information he needs to run the encounter, such as specialized descriptions of locations and events and statistics for gamemaster characters they may meet or creatures they may fight. If the players or gamemaster need a map to play an encounter, it appears here. As with **Setting the Stage**, any special instructions for the gamemaster here are printed in **boldface** type.

The final section of each encounter, **Troubleshooting**, offers suggestions to help the gamemaster get the adventure back on track should things go awry. For example, the characters may miss an important clue or lose a fight that they need to win. Most gamemasters will not want the player characters to get discouraged or killed off too easily.

This section offers the gamemaster options for keeping the game going over trouble spots. Of course, the gamemaster may ignore these hints and invent his own solutions or simply let the chips fall where they may.

Following the encounters, the section entitled **Loose Ends** sums up the consequences of the adventure and suggests ways the gamemaster might use the adventure's gamemaster characters and settings in future adventures. This section also includes **Awarding Legend Points**, guidelines for awarding the adventure's **Legend Points** to the player characters. In **Earthdawn** adventures of standard length, the gamemaster awards Legend Points after each gaming session as well as at the end of the adventure. Because the adventures in this book are designed to fit into a single gaming session, the gamemaster need only give his players an **Adventure Legend Award** (see **Awarding Legend Points**, following). **Cast of Characters** provides game statistics and descriptions for significant gamemaster characters in each adventure, including creatures and/or Horrors. One adventure contains a **Rumors and Research** section, which provides all the information the player characters can obtain from outside sources in the adventure: rumors, tales and legends, library research, and so on. If he wishes, the gamemaster can adapt much of the information in this section to future adventures.

## AWARDING LEGEND POINTS

The **Loose Ends** section of each adventure includes guidelines for awarding Legend Points for that adventure. These guidelines for Legend Awards indicate the points the gamemaster awards for each task accomplished or goal reached during the adventures. The **Adventure Legend Award** represents the Legend Points awarded for completing the adventure successfully. For more information on completing adventure goals and earning Adventure Legend Awards, see p. 242, ED. In addition, player characters may receive Legend Awards for creative roleplaying and/or heroics, defeating creatures and/or opponents, and finding or acquiring treasure.

For **creative roleplaying and/or heroics**, characters may receive a number of Legend Points for taking certain types of actions listed in each adventure. A single character may only receive one such award during a given adventure. Unlike other Legend Awards, the Legend Points listed for various acts of creative roleplaying or heroics are not divided among the characters.

The **Creature Legend Award** appears in the Creature/Opponent Award Table provided in each adventure. These tables list the available Legend Points for defeating the adventure's creatures and/or opponents, arranged by the type and number of each creature and opponent fought as well as by the number of player characters. The Legend Points listed for each creature represent the total number of points for each type, not the number of Legend Points per creature; for example, the Creature

