

UTA'S CHRONICLES -TALE 1-

THE BEAST OF DRACHENFELS



A FANTASY MIXED MEDIA GAME-NOVELLA BY
GREG BOZZETTI

Uta's Chronicles
Tale 1: The Beast of Drachenfels
(part 1)

– an epic journey through time where you choose your own path –

by Greg Bozzetti

Disclaimer:

This narrative is a work of fiction that includes elements based on real places and people. If you would like to know more about Jens Ritter Instruments, or visit the present day workshop in Deidesheim, please go to www.ritter-instruments.com. You can also contact the author at: greg@utaschronicles.com

Foreword:

In the summer of 2015, out of the blue, I started to type a few words on my keyboard: “A present day musician wakes up trapped in medieval Germany and must face Drachenfel’s Beast in order to escape.” What started as an idea for a mixed media bass project paying tribute to old “create your own adventure” game-books gave birth to what initially was a simple novella, which is now expanding to a series of adventures planned to become “a world.” A world where you, the reader, will sometimes have to make decisions directly impacting the story. A world where you will meet familiar historical figures and discover some of their not-so-familiar sides. A world deeply rooted in reality, but where you will meet dragons, giants, and a race of humans gifted with unnaturally long life.

In this first novella, I would like to invite you to take your first step into this world – regrouped under the title “Uta’s Chronicles” – and step into Middle Age Deidesheim...

Acknowledgements:

First and foremost, I would like to say a particular thank you to Mr. Jens Ritter, without whom this whole project would not have been possible! *Jens du bist ein wahrer Freund und eine wahre Inspiration für mich.*

I would also like to give a big thanks to:

- My editor, Troy, for his limitless patience and dedication.
- Epic SciFi author Christian Kallias senpai (check out his amazing work at <http://www.christiankallias.com>)
- Jan “Örkki” Yrlund from Darkgrove Design (cover artwork).

Links to paragraphs, better safe than sorry:

While there are links that send you to the relevant numbers, I would encourage you to memorize the number just in case your PDF reader or device isn’t interpreting these links well or decides to send you to the page instead of the exact place you should go. To be on the safe side, memorize (or write down if you prefer) where you have to go before clicking the link.

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Stats, skills and combat rules

HEALTH total = 50 HP

SKILLS (*see below*)

EQUIPMENT (*weapons, shield, armor and item pouch*)



Weapons: swords, axes (*one or two handed*), spears, etc....

(*Attack = determined by dice roll + weapon power; ex: roll of 5 + weapon power of 2 = 7 damage points inflicted to the enemy*)

Shield (*reduces damage; cannot be equipped if using two handed weapons*)

Armor (*reduces damage*)

Item pouch:

accessory (only 1 can be carried at a time; ex: Att+1, Def+1, Luck+1, Anti-Poison...)
silver coins

Permanent Skills:

Before the start of your adventure, you have 25 points to freely distribute between 4 base skills. Each of these skills starts at 10 points.

-**Mind** 10 + __

-**Luck** 10 + __

-**Diplomacy** 10 + __

-**Stealth** 10 + __

Combat and combat skills:

a) Overview:

Unless stated otherwise, **enemies always attack the player first** at the start of the battle and therefore have the first strike (roll).

HP: total of Health Points

ATT+XX: base attack + dice roll

The player gets higher "+XX" by obtaining better equipment.

Shields and armor directly reduce enemy attacks; for example, bronze armor reduces 1 HP from each total enemy attack.

ex: "Slime"

HP 12

ATT +1

If the slime attacks you with a roll of 3, the total Health Points to be reduced from your HPs will be 4.

If, however, you are wearing bronze armor, the total Health Points to be reduced from your HPs will only be 3.

b) Combat skills:

You can choose 1 combat skill from the following:

• **Evade:**

A special power allowing the player to evade the enemy attack.

Ex: before the turn starts, the player chooses 1 number, for example 3.

If the enemy roll lands on a 3, the attack completely misses and the player receives no damage at all.

Note this skill can be used a maximum of 4 times in a single battle

• **Counter**

If the enemy rolls the number you have chosen, you will receive the roll damage, but you will also automatically deliver a counter of the same damage to the enemy in the same turn.

NB: this skill can be used a maximum of 3 times in a single battle

• **Evade and counter**

If the enemy rolls the number you have chosen, you will not receive the roll damage, but you will automatically deliver a counter of the same damage to the enemy in the same turn.

NB: this skill can be used a maximum of 2 times in a single battle

• **All or nothing**

When the enemy's HP is equal or below half of its total (*ex: 50/100 HP or lower*), if you roll the number you have chosen, the enemy's HP will be reduced to zero, no matter how many HP remains. If you miss, nothing happens.

NB: this skill can be used only once in a single battle

c) Enemy combat skills:

Certain enemies you encounter may also have combat skills. Please note that **there is no maximum number of "enemy combat skills" per single battle!**

d) Special moves common to both player and enemies: critical hits

If the same dice number appears two turns in a row, the player/the enemy gets a "free" additional 3rd hit, corresponding to the number's value.

Ex:

1st turn: roll = 4

2nd turn: roll is 4 again – free "4" again (*therefore a total of "8 damage points" for this turn*)

NB: there is no maximum number of critical hits per single battle (*for both player and enemy*)

By the way, if you don't have a pair of dice handy, I would suggest using an online dice tool such as this one: <https://freeonlinedice.com/>

1.

Seated on a train and looking through a small window, you contemplate the numerous vineyards stretching over the horizon. After spending hours on a modern express train, the slow, two wagons local train is a strong contrast. It is also a relief; as the scenery around you grows greener, you are nearing your final destination, a small town called Deidesheim. Located in Rhineland-Palatinate, southwest Germany, Deidesheim lies at the heart of the lush German Wine Route.

It is your second time there, the first being last December, around Christmas time. As spring is nearing, you discover landscapes you had not noticed on your previous trip, as the weather at the time was rather cloudy; hills, forests, castles ruins, and of course countless vineyards.

An announcement coming over outdated speakers brings you out of your reverie: "Nächste Haltestelle, Deidesheim."

You reach for your luggage and exit the train, making your way to your hotel.

Last year, you stayed in a hotel called the Deidesheimer Hof, but it was full this time, so you booked a room at a smaller hotel called Ritter von Böhl. The hotel has a long history dating back to the Middle Ages. Coincidentally, the hotel shares the family name with the reason for your trip; custom electric basses and guitars maker, Jens Ritter. You've played some of his instruments belonging to other players before, but this trip is to order an instrument custom made to your specs.

After a short walk through Deidesheim's picturesque narrow back streets, you arrive at the hotel. You check-in without any issue, thanks to your fluent German, and as you go up to your room using the stairs, you are greeted by a large and imposing knight's battle armor covered in black with some golden motifs. The knight bears a full helmet leaving only a small horizontal surface for the eyes, a large shield and a long spear. You pause for a moment and gaze at the impressive sight, then continue up the stairs. You notice that some parts of hotel, like the whole area on your left, seem to be under some heavy renovations.

You turn right into a narrow corridor, and arrive at your room.

You open your room's door with the key and right away drop your luggage on the bed; feeling glad to finally arrive.

You take a look around; the room is very simple, almost bare, with just a small window with a view on an interior courtyard.

Your meeting with Jens Ritter is planned for tomorrow morning, and the long train trip made you tired. You take a quick shower and then fall asleep while watching some local television program...

You awake the next day with a strange sensation; it feels much colder than it should be for that time of the year. Also, there's a strong smell you cannot identify hanging in the air.

You open your eyes, and quickly understand that something is not right...

You look around the room and discover with shock that everything has changed! The walls are completely bare, the few decorations that were hung on the wall are now gone; no more furniture, no more television on the wall, and even what used to be a window is now just a simple hole in the wall!

Looking down, you see the clothes you were wearing are now gone, replaced by not so fresh looking beige colored shirt and pants. Also, you wear odd-looking pointy leather shoes, their soles covered in reddish dust.

It looks as if someone played an elaborate prank on you, and turned the whole room into a movie set from the Middle Ages.

Your first reflex is to reach for your mobile phone; you see it on the ground a few centimeters away from you, but you realize your whole bed is actually gone! You were sleeping on what looks like straw.

Also, you do not see any of your belongings. Starting to get angry, you quickly head for the bathroom.

Even an elaborate prank can't turn a bathroom into something else, you think, while quickly closing the distance. Your anger turns into fear; the bathroom is completely gone. In fact, there isn't even a wall separating it from the rest of the room anymore.

Armed only with your mobile phone, you decide to exit your room, which is simply covered by a heavy curtain rather than a proper locking door.

The scene unfolding at front of your eyes is unreal.

All the other rooms are covered by the same heavy curtain you just went through, and you see a few people with strange dresses; which you immediately recognize as what people wore during the Middle Ages.

You quickly go down the stairs to see what the outside looks like. As you exit the building, you understand what the strong smell you have been experiencing since waking up is, horses. There are no cars on the street in front of you, but

plenty of horses and even some cows, as well as droppings and other filthy looking materials on either side of the street.

On your left, you see a straight street going a few hundred meters in the distance. It looks much different than how you last saw it yesterday!

In front of you is a white and brown, austere two story buildings, with a wooden roof and a large, round wooden door. The architecture reminds you of military buildings.

On your right, you see a building bearing a dozen banners of what appears to be a Catholic priest's ceremonial hat crossed with two staffs, and a large key inside a black shield.

A few dozen meters behind that building, you do recognize a familiar sight; the Deidesheimer Hof hotel. It may not be a hotel here, but at least it looks similar.

You would need to get closer to make sure, but from the distance, it looks fortified and surrounded by armored soldiers.

After you have made a few hesitant steps down the street, you hear a very familiar sound coming from your pants' back pocket. Your mobile phone's morning wake-up ring tone, set for 8am.

For a few seconds, you just stand there in the middle of the street, hoping that the sound will actually wake you up, and that you will find yourself back in your modern day hotel room.

But nothing happens. Well, that is not entirely true. What happens is that a few passersby gather around you, intrigued by the unusual sound.

"What is that sound?" asks a short, middle-aged man carrying a heavy leather bag full of potatoes.

"It sure is an odd sound!" says another man as he approaches.

Intrigued, two women talking to each other join the group.

You now have a small crowd of six people with the same type of medieval clothing looking straight at you. A strong and unpleasant smell comes from them.

What do you say to them?

- If you would like to say that this is just your mobile phone, [go to 12](#)
- If you would like to try your luck with a quick made up excuse about the sound, [go to 94](#)
- If you prefer to say nothing, then [go to 36](#)

4.

You are lucky!

After briefly gathering your thoughts you say, “Oh, this is coming from an instrument made by Jens Ritter.”

- [Go to 85](#)

6.

You take a few steps inside and immediately notice a dozen pairs of eyes staring at you as if you were David Bowie coming straight out of the *Life on Mars* music video. The image reminds you of an insane 12 string bass current time Jens built, but having no time to spend day dreaming, you take a deep breath and walk confidently toward the counter.

Once you get closer, you can clearly see the large counter and what’s behind it. There are two short swords on the counter and two racks containing various bladed weapons behind it, as well as a half-bodied mannequin wearing pieces of upper body armor. When entering, you’d noticed a couple of large wooden barrels next to a shelf with wooden cups; you deduce that this place is as a bar as well as a weapon shop.

Since the bartender, or the armorer, you are not too sure, is already busy with potential customers, you decide to look at the various wares for sale. There are swords, long and short, axes, knives, and bows. There is even a terrifying looking bladed gauntlet that reminds you of Freddy Krueger’s glove. Armor parts of different colors and design are also for sale. You notice that the prices seem to be cheaper than what you have seen at the marketplace.

Since the sword Jens gave you is likely of higher quality than the ones sold here, you head back toward the customers having a drink at the entrance.

On your way there, you spot a staircase on your left leading to a second floor. The look of the women standing at the bottom of the staircase leaves you no doubt of the kind of business taking place there. You let out a small laugh, impressed by the versatility of this place.

You approach a couple of customers standing around a barrel used as a table to hold their cups and wonder how to engage the conversation.

You don’t have to think for long, as one of the customers, a middle-aged man with a rough look, raises his head at you and says, “Judging from that hilt, it looks like you have a nice sword there. Do you know how to use it?”

His companions laugh loudly.

“Yeah, I do,” you manage to say. “But, you know, practice makes perfect.”

“Ah, true. If you would like to get some practice, there’s a weapons school a few meters down the road. They often have practice tournaments; maybe you could give it a try?”

One of the man’s companions says mockingly, “Hey Gunter, why don’t you give it a try yourself?”

“Shut up Herbert,” replies the man.

As you head toward the exit, a thin old man, standing alone a few meters away from the loud customers, says to you, “Hey, young fellow, come on over here. I have something that may interest you.”

- If you would like to hear what the old man has to say, [go to 124](#)
- If you would rather not waste any more time here, and go back to the street, [go to 38](#)

7.

Standing in the street in front of Jens’ house, you take a moment to gather your thoughts.

The sword in the scabbard hanging by your side feels strange. It is both reassuring and frightening at the same time. You managed to store the Larch potion into one of your pockets, but hope you will not have to use it.

Mechanically, you reach into your right pocket to grab your mobile phone – and then remember you entrusted it to Jens. You wanted to look at the time, but you will simply have to guess it; or find some sort of clock. It seems to be still morning.

Thinking about time, you hope Jens will find a way to help you get back to yours – and are determined to do all you can to make that happen; the sooner the better.

Looking front of you, you see several two-story houses linked together, some with open doors, some closed.

The street goes either left or right; left is the way you came – toward what you have nicknamed “the Deidesheimer Hof,” and right is to a part of town you have not been yet.

Where would you like to go next?

- If you would like to investigate the area just in front of Jens' atelier, [go to 222](#)
- If you would like to go left and return back to the Deidesheimer Hof and the street market, [go to 15](#)
- If you would like to head right to explore a new part of town, [go to 79](#)

10.

Sorry – this paragraph will be available in Part 2.

Please go back to where you came from.

12.

The group seems confused by your answer.

“What Devilry is that?” asks one of the two women.

In the distance, you see a menacing figure approaching.

All this commotion has brought the attention of what appears to be a patrol guard; he is taller than the passersby, wears light armor and a half helmet covering his head. The passersby stand aside as the guard approaches. Now in front of you, he asks, “What is going on here?”

- If you would like to try to run away, [go to 113](#)
- If you prefer to say nothing, then [go to 36](#)

13.

With barely no time to breath between rounds, and no time to wonder if the moves you just executed were just sheer luck or not, your next opponent walks toward you and gets ready.

Your opponent is a tall young man with long blond hair wearing a blue tunic. He seems relaxed, and you can tell he is probably experienced in this kind of competition.

As soon as the match starts, he waives his wooden long sword left and right in the air, before rotating it against his wrist and executing an upward strike toward your torso.

In order to first jump back to avoid the blow and then spring back to counter attack, your roll should be:

over 5

but under 10

- If you manage to outperform your opponent, [go to 86](#)
- If not, [go to 161](#)

15.

You arrive at the marketplace; it is a very lively, colorful and crowded area.

There are small stands all around you, some covered with cloth, some with their goods simply laid on tables, as well as other shops located in small buildings surrounding the northern part of the marketplace. From where you stand, you notice a sign that likely belongs to an armory, as well as a small tavern that looks overcrowded with customers. In the distance, you notice two fierce looking guards on horseback; luckily for you they seem to be leaving and heading toward the town's North exit. You feel relieved that those two were not there earlier today when you had to run away.

You slowly make your way forward through the crowd while looking around; people are chatting in various dialects, children are running around, and sellers are loudly trying to attract customers to their stands.

“Welcome stranger!” hails a voice.

“Best goat cheese in the whole Kurpfalz!” says a woman from the cheese stand while waiving at you.

There are many different smells in the air, creating a rather strong, hard to describe scent; it's a mix between strong cheese and a horse stable. Or maybe it is only because you are standing next to the cheese stand.

You would like to move forward into the market but are blocked by an old lady walking around with a few live lambs alongside her. After spending a moment behind her, and the new lamb smells adding to the previous stench, you finally manage to pass the old lady without damaging her or the lambs.

- [Go to 80](#)

16.

The Deidesheimer Hof stands at front of you.

It looks nothing like you remember; the once familiar light colored building is now a dark, imposing monument with barred windows and fortifications. There is what seems to be a street market on the right of the building.

As for the building itself, the two entrances, at the lower and upper levels, both have guards at front of them.

Gathering your thoughts, you remember that this hotel used to be your landmark for Deidesheim; in other words, for you, this hotel represents the town's "center." It also means that from that location, Jens Ritter's shop – or whatever is there right now - is not far.

Keeping a low profile, you head toward Jens Ritter's shop, or whatever you will find there.

- [Go to 164](#)

17.

You follow the instructions Jens provided; you turn right outside his house and head north for a few hundred meters until you reach a guarded gate. You pass the gate without the guards asking you any questions, and you turn left to enter the western 3rd tier.

A glance at the overall scenery immediately makes you understand what Jens meant earlier; the main street is narrower, darker, dirtier, and most of the houses are in rather poor shape. Houses seem to be more basic than the ones you have seen so far, and most feature thatched roofs rather than stone.

Fewer people walk down the street, and the atmosphere is quieter.

You lightly touch the hilt of your sheathed sword at your side to make sure it is there, and you take your first steps into the area.

- [Go to 251](#)

18.

You are in front of where St. Ulrich church would be in present time.

A small church stands there next to a wide and deep hole in the ground with some wooden planks on the side. You wonder if this is for the construction of a larger church. You enter the small church. There are half a dozen rows of empty wooden benches and an altar with a large cross on the back. A priest stands near the altar. The atmosphere brings back memories of old role-playing computer games you played when you were young. For a moment, you consider asking the priest if it is possible to save your game or remove a curse but finally choose not to.

A little nostalgic, you leave the safety of the small church.

- [Return to 81](#)

19.

After receiving a couple of strong hits from the stick, the two wolves seem to have understood their lesson. They still stand but realize they will not have the upper hand. The one that seems to be the leader slowly starts walking backward while still fixing you in his eyes as he growls softly.

After a few seconds, the other wolf quickly turns around and flees downhill as well.

You let out a sigh of relief and let go of the stick.

If you would like, you can take this opportunity to apply some larch balm on your wounds, thus recovering 50 health points.

After gathering your thoughts, you continue your way downhill but are shortly interrupted by animal shouts and cries.

“Wolves again!” you mutter under your breath.

Only this time, they are cries of pain followed by silence.

Intrigued, you stop and listen.

In the distance, you hear two men talking to each other.

While crouching, you follow the sound of their conversation, until you get close enough to make out their features. You do not need the light of day to tell that the two men were not part of the ceremony you witnessed. Their hair is untidy, their clothing mismatched and torn; these two are likely bandits.

“Ha! That was easy!” says the smaller one.

“Shhh - not so loud!” says the other one. “Too easy. They must have been roughed up by the prey they were following; and that prey may still be around.”

“Ahhh, I don’t think so.”

“Anyway, start working on their skin; we’ll get a good price for those.”

“And why you don’t give me a hand?”

“Because I need to keep watch.”

“Come on; it’s always me that does all the work!”

The two men keep on arguing.

You have a quick choice to make.

You can try using stealth to pass nearby the bandits without being seen (stealth skill equal to or above 20 required).

You can try your luck to avoid the bandits.

Finally, you can take this opportunity to attack them by surprise (you get a 2 turn bonus).

- If your stealth skill is equal to or above 20, [go to 32](#)
- If you wish to try your luck to avoid the bandits, [go to 57](#)
- If you rather wish to attack them by surprise, [go to 66](#)

21.

You dash to the opposite direction of where the guard is coming from.

You hear him yell, “Halt! Stop him!”

Unfortunately for you, at the same time, a couple of knights exit the guardhouse on your right. You run as fast as possible, but within a few seconds you feel a sharp pain coming through your chest as a deadly spear goes through your body. Your eyes start to blur, and the last thing you see is a group of knights gathering around your body. Your adventure ends here.

27.

The next morning, while eating some cheese and bread, you gather some additional information about the Dragon’s mountain from Jens and Uta.

You learn the locals have named that hill “Drachenfels” decades ago. It is a place they have always feared and avoided. The hill has alternate charming names such as “red path hill” and “the gates of Hell.”

You also tell Jens and Uta about some elements you forgot to mention yesterday.

What seems to surprise Jens is the mention of the disappearing girl in white. The locals know a strange cult has some sort of camp on that hill, but they haven’t conducted any official investigation. According to Jens, the cult members have been there for over a year and provide some kind of financial support to the Bürgermeister, who is likely turning a blind eye to their activities. Furthermore, some of the cult members are financially beneficial to many traders and shop owners in town, one more reason everyone doesn’t mind the cult’s business.

You also talk again about the portal and ask how Jens knows this will get you home. Uta is quick to remind you that it will *likely* get you home. Unfortunately, Jens remains rather vague on that topic, simply telling you to trust him.

When you are finished eating, Jens says, “Listen, I have some good news for you. And some bad. I am afraid you will need to return to Drachenfels soon.”

“You are kidding, right?” you reply.

“I am afraid not; there is something specific I need in order to finish the sword, and it can only be found there.”

“Let me guess – you can’t get involved and get it yourself or ask someone else to get it – right?”

“Well, no – actually I could get it myself, but time is of the essence, and I prefer to use my time working on the sword, while you go there – since you already know the area.”

“I see. You said there was some good news?”

“Yes! First, I suggest you go there during daytime, and stop before the very top of the hill. That way you should not encounter the Dragon, and if stopped by cult members, you can always pretend to be lost.”

You look at Uta, and ask, “He is serious?”

“Too serious, if you ask me,” says Uta while licking some milk from his bowl.

Jens continues, saying, “I need a piece of wood from a specific tree. You will need to bring me back some beech wood.”

- [Go to 208](#)

You continue walking for a few moments and see two large buildings on either side of the street. On your left is a large two-story building with thick walls and a small tower. From the sign at the front, and the young men practicing with wooden swords in the courtyard, you deduce it is some kind of weapons school. On your right side is what appears to be another school, but judging from what you can see, this is likely a dancing and juggling school or practice ground.

- If you would like to investigate the weapons school, [go to 106](#)
- If you would like to investigate the courtyard where people are practicing dance steps, [go to 48](#)
- If you prefer to continue down the street, [go to 205](#)

29.

You end your exploration of town for now, and walk back to Jens' place.

When you arrive, the large oak front door is already open.

You enter and say, "Hello Jens, I'm back! Are you here?"

You hear Jens' voice distantly coming from across the courtyard, saying, "Yes, over there; please come join me."

As you head toward Jens' location, you hear the sound of steel against steel.

You enter the forge, which is located where the present day instrument building area would be. It is a large room, mostly lit by a fire located in the west corner. Metal equipment lies all around, as well as a few upper body mannequins with pieces of armor and helmets. There is also a large rack with what seems to be sword blades.

You turn your attention to Jens; he's using a hammer to hit a piece of steel placed on top of a large anvil. Leaning closer, you notice that the piece of steel does not seem to be large enough to be used on a sword.

"What are you working on?" you ask between two hits of the hammer.

"Horseshoes!" says Jens.

"Horseshoes?" you repeat, surprised.

"Yes. Not as flamboyant as swords, but it pays the taxes. I also build different kinds of tools and equipment. Also, I do quite a lot of repair work."

You nod thoughtfully.

Jens continues speaking while casually hitting the steel with his hammer.

"I hope the heat and the noise are not bothering you too much!"

“No, no, that’s fine with me.”

“And your clothes will likely get dirty because of all the coal laying around.”

“That must be tiring work hammering that hard for a long period of time.”

“Not really. Actually, it’s more about accuracy than strength. You do not want to hit the steel at the wrong place, especially on a sword’s blade.”

You watch with interest as Jens continues working.

He finishes after a few minutes. He grabs each horseshoe one by one with a clamp and inspects them carefully.

Once satisfied, he joyfully says, “*Das is der Hammer!*”

Having heard this expression before, but not certain, you ask, “Sorry, what did you say?”

“Oh, forget it – this is just a strange expression I use,” Jens says smiling.

You simply smile back at Jens, but laugh quite hard inside, thinking *so that’s where it comes from!*

Jens neatly clears his workspace and tools, then invites you to move to the main part of the house.

“So, how was your day?” Jens casually asks while removing some protective clothing used on his arms and chest.

“Well, nothing of the ordinary, you know. I woke up in the Middle Ages, I’m walking around funnily dressed with a sword by my side... And, oh, I met a talking cat today; nothing out of the ordinary, really.”

Jens chuckles.

You proceed to tell Jens about your activities in detail.

“Hmmm, then nothing that really helps so far, seems like,” Jens finally says.

“I’m afraid not. I have seen a few fancy carriages, but no DeLorean to take me back home so far.”

“What is that, some special breed of horses?”

“Yeah, kind of. But I don’t think you have them yet, but it’s a big thing in the future.”

Jens nods seriously and says, “Oh, talking about the future, I have spent quite some time on your – phone – it is truly fascinating.”

“I guess... I mean, I just take it for granted, but yeah, I can understand you would find it amazing.”

“I have seen some very realistic drawings of particularly colored places; is this where you live?”

“You probably mean the pictures of New York or Tokyo?”

“I never heard of those places; they look fascinating.”

“I don’t live there, but I enjoy going there for vacation; yes, very colorful places,” you say with a slight sadness in your voice, as talking about it reminds you how far away from them you are.

“There’s also this,” Jens hesitates, “activity,” he finally says, “called *Candy Crush*; what is the goal of that?”

You burst out laughing.

“Well, there’s no goal, it’s just a game to waste time.”

Jens looks very confused but does not pursue the topic further.

Instead, he informs you he has also been investigating why you could be here, but that nothing of interest came out yet. He reassures you by telling you that he’s confident some clues will likely soon emerge.

Jens takes you to a different part of the house hosting the kitchen, where he asks a few more questions about your world while preparing dinner.

Jens also asks if he could still keep your mobile phone, to which you respond positively, adding that it’s not like you are going to need it right away.

Dinner is particularly good; Jens has made roasted chicken with potatoes and corn, along with some berries.

Once done eating, Jens walks you to your room, which is located not far from the dining area, where the wood storage would be in the present time.

You take a look at the room; it is rather simple, with very little furniture.

Actually, it appears that Jens is rather proud of having this spare room, which even has its own mattress. Next to it, lays a pile of blankets and some animal skins. Jens provides you with some practical information, bids you good night and closes the door as he leaves. You take a moment to arrange the mattress with some blankets, and you have but very little time to recall today’s events before falling deep asleep.

- [Go to 58](#)

31.

You stand in front of a large building with several archways, each guarded by soldiers. There is a large amount of townspeople coming in and out. The location and general outline of the building reminds you of the present day

Deidesheimer Hoff's hotel. It looks like the building must be used for official functions; you see many flags hanging but do not recognize any of them.

Wanting to know more, you decide to ask an old lady standing near you about it.

"Excuse me, ma'am, can I ask you a question?" you ask.

"Yes, of course. What can I help you with?" replies the old lady.

You question her about this location. She explains that several buildings form what is known as the town's government office, which includes the Bürgermeister's office and residence, the taxation office, and a large hall and housing quarter where important foreign guests are hosted. The mayor is called "Bürgermeister Gentellmann," and answers to a higher authority from the town of Speyer, located roughly a day's walk away.

The lady also mentions that once a year the building's dining hall is open to locals and they can taste the cooking of the Bürgermeister's personal chef. She appears to be a big fan of the chef and mentions his famous spicy pig stomach tartare dish. You wonder for one second what this would taste like, thank the lady for her time, and move on.

- Once you are done here, [return to 81](#)

32.

You manage to pass close by to the bandits without them noticing and resume your climb downhill. You feel bad for the wolves you previously spared, but you prefer avoiding any unnecessary and potentially deadly fights.

- [Go to 44](#)

33.

A few seconds after the hooded men leave the Alte Eber tavern, you slowly exit as well.

There is still some sunlight and you can see the two men heading toward the town's west exit.

You never trailed anyone in your life before, but you discover you are doing rather well, keeping your distance a few meters from the two men and pretending to mind your own business.

Things grow more complicated once you are about to exit the town.

There's a crowd inside the city, but once you exit, if you maintain the same distance, it would be too obvious that you are following the two men.

You decide to wait a few seconds before continuing to trail the mysterious men.

You have no trouble following them, as the two seem to be engaged in a rather energetic discussion about a topic you cannot clearly hear from the distance.

The men walk a good twenty minutes, during which time you are able to contemplate the surroundings outside of Deidesheim; you are impressed, and almost scared, by the ominous presence of the dark forest and towering mountains. The trees are all around, obscuring your field of view. This beautiful and mysterious scenery makes you better understand the respect, and sometimes fear, that people from that time showed to nature; especially during nighttime.

You are taken out of your reverie as the two men are about to enter a dense forest.

For a moment, you hesitate to follow them – if something happens this far away from town, no one will come to your rescue – but your curiosity is stronger, and you decide to keep going.

- [Go to 375](#)

34.

You discreetly get closer to the men and now understand what unconsciously caught your attention: their shoes.

First, they are the exact same shoes as the ones you wore when you first woke up here. You think that this could be some kind of standard shoe model, or maybe there are only one or two shoemakers for the whole area, so most people wear the same type of shoes, but you haven't seen those shoes on any other people.

Secondly, you clearly see some reddish dust on their shoes, the same reddish dust you had noticed on your own shoes when you first woke up here. Your mind races for an explanation when the men stop their conversation and stand up.

It seems like you finally found an interesting lead; you quickly decide to discreetly follow the two men and see where they are headed next.

- [Go to 355](#)

35.

As the bandit's short sword is about to hit your chest, you unconsciously step to your right, avoiding the strike.

Carried forward by his attack, the bandit loses his balance and falls to the ground, the short sword falling out of his hand.

Pleasantly surprised by the move you just pulled, you slowly move your hand to your sword's hilt and observe the bandits' reaction.

- [Go to 55](#)

36.

You remain silent, and after a while the sound stops. You thank the Gods for the automatic "snooze" function.

The men and women around you start dispersing as they look for the sound's origin.

You decide to leave the area and head directly for what used to be the Deidesheimer Hof.

- [Go to 16](#)

38.

After a few meters, you see a wooden sign of a hand and a potion, hung above the entrance of a small house. As you wonder what kind of shop this is, the door opens, and a charming woman exits. She's smiling and looking pleased.

Once she passes you, you hear the voice of an old lady calling you, "Co-come inside young man."

- If you would like to enter the building to speak to whoever has just called you, [go to 47](#)
- If you prefer to ignore the voice and continue down the street, [go to 28](#)

40.

The bold man leads you to the back of the school. You observe some students training with bows and crossbows shooting at wooden targets. There are also a few seated students sharpening swords under the supervision of an older student.

The bold man indicates a board where you write down your name.

Since only a few people are participating, there will be a total of 5 rounds to determine the winner.

Here are the rules for this small practice tournament:

There will be a total of 3 rounds for you to compete, including the final.

Your opponent will make a move, the move (roll dice) you make as a counter will determine if you successfully avoid and counter the blow; thus winning the match.

If your move (roll dice) is unsuccessful, the blow hits you and you lose the match, ending the contest.

The bold man hands you a wooden middle sword, and you get ready for the first match.

Your opponent is a young man dressed in brown, equipped with a wooden sword similar to yours. He does not seem very confident.

The bold man gives the signal for the match to start.

The young man hesitates for a moment, and then lunges at you with a straight thrust to the chest; in order to step aside to avoid the blow and counter attack, your roll should be:

over 4

but under 11

- If you manage to outperform your opponent, [go to 13](#)
- If not, [go to 161](#)

41.

You spend the next hour trying to explain your situation to Jens, who listens without interrupting you. He does not seem to be too disturbed by your tale.

Finally, once you have explained everything, Jens says, “So, if I understand you right, you come from a place where people can talk into mechanical devices

over great distances, where I make lightning powered lutes, and you have actually travelled around seven hundred years back in time, or to a parallel universe – from which you would like to leave – is that about it?”

“Well, yes, basically that’s it,” you say, a little overwhelmed by this blunt summary, which actually rather accurately reflects your current situation.

“Huum...” says Jens, apparently deep in thought. He remains silent for a while before exclaiming, “Oh; okay, now I got it! I have an idea!”

“To return me to where I belong?!?”

“Pardon me? Oh – no, sorry. I was just thinking about one of my latest projects, and got an idea how to make it work. You see, my day job is mainly making swords and other tools, but what I really like to do is create things. I like to create original devices with a practical function.” Jens pauses. “And sometimes devices or sculptures without a function.”

Before you can comment, you hear a medium pitched and educated sounding male voice:

“Too bad he has not invented something really useful, like a device to create silver coins yet.”

You look around, but see no one.

“Or even a device to make food. Food for me. I don’t care so much about what he eats. He doesn’t eat much anyway.”

With that, a large cat jumps down and stares at you. It has bright yellow eyes, grayish blue fur, and seems to be a singular mix between a Nibelung and an Angora.

“Did the cat just...?” you start muttering.

“Oh, yes... Sorry about that, this is Uta, my cat,” says Jens.

“Your co-tenant and partner,” rectifies Uta.

“Yes, yes, of course; sorry about that,” says Jens naturally, as if having a conversation with a cat was perfectly normal.

Jens turns toward you and says: “Uta is a rather unusual cat. In many different ways.”

“Is he able to speak because of one of your machines?” you ask, intrigued.

Uta looks at you angrily.

“Oh, no,” replies Jens, “but it’s a long story. Speaking of machines, can I please take a look at your device?”

“My what?!?”

“The one you have been talking about.”

“Oh – that!” you say, reaching for your mobile phone.

You take the opportunity to do something you had no chance of doing before; checking for reception. Of course, there is no reception at all.

You hand over your phone to Jens, who holds it cautiously, and starts looking at it intensely.

“From where I come from, this is very useful; most people have one,” you say.

“Interesting,” replies Jens.

A moment passes, and while still holding the phone he says, “Alright, I will do what I can to help you. The first step would be to gather information. Here’s what I suggest: you’ll leave your device to me for safekeeping – ”

You interrupt Jens. “It is called a mobile phone.”

“Understood; so you’ll leave your mobile phone for me to study – ”

This time it is Uta who interrupts Jens.

“You said ‘safekeeping’ before!”

“Yes, yes, I know. I also want to study it. Anyway! In exchange, I will provide you with a place to sleep, a change of clothes and some coins. That should be enough for you to start gathering information. I’ll even add a sword as a bonus.”

“A sword? But I am not a fighter, I am a musician!” you reply.

“Well, you better learn fast then,” says Jens as he turns around and heads into his atelier.

You add the following to your inventory:

- * 100 silver pieces
- * new set of clothes
- * basic iron sword (*attack +1*)
 - [Go to 199](#)

44.

After a few dead ends and some bruises, you finally see the town in the distance. When you finally reach Deidesheim, the gate is open and the soldiers simply look at you but let you pass freely.

You let out a sigh of relief – you feel tired, still shocked and out of breath, but what you want right now is to tell Jens what just happened. You hurry to his house and knock softly on the door.

Apparently, Jens must have been waiting, since the door opens almost right away.

Jens can see that something happened; he promptly rushes you inside and closes the door.

You follow him to the fireplace, and he offers you to sit down.

“Jens, Jens! I – I,” you stutter.

“First, calm down – let’s start at the beginning,” says Jens.

“But – I’ve just seen a freakin’ Dragon up there!” you reply hastily.

“Well,” said Jens calmly, “I have a talking cat. And an acquaintance of mine has a talking owl, so –”

“Are you trying to tell me that bumping into a Dragon in a forest is a normal thing around here?”

“No,” says Jens suddenly with a darker tone, “it is not. Let me get you a glass of wine, and then you can tell me all the details.”

- [Go to 135](#)

46.

You remove the larch balm from your pouch (and your inventory) and give it to the leader. He looks at it for a moment, then smiles in satisfaction. He orders the men at his side to prepare a sleeping spot, around twenty meters from the fireplace. The sleeping spot is rather crude; it is made up of a hard slab covered in moss and a dirty woolen blanket full of holes. You don’t really care, since you don’t intend to use it much, if at all.

You are now able to come to this location at any time, as long as you are currently located inside Deidesheim. All you have to do is [go to 100](#), and once your business is done, simply return to the number from which you just came from.

But for now, as nightfall is setting in, you would rather spend the night at Jens’s place, so you decide to leave this place for now.

- [Go to 29](#)

47.

You go through the door and enter the two-story house. You see an old lady dressed in black, wearing a tiara with a strange looking green ornament. The room has no windows, and is only lit by a few candles.

You greet the old lady, saying, “Uh, hello there, you called me?”

“He–hello young man. Ye–yes, thank you for coming in.” Apparently, the old woman has some kind of speech impediment making her stutter the beginning of sentences.

“W–we saw you peering through the door.”

You wonder why she is speaking at the third person and say, “Yes, I was just wondering what kind of shop this is.”

“O–of course. I–I read palms and make potions, and this is our home and shop.”

“Our?”

“Ye–yes, me and Kodok.”

You hear a loud noise from the old lady’s tiara, and realise that what you thought was an ornament is actually a frog!

“Oh! Well, this is an unusual pet you have there!”

“Re-really? M–me and Kodok go back a long way. B–but enough about us, please show me your right hand young man.”

Thinking the worst thing that could happen to you would be a frog biting your hand, you extend it slowly.

The frog-wearing old woman reaches out for your hand and holds it softly with both of her. She slowly goes over your palm with her index finger, as if reading a text from a book.

She softly pulls back her hands, a smile on her face. Kodok emits a strange soft growl.

“So, what do you – guys – see?”

“A–a lot; we see a lot. B–but not so clear to us, like a different language. W–what we can see is that you are a good person.”

You expected a bit more info and simply say, “Well, thank you.” You hesitate a few seconds, then continue. “By any chance, can you tell where I come from or...this is going to sound like a strange question, but...how to get back there?”

The old lady lets out a long moan of concentration and reaches out for your hand again. While holding it firmly, she says, “W–we are sorry, we can see your past, or maybe your future has many branches, but it is difficult to say where they

come from, or where they will go. T–two branches we see more clearly. O–one leading to a mighty witch on a high tower, and one leading to a far and foreign land full of vegetation, and with a strange man dressed in brown and green. M–much more we cannot say.”

Trying to make some sense of what the old lady just said, and wondering how she could see all that just by looking at your hand, you simply say, “Alright, thank you.” After a brief pause you ask, “How much do I owe you?”

“N–nothing young man. U–usually our readings are much clearer, this one was not really successful. A–actually it is me who should thank you for stopping by and giving us the opportunity to s–see branches we had never glimpsed before. H–hold on a second.”

The old lady turns around, Kodok adjusting his, or her, you are not too sure, weight to remain balanced. She reaches for three small glass bottles on a shelf and lays them in front of you.

“P–please choose one and take it with you. W–we hope that it can be useful for your travels.”

You can choose one of three small, corked, glass bottles; they are all of similar design but have different colours.

There is a green coloured bottle labelled *Anti poison, to drink*, a purple dark coloured bottle labelled *Animal repellent, to pour on the ground*, and a clear blue coloured bottle labelled *Clear sky, to pour on the ground*.

Once your choice is made, please write it down in your inventory.

You thank the old lady and her frog and bid them farewell.

As you exit the building, you wonder how much, if any, of the old lady’s comments were true, and if the potion will actually have any effect at all.

- [Go to 28](#)

48.

You enter the premises and see a couple of men and women dancing, following the lead of a young lady instructor, who sings to provide a rhythm. A few steps away, some people juggle colorful balls.

You observe the dancing and juggling students for a while. Once done instructing, the young lady approaches you, her breathing not showing any kind of strain, even though she had been dancing.

“Hello there, my name is Orwen, I am the head instructor of this school. How do you do?”

You explain that you are new in the area and ask a few questions about this place. She explains that it is a renowned dancing school, some of its past students having joined dance companies in foreign countries, including some Royal houses. She informs you that a short dance contest is about to start and asks you if you would like to participate. Apparently, the school holds contests on a regular basis, they are open to students and non-students alike, and require no registration fee.

- If you would like to participate to the contest, [go to 97](#)
- If after all you prefer to head back to the main road and continue down the street, [go to 205](#)
- If you would like to investigate the weapons school, [go to 106](#)

50.

This is the building that you only had a brief look at earlier today. Two fully armored guards holding halberds stand on either side of a large stone arch that leads inside the compound. From where you stand, you see some knights training with swords and shields, some weapon racks, and large stables manned with horses in the back.

As a group of five guards head toward the gate, you decide to move on.

- [Return to 81](#)

55.

The bandit realizes that this is a fight he will not win. He retreats toward his accomplice, who only stood there watching the confrontation, and both run toward the end of the alley, leaving the old lady and her chest behind. The two bandits swiftly climb over the wall at the end of the alley and disappear out of sight.

“Thank you so much, young man. I hope those two learned their lesson!” says the old lady as she slowly gets up. “I think they have been following me for a while now. I should have been more careful.” She looks to her left and says, “Azal, where are you? You can come out now.”

You expect a child to come out of hiding, but after a few seconds, a black cat comes out of nowhere and goes straight to the old lady's legs. She painfully reaches down to pet the cat.

"There Azel, you must have been scared."

The old lady thanks you again, to which you reply that you are glad you could help. You think to yourself that you are also glad you could make it out alive.

Before continuing, you look at the cat and say, "Azel, right?" Softly, you say, "Does your master have some special powers or something like that? Why didn't she use it? What about you, do you have powers?"

No reply comes.

"I'm a friend of Uta. It's okay, you can tell me," you say under your breath while smiling.

The cat simply looks at you and your hands, apparently looking for food.

Feeling embarrassed, you are about to leave when the old lady stops you.

"Oh, young man, please wait, I would like to give something to you, as a reward."

The old lady explains that she is a travelling merchant, and that she is heading out of Deidesheim to sell her wares to a larger city. She says that the steel bracelets she makes are magical and grant their wearer special abilities.

She reaches for a few bracelets from the chest and presents them to you. You can choose one to keep.

* bracelet of defense – defense +1

* bracelet of luck – luck + 5

* bracelet of strength – attack +1

* bracelet of anti-poison – protects its wearer from various poisons

Once your choice is made, please write it down on your inventory – remember you can only wear one accessory at a time.

You thank the old lady for her gift and offer to walk with her to the nearest exit.

- [Go to 117](#)

Try your luck and roll 2 dice:

- If your total is above 6, [go to 32](#)
- If your total is below 7, [go to 82](#)
- If your luck skill is above 22, [go to 148](#)

58.

You wake up feeling a bit dizzy and disoriented. A quick glance around the room is enough to confirm that yesterday was not a dream, and that you really are in Middle Age Deidesheim.

You quickly put on some clothes Jens had prepared yesterday and head to the workshop.

Jens greets you with a smile and asks if you managed to get any sleep.

“Yeah, I actually slept pretty well,” you reply, just as your stomach growls.

“Hungry?” asks Jens.

“Yes, very much so. If I could eat something for breakfast, that would be great.”

“Breakfast? Do you eat breakfast in the middle of the afternoon where you come from?” asks Jens with a smile, probably guessing that such is not the case.

“Oh! I... Sorry, I have no idea what time it is,” you mumble.

“Not a problem; you probably needed some sleep. Let me see what I can find for you.”

You follow Jens to the kitchen.

While you eat some bread and cheese, Jens cuts some fresh fruit for you, saying, “I think today you could continue looking for clues about what happened to you by expending your search to what we call the 3rd tier.”

“The 3rd tier? What’s that?” you ask.

“You see, Deidesheim is divided into three areas, each of them separated by a large stone wall that goes all around each area and connected by guarded gates that can be closed. Of course, a few not so official passage ways also exists,” Jens says with a smile. “The town center where the government office and the church are located is the 1st tier, which is the smallest. You then have the 2nd tier, where we are now, which includes most shops and merchants. Finally, you have the 3rd tier, which is the largest, and actually separated in two parts, west and east.”

“West and east?” you repeat.

“The east part is where most people live. As for the west part, which is a little smaller than the east part, this is...how to say...” Jens pauses and searches for words, “an area where people who have less financial means or want to stay discreet gather.”

“I see...” you say hesitantly. “Is it dangerous?”

“Well, yes and no. It can be, yes. And I would for sure avoid that area at night. But during day time I wouldn’t remove it from your search area, as you might find some clues there, considering the variety of people living there.”

“Alright, I will give it a try,” you say as you reach out for a glass of milk.

- [Go to 17](#)

59.

You turn around, and after having walked a few steps, you notice a building you had not seen before. On your right, slightly uphill, stands a sumptuous house, surrounded by a large and elaborated garden. A black fence goes around the house, keeping those curious at bay. Actually, the black fence is not the only thing keeping people away – a couple of guards patrol the garden, but they look different from those you have encountered so far. They wear red, fancy uniforms and are armed with long spears.

You try to look for a hint at who lives in this house, or palace, but you do not recognize any emblems.

Curiosity overtaking you, you decide to ask a man and a woman having a conversation nearby.

“I’m sorry, I am new to this town, could you please remind me who lives here?” you ask.

“Well, for sure,” says the man, staring at you for a few seconds before answering. “Actually no one!”

“No one?” you reply in disbelief.

“Yes, that is kind of true,” says the woman.

“You see,” continues the man, “our dear Emperor likes to come here only a few days during the year, mostly during the vine festival – such a waste of land and resources if you ask me.”

“Shhh – keep your voice down!” says the woman.

“I see. And those red folk?”

“They are part of the Imperial Guard,” replies the woman.

“Well, by how they are dressed and this magnificent garden, your Emperor sure has some fancy taste!”

“Your Emperor?” questions the man, surprised.

“Oh – yeah, no, sure, I mean *our* beloved Emperor. Well, it is a good thing for the economy I’m sure; you know, keeping gardeners busy and all...”

With that, you decide not to stay in this area any longer.

- If you would like to walk toward the isolated manor you previously saw outside the city walls, [go to 126](#)
- If you prefer to go to the market place, then [go to 15](#)

60.

As your moves become faster and more daring, the crowd gradually cheers your name as well, until it is so loud that you barely hear a few voices cheering for Orwen. You manage to do a rather accurate execution of a Moonwalk, ending it with an impressively deep forward bend, sending the crowd into a frenzy.

Shortly after, Orwen stops her routine, wipes the sweat from her brow, and says out of breath, but still managing to smile, “Alright, I think we have a winner.”

The crowd cheers loudly.

You have absolutely no idea how you managed to pull off the moves you just did, but you are very much satisfied with the end result. Strangely, you actually do not feel exhausted, but rather refreshed.

Orwen, clearly impressed, congratulates you and asks where you learned those moves.

Your initial thought is to simply say, “As a kid, I watched a lot of Michael Jackson music videos,” but instead you come up with a rather vague reply, also complimenting Orwen for her acrobatic moves.

Moments later, Orwen hands you your free membership, mentioning that you would likely not need it, but that she would be pleased if you could back some day to teach her some of those moves.

She also gives you a pouch containing 25 silver coins, the prize for today’s competition.

You thank Orwen and exchange a few parting words with her and her students, and then exit the school.

- If you would like to head back to the main road and continue down the street, [go to 205](#)
- Or if you haven't yet investigated what appears to be a weapon school, and would like to do that, [go to 106](#)

62.

You walk down the street for a while; from where you now stand, you see a wooden sign for what is likely a tavern. Further down the street, there's another sign with a drawing representing a small vial.

- If you would like to take a closer look at the tavern, [go to 84](#)
- If you would like to enter the shop with the small vial sign on it, [go to 111](#)
- If you would like to head further down the street, then [go to 131](#)
- If you would like to return to the marketplace, then [go to 80](#)

- If you have already done all that, or simply prefer to return to Jens' house, then [go to 281](#)

64.

You retrieve the food from your pouch (as well as from your inventory) and give it to the leader. He inspects it for a moment, then smiles in satisfaction. He orders the men at his side to prepare a sleeping spot, around twenty meters from the fireplace. The sleeping spot is rather crude; it is made up of a hard slab covered in moss and a dirty woolen blanket full of holes. You don't really care, since you don't intend to use it much, if at all.

You are now able to come to this location at any time, as long as you are currently located inside Deidesheim. All you have to do is [go to 100](#), and once your business is done, simply return to the number from which you just came from.

But for now, as nightfall is setting in, you would rather spend the night at Jens's place, so you decide to leave this place for now.

- [Go to 29](#)

65.

There is a wide variety of customers, men and women alike; wanderers, soldiers, nobility, and regular folk. They are spread throughout the room, and appear to all be having a good time. A large woman with a white cap stands out; she carries drinks on a tray that she desperately tries to keep stable while navigating between customers. You also notice a bard playing a lute in a corner, near a large fireplace, but you can barely hear the instrument.

You pass by the various rows of benches, generally observing people and trying to listen to conversations.

You notice that there are no table and seats, like you have seen depicted in many movies or books, but instead long tables coupled with benches. People are using large pieces of bread instead of plates and eat with their fingers. The food, including some impressively large pieces of meat, is dispatched in unorderly fashion in the middle of the table, making it difficult to determine who ordered what.

After a few minutes, you manage to gather some information.

One man mentions a large deer he hunted this morning, his drinking companion replies that his catch is nothing compared to what Zenger and Vinci hunted last week.

At the end of one bench there are two men and three women dressed in fancy colors such as red, purple white and green; they appear to be reminiscing about their latest adventures in a place called Endiness.

Three soldiers are having a heated conversation about which weapon would better cut through French knight's armor.

Some other conversations make less sense to you; in particular a mention of a tower of gigantic proportions being built in Speyer, a rumor of a powerful witch living in the west, and a quest to collect 50 precious gems in exchange of granting a wish.

This lack of sense may come from the fact that some of the dialects the customers speak are unfamiliar to you. Or maybe it is simply that the customers are half drunk.

Mostly satisfied with the information you have gathered, you decide to head toward the counter.

- [Go to 301](#)

66.

The two bandits are busy gutting the wolves when you come rushing at them, sword in hand – they are still getting up as you reach them, allowing a 2 turns bonus:

Pair of bandits

HP 40

ATT +1

Special move: “combined attack”: 1 and 2 = double damage

- If you win your battle with the bandits, you can add 20 silver coins to your inventory, and [go to 44](#)

68.

You climb up the stairs and face a long corridor, which is blocked by two bulky men wearing fur and carrying axes. From what you glimpse of what lies behind the two men, this part of the manor looks to be in much better shape than the rest. There is also a faint smell of perfume floating in the air.

The man standing the closest to you addresses you in a loud and slightly menacing voice, informing you that this floor is being used at the moment, and making it clear that if you have no business here, you should be on your way.

Unfortunately, it seems that you will not be able to access that part of the house today.

- [Go back to 200](#)

70.

You realize that climbing while being careful not to be seen nor heard was not an easy task, walking down in the dark has its challenges as well. Of course, the main one is visibility; you wish you had your mobile phone with you – the flashlight function would be handy right now.

Your imagination and the moonlight are also not helping, transforming trees into intimidating shapes.

The first fifteen minutes or so pass without trouble; you have at least some light from the full moon and the stars. You are actually surprised at how bright the stars are, reminding you of a vacation you spent in Sardinia, camping in the

middle of nowhere, and with the clearest night sky you ever saw in your life. The night sky here easily beats it, but you would gladly trade it with your present time Sardinia if you could as wolves were not part of the wild creatures there.

You heard some wolves howling in the distance a few minutes ago and then nothing. Apparently, they have silently closed in on you and are now approaching for the kill.

You look around; the area where you are is rather flat and empty, probably the reason the wolves chose to make their move here, but there are still some trees close to each other, which you can use to your advantage.

You see two large wolves coming from opposite directions, slowly walking toward you while growling softly. Their fur is messy and scarred, without any kind of identification mark. It is clear they are not domesticated and that their intentions are not friendly.

Prepare yourself to face the wolves.

For this battle, you have the choice of using your sword (attack +2), or picking up a large wooden stick that you see lying nearby. Should you wish to use the wooden stick in order to hurt, rather than kill, the wolves, your attack will then only be +1.

Pair of wolves

HP 35

ATT +2

Combat skill: Evade: if you roll a 5, the wolves will avoid your attack

Special move: “combined Fenril attack”: 2 and 4 = double damage

- If you survive your encounter with the wolves and used your sword, [go to 136](#)
- If you survive your encounter with the wolves and used only the wooden stick you found, then [go to 19](#)

76.

You dash to the guard's right, and luckily his armor slows him down enough for you to quickly gain distance over him.

However, you cannot keep on running this fast for too long, as it will draw attention. Once out of the guard's sight, you decide to head toward what used to be the Deidesheimer Hof, and blend with the crowd.

- [Go to 16](#)

77.

“Huuuum – if there is a concert and the guitar player is sick, then yes, useful this may be,” replies the old lady.

10 silver coins and a little bass player pride have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)
- If you would like to debate about this issue, then visit <https://www.talkbass.com/>
- If you feel offended about this paragraph, then [go to 277](#)

When you are done here, [return to 80](#)

79.

The main road running through town – you remember it is called “the Weinstrasse” in the current time – passes just in front of Jens' house. The road is used by people traveling on horse and on foot, along with carriages and sometimes even cows and pigs.

You walk to the right; for a few hundred meters you see similar looking houses on both sides of the road. You come across a large, tall stone wall, which seems to go around this whole area. There is only one opening in the wall, in the form of a heavy looking iron gate, currently open. Two armored guards chat on one side of the opening.

You peek behind the gate, and notice that it is simply is an intermediate gate, leading to a different part of town. You suppose that in case of an attack – or having to catch a fugitive – being able to lock certain parts of town could be useful.

Hoping that the attire Jens provided you with won't get the guards' attention, you casually walk through the gate.

The guards do not seem to pay any attention to you.

You are now in what seems to be a different part of town; in the distance you see another large stone wall, probably the town's main protective wall.

The road separates in three directions, left, right and straight – you decide to simply continue straight.

There is nothing out of the ordinary for the next few hundred meters. From where you now stand, you can see the town's two main entrances, along with the town's main protective wall, which is twice the height of the other separation walls you have seen so far. The iron gate is also much bigger than the one you crossed a few minutes ago, and half a dozen guards stand nearby. Currently, the gate is in the open position, and you have a clear view of what lays outside of the city walls: mostly fields, some dwellings, and deep forests stretching over the horizon. Actually, you notice that on the far right, about four hundred meters from where you stand, there is one isolated dwelling much larger than the others; it appears to be some kind of manor.

- If you would like to go outside the city walls and walk toward the isolated manor, [go to 126](#)
- If you prefer to turn around and go back toward where you came from, [go to 59](#)
- If you have already done all that, or simply prefer to head back to Jens' house, then [go to 281](#)

80.

You stand at the center of the marketplace. From here, if you would you like to:

- have a look at the wine stand, [go to 141](#)
- have a look at the beer stand, [go to 142](#)
- have a look at the food stand, [go to 143](#)
- have a look at the corner where miscellaneous street vendor stands are located, [go to 144](#)
- have a look inside the armory, [go to 145](#)
- have a look inside the fortuneteller's tent, [go to 146](#)
- have a look at the clothing stand, [go to 147](#)

Alternatively, would you like to inspect the buildings around the marketplace?

- If so, [go to 81](#)

If you have already done all that, or simply prefer to return to Jens' house, then [go to 281](#) (*please make sure to write down in your inventory any items you may have bought*)

81.

There are many buildings and landmarks all around the marketplace and down the Winestrasse, toward the south exit.

Where would you like to go?

- If you would like to take a look at the building that is the Deidesheimer Hoff in your current time, [go to 31](#)
- If you would like to take a look at the inn where you woke up this morning, [go to 88](#)
- If you would like to take a look the location where St. Ulrich stands in the current time, [go to 18](#)
- If you would like to take a look at the military barracks you saw earlier today, [go to 50](#)
- If you would like to head further down the street, then [go to 62](#)
- If you would like to return to the marketplace, [go to 80](#)

- If you have already done all that, or simply prefer to return to Jens' house, then [go to 281](#)

82.

You were about to pass by the two bandits silently, but the taller one turns his head and sees you.

The two bandits do not even bother to ask your identity, they simply close the gap and start swinging their swords at you.

Pair of bandits

HP 40

ATT +1

Special move: “combined attack”: 1 and 2 = double damage

- If you survive your battle with the bandits, you can add 20 silver coins to your inventory, and [go to 44](#)

84.

You stand in front of the tavern; apparently it is not opened yet. There is a large sign with two black boars charging at each other. It reads *Der Alte Eber*. Somehow, this name sounds vaguely familiar to you. You are curious to see what the inside looks like and make a mental note to return later.

- Once you are done here, [return to 62](#)

85.

“An instrument made by Herr Ritter? The blacksmith? Ah – that is strange,” says the man closest to you.

“It sure makes a horrible sound,” adds one of the two women.

With that, the group dissipates and heads off to various directions.

You decide to leave the area and head toward what used to be the Deidesheimer Hof.

- [Go to 16](#)

86.

The young man, still baffled by your counter attack, smiles nervously and congratulates you for that move. He steps aside, and your final opponent, who has also defeated two students, appears.

Your final opponent is a sturdy young man, older than the previous one, equipped with a wooden axe, which he carries behind his head. He has a broad smirk on his face. As soon as the bold man gives the signal indicating the start of the match, he raises his axe above his shoulders and runs at you. Once in range, he feints a descending blow straight at your head, stopping his movement at the last moment, and changing direction to strike at your right flank.

In order to parry the blow with your blade and then striking his chin with your sword's pommel, your roll should be:

over 6

but under 9

- If you manage to outperform your opponent, [go to 310](#)
- If not, [go to 161](#)

88.

You hesitate a few seconds, afraid to encounter a soldier that may recognize you, but enter the building by the same gate from which you left earlier today. A few people who look like guests chat cheerfully. You head toward what appears to be the inn's front and speak with the middle-aged woman standing there. She does not seem to know or recognize you. You tell her you are looking for a guest and provide her with your own name. She consults a large book lying by her side and then walks a few steps to an old man currently arranging a cabinet.

Your heart races as the two exchange a few words. As the woman returns to the front, you prepare to make your way out quickly.

The woman simply tells you that she is sorry, and that there is no guest by that name staying there currently.

You thank her for her time and exit the building without delay.

- Once you are done here, [return to 81](#)

94.

You think of something to say to the crowd around you.

Try your luck; mentally pick a number between 1 and 10.

- If the number you chose is between 1 and 5, [go to 4](#)
- If the number you chose is between 6 and 10, [go to 234](#)
- Or, if your luck level is above 25, [go to 203](#)

97.

The head instructor nods and asks you to join the students having a break at a corner of the courtyard before the contest starts.

A few minutes later, all the participants are gathered around Orwen, who explains the rules of the dance battle competition.

Rules:

There will be a total of 5 matches, including the final.

Each match is won once you have managed 2 successful rolls. The successful rolls represent your ability to match your opponent's dance steps.

Once a match is won, you move to the next one.

If you lose a match, the contest ends.

You watch the first match, opposing two slender female students.

The first dancer starts with an energetic array of moves and finishes with a flourish. You are impressed, but even more so when you see her opponent copying the moves she had just executed, but adding even more speed and grace.

A few moves later, the second student is declared to be the winner.

It is now your turn.

You face a young female student in her twenties; she is dressed in blue and wears her dark hair in a ponytail.

Hoping the time you spent watching MTV during your teen years will help, you ready yourself for battle.

The roll has to (twice):

go over 4

but be under 11

- If you manage to outperform your opponent, [go to 286](#)
- If not, [go to 175](#)

100.

You are now back at the “Isolated Manor,” where a hard slab covered in moss and a dirty woolen blanket full of holes are available for you every time you come.

Would you like to:

- talk to the men seated by the fire? Then [go to 200](#)
- visit the upper floor? Then [go to 68](#)
- visit the basement? Then [go to 10](#)

- If you would like to do none of the above, please return to the number you just came from.

106.

You cross the gate and enter the courtyard. Four students practice hitting and parrying with wooden swords; a sturdy bold man, who looks like an instructor, yells commands at them.

You silently observe the drills for a minute.

The bold man turns toward you and says in a loud voice, “Greetings to Schauer’s knight school! Did you come to enroll?”

“Well, not exactly, I came to see what was going on.”

The bold man quickly scans you from head to toe, stopping on the sword at your side.

“Right. I see that you actually already carry what seems to be like a fine sword, my mistake.”

“No probl – I mean, yes, I am already quite familiar with sword techniques, at least some of them,” you manage to say with confidence; wondering if the countless plastic lightsaber fights you had during your youth really count.

“Well noted. In that case, maybe you would be interested in joining a small practice tournament that is about to begin?”

You do not answer immediately, allowing the bold man to go on.

“There will be just a few participants, most of them my students. Of course, we will use wooden swords. And wooden axes for the courageous ones who favor that weapon.” The bold man gives a quick nod at one of the students, carrying a metal axe. “To add some spice, there is a small entry fee; 10 silver coins. And for the winner there’s a prize; 50 silver coins, plus one big and fat pig from HERN’S farm.” The bold man swells with pride. You are not too sure what you would do with a big and fat pig – even if it comes from HERN’S farm or wherever – but you consider this could be a chance for some potential training.

- If you would like to give the practice tournament a try, deduce 10 silver coins from your inventory and [go to 40](#)
- If you would like to politely decline the invitation and head back to the main road to continue down the street, then [go to 205](#)
- If you would like to investigate across the street what appears to be a dancing school, [go to 48](#)

111.

Before entering the shop, you notice a smaller sign that reads *Apotheke* in old German. You push a heavy door and enter the shop; the inside is rather luxurious with large rows of wooden furniture. The overall display is actually very similar to a modern age pharmacy, with some wares at the front, and most of them on the back, behind the counter. Jens already gave you some healing items, but out of curiosity you decide to take a look at the various items on sale.

* healing herbs – 20 silver coins (*heals 10 HPs*)

* healing potion – 50 silver coins (*heals 25 HPs*)

* anti-poison potion – 20 silver coins

* mind purifying potion – 20 silver coins

* charm potion – the notice reads *this potion is not for use on human beings* – 50 silver coins

- Once you are done here, [return to 62](#)

113.

As fast as you can manage, you look for an opening and dash:

- If you would like to try to go around the guard's left, [go to 21](#)
- If you would like to try to go around the guard's right, [go to 76](#)

117.

You exit the alley and head down the street. A few meters away, there are rows of small stands, some of them covered by white linen. Most stands sell what appear to be homemade dishes, with some selling small crafts or simple furniture.

The old lady stops between two stands and indicates a long alley heading east.

“There, young man, thank you again for your help, I will be fine from here.” She points to the alley between the two stands. “I will now be on my way, but I suggest you get yourself a beer or two at the Alter Eber tavern. This alley here is a passage joining the 2nd and 3rd tier; it will lead you directly next to the Alter Eber tavern.”

With that, the old lady smiles at you and walks away.

You consider your options for a moment, but decide that you do indeed deserve a beer or two, and head down the alley.

- [Go to 304](#)

124.

You approach the old man, who wastes no time with introductions.

“I’ve seen my share of people over the years, and you don’t seem to be from here. If you don’t know where to sleep at night, or would like to get familiar with some ways to earn a few silver coins, there’s a place just for you.”

Not waiting to hear about your interest or not, the old man hands you a wrinkled piece of paper.

“There, go visit it sometime. This here is a good place.”

You take a quick look at the paper, which is actually a map.

Observing the map in detail, you see that it leads to what seems to be a large house or small castle outside of town.

You thank the old man for the map and decide to be on your way.

You are not too sure whether or not the old man is completely sane, but nevertheless fold the map inside your trousers.

You are now able to consult the map at any time by [going to 128](#), as long as you are located inside Deidesheim and not currently engaged in combat.

- [Go to 38](#)

126.

You start walking toward the isolated manor, and as you get closer, you notice that the building, as well as the garden that surrounds it, is basically in ruin.

The manor has four stories; the ground and first floor incorporates an open passage that goes throughout the house. The second floor, probably the area used for receptions, has some large openings on the outside, while the third floor likely consists of bedrooms. The fourth and final floor is not as tall as the others, and only has two small openings.

Although it is clear the place is in ruin, you notice that there is activity inside. In fact, you see three people chatting in front of a small fire, a few steps inside the tunnel like passage.

- If you would like to walk the few meters separating you from the men near the fire and engage a conversation, [go to 181](#)
- If this place makes you uncomfortable and you prefer to go back toward where you came from, [go to 59](#)

128.

Following the map, you walk toward the isolated manor, and as you get closer, you notice that the building, as well as the garden that surrounds it, is basically in ruin.

The manor has four stories; the ground floor incorporate an open passage that goes throughout the house. The second floor, probably the area used for receptions, has some large openings on the outside, while the third floor likely consists of bedrooms. The fourth and final floor is not as tall as the others, and only has two small openings.

Although it is clear the place is in ruin, you notice that there is activity inside. In fact, you can now see three people chatting in front of a small fire, a few steps inside the tunnel-like passage.

- If you would like to walk the few meters separating you from the men near the fire and engage in conversation, [go to 181](#)
- If this place makes you uncomfortable and you prefer to retreat, simply return to the number where you came from.

131.

You are standing close to the southern edge of town; on your right, you recognize the area where in present time the Geschichts und Brauchtumsbrunnen sculptures are located. Of course, none of the modern sculptures are there, but instead there stands a life-sized sculpture of a knight made of bronze. The knight wears a helmet with a large visor hiding most of his face. He holds a massive square shield with his left hand, while his right hand rests on the hilt of his sheathed sword.

There's no mention of the knight's name or history anywhere on or around the sculpture.

You notice that someone is now standing on your right, contemplating the sculpture.

It is a tall man, wearing a black hooded cloak. You turn around to greet him, and take this opportunity to ask about the statue.

“Do you know who this knight is?”

While still looking at the knight and without turning his head, he replies in a soft, slightly cold, voice, “No, I don't.”

You hesitate for a moment, then ask, “Oh, you are not from here?”

“No, I am not.” The man pauses. “But the same can be said of you, I presume?”

“Yeah, that's right, I'm from... Well, I live quite far from here.”

The man does not change his position and continues eyeing the statue. Since you do not particularly like to have a conversation without seeing the face of the person you are talking to, you decide to take your leave.

“Well, sorry to have bothered you, I was just curious about this sculpture. Maybe it's actually not even based on a particular person.”

You start walking away and hear him say, as if talking to himself, “I am quite sure this statue is based on someone who has done some great deeds. A great knight of the past, or maybe the present.”

You cannot see the mysterious man's face, but somehow you have the feeling that under that dark hood, he is probably smiling.

The encounter starting to get creepy, you quickly take your leave without saying another word.

- [Return to 62](#)

135.

A glass of white wine in your hand, you tell Jens and Uta in details all that happened to you, finishing with the woman in white disappearing in a cave behind the Dragon.

“I see, it is just as I feared,” says Jens, followed by a long sigh.

“Do you know about those people; about the Dragon?” you ask.

“I may.”

“Could you please elaborate?”

Jens stands up, pours himself a glass of wine, and refills yours.

“There, I think you will need it.”

“Yeah, I think he will need it,” echoes Uta.

“Do you trust me?” asks Jens.

You are not really prepared for that question, but without thinking too much you reply, “Yes, I think I trust you.”

“Good,” says Jens, “because you will really have to trust me here; I can only provide you with some of the answers you seek, but not all, even if I may know them.”

“Alright,” you reply hesitantly.

“Let me get straight to the point; if you want to go back to where you came from, you must return to that place, called Drachenfels, and face the Dragon.”

Your heart skips a bit. Before you can ask why you should return there, Jens continues.

“I believe the cave you mentioned is some kind of portal, and that it may get you back home.”

“Some kind of portal? That it *may* get me back home? And how do you know that?” you ask, your voice shaking.

“Well, I said I could only give you some answers...”

This is growing more and more confusing.

“You should tell him about the Dragon,” says Uta.

“Right!” replies Jens. “The Dragon...is likely controlled by a Beastmaster. I believe the Dragon is here to guard the portal. In order to face and defeat the Dragon, since a regular sword will not do much damage to the Dragon’s skin, you will need a special sword, a DragonSlayer.” Jens nearly has a smile on his face.

“It this supposed to be good news?” you inquire.

“Yes, because I am a sword maker and one of the few around here who can actually build a DragonSlayer. As a matter of fact, I have one that is near completion.”

There is a long silence in the room until Uta breaks it, saying bluntly, “Basically, Jens has a DragonSlayer prototype, and in order to test it, he needs a person to hold it, and a Dragon to test it on – I’d say he has found both.”

You reflect for a few seconds, and then say, “But...why me? Couldn’t we ask some knights to do it?”

“I’m afraid the Burgermeister may simply be a puppet of the people you saw on that hill,” replies Jens.

“Really? Doesn’t he have some authority?”

“Actually, not that much. He takes orders from the authorities in Speyer; a large town about a day’s travel east from here.”

“I see, but back to testing the DragonSlayer, why can’t you do it yourself?”

“Well, first, I don’t need to get back home.” Jens chuckles. “But seriously, I cannot get directly involved.”

“Directly involved with what? And you still haven’t answered why there’s a freaking Dragon in those woods!” You press the issue, tiredness and anxiety getting to your nerves.

Jens lets go of a long sigh.

He takes a sip of his glass of wine, and then says in a serious tone, “I know that since you’ve been here you’ve seen strange things, including a talking cat and a Dragon, but what I am about to tell you beats all that.”

“Try me,” you reply.

“Alright. Are you familiar with the Watchers from the Bible?” Jens asks hesitantly.

“Yes, kind of.”

Jens looks surprised.

“Well, I didn’t really read the Bible that much, but I played a lot of video games.”

“You played what?” Jens replies, confused.

“You know, like Shin Megami Tensei and – oh, forget it. Please continue.”

“Fine. Since you know the story about the Watchers, that makes it much easier. According to the Bible, the Watchers were angels who descended on Earth and taught its people various matters, including medicine and the arts. But what happened is that they found the Earth’s women attractive and mated with them, giving life to special children with non-human blood running through their veins. Physically, you could easily distinguish them from other humans, especially the grownups; they were much taller, had a stronger build, a longer life span, and a sharper mind. Over time, this apparently created an issue, both for the people of Earth, who envied and feared them, and whoever created the Watchers, who disapproved of this blood mixing. Can you guess what the result was?”

You think about it for a few seconds, but nothing comes to mind.

“The flood. The great flood mentioned in the Bible, with the purpose to wipe out civilization. Do not ask me if it was a literal flood, but the end result was that most of the Earth’s population, whether humans or animals, were wiped out. This is where I come in, kind of.”

“Don’t tell me you were born right after the flood?” you ask perplexed.

Jens laughs. “Hahaha, no, not quite. But my descendants were. After the flood, a few beings actually did survive, and amongst them were some of the sons and daughters of the original Nephilim. They survived through the centuries by hiding and staying grouped together. A few actually had a fragile alliance with human kings, who used them to build gigantic structures, but that did not last long, nor end well.”

“Hang on; so you’re telling me that you basically are a descendent of – what’s this guy called – you know, there was a weak, smart short guy and a strong giant? Oh yeah, David and Goliath!” you exclaim.

“Well, not really, it’s a bit more complicated. But for your information, from what I was told, David was not a weak and short person. He was smart, yes, but he was also a mighty warrior. Only someone like him could slay Goliath.”

“Oh,” you say, “some people from my time didn’t really get the story right then.”

Jens looks confused, but continues.

“Over time, clans were formed, each with their own views on their way of life and purposes, but they all made a common oath, that all clans approved.” Jens

pauses, and continues. “That oath was simply never to directly interfere with human matters.”

“That’s strange, no? I mean, if they were so powerful, why do that?”

“They were powerful, yes. But very few. They would be no match against human armies. Therefore, they first went into hiding, and then slowly blended with humans. As for the clan where I come from, we can lead normal lives, but have to move around regularly, changing regions or even countries, in order not to raise suspicion over our slow aging. As you have noticed, I am not as tall as David; as a matter of fact, since a few centuries ago, there are almost no physical difference between our kind and humans. While we are the direct descendants of the Nephilim, our blood was mixed in various ways, thus creating different clans and individuals with varying skills and abilities. But back to the point, like I just said, under no circumstances can we directly take part in major human matters. Now you understand why I cannot directly get involved in this matter, although I wish I could.”

The room remains silent for almost a minute.

You were captivated during Jens’ tale, but you realize the importance of the information, as well as the fact that you basically have to act on your own.

You feel both scared and excited by these revelations.

After a while, you finally say, “Wow, I have a thousand questions. I don’t know where to start.”

“I understand this can be quite hard to believe and embrace,” says Jens.

“Well, I guess the first thing that comes to mind is that your story, if it’s true, proves that God exists, correct?”

“Oh my! That is the big question, isn’t it?”

“But you just told me that the Watchers and the Nephilim existed and were real!”

“Yes, I did. And I see where you are going. If the Watchers were real, who created them, right? Well, religious books mention ‘God,’ and sometimes ‘Gods.’ But what is ‘God?’ There are as many answers as there are sacred texts. This is actually a question, we, descendants of the Nephilim, as some initiated scholars call us, searching the answer to. To be honest, we do not know; is the ‘bearded man in the clouds’ description of God accurate? Is it more like an all-seeing, omniscient ethereal force? Or are humans and their variations simply the result of some kind of experimentation from beings coming from another planet; beings that at the time we called ‘Gods?’ And what if – ”

Uta interrupted Jens, saying, “If we start talking about this, this is endless. I suggest you let the boy digest all that, and tomorrow we can focus on the matters

at hand: respectively, a Dragon living not far away from here and a DragonSlayer sword to complete.”

You feel frustrated and thirsty for answers, aware that you still do not know why a Dragon is in those woods and what exactly happened to the girl in white, but your mind is overloaded at the moment, and you accept Uta’s proposal to call it a day and take you to your room.

Needless to say, it takes you a long time to fall asleep.

- [Go to 27](#)

136.

The two wolves lay on the ground in front of you, motionless. Before putting your sword back in its scabbard, you decide to wipe the blood from the blade. While you are busy with your task, a metallic object flies past your right shoulder, missing by a few centimeters. You turn around and see two savages running toward you. You do not need the light of day to tell that these two men are not part of the ceremony you just witnessed; their hair is untidy, their clothing mismatched and torn, and an overpoweringly bad smell is coming from them.

The two bandits do not even bother to ask you to choose between your coins and your life. They simply close the gap and start swinging their swords at you.

Pair of bandits

HP 40

ATT +1

Special move: “combined attack”: 1 and 2 = double damage

- If you survive your encounter with the bandits, you can add 20 silver coins to your inventory, and [go to 44](#)

141.

You are in front of the wine stand and are amazed by the design of the bottles and drinking cups. Thinking you cannot miss a chance to try a “centuries old” wine, you start talking with the merchant.

“Hi, I would like to try some wine; is that possible?”

“Greetings, dear sir. Yes, sure. What kind would you like to try?” says the merchant jovially.

“What about some Riesling?”

“I’m sorry, say what, sir?”

“You know, Riesl – oh – never mind. I think you don’t have that in that region,” you reply, softly adding under your breath, “yet. Anything from the area will do.”

“Understood,” says the merchant while reaching out for what looks like a small bowl made of clay. He fills it with a red liquid from a wooden container.

You take the bowl and give it a sip.

“Wow!” you exclaim. “Strong stuff!”

“Yes!” The merchant laughs.

Would you like to purchase a bottle of red wine for 20 silver coins?

- If so, deduce 20 silver coins from your inventory, and [return to 80](#)
- If you aren’t interested in purchasing the wine, [return to 80](#) without deducting anything from your inventory

142.

You are impressed by the size of the beer stand, which is easily three or four times larger than the nearby wine stand. The stand is filled with customers, most with a wooden jug in their hands. Surprisingly, many of the beer-drinking customers seem to be children!

You manage to clear a way up to an area where two monks receive payments and handle cups. They seem to be distributing the same beverage to both adults and children.

Would you like to purchase a cup of beer for 2 silver coins?

- If so, deduce 2 silver coins from your inventory and [go to 228](#)
- If not, then [return to 80](#)

143.

The stand offers various types of bread, fresh eggs, vegetables, and fruit. There are also some live animals for sale.

Would you like to buy some bread for 2 silver coins?

- If so, deduce 2 silver coins from your inventory.

Would you like to purchase an assortment of berries for 3 silver coins?

- If so, deduce 3 silver coins from your inventory.

- Once you are done here, [return to 80](#)

144.

In this area, miscellaneous vendors sell their wares directly on the ground without any kind of stand. Some vendors are seated on their carpets and surrounded by their goods, while others are standing and trying to engage passersby in conversation.

You spend a few minutes going through the different vendors; most items are of no immediate use to you, but you do notice a few items of interest:

- * healing herbs – 10 silver coins (*heals 10 HPs*)
- * anti-poison potion – 10 silver coins
- * red jewel – 20 silver coins (*effect unknown*)
- * blue jewel – 20 silver coins (*effect unknown*)
- * brown jewel – 20 silver coins (*effect unknown*)
- * purple jewel – 20 silver coins (*effect unknown*)
- * a cloak made of animal hide – 75 silver coins (*def +1*)

- If you would like to buy some items, deduce the total silver coins from your inventory, and then [return to 80](#)

145.

Outside the building, there is a diamonded shape metal sign with a shield and a helm on it. You enter the armory; there are large rows of weapons taking up the entire shop's length on your left and right. A few meters in front of you is a counter with a shopkeeper behind it. The shopkeeper is currently engaged in a transaction with a customer. Another customer seems to be waiting for his turn to pay for his wares. You take this opportunity to tour the shop. You quickly realize that you are not carrying enough coins for most of the items and today all you will do is simply look around.

- * bronze shield – 100 silver coins
- * bronze sword – 150 silver coins
- * leather armor set – 500 silver coins
- * leather shield – 100 silver coins
- * knight shield – 200 silver coins
- * knight helm – 150 silver coins
- * knight greaves – 100 silver coins
- * chain mail – 800 silver coins
- * plate greaves – 350 silver coins
- * plate mail – 1000 silver coins
- * dagger – 200 silver coins
- * short sword – 250 silver coins
- * gladius – 300 silver coins
- * heavy mace – 400 silver coins
- * battle axe – 500 silver coins
- * lance – 500 silver coins
- * halberd – 650 silver coins
- * bastard sword – 750 silver coins
- * long bow – 400 silver coins
- * short bow – 200 silver coins
- * set of 20 arrows – 50 silver coins

- Once you are done here, [return to 80](#)

146.

You enter the fortune-teller's tent, which is only big enough for two people.

The inside is lit by a few candles, and an old woman covered in purple is seated in front of you.

“Welcome, traveler,” she says smiling. “What would you like to know? My fee is 10 silver coins per question I will answer for you.”

- If you would like to use the fortune teller's services, [go to 233](#)
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

147.

You see a wide variety of clothing, which you find surprisingly colorful in comparison to movies and documentaries set during the Middle Ages; there are different shades of bloody reds, purples, bright yellows and oranges. The items for sale are mostly made of wool or silk and seem of high quality. You notice that some of them may actually fit you better than what you are currently wearing but finally decide not to buy anything and keep the clothing Jens provided you – likely for a reason – with.

- Once you are done here, [return to 80](#)

148.

You manage to pass close by to the bandits without them noticing and resume your climb downhill. You feel bad for the wolves you spared, but you prefer avoiding any unnecessary and potentially deadly fights.

- [Go to 44](#)

161.

You flinch at the pain inflicted by your opponent's blow, but at the same time feel grateful that the weapon is made of wood and not steel.

You respectfully congratulate your opponent, exchange a few words with the bold man and then exit the school.

- If you would like to head back to the main road and continue down the street, [go to 205](#)
- If you haven't yet investigated what appears to be a dancing school, and would like to do that, [go to 48](#)

164.

You go through passersby and street vendors being as discreet as you can, avoiding looking at people or talking to anyone. You risk a few glances at the stalls here and there, but hurry out of the market and continue on the right side of the street.

You let out a sigh of relief when you finally see the familiar large oak wooden door in front of you.

Above it, there is a metal sign reading:

Jens Ritter Schmied

You look to the upper right, hoping to see the electronic Ritter Instruments doorbell on the wall, but only find a bronze bell. As you move it sideways hurriedly, it produces a low-pitched sound.

After a few seconds, you hear a voice coming from behind the door asking, "Ritter?"

"Jens, is that you?" you ask.

"Jens, of course it's me. Who else could it be?" says the voice cheerfully. "And you, who are you?"

Instinctively, you tell him your name, and quickly add "... you may not remember me, or well, you may not know me, but I need to talk to you – rather urgently!"

"Oh. I see," says Jens.

A few seconds that feel like an eternity pass by until the heavy oak door finally opens.

You keep looking to your right to see if any guards are approaching, and as soon as the door's opening is large enough, you step inside, not waiting for an invitation from Jens.

"My! Someone is in a hurry..." says Jens, surprised to see you rush inside.

“Yes, forgive me,” you say while stepping further inside the house and catching your breath.

You take a good look at Jens; it is him alright.

He’s not exactly as you remember him. He’s not wearing glasses, although what look like spectacles hang on a leather strap around his neck, but you can’t be sure. He seems to be the same age as the present day – around forty – but his hair is a little darker. He wears a blue outfit that, despite being covered with dirt, is a strong contrast to the clothing you saw people wear in the streets; his attire being more elaborate. The only accessory he wears is a ring with an ultramarine stone on his left pinky finger.

“Jens, it is you! Oh boy, am I glad to see you!” you finally say, relieved.

“Yes, I’ve told you it’s me. And you’ve told me who you are. I don’t think we’ve met before; what you can I do for you?” asks Jens.

You look at Jens, not sure what to say, and finally ask, “Do you have some time to spare?”

- [Go to 41](#)

166.

“Hmmm – an unusual question this is, traveler. I would say yes, especially if you play at nighttime and the moon is in its Waning Gibbous phase. Alternatively, if you want more mids, you can also turn the mids button on your amp,” says the old woman in a rather flat voice.

10 silver coins have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

175.

You chain your best moves, but that is not enough to compete with Orwen’s wild set of moves. The crowd cheers her name wildly, leaving no doubt about who the winner is.

You congratulate Orwen, who in turn says you did pretty well, too.

You exchange a few parting words with Orwen and her students and exit the school.

- If you would like to head back to the main road and continue down the street, [go to 205](#)
- Or if you haven't yet investigated what appears to be a weapon school, and would like to do that, [go to 106](#)

178.

“Hmmm – an unusual question this is, traveler. Far away your land seems, and a great peril you must first face in order to return home.”

10 silver coins have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

181.

The man in the middle looks at you and says, “Greetings stranger! What business brings you here?”

“Well, I’m not quite sure. As a matter for fact, I’m not quite sure how I ended here,” you say a little too honestly.

Not taken aback by your comment, the man replies, “Aren’t we all trying to find out where we are, and where we’re going?”

“Yeah, I suppose,” you reply.

“Not sure what you are looking for mate, but what I know is this place here’s the safest place around.”

“Sure is!” seconds one of his companions.

“Why is that?” you ask hesitantly.

“Well, you know, strange things go on around here since some time ago. I mean, there’s soldiers in town, strange people in the hills; people around town disappear more and more... So this place right here is still the safest.”

His companion adds, “That’s right, so if you’re looking for a safe shelter, you found it. Just don’t forget to drop us a few coins before the night.”

“And also,” says the leader while nodding sideways, “do not go down there.”

“Down there?” you ask, slightly nervous.

“Yeah, down there in the underground. Well, actually don’t go up either; just stay on this floor here.” He pauses and says, “Or you can visit the first floor, if your pocket is deep enough.”

“Hang on, hang on,” you reply. “Why would I want to go down to the underground? I don’t know about here, but where I come from undergrounds and sewers generally stink, and you can find some rather uncomfortable creatures; you know, strange turtles and large rats.”

“Oh, it’s not the rats we worry about – actually, they are quite tasty!”

All three men laugh loudly.

“No, there’s a whole underground city down there; getting in is easy – but getting out is a different story. Not even the knights from town venture around here,” says the leader with a large grin on his face. “Say, stranger, talking about food made me hungry, do you have anything to eat to share with us? Or maybe just a few coins? Actually, anything of value may do – we are not that demanding.” He sneers.

It takes you a moment to realize that what made the man hungry was likely your mention of rats. You consider his request and make a choice:

- If you carry some food with you and would like to give it to the man and his companions, or alternatively if you possess and would like to give 20 silver pieces, [go to 64](#)
- If you carry a green amulet and would like to give it to the man and his companions, [go to 336](#)
- If you carry a larch balm and would like to give it to the man and his companions, [go to 46](#)
- If you have enough coins and would like to give 20 silver pieces, [go to 264](#)
- If you would like to politely decline, then [go to 256](#)

199.

You are now inside Jens’ workshop; it is a large room, filled with many items, large and small. You do not recognize most of them, except some metal working tools, and of course various swords, most of them under construction.

Jens looks at you and, as if reading your thoughts, and says, “Yes, this is the place where I finalize my swords – and other items. There are many other rooms in the house; on the ground floor we have a forge, a small presentation room, and a place for storage. On the first floor we have – ”

Jens is interrupted by Uta.

“Up on the second floor, we have other rooms, including the one where I sleep. Which means it is off limits to you.”

Jens looks uncomfortably at you and says, “Well, I have some work to do for you – and also I have to feed Sir Bad Manners here before he turns into a Dragon. So, like I mentioned before, I suggest you go out there and investigate this matter.” You nod, and as you ponder whether this was just a figure of speech or if Uta would really turn into a Dragon if not fed, Jens adds, “Oh, just a final word of advice – if locals ask about you, just tell them that you are my new apprentice.”

“Alright, sounds good,” you say.

“Sounds good?” says Uta while licking his paws. “You don’t want to know what happened to the previous apprentice.”

“What happ—”

Before you finish your sentence, Jens says, “Also, I would suggest you avoid going too close to the forest for now.”

“That’s two words of advice,” protests Uta.

“Understood, I’ll keep that in mind, too,” you reply.

Jens claps his hands loudly and says, “Perfect. Off you go then. Be careful out there, and come back here tonight for dinner; I want to ask a few more things about where you come from.”

“Alright, I’ll come back around 7pm then,” you reply.

“What’s that?” questions Jens.

“Never mind; I’ll come back when the sun goes down...or when my stomach is too noisy; whichever comes first.”

Jens smiles, then says, “Oh! Talking about stomachs; this reminds me of something!”

Jens goes behind a large wooden desk where various tools are stacked, and reaches for a small leather flask. He hands it to you.

“What is that?” you inquire.

“Larch potion. I have it in balm version too. But anyway, it tastes like frog liver but will cure your wounds if needed.”

With that, Jens walks you out, while Uta watches from a distance, an almost malicious look on his face.

The oak door closes behind you with a loud sound, and you are on your own.

You can add the following to your inventory:

* Larch healing potion (*heals 50 HPs*)

- [Go to 7](#)

200.

You ask the men what can be found “down there.”

The leader sighs, then answers, “A lot of things can be found down there. But many have one thing in common.” He pauses, before saying, “Death.” Looking in the direction of the stairs leading down, he continues. “At least, that’s what many adventurers have found while venturing there.”

“But not all of ’em!” says the man seated on his right.

“Yeah, you’re right. Some have found some pretty valuable treasures – and that’s why people still go down there, hoping to bring back something of value; hoping to bring back the treasure.”

“A treasure? I see,” you reply. “And more specifically, what kind of dangers brought people down there such misfortune?”

“I have never been there myself,” says the leader, “but on the accounts of people who actually have – and came back – there’s a large labyrinth down there, and it’s filled with beasts and demons.”

“Demons?” you ask, surprised.

“Aye. Demons.” Judging by the seriousness of his tone and face, the man does not seem to be joking. He continues in a more cheerful tone. “Unless you are looking to meet your end, I don’t suggest that you venture there, but if you choose to do so, all you have to do is head down the stairs. And leave all your valuables to us; I don’t think you’ll need them in the afterworld.”

His two friends softly laugh.

- If you would like to go visit the basement, [go to 10](#) (you, of course, can, and should, hold onto your valuables)
- If you would rather not go there, please return to the initial paragraph you came from before visiting the Isolated Manor.

203.

After briefly gathering your thoughts you say, “Oh, this is an instrument made by Herr Jens Ritter.”

- [Go to 85](#)

205.

After walking for a couple of minutes, you notice two men wearing hooded brown robes talking quietly to each other. They catch your attention; something about them, you cannot say exactly what, seems to be out of place.

Your attention is drawn to a sound coming from a nearby alley to your right.

- If you would like to discreetly get closer to the two hooded men, [go to 34](#)
- If you would like to investigate the sounds you heard coming from the small alley on your right, [go to 302](#)
- If you would like to simply continue your way, [go to 307](#)

208.

“Why beech specifically; does this wood has some magical properties?” you inquire seriously.

“Well, not really, although beech has been a very important tree for human kind.” Without further explanation, Jens continues. “But back to the present matter, I need beech from Drachenfels, because for a DragonSlayer sword to be efficient, it needs to be linked in some way to the Dragon. In the present case, the handle should be covered with wood coming from where the Dragon in question lives.”

“I see,” you say thoughtfully, wondering if there were any Dragons living in the middle of the desert or in Antarctica; in which case, it seems like they would not have to worry much about DragonSlayer swords.

“Just wait here and give me a moment. I will get you a book showing a drawing of what this tree looks like; it is easy to recognize.”

“No need, if you hand me back my phone for a moment, I’ll just Google it; that will only take a few... Sorry, habit. I’ll wait right here.”

When he returns, Jens has a large book in his hands.

The book seems ancient; it is handwritten, with some pages containing various leaves and barks. Jens quickly finds a page with information and drawings about beech trees.

Puzzled, you look at the drawing and say, “It just looks like a tree to me.”

“Well, it is a tree,” replies Jens simply.

“I mean, I could confuse it with just any tree!”

“Oh – I see. Well, in that case you better take quite a few pieces of wood. Let’s see...around this size!” said Jens as he grabs a piece of wood lying around. “A piece this size would be perfect to carve the veneer for the handle. Let me get you a carrying pouch and a special knife. You don’t want to use your sword for the task.”

“Won’t some branches be lying on the ground?”

“If you are lucky. But beeches are strong trees; you won’t find a lot of large branches lying around in this season. Also, their branches are usually pretty high on the tree – so you also better hope to find some small trees.”

“Alright, I think I got it,” you reply, memorizing Jens’ instructions. “Oh, Jens, one last thing. What are the sonic properties of beech? Will it give me a punchier tone than alder?”

Jens looks at you for a few seconds, apparently pondering an answer, but without changing his expression, simply replies, “Just go get some beech wood.”

To be continued in part 2...

Thank you for reading part 1! If you would like to continue your adventures with Jens and Uta in part 2 of the Beast of Drachenfels, please send an email to greg@utaschronicles.com. Feedback, comments, or questions are most welcome.

222.

The main road going through town – you remember it’s called “the Weinstrasse” in the current time” – passes just in front of Jens’ house. The road is used by people traveling on horse and on foot, along with carriages and sometimes even cows and pigs.

This part of the town has similar houses side to side and on either side, again, just like in the current time. Most of the houses are three stories tall and have either thatched or clay tiled roofs. None of them have what you would call “a

garden,” at least not out front. Indeed, many of the houses are not directly located parallel to the street, but feature a large gate that protects the house’s entrance and provides some privacy.

After a few minutes, you conclude that this part of town, likely the residential area, will not offer you much clues to your situation, and you decide to go back toward the marketplace.

- [Go to 15](#)

228.

One of the two monks hands you a large wooden jug of beer.

You move away from the counter and try the beverage.

It sure tastes like beer, but the kind of beer that has been left far too long in the sun at a music festival. In other words, the beverage is hot and bitter, and you wish you had not spent those 2 silver coins for it.

You discreetly discard your beer on the ground and return the empty jug to the monks.

- [Go to 80](#)

233.

- If you would like to ask the old lady where you are, [go to 333](#)
 - If you would like to ask the old lady how you can return home, [go to 178](#)
 - If you would like to ask about your near future, [go to 238](#)
 - If you would like to ask the old lady about your distant future, [go to 316](#)
 - If you would like to ask if an alder body will provide more mids than a swamp ash body on an electric guitar, [go to 166](#)
 - If you would like to know if a bass player really needs 6 strings, [go to 77](#)
-
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

234.

You are unlucky!

You try gathering your thoughts, but before you can utter anything, a menacing figure approaches.

All this commotion brought the attention of what appears to be a patrol guard; he is taller than the passersby, wears light armor and a half helmet covering his back and sides. The passersby stand aside as the guard approaches.

The guard is now in front of you.

He asks with a thunderous voice, “What is going on here?”

- If you would like to try to run away, [go to 113](#)
- If you prefer to say nothing, then [go to 36](#)

238.

“Hmm – I am sorry, traveler, your future appears blurry to me,” says the old woman. She concentrates some more. “It is not so clear, but I do see something...something that will put your life at risk... It is colorful, small...and cursed!” says the old lady with a menacing voice. “More I cannot tell.”

10 silver coins have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

251.

You only walk a few meters before you hear the sound of loud conversations. You continue walking, and on your right, you see what appears to be some kind of tavern or gathering spot. There’s no outside sign, but the ground floor is open to the street. A few groups of people, totaling around a dozen, most of them armed, talk with mugs in their hands. You notice a large counter on the back, but people standing in front prevent you from seeing its purpose.

- If you would like to enter this place to find out more about it, [go to 6](#)
- If you prefer to continue down the street, [go to 38](#)

256.

You politely tell the men that you don't carry what they're looking for.

They also politely ask you to be on your way, a suggestion you choose to follow.

- If you would like to go back toward Jens' house and investigate the area just in front of his atelier, [go to 222](#)
- If you would like to visit the market place, then [go to 15](#)
- If you have already done all that, or simply prefer to directly return to Jens' house, then [go to 29](#)

257.

Suddenly the lead man stops; the other one almost bumps into him.

Your heart stops as well. *That's it, they've seen me. I'm done*, you think.

"Listen!" says the first man.

"What?" asks the other.

"You don't hear it? I think it has already started..."

"The ceremony? It is too early. I don't think it –"

A woman's scream echoes in the night, followed by a deep growl from what is likely a large creature.

The lead man says, "Yes, that was definitely the Dragon, it's getting agitated. Come on, let's hurry!"

And with that, the two men start running toward where the scream and growl came from.

You mutter under your breath, "Did he just say Dragon?!?"

At this point, any sane man would start running away from those sounds – nevertheless, if there really is a Dragon a few meters from here, you want to see it with your own eyes. You quicken your pace as well, careful not to trip and reveal your presence.

After a short time, the two men arrive at the top of the hill; you stop a few meters behind them, and hide behind some bushes.

You see a very large rectangular rock – so black it seems to blend with the night. The rock stands above a flat clearing, providing natural cover to the area just below. There, the two men you followed join similarly dressed figures also

wearing hooded brown robes. They do not seem to wear any weapons, but they could be hidden under their robes.

You stop and kneel down behind some bushes about twenty meters from the top.

Some men stand still with torches as a few more approach them, their hands joined as if in prayer. You also notice a shadowy figure wearing a dark robe standing next to the rock wall, contemplating the scene. Two other figures appear in your field of vision; you now see the woman you heard before, she is likely in her twenties, with blond hair and a simple white dress. An unhooded old man, wearing two large gold necklaces with some metal parts hanging around his neck, is walking next to her while holding her arm. The woman seems reluctant to walk in the direction the old man is taking her, and, with horror, you now understand why.

You did not see it right away, but it was actually there from the start. Against the rock, a black Dragon, at least three meters in length and roughly two meters in height, with red gleaming eyes shining through the darkness. It is positioned in front of what seems to be the opening of a cave. You have seen plenty of depictions of Dragons in books, movies and video games during your youth, and you realize they were quite accurate.

The creature is covered in scales, save for its throat and chest, with brownish horns running in pairs from the top of its head to the back of his large, muscular tail.

The Dragon has a large, elongated head, with wide reptilian eyes, the red adding to its terrifying predatory look. Below its nostrils are large, half open jaws, from which long, sharp looking teeth protrude; you have no doubt they would effortlessly cut a man in half. There is a large silver collar around the Dragon's neck with an impressive chain set in the nearby rock wall. The chain is rather short, and likely does not allow much freedom of movement to the Dragon.

From this distance, it is difficult to see clearly, but the creature seems to have four clawed feet. You also notice fragments of what appear to be bones lying on the ground; you are unsure whether they belong to animals or humans. Finally, you notice two wings folded under the Dragon's body.

The old man, who seems to be the leader, removes a stone from a pouch he's carrying, holds it toward the woman and says, with an emotionless, detached voice, "Now take this in your left hand, and walk."

The woman takes the stone, and then mutters softly, while crying, "I-I can't—there's—there's—a Dragon..."

"*He* won't hurt you as long as I'm nearby. But *I* will, if you don't start moving forward."

You watch in horror as the woman slowly walks toward the Dragon, or to be more specific, around its left side, trying to stay as close to the rock wall as possible.

After a few seconds, she is within a mere meter of Dragon's head. The Dragon simply stares at her without moving. A strange sound comes out of its mouth, and what looks like hot air is expelled.

The older man, still standing near the woman, orders, "Now walk behind the Dragon and into the cave. At the end of the cave there's a wall with a darker area. Keep the stone in your left hand and touch that part of the wall with your right one, and you will be done."

The girl hesitates, looks about to ask a question, but then keeps moving, slowly walking behind the Dragon while shaking and crying softly.

She is now out of your sight, but you see the old man is watching over her, making sure she follows his instructions.

A few seconds pass. Suddenly, without any noise, a bright flash of light comes out of the opening behind the Dragon, illuminating the whole area for a brief moment.

Instinctively, you lower your head and wait a few seconds.

When you look up again, you see the old man saying in a stern voice, "It is done."

Most of the hooded men start moving back the way they came, careful to keep their distance from the Dragon. The old man stops for a moment before the Dragon, looks at him gravely for a while, and then leaves as well.

Shaken by what you just witnessed, it takes you a moment to realize that you are hiding in the middle of nowhere, and that night is upon you. The hooded men are heading to a path leading behind the rock, away from your position, and you decide it would be safer to leave now.

You decide to head back to town; hoping it will not be too difficult to trace your steps.

- [Go to 70](#)

264.

You remove the 20 silver coins from your pouch (and your inventory) and give them to the leader. He counts them, then smiles in satisfaction. He orders the men at his side to prepare a sleeping spot about twenty meters from the fireplace. The sleeping spot is rather crude; it is made up of a hard slab covered

in moss and a dirty woolen blanket full of holes. You don't really care, since you don't intend to use it much, if at all.

You are now able to come to this location at any time, as long as you are currently located inside Deidesheim. All you have to do is [go to 100](#), and once your business is done, simply return to the number from which you just came from.

But for now, as nightfall is setting in, you would rather spend the night at Jens's place, so you decide to leave this place for now.

- [Go to 29](#)

277.

If you felt offended as a bass player; please don't – it's just a joke :) As a matter of fact, I own an extended range Ritter Instruments bass, and actually have a 7 strings Roya on order!

281.

You decide to put an end to your exploration of the town for today and head back to Jens' house.

When you arrive, the large oak front door is already opened. You enter and say, "Hello Jens, I'm back! Are you here?"

You hear Jens' voice distantly coming from across the courtyard.

"Yes, over there; please come join me."

As you head toward Jens, you hear the sound of steel against steel.

You enter the forge, which is located where the present day instrument building area would be. It is a large room, mostly lit by a fire located in the west corner. Metal equipment is lying all around, as well as a few upper body mannequins with pieces of armor and helmets. There is also a large rack with what looks like sword blades.

You turn your attention to Jens; he is using a hammer to hit a piece of steel placed on top of large anvil. Leaning closer, you notice that the piece of steel does not seem to be large enough to be used on a sword.

"What are you working on?" you ask between two hits of the hammer.

“Horseshoes!” says Jens.

“Horseshoes?” you repeat, surprised.

“Yes, not as flamboyant as swords, but it pays the taxes. I also build different kind of tools and equipment. Also, I do quite a lot of repair work.”

You nod thoughtfully.

Jens continues speaking while casually hitting the steel with his hammer.

“I hope the heat and the noise don’t bother you too much!”

“No, no, it’s fine by me.”

“And your clothes will likely get dirty because of all the coal laying around.”

“That must be tiring work hammering that hard for a long period of time.”

“Not really. Actually, it is more about accuracy than strength. You do not want to hit the steel at the wrong place, especially on a sword’s blade.”

You watch with interest as Jens continues working.

After a few minutes, he is done. He grabs each horseshoe at a time with a clamp and inspects them carefully.

Once satisfied he joyfully says, “Das is der Hammer!”

Having heard this expression before, but not certain, you ask, “Sorry, what did you say?”

“Oh, forget it – this is just a strange expression I use.” Jens says smiling.

You simply smile back at Jens, but are laughing quite hard inside, thinking *so that’s where it comes from!*

Jens neatly clears his working space and tools and then invites you to move to the main part of the house.

“So, how was your day?” asks Jens casually while removing some protective clothing from his arms and chest.

“Well, nothing of the ordinary, you know. I woke up in the Middle Ages, I’m walking around weirdly dressed with a sword by my side... and, oh, I met a talking cat today; nothing out of the ordinary, really.”

Jens chuckles.

You proceed to tell Jens in details about your activities.

“Hmmm, then nothing that really helps so far, seems like,” Jens finally says.

“I’m afraid not. I have seen a few fancy carriages, but no DeLorean to take me back home.”

“What is that, some special breed of horses?”

“Yeah, kind of. But I don’t think you have them yet, but it’s a big thing in the future.”

Jens nods seriously and says, “Oh, talking about the future, I have spent quite some time on your – phone – it is truly fascinating.”

“I guess... I mean, I just take it for granted, but yeah, I can understand you would find it amazing.”

“I have seen some very realistic drawings of particularly colorful places; is this where you live?”

“You probably mean the pictures of New York or Tokyo?”

“I never heard of those places; they look fascinating...”

“I don’t live there, but I enjoy going there for vacation; yes, very colorful places,” you say with a slight sadness in your voice, as talking about it reminds you how far away from them you are.

“There’s also this,” Jens hesitates, “activity,” he finally says, “called *Candy Crush*; what is the goal of that?”

You burst out laughing.

“Well, there’s no goal. It’s just a game to waste time.”

Jens looks very confused but does not pursue the topic further.

Instead, he informs you that he has also been investigating why you are here, but he’s found nothing of interest yet. He reassures you by saying that he is confident some clues will likely soon emerge.

Jens takes you to the kitchen, where he asks a few more questions about your world while preparing dinner.

Jens also asks if he could keep your mobile phone, to which you respond positively, adding that it’s not like you are going to need it right away.

Dinner is particularly good; Jens has prepared roasted chicken with potatoes and corn, along with some berries.

Once done eating, Jens walks you to your room, which is located not far from the dining area, where the wood storage would be in the present time.

You take a look at the room; it is rather simple, with very little furniture.

Actually, it appears that Jens is rather proud of having this spare room, which even has its own mattress. Next to it lays a pile of blankets and some animal skins. Jens provides you with some practical information, bids you good night and closes the door as he leaves. You take a moment to arrange the mattress with some blankets, and you have but very little time to recall today’s events before falling deeply asleep.

- [Go to 58](#)

286.

You watch other students compete, and your turn is up again.

This time a rather old man, likely in his fifties, stands in front of you.

The man is bold and wears distressed brown clothing.

You give a quick questioning look to the head instructor to be sure he is indeed your opponent, and to your surprise, she nods to you, smiling.

The old man starts the battle, and some students cheer his name, Antonio. The old man definitely still has lots of energy in him, executing fast side steps, cartwheels, and finishing with a one-handed handstand.

The students' cheering dies, and it is now your turn to impress the crowd.

The roll has to (twice):

go over 5

but be under 10

- If you manage to outperform Antonio, [go to 347](#)
- If not, [go to 175](#)

301.

On your way to the counter, you notice some food on the tables that look and smell delicious; you consider for a second to order some, but you decide to be patient and wait for dinner at Jens' house.

Reaching the counter, you are hailed by a strong and authoritative voice, asking, "What will it be, stranger?"

The voice comes from the tavern keeper, a sturdy old man with a long brown beard, furry eyebrows, and a large, reddish nose. He wears a scruffy brown work tunic and a blue colored cap.

"I'm sorry, what do you mean?" you reply hesitantly.

"What do you drink!" says the man impatiently.

“Oh! Yes, of course – I will have a beer please.”

The tavern keeper replies with a grunt.

“Some things never change,” you whisper to yourself under your breath.

The tavern keeper hands you a drink, while saying, “You must be a new recruit, right? Your uniform is not ready yet?”

You take the cup and start to reply, but the tavern keeper is already gone, shouting at a lady carrying several beverages and what looks like an assortment of dry meat.

You decide to keep some distance between you and the tavern keeper and stand a few meters away from the counter. From here, you have a good view over a large portion of the tavern and its customers.

You see an elegantly dressed knight wearing a bright green cape leaning on the counter, engaged in a conversation with a man wearing a simple brown tunic, who is likely a farmer. There is a large, chest high table on your right, shared by several standing customers playing a game of cards.

At one of the benches furthest away from you, you notice the tavern keeper speaking to some customers. Strangely, he isn't wearing the same clothing that he was a few seconds ago. You haven't drunk that much of your beer yet, but you wonder if maybe middle-age beer is particularly strong. You look back at the counter to check if the tavern keeper is still where you last saw him. He actually is. You feel relieved and experience a strange feeling of *déjà-vu*. You conclude that the two must be twins. You wonder if both have the same personality. Rather than asking them bluntly which one is the rudest, you decide to pay for your drink and make a mental note to ask Jens about these two.

You are about to leave the Alte Eber tavern when something across the room catches your attention. Two men wearing hooded brown robes are seated at the end of a bench talking quietly. You did not see them until now, as a group of people were drinking standing just in front of them. What brings your attention to these two men are their shoes. First, they are the exact same shoes as the ones you wore when you first woke up here. Granted, this could be some kind of standard shoe model, or maybe there are only one or two shoemakers in the whole area, so most people are wearing the same shoes. But actually, you have not seen these shoes on anyone else so far, which is why it got your attention. Secondly, you can clearly see some reddish dust on their shoes – the same reddish dust that you had noticed on your own shoes when you woke up here... Your mind is racing for an explanation when the men end their conversation and stand up, ready to leave.

It seems like you finally found an interesting lead; you quickly decide to discreetly follow the two men and see where they are headed next.

- [Go to 33](#)

302.

You enter the dark and narrow alley, which is actually a dead end. You immediately notice an old lady lying on the floor, towered over by two shady looking characters. The old lady is clutching a small chest in her hands. Her eyes brighten when she sees you. She says in a weak voice, “Young man, please help me!”

Before you can utter a reply, or even make a move, one of the bandits heads toward you and says, “You are at the wrong place at the wrong time boy.”

The bandit reaches out for the short sword at his side and launches at you, leaving you no choice but to fight back.

- If you have just participated to the weapon tournament or the dance competition, [go to 35](#)
- If not, you draw your sword and face the incoming bandit:

Bandit

HP 25

ATT +1

Special move: none

- If you manage to bring down the bandit’s HP to 5 or below, [go to 55](#)
- If not, your adventure ends here, at the hand of a low life thug in a dark and narrow alley of Deidesheim’s 3rd quarter.

304.

You go through the alley, and as the woman predicted, end up back at the 2nd tier, with the Alte Eber Tavern right next to you. You hear people talking loudly and cheering but do not directly see the inside of the tavern. The smell of grilled meat appealing, you decide to move forward and go through a long and narrow corridor leading inside the tavern. You squeeze through a few standing customers and face a large room that connects to the main area. The room is full of customers chatting merrily and standing around small chest-height tables filled with drinks and food.

- If you would like to engage a conversation with some of the customers from this room, [go to 65](#)
- If you would like to directly head over to the counter of the main room, then [go to 301](#)

307.

As you get closer to the southern end of the area, there seems to be more people and activity in the street. Two women carrying wooden buckets are chatting while queuing in front of a wooden well.

A few meters further, there are rows of small stands, some of them covered with white linen. You decide to take a closer look to the left side, and see what the stands are selling. Most are selling what appears to be homemade dishes, with some selling small crafts or simple furniture.

Between two stands, you notice a long alley heading east.

You ask a young woman selling bread where this alley goes.

She explains that it's a passage joining the 2nd and 3rd tier, and that it exits directly next to the Alter Eber tavern.

You thank the young woman for the information and decide to head back to the 2nd tier, a tavern likely being an adequate place to investigate, or at least to have a beer or two.

- [Go to 304](#)

310.

In a swift motion, you manage to parry the incoming blow with impeccable timing and immediately after rotate your sword and hit your opponent's chin with your sword's pommel. He grunts when the blow connects and remains dazed for a few seconds.

As if reading your thoughts, the bold man approaches you and says, "Don't worry, he'll be fine. That's also why the students are here; to receive some blows and learn from their mistakes. Nice moves you showed us today. I think we have a clear winner!"

He quickly makes sure your opponent is fine, then turns back to you.

"Well, you fought well today." He reaches for a small pouch attached to his belt and grabs a few coins. "Here is the first part of your reward."

You add 50 silver coins to your inventory.

“As for the second part, as promised, let us prepare Lester for you.”

“Lester?” you ask dubiously.

“Of course. He’s got plenty of fat, coming out of Hern’s farm, you know.” He shouts to a student in the distance, “Garn, go get us Lester, bring along some rope.”

You consider for one moment whether or not bringing a fat pig to Jens and Uta would make them happy, but you decide against it, thinking that continuing your investigation with a large pig at your side may not be very convenient.

You politely explain to the bald man that you would be very proud to receive this gift but you have to be on your way now, and that this animal would, well, get in your way. The bold man is reluctant at first, but finally accepts to keep the pig.

You respectfully salute the students, exchange a few parting words with the bold man and exit the school.

- You can now head back to the main road and continue down the street; [go to 205](#)
- If you haven’t yet investigated what appears to be a dancing school, you can do that by [going to 48](#)

316.

“Hmmm – a difficult question this is, traveler. Always in motion is the future. But I see somewhere far away from here... Hot, humid... Green. I also see friends, enemies, large foes... I see joy, but I also see fear and death.”

10 silver coins have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)
- If you are done here, then [return to 80](#)

333.

“You are in my tent, in Deidesheim,” says the old woman.

10 silver coins have been removed from your inventory.

- If you would like to ask other questions, [go to 233](#)

- If you are done here, please [return to 80](#)

336.

Reaching in your pocket, you tell the leader, “Here, I can trade this green amulet for some shelter and information; it is of great value.”

However, since you actually do not possess a green amulet, you are not able to give it to the man. He and his companions do not seem amused at all by your joke. The man on your left suddenly lounges at you with a dagger.

You feel a sharp pain in your stomach, while hearing one of the men say, “You filthy liar!”

Your adventure ends here.

347.

The students are all cheering as Antonio congratulates you with a broad smile.

“Not bad for a young fellow!”

It is now time for the final match.

To your surprise, you learn the contestant from the first match, who made her way up to the final, hurt her ankle and will not participate. For a moment, you think an easy victory is at hand, but you realize the head instructor will replace the injured candidate. You wonder about the fairness of that decision, but the head instructor being a quite charming person, you decide you can live with it.

As if reading your mind, Orwen, who is warming up her ankles, says with a smile, “Don’t worry, I will go easy on you.”

The bell indicating the start of the battle rings; as soon as Orwen starts her routine, all the students cheer for her, twice as loud as when Antonio was dancing.

You quickly realize that Orwen fully deserves her title of head instructor, as she moves with grace and speed through some difficult moves requiring both flexibility and good timing. She ends her routine with two cartwheels and a back somersault, landing gracefully in front of you, smiling.

Thinking that now would be a good moment to “use the force,” you head into the battle with everything you’ve got.

The roll has to (twice):

go over 6

but be under 9

- If you manage to outperform Orwen, [go to 60](#)
- If not, [go to 175](#)

355.

The two men take a small passage out of the 3rd tier leading into the 2nd. They head toward the town's west exit, and you decide to follow them.

You never trailed anyone in your life before but find out you are doing pretty well, keeping your distance a few meters from the two men, and pretending to mind your own business. After a few minutes, you arrive at the town's south exit. Things may get more complicated from here. As there will likely be fewer people walking around, if you maintain the same distance trailing the two men, it will be obvious that you are following them.

You decide to wait a few seconds before continuing to follow the mysterious men.

You have no trouble following them, as the two seem to be engaged in a rather energetic discussion about a topic you cannot clearly hear.

The men walk a good twenty minutes before entering a forest.

You hesitate to follow them – if something happens this far from town, no one will come to your rescue, but your curiosity is stronger, and you decide to keep on going.

- [Go to 375](#)

375.

The forest is dense with tall pine trees and large beech trees as it goes up the mountain. As the sun goes down, the fog creates a beautiful orange and brown glow, giving the whole area an eerie atmosphere.

The initial path the two men followed was large enough for two horses, but it is now getting narrower, to a point where they have to walk behind each other.

At some point, the men step out of the path and stop for a moment to look at their surroundings. Luckily, they do not notice you. They proceed to climb a steep hill so thick with trees and branches that you can barely see the men.

You resume trailing the men, braving the difficult terrain. The difficult terrain helps cover your presence, as visibility is much reduced, and the two men make a lot of noise climbing, which further masks your own progress.

The climb continues for a few more minutes until the terrain becomes flatter and the ground softer.

At this point, you realize the ground you're walking on is a different color than from the foot of the mountain. You take some time to examine the ground and realize where the reddish sand came from – this area. You are not sure why, but the ground is a mix of solid brownish soil with blood colored sandy dust; its origin you aren't too sure about, and actually, you're not sure you really want to know.

After a few more minutes, you do not think about the blood colored ground anymore, and the sun has definitely set, providing you additional cover. Between that and the hundreds of tall and skinny grey pine trees surrounding you, you feel rather protected from the men's view.

- [Go to 257](#)

