


THE EYE SHIELD



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MESSAGE FROM ME

Welcome to issue forty of *The Eye Shield*. There's plenty for you to enjoy in this issue, including a review of series 4 by prolific TES reader Chris Stallard. Chris, I must thank you once again for continuing to share your Knightmare views and TES feedback with me. I only wish there were more out there like you...

Now, as for Chris's article, which is entitled *Transition Gone Mad*, I must admit that not all of the opinions expressed tally with my own, what with me being a diehard fan of series 4. However, this is exactly the kind of thing I want for TES - readers sharing their thoughts and opinions, just as it was in the good old days of Paul McIntosh's fanzine! If you have something you want to get off your chest about anything remotely Knightmare related, do what Chris did and get in touch!

Here's something I've been wanting to get off my chest for a while - I actually find series 3 a bit samey, mainly because so much time is spent larking about in level one, where the team either meet Golgarach, Velda and Mrs. Grimwold, or Brangwen, Motley, Mellisandre and Olaf, a pattern which becomes all too predictable by about the sixth episode of the series. I freely admit that, when the series gets exciting, it gets very exciting, particularly during Leo's and Martin's third level experiences. However, these are confined to two or three episodes of the series. The majority of episodes are much less interesting than those in series 2, 5 and 6, in my view. There, I bet that made you sit up and pay attention! Why not write in and tell me why I'm completely and utterly wrong about series 3 in time for the next issue?

Anyway, moving on. Richard Temple's intriguing tale of espionage and deceit, *Trade in the Old for the New*, unfortunately takes a break this issue, but hopefully it will be back for the next one. By the way, if you're reading this, Richard, please send me the final part of your story ASAP! To compensate somewhat for this gaping hole in the pages of *The Eye Shield*, Rosey Collins (veteran Knightmare fan and TES contributor) has written an article entitled *Politically Incorrect*, in which she examines the top five stereotypes from Knightmare's extensive character reservoir. Rosey has asked me to point out that this article is a completely original piece, as she wrote it without any prior knowledge of the recent discussion on the Knightmare forum about stereotypical characters.

Here is an e-mail from Richard Lowe, who has taken the time to share with me some of his thoughts on the previous issue of TES. I hope he will inspire more of you to do the same...

This is arguably my favourite edition yet, primarily as a result of the articles about Dickon and the minecart. Dickon's quest is one of my most memorable, along with Ben II and the legend that is Barry! Oh, and how could I forget the Lord Fear quotes, from arguably the greatest performer in Knightmare history? If any form of the Dungeon

were to reappear, a sarcastic Mark Knight would probably top of my list of priorities - yes, more so than Treguard! Anyway, thanks for your continued devotion to the Greater Game; it is most appreciated!

Thanks again for writing, Richard. It is feedback like this that really makes all my efforts with The Eye Shield seem worthwhile, so thanks for giving me renewed hope to carry on. I am very pleased that you enjoyed my latest offerings in Classic Quest and Remember This, as well as my carefully selected Lord Fear quotes. Much as I like Lord Fear as a character, Hugo Myatt as Treguard would always top my list for inclusion in any version of Knightmare, as it just wouldn't be Knightmare without him!

Chris Stallard contemplates the shortcomings of series 4, which he explores in much greater depth in his article this issue.

Whilst I know that a large number of fans appreciate series 4, I've always found it to be the most disappointing, with its over-reliance on the eye shield, dull quests and clashes between old and new aspects.

Despite my fondness for series 4, I can see exactly what you mean by everything you say in your article. It is quite samey, and my fondness for it comes mainly from nostalgia, I think. For content, my favourite is series 2, which I think is much more varied and exciting even than the ultimate fan favourite, series 3.

Challenge Question: What is this a list of? *Brass bracelet, green gem, dagger of darkness, leather-bound book, potion, silver chalice, iron key.*

REMEMBER THIS?

Series 3. Level 1.

THE LION'S HEAD AND THE BROKEN PATH

This challenge took place in the same room as the Lion's Head and the Lasers. The crucial difference was that the floor had been replaced with a precarious, narrow path over a pit, which had to be crossed in order to reach the exit. This challenge appeared to test teams on level one, in very much the same vein as the scorpion, the slithering snakes and other such minor menaces. And it sounds like simplicity itself, doesn't it? Guide the dungeoneer along the path using clear, simple instructions, and make it to the exit in one piece. However, it really wasn't that simple at all.

I think this challenge was remarkably hard for level one. For all that it looked easy, it really wasn't! Stepping from the first section of the path to the second was simple enough, as it merely involved a sidestep to the left. However, the third section of the path was almost impossible to reach, being placed diagonally at right angles to the left of the end of the second section. Successful attempts to complete this difficult manoeuvre would involve having the dungeoneer teetering precariously over the pit for several agonising seconds as the advisors tried to explain that the left foot needed to be placed outwards to the left at an angle, before the right foot followed in the same way. Most teams found this very difficult to explain to the dungeoneer, and overcomplicated explanations from advisors often led to confusion and complication of this seemingly simple step to the left.

The puzzle went back to basics when presenting the challenge of stepping onto the final section of the path, which involved a sidestep to the right and then a straight line towards the door. However, the eerie moaning of skull ghosts approaching and, in some cases, the pathway disappearing behind the dungeoneer as they walked forward served to add to the tension of the awkward situation, which made for some very nerve-wracking scenes in this room, as otherwise competent teams left their dungeoneers teetering on the edge of the pit, completely unable to understand what they were supposed to do, or at least how to relay that information to the dungeoneer.

Having said all that, most teams who attempted this challenge did manage to make it across in the end. The nearest miss, I think, was Julie, who spent a long time wobbling precariously over the gap between the second and third sections of the path while one of the advisors tried to explain what to do. The Lion's Head and the Broken Path can claim one victim, however, in the form of James, the fifth dungeoneer of series 3. After completing a very unremarkable level one quest featuring Golgarach, Velda and Mrs. Grimwold (as many level one quests did in series 3), James went blundering forward onto the Broken Path, and took a

nasty fall at the precarious part between sections two and three. The advisors completely failed to take into account the fact that a diagonal approach was needed, and sent James sidestepping straight into the pit! Worthy of Simon III at the Block and Tackle, I'd say.

This was not a very memorable challenge, and it has not gained notoriety in Nightmare lore, but I think it's a hidden gem, providing some great scenes and some genuinely tense and exciting moments. Next time you find yourself watching series 3, keep your eyes peeled for the Lion's Head and the Broken Path and see if you agree with me.

Difficulty: 9 Very fiddly, especially for level one.

Killer Instinct: 8 One solid victim, and some near misses.

Gore Factor: 6 A quick fall and it was all over.

Fairness: 4 Should have been a level two challenge.

ADVENTURE TIME

In this age of heroes, the score is Dungeon 11, Humans 4. However, as Katie enters the third level, things are bound to change.

Katie emerges into the level three clue room. On the table there is a talisman, a key and a bottle labelled *flash*.

"Well, team, an early choice awaits you in level three," Treguard remarks. "Choose your objects with care, for the third level will offer you no obvious clues to help."

The advisors tell Katie to examine the objects. As she does so, a large image of Morghanna's head forms on the far wall.

"Another puny dungeoneer has infiltrated my kingdom!" the sorceress snarls. "Well, dungeoneer, you may as well turn back now, for I have sensed your progress through the Dungeon, and I am prepared for you. There are so many traps and tricks waiting for you up ahead, you're bound to succumb to one of them eventually. Yes, puny adventurer, I think that you will never unlock my secrets!"

The image disappears to the sound of cackling laughter. The advisors discuss Morghanna's use of the word *unlock*.

"Does that mean we should take the key?" one of them wonders.

"It must do," another opines.

"No, let's take the other two objects," Katie insists. "There are no obvious clues on this level, and we shouldn't trust Morghanna anyway."

The advisors agree with this reasoning, so Katie picks up the bottle and the talisman. She is directed out, into a large cavern with one exit. This is the home of Owen, the enormous earth dragon.

"You must have your wits about you here, team," says Treguard. "This reptilian beast can give you great rewards if he so chooses, Katie, but first you'll have to prove yourself."

"Ah, another dungeoneer has entered my cave," Owen remarks. "Welcome, human. What is your name?"

"My name's Katie, and I'm on the quest for the Cup," Katie explains.

"And would you like to earn some dragon magic?" Owen rumbles.

"Yes, please," Katie replies politely.

"Listen, then, very carefully," Owen instructs the team. "I was born of the earth, and baptised in fire. I am beloved of my master, though I owe him no loyalty, and one day his friendship with me may make his wife a widow."

The advisors discuss this for some time, as Katie becomes increasingly anxious. The team sense that victory is within their grasp, and they are keen not to let it slip away.

"You'll have to get a move on if you want some magic," Owen prompts them after a while.

"Come on, team, for without Owen's magic, Morghanna will surely cut you down to size," Treguard hints heavily.

"A sword!" Katie blurts out in sudden inspiration.

"Ah, excellent, my dear child," Owen smiles widely. "Your answer is correct. As promised, I gift you with the spell CHARGE. Now, I wish you luck on your journey. Farewell."

Feeling very pleased with herself, Katie progresses further into the third level. The next chamber is swarming with goblins, who scuttle towards Katie with their weapons raised as soon as they catch sight of her.

"Warning!" Treguard exclaims. "These creatures can be deadly. You must deal with them swiftly, or your quest ends now!"

"Uncork the bottle!" commands one of the advisors.

Katie follows this instruction, and the room is filled with a brilliant flash of white light. The goblins are blinded and confused, so Katie grabs the opportunity to hurtle past them, through the only exit. She emerges into Merlin's vast level three chamber, where there is a glowing letter M on the table. Katie touches this, causing a large image of Merlin to appear.

"Ah, Katie, well done indeed!" Merlin booms warmly. "You have survived much peril to reach this point, but your direst foe still waits for you on

the path ahead. However, you already have the weapons you need to defeat her. The trick, of course, is combining them together at the right moment. Bear this in mind, for you will need to empower your missile and send it Morghanna's way before her evil magic destroys you. If you survive, you will need another small spell, which I now gift to you. It is called FIRE. Now, step bravely onwards. It is a short path you tread, but a dangerous one."

Merlin disappears and then Katie is directed out. The next room contains a large stained-glass window and four paths as exits. The rightmost path is emblazoned with the symbol of the Cup that Heals.

"A very clear signpost, team, but you must press on now," Treguard urges the team. "I sense that Morghanna is not far away!"

Katie is directed towards the correct path but, before she has taken more than a few steps down it, the stained-glass window dissolves into an enormous projection of the evil and ruthless Morghanna.

"So, Katie, we meet again," the sorceress sneers. "This time, however, you will not escape from me so easily."

"Come on team, take action now, or your quest is surely doomed!" Treguard urges.

"Which spell shall we use?" twitters an advisor. "FIRE or CHARGE?"

"FIRE sounds more likely," says another.

"But we're supposed to combine a spell with a missile of some sort," points out the third. "That must be the talisman. Let's use CHARGE, because that's dragon magic, which is supposed to be effective against Morghanna."

"Let's go for it," decides the spellcaster. "Spellcasting: C-H-A-R-G-E!"

The talisman in Katie's hands becomes charged with dragon magic. The advisors tell her to turn around and hurl the missile at Morghanna, which Katie duly does.

"No!" Morghanna screams in rage. "I will not allow another dungeoneer to win! I will not..."

But then she is silenced as the talisman makes contact with her, and she disappears in a flash of lightning. Katie is directed down the path very quickly. It leads to a small cave with a stone altar at its centre, where shimmers the golden Cup that Heals. However, it is trapped in a block of ice.

"Here is the object of your quest, team!" Treguard exclaims, in case the advisors haven't noticed. "But how can you get to it?"

"Spellcasting!" declares the spellcaster without hesitation. "F-I-R-E!"

The Cup is released, and Katie strides forward and picks it up. There is a flash of magical lightning, and she is back in the Great Hall of Nightmare, where Treguard and Merlin are both waiting to congratulate her. Of the Cup that Heals, however, there is no sign.

"Well done indeed, Katie!" Treguard booms. "You and your friends have proven equal to the Nightmare challenge, and you will walk from these halls as true champions of chivalry!"

"But what about the Cup?" asks Katie. "Where did it go?"

"Oh, nowhere in particular," Merlin smiles with a twinkle in his eye. "You must realise, Katie, that the Cup that Heals is also known as the Holy Grail, and it cannot be redeemed in quite the same way as the other quest objects. However, you will carry it forth in your hearts and minds, and deliver its message to all you meet!"

"Plus you get the usual mementos, of course," Treguard assures the team.

Merlin hands the Silver Spurs of Squiredom to Katie and her three advisors, who are called Teresa, Dannielle and Sophie. As the victorious girls are transported home, Merlin returns to his home in Dungeon, and Treguard stands before the castle door, ready for the next team of challengers to appear before him.

Katie's victory has reduced the Dungeon's lead to a less impressive 11-5, but will the next team fare so well? Read the next exciting chapter of Adventure Time to find out.

PUZZLE PAGE ONE

Treguard's Introductory Quotes

These Nightmare quotes all come from Treguard, as he describes different Nightmare characters during their first ever appearances on the show. For each quote, name the character being introduced by the Dungeon Master, and the episode and appropriate dungeoneer if you can.

1.) "You must understand, team, that no true quest is unopposed. It is in the nature of evil to struggle against truth and justice."

2.) "I think a presence is beginning to manifest itself, and it's not a pleasant one."

3.) "Caution, team, manifestation; this is an unfamiliar guardian, so take special care."

4.) "_____ usually has a splitting headache, which makes him a very bad-tempered wall monster."

5.) "This lady is a wood elf, and despite her form is every bit as dangerous as an armoured knight or a hungry cave goblin."

6.) "There's a power here, and I'm not at all sure that it's pleasant."

7.) "Not a frightknight, Pickle, but someone pretty frightful if you're trying to get on with an adventure."

8.) "You know what a thief-taker is? Well, _____-_____'s a fool-taker."

9.) "She commands here; she will not tolerate my presence. Even as I speak, she rejects me. She rejects me!"

10.) "This _____ is what you might call a Scandinavian tourist."

11.) "We had enough trouble with Folly, but this new jester's turning out to be a complete time-waster."

12.) "Caution, team, this lady is not a friend."

13.) "This barbarian guard looks positively barbaric. But you should be able to outwit him without wasting magic."

14.) "This, unless I'm much mistaken, is the Opposition."

15.) "This is a troubadour. In this realm there are no newspapers such as you have, and strolling players such as these both gather and distribute news. Of course sometimes it's just pure gossip. A bit like your newspapers, actually."

TRANSITION GONE MAD

An analysis of series 4 by Chris Stallard

While I will admit that series four had its good points and that it still has many fans (notably the editor of this fanzine) it was, in my opinion, the weakest of all eight series of Knightmare, and the one series that I really did find painful and dull to watch.

While it was inevitable that changes would have to be made from the original series, the changes made from series three to four were, in my opinion, over the top and much more than were necessary. The graphics of the series are a good illustration of this. While the variety of rooms needed for the programme meant that it was impossible for David Rowe simply to design the show's rooms almost single-handedly, as he had done previously, the change from near total hand and computer designed chambers to the cut and paste castles and villages of series four was too large a jump. The technology of 1990 meant that, in reality, the graphics of series four looked gaudy and plain compared to the rich fantasy style graphics that had preceded them. Also, the fact that the pictures used had to be taken in the daylight meant that Knightmare lost the essential dark atmosphere of the earlier series, which had been so intimidating yet intriguing to its legions of young viewers.

This new style clashed awkwardly with the characters from the previous series that were included in the new series. The worst (or best) example of this is Merlin, who went from being the central wizard in series 1, 2 and 3, with a grandly designed chamber in series 1 and 2 and an equally magical chamber in series 3, to being an outcast within the castle ruins of series 4. The fact that Merlin also lost his trademark bright robes (to be seen only at the end of Dickon's winning quest, and the level three and end of season appearances in Giles's quest) reduced his prestige, as did the fact that he became one of the many victims to be trapped in the stocks in this series.

Treguard's role was also downgraded, in my opinion, by the unforgivable act of providing him with an assistant. While Pickle was a memorable and humorous character, he surely didn't warrant being Treguard's assistant and would have been more appropriate as an "in-game" character. The Dungeon Master didn't require an assistant; the power of the role should have been absolute. It is indisputable that from series 4 to series 8, when Treguard had an assistant, he was far less serious and intimidating than in series 1, 2 and 3, when he had no assistant. While the series did contain memorable characters such as Brother Mace, the majority of the characters looked ill at ease in this series, and the inclusion of an assistant to Treguard is a step I never agreed with.

As I mentioned, nine characters were trapped in the stocks in this series, for only eight quests attempted. This repetition was the main factor in making series four the only Knightmare series that I really cannot stand. The lack of imagination in this scenario is unbelievable! Yes, characters have always needed rescuing in Knightmare (the first winning quest was based around a rescue, of course) but in series four this scenario seemed to be the only way for dungeoneers to interact with characters. How often did a dungeoneer walk into a room to find a random character trapped in the stocks, with no forewarning or plot development?

This repetition was a common theme throughout the series. All quests followed a rigid pattern of passing a door monster, agreeing to retrieve an item for a character (the quest within the quest), taking the eye shield, and then enduring scene after scene of dull pre-recorded walking scenes in which anything at all rarely happened. Level one was so rigid that viewers could confidently predict the scene and room that was about to appear. This lack of variety became annoying to say the least, as it is

fair to say that once one quest had been seen, the rest would not differ from it too drastically.

As you may have noticed, I am anti the eye shield. (The device, not the fanzine!) Whilst it would, in theory, allow for quicker exits from rooms, as opposed to having to leave via a set point, the device was overused to the point of lunacy! Practically every room saw Treguard cry "*Hold up the eye shield!*" and we all knew we were about to be treated to more pre-recorded footage of a man walking slowly through the woods/ruins/hills. The fact that the recording bore no resemblance to the guiders' instructions also didn't help, as, when the dungeoneer was told to stop, it took about five seconds to register on the screen! It is clear, however, that the use of the eye shield did improve, as in subsequent series it was used much less, and when it was used it was much more for its original purpose (speed) rather than just to show off the archive of footage that the programme had built up.

However, the weakest point of series four was the simple fact that the quests were, by and large, not very entertaining. Apart from Dickon's winning quest, the only entertaining efforts were from Helen and Giles, who were both, in my opinion, unlucky not to be victorious. The other teams were either, to be diplomatic, not the stuff of legend, or simply bound too tightly by the rigid nature of the series. The quests were also incredibly long in this series, with the shortest quest lasting twenty-five minutes, which is just fifteen shorter than the first ever winners! Devoting long periods of time to watch uninspiring, dull quests in a rigid framework simply wasn't very entertaining.

However, even I'll admit that the series had its redeeming features. The Corridor of Blades and the Block and Tackle were two of the greatest rooms ever devised, although the latter was strangely dropped at the end of the series. As I have said, the efforts of Helen, Dickon and Giles were entertaining, but these bright lights shone in a dark grey mess of a series.

So there you have it: harsh, but fair? The show always had to evolve and change, nobody denies this, but to change so quickly and dramatically ensured that series four will always be seen as a transitional period for me, as the old tried to live with the new, with some quite disorganised consequences. While I prefer the original three series, I also enjoy watching series 5, 6, 7 and 8, but I honestly can't say that about series 4.

CLASSIC QUEST

Series 6.

Quest: The Crown.

Dungeoneer: Ben Waite.

Advisors: James, Alan and Nat.

Home town: Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Team score: 10 out of 10.

The winning quest from series 6 contains many classic scenes, some of them funny, some of them ludicrous, and many of them, particularly towards the end of the adventure, very exciting and nail-bitingly tense.

Level One: After choosing the Crown in the Hall of Choice, Ben travels through a dwarf tunnel to Dungarth, which, as Treguard and Pickle go to great lengths to remind us, has not been seen since series 4. Here Ben makes use of a spyglass, through which Lord Fear and Skarkill can be seen. Their conversation reveals that Fear wants a red dragon, and Skarkill is the unlucky underling who has been tasked with acquiring one. Lord Fear also has a conversation with Sylvester Hands in his magic pool. Hands informs his master that their plan to make Sidriss fall in love with the insanitary thief is going swimmingly, to which Lord Fear replies that the causeway code will now be impossible for anyone to learn, as only Sidriss knows it.

After the spyglass sequence has finished, Ben moves on to a clue room, where he picks up a bar of gold and a horn. He is chased out by a pooka. Ben next arrives in Wolfenden, where Julius Scaramonger and Ah Wok are in direct competition with each other. Scaramonger's attempts to sell Ben the password for level one earn him no reward, but Ah Wok manages to make a sale in the form of a *true sight* potion. Ben next meets Ridolfo, who is on the lookout for news. Ben informs the troubadour that Lord Fear wants a red dragon, and that

"Sidriss is under a potion to make her love Hands Sly." - Ben.

In return for this juicy snippet of information ("*Scandal, I love it!*" - **Ridolfo**) Ridolfo reveals the password - *breastplate*. This is utilized outside the roundhouse at Holngarth, where Dreadnort is on guard. Next, in a forest clearing, Ben finally meets Sidriss. He persuades her to drink the *true sight* potion, saying that it is a present from Hands:

"It's this potion, it'll make you fall even more in love with him." - **Ben**.

Sylvester Hands soon turns up and ties Ben up with his magic rope, but Sidriss returns to her senses (such as they are) and scares Hands off, before untying Ben and telling him the causeway code - 6, 4, 7, 3, 0. When the causeway has been crossed, Ben reaches Smirkenorff. The dragon is feeling unusually generous, and transports Ben to level two free of charge.

Level Two: Ben picks up a ring, as well as a pooka in a bottle, in the clue room. A spyglass sequence reveals Lord Fear instructing Skarkill to keep a firm hand on the key to level three under any circumstances. During this sequence, it becomes clear that Mount Fear has become home to the bad-tempered dragon Red Death, which can be heard growling and snarling off-screen, in very much the same vein as Festus in series 3.

Ben travels through some dwarf tunnels to Witch Haven, where he has to avoid Peggaty's fireballs. A meeting with Queen Greystagg follows, during which Ben agrees to part with the ring in return for information about how to use the trapped pooka effectively. The advisors are wary of Greystagg at first, and she has a job persuading them to give her the ring:

"I like the ring, and if you give it to me I will help you; you will just have to believe me." - **Greystagg**.

Once the deal is done, Greystagg reveals that the pooka's name is Puck, and that this knowledge will give Ben the power to command it. In the next chamber, Ben finds a scroll that tells him to take the odd path on the causeway, before Skarkill and two goblins arrive. Ben releases Puck from his bottle, and scares Skarkill into handing over the key. After he has done this, the goblin master beats a hasty retreat, relentlessly pursued by the pooka. Once Ben has crossed the causeway, he encounters a locked metal door. The key opens this, revealing the Descender. A short journey in the device is completed, and Ben has reached the third level.

Level Three: In a stone clue chamber, Ben picks up a bar of gold and a mace. He looks through another spyglass, to reveal Lord Fear and Skarkill having an argument about wages. Fear is angered by Skarkill's request for more money, and remarks that Ben will never survive in level three thanks to the Great Causeway.

Ben next finds himself aboard the Cloudwalker, where he pays the bar of gold to Captain Nemanor in return for passage on his ship. When Nemanor learns of Ben's quest, he offers to deliver the dungeoneer to the Mines of Gore, where both Mount Fear and the Crown are to be found. In return for this service, Ben is tasked with retrieving Nemanor's lost astrolabe from Ariadne's new lair. Through the dwarf tunnel once again, Ben reaches the spider's chamber, which has the customary web spanning the ceiling.

On a lectern-style bench, Nemanor's astrolabe and a scroll are waiting. The scroll reveals the first two numbers of the combination for the Great Causeway (2 and 3) before Ariadne scuttles into the picture, prompting Pickle to panic uncontrollably as usual. Ben grabs the astrolabe and is hastily directed to the exit, with Ariadne looming menacingly behind him at every step. The dwarf tunnels lead back to the Cloudwalker, where Captain Nemanor is delighted to receive his astrolabe.

He spellcasts WIND to take the ship to the Mines of Gore, where a scroll is sitting on a rock. The scroll reads TRICK OR TREAT. Treguard explains that both of these are spells, and the team must choose one to cast. This is a life or death decision, and one which must be made. The team opt for TRICK in the end, which summons Hordriss to them. He is very annoyed to have been summoned without permission, and he demands to be returned at once. In exchange for dispelling TRICK, Ben demands some kind of reward:

"Hordriss, you're at my mercy!" - Ben.

Hordriss grudgingly parts with a spell called SPLASH. Tense moments follow on the Great Causeway, where the team have to work out the rest of the number combination (4, 5, 4) which they do in the nick of time, and then spell out FIND on a second part of the causeway, before spelling out PATH on the third section, which finally takes them to the exit. They arrive in the final chamber, where the Crown is in plain sight, but Lord Fear arrives to put a spanner in the works.

Fear makes it clear that he will fry Ben with a fireball if any attempt to take the Crown is made, but the team soon put him in his place by casting *SPLASH*, which traps Fear within the enchanted waters of his own communications pool. Ben is then able to pick up the Crown, complete a mad dash through the dwarf tunnels, and arrive back in the Great Hall of Nightmare just as his life force runs out, making for a satisfying and exciting finish. Hordriss appears on the telescreen to award the frightknight trophy, before Treguard sends the team home:

You're going home now; I hope you won't find it a trifle dull!" - Treguard.

Summary: A competent team who deserved to win, and did so in style.

CREATURE FEATURE

Series 1/3. Level 1/2.

GIANTS

Although there were plenty of giant monsters on Nightmare, there were only two actual giants. The trolls, for example, were certainly giant in their own right, but as Brother Strange makes clear in his claim "*a giant can handle a troll*" giants and trolls are not the same thing, even though they have remarkable similarities. Both of Nightmare's giants appeared relatively early on in the proceedings, made only two appearances each on the programme, and cannot really be considered as very memorable creatures. However, this is their fifteen minutes (or slightly shorter) of fame.

The Giant who inhabited a level one cave in series 1 is really a character in his own right, despite his infrequent and inconsequential appearances. The Giant was played by Edmund Dehn, who also played Gumboil in the series, although he is credited only as "Knight" in the cast list at the end of each episode. The Giant first appeared in episode 2 of series 1, threatening to blast dungeoneer Simon into the Netherworld with a very explosive sneeze. Unfortunately for dungeoneers, it turned out, the Giant was allergic to humans. Simon managed to escape from the cave with a speedy dash, but when Helen met the Giant in episode 6 of the series, she was able to suggest a cure for his sneezing fits - holding

his nose. The simple Giant was very pleased with this remedy, and is probably still sitting in his cave right now with his nose firmly held between thumb and forefinger, as that was how we left him after this, his second and final appearance on the programme.

In series 3, there was a very hairy-footed giant who hung around level two. His feet could be seen stamping around behind the five doors in what used to be the Moving Keyhole Chamber, and the task for any dungeoneer entering this room was to find a safe exit without being unceremoniously trodden on. As it turned out, only Cliff and Leo were presented with this challenge, both quite early on in the series. Cliff's encounter was nothing to write home about, but Leo's was more exciting, with the added hazard of a pesky axe haunting to spice up the proceedings. However, despite a brush with the axe, Leo lived on to fight another day.

Who's to say how many other giants found their way into the land of Nightmare over the years? Brother Strange obviously saw a few, kicking the living snot out of some very unlucky trolls, but there were never any more quests to feature giants. I don't think that giants will ever be remembered as a classic Nightmare creature, because they never really got the chance to prove themselves. However, if you like giants and you like Nightmare, there are four occasions where the two things mingle, so that should be enough to satisfy you to some small extent.

Fear Factor: 8 Big is scary, in this case at least.

Killer Instinct: 1 Unlikely to bag a victim.

Gore Factor: 9 That hairy foot was disgusting!

Humanity: 7 The size is the only difference, really.

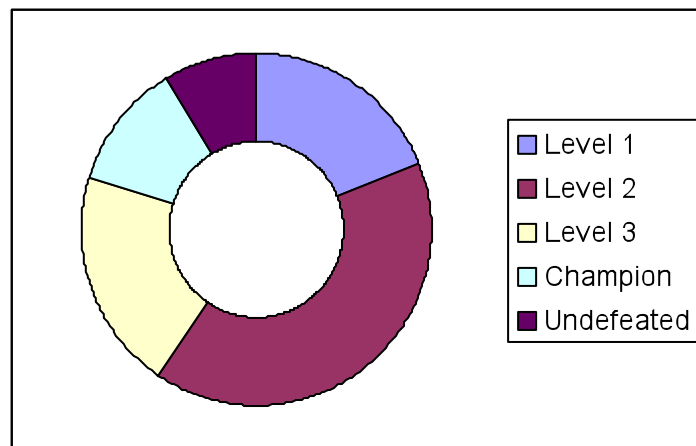
KNIGHTMARE TOP FIVE

—

This is a list of the top five fates suffered by dungeoneers. In fact, it is a list of the only five fates, placed in order of how frequently they occurred. Once a dungeoneer entered the Dungeon, there were three possibilities as to what would happen to them in the end: they would either win, lose, or leave the Dungeon undefeated when time ran out at

the end of the series. In order to make the list more interesting, I have divided the losing dungeoneers into those who died on each individual level, thus creating five different dungeoneer fates - a level one death, a level two death, a level three death, a win, or an undefeated quest which was cut short by the end of a series. Understand all that? Good, then look at the statistics below in rapt fascination!

Position	Dungeoneer fate	Number of dungeoneers
1	Level 2 Death	28
2	Level 3 Death	14
3	Level 1 Death	13
4	Champion	8
5	Undefeated	6



REMEMBER HER?

Series 4. Level 1/3.
MALICE

Although Samantha Perkins is often remembered with a distinct lack of fondness for playing the "goofy" Gundrada in series 4, consider

for a moment her other role in the series and you may come out with a different opinion of her as an actress. Malice was the ultimate evil Nightmare sorceress, more frequently seen than Morghanna, more hands-on than Aesandre, and more hauntingly scary than either of them.

Malice was clearly brought into series 4 as a direct replacement for Morghanna, as the fact that the two characters wore exactly the same costume will attest. Both of them also appeared to wrest from Mogdred the coveted position of ruler of level three, as, after early appearances on this level in both series 3 and 4, Mogdred retreated into the background later on in the series, seemingly to be replaced with each of these black-clad female counterparts on turn.

However, there was more to Malice's role in Nightmare than merely filling Morghanna's shoes. Malice's first appearance in the series was in level one, where she struck up a deal with Alistair. Despite her extremely sinister manner and obvious disdain for the team, Malice kept her word and rewarded Alistair with magic when he retrieved a green gem for her, as she had promised to do. It became clear that Malice was prepared to help dungeoneers if she herself had something to gain from the arrangement, but once she had got what she wanted, she was no longer an ally: *"With our pact redeemed I have no further interest in your progress."* - **Malice**.

Some viewers (myself included) may have been slightly surprised by the nature of Malice's subsequent prolonged appearance with Dickon in level three, where she both showed and proved herself to be an enemy through-and-through, and one that had to be defeated for the quest to succeed. In this quest, Malice was certainly filling the shoes of Morghanna, and she was doing so with ruthless determination. Slightly acrimoniously, it was in the very same episode that Malice encountered Jeremy in level one, and spoke to him in softer, almost friendly, tones, promising him help if he retrieved a silver chalice for her. This switch in sides backs up the idea that Malice was only out for what she could get. If she thought that dungeoneers could help her, she would let them live, and help them in return. However, she was just as likely to live up to her name and try to bring an abrupt end to the quest, if there was no little errand she wanted the dungeoneer to run for her.

However you look at it, Malice was certainly well named. Even when she was helping dungeoneers, she was very threatening in her manner, not only to the team but also to Treguard in the antechamber, much like Morghanna had been the year before: *"Silence! I may not have the power to stop you watching, but I can certainly stop your muttering!"* - **Malice**. Even though her allegiance was to herself rather than specifically to the

Dark Side, Malice was always a threat to the continuation of the quest, and she made it clear that she could and would bring it to an end if she felt like it: *"If you had said, for instance, the quest for the Sword, then I would have been constrained to destroy you."* - **Malice**.

As you can perhaps tell, I like Malice as a character, and I found her to be genuinely frightening when I was younger. Although she made only a few appearances in one series, I've found her to be a memorable character, and I certainly think Samantha Perkins's best appearances were as Malice, rather than as Gundrada.

Fear Factor: 10 Very haughty, very threatening and very scary!

Killer Instinct: 3 Given more opportunities, she could have been prolific.

Humour Rating: 5 She laughed at others, but never with them.

Oscar Standard: 9 Sinisterly played to perfection.

PUZZLE PAGE TWO

Witch Word

Find the names of the Knightmare witches (and sorceresses) hidden within the letter grid.

A	D	V	T	T	J	M	V	B	M	D	Q	U
G	C	V	B	N	M	I	L	D	R	E	A	D
R	T	R	E	M	A	S	R	F	S	D	Z	X
E	Y	U	W	Q	L	T	T	B	G	C	V	B
Y	I	O	P	M	D	R	G	I	R	O	I	N
S	A	A	B	O	A	E	B	H	I	P	U	T
T	E	S	V	R	M	S	N	E	M	L	Y	F
A	S	D	C	G	E	S	J	G	W	N	Q	D
G	A	F	X	H	H	G	H	G	O	R	A	S
G	N	G	Z	A	J	O	M	A	L	I	C	E
Z	D	H	L	N	K	O	F	T	D	Q	I	U
X	R	J	K	N	L	D	G	Y	D	W	O	Y
P	E	G	G	A	T	Y	P	A	S	E	R	T

AESANDRE
GREYSTAGG
HEGGATY
MALDAME
MALICE

MILDREAD
MISTRESS GOODY
MORGHANNA
MRS GRIMWOLD
PEGGATY

POLITICALLY INCORRECT:

The Top 5 Dungeon Stereotypes according to Rosey Collins

All evidence suggests that there was no such thing as political correctness in medieval times: indeed, the Church in the Middle Ages taught that women were inferior to men (ha ha ha!), and husbands were encouraged to beat their disobedient wives (Terry Deary, *The Measley Middle Ages*, Scholastic 1996, p.83). Not very PC, though not so different from Punch and Judy. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, when *Knightmare* was being made, political correctness was starting to emerge - and, all credit to the medieval thinking behind *Knightmare*, not very many stereotypes slipped through. However, attitudes on this issue were more lax fifteen-odd years ago than they are now, and I have been able to spot five (and maybe there are more) stereotypes in the *Knightmare* Dungeon. These are they, ranked in reverse order of just *how* stereotypical and potentially offensive I think they are:

5. MARTA

Series: 7

Played by: Jacquelin Joyce

Potentially offensive to: barmaids

Marta was a pouty young woman working as a serving wench at the Mad Cow inn. She had rather untidy blond hair, a thick West Country accent, a low neckline and occasionally a suggestive note in her voice (particularly when she was offering 'information'). Her appearance suggested that she was either poor, or couldn't be bothered to look after herself. Hordriss and Lord Fear both fancied her, though in fairness we never saw her do anything to encourage them. And let us not forget that the incident with Sidriss, whereby the latter turned Marta into a giant cat (and then a dog,

but that's irrelevant), came about when Sidriss called Marta a 'cat'. Now, if a woman is referred to as a cat, what might this imply...?

4. SIDRISS

Series: 6, 7, 8

Played by: Iona Kennedy

Potentially offensive to: blondes

Sidriss was (in my opinion) a classic character, and she was one of my favourites, simply because she was so funny. She was a complete ditz. She just could not get anything right. Besides all the magical mishaps (too many to list!), she made a mistake whilst rowing a dungeoneer across a lake and then couldn't even refer to it with the correct expression:

Sidriss: "Ooh, I think I caught a lobster!"

Motley: "Crab!"

Anguished cries of "Ooh!" and "Oh!" were very common from Sidriss. In series 8 she was unable to answer Snapper-Jack's riddle, which brought her close to tears, and it even took her a moment to realise that the dungeoneer (Mike) was trying to help her. She even forgot her own name on two or three occasions. And, like all the best ditzes, she was an incurable daddy's girl. She reminds me of Sharon Watts from *EastEnders*.

3. MERLIN

Series: 1, 2, 3, 4

Played by: John Woodnutt

Potentially offensive to: the elderly

Perhaps our dear departed John Woodnutt was a little deaf himself, in which case it isn't very politically correct of me to include him in this article. Perhaps his occasional struggle to remember riddles was also genuine - but he did do a degree of acting forgetful as well. For example, following Dickon's win in series 4:

Merlin: "Well this hasn't happened since... er... er... er... 1988 - I've almost forgotten what to do next! ...I have forgotten what to do next."

2. RIDOLFO

Series: 6

Played by: Adrian Neil

Potentially offensive to: people of Italian origin/musicians

Perhaps the men of Italy would not find Ridolfo all that offensive, as he played a positive stereotype. But he was a stereotype nonetheless: the great Italian (more specifically, Venetian) lover.

Ridolfo: *"I sing-a thee songs and I break-a thee hearts."*

He had (or attempted to have) liaisons with Sidriss (or he at least talked about it), the married Lady Brinkator (definitely!) and even the warty little witch Heggaty, which very much implied that he wasn't at all fussy. Heggaty wasn't having any of it, though:

Heggaty: *"All tights and no trousers, he is! Hehehehehe!"* (Now what do you suppose she meant by that?) *"Tried to pinch me bum, he did! If he tries it again, I'll turn him into a toad!"*

Ridolfo's roving eye did cause him trouble: Count Brinkator put him in the stocks, and Hordriss magically doomed him to the life of a fisherman in response to the Sidriss rumours. As to the dungeoneers, he once confided to Alan with a knowing smile that *"thee ladies love-a thee music"*, while Sofia and January each received a kiss on the hand. Aahh.

1. AH WOK

Series: 6

Played by: Mark Knight

Potentially offensive to: people of oriental origin

The benevolent yet money-hungry Chinese merchant of Wolfenden wins this competition hands-down. Before he even began talking, we saw that Mark Knight had been painted with a fake tan, which is slightly reminiscent of olden-day films in which painted white actors gave pretty appalling performances of black characters (Lawrence Olivier's Othello, for example, when he could barely move for the body paint - cultured, aren't I?). Ah Wok wore a nice yellow and red dress and a fake, long, thin, black moustache. He had a strong accent that I feel Mark Knight imitated rather well, but with perhaps a little too much emphasis, especially when it came to substituting Rs for Ls and vice-versa (he inverted them, rather than always saying one or the other, which seems unlikely to me but there it is). He pronounced dungeoneers' names in ways that I do admit to finding quite funny: off the top of my head, Bin for Ben, Rat for Matt and Somewhere for Sumaiah. Mark Knight is one of my favourite actors on Knightmare, largely because of his marvellous comic performances. I do think Ah Wok was a very enjoyable character, but I doubt very much that we will ever see anyone quite like him on children's television again.

POETRY CORNER

A trip back to series 3 this time, where tiny little Simon Keating and his three stout friends are ready to take the Nightmare challenge.

From Horsham town, in Sussex green,
Simon's quest will now be seen.
A burning bomb was first to best,
Then Golgarach's rhyming test.
Past ogre's roar, round valley's bend,
Velda proved a useful friend.
Candlelight then showed the way
To Festus, who was keen to play.
With Mrs. Grimwold's helping hand,
In level two Simon did land.
Past the spearpoints' screeching jar,
Simon soon became a star!
With magic amulet held tight,
Simon's future looked quite bright.
Hordriss sent him to the caves,
There, the goblins Simon braves.
But then, alas, the cliff was steep,
And Simon fell into the deep.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Challenge Question: The objects that the dungeoneers of series 4 (Helen, Alistair, Nicky, Simon, Vicky, Jeremy and Giles) were asked to collect for Hordriss, Malice and Merlin. Only Helen, Alistair and Giles succeeded.

Treguard's Introductory Quotes

- 1.) Mogdred. Episode 203. Chris I.
- 2.) Hordriss. Episode 304. Simon II.
- 3.) Golgarach. Episode 301. Gavin.

- 4.) Igneous. Episode 201. Claire.
- 5.) Velda. Episode 301. Gavin.
- 6.) Malice. Episode 403. Alistair.
- 7.) Sir Hugh. Episode 505. Sarah.
- 8.) Snapper-Jack. Episode 802. Daniel II.
- 9.) Lillith. Episode 101. David.
- 10.) Olaf. Episode 202. Chris I.
- 11.) Motley. Episode 301. Cliff.
- 12.) Morghanna. Episode 308. Ross.
- 13.) Fatilla. Episode 402. Helen II.
- 14.) Lord Fear. Episode 501. Catherine.
- 15.) Ridolfo. Episode 601. Matt.

Witch Word

A	D	V	T	T	J	M	V	B	M	D	Q	U
G	C	V	B	N	M	I	L	D	R	E	A	D
R	T	R	E	M	A	S	R	F	S	D	Z	X
E	Y	U	W	Q	L	T	T	B	G	C	V	B
Y	I	O	P	M	D	R	G	I	R	O	I	N
S	A	A	B	O	A	E	B	H	I	P	U	T
T	E	S	V	R	M	S	N	E	M	L	Y	F
A	S	D	C	G	E	S	J	G	W	N	Q	D
G	A	F	X	H	H	G	H	G	O	R	A	S
G	N	G	Z	A	J	O	M	A	L	I	C	E
Z	D	H	L	N	K	O	F	T	D	Q	I	U
X	R	J	K	N	L	D	G	Y	D	W	O	Y
P	E	G	G	A	T	Y	P	A	S	E	R	T