



The Datestones of Ryn



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Typesetting: Reeder Type, Fremont, Ca.

Printing: W.B. Barth, Inc., Sunnyvale, Ca.

Introduction

Did you grow up in the company of the Brothers Grimm, *Snow White*, *The Red Fairy Book*, Flash Gordon serials, *The Three Musketeers*, the knights of the Round Table, or any of the three versions of *The Thief of Bagdad*? Have you read *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Worm Ouroboros*, *The Incomplete Enchanter*, or *Conan the Conqueror*? Have you ever wished you could cross swords — just for fun — with Cyrano or D'Artagnan, or stand by their sides in the chill light of dawn, awaiting the arrival of the Cardinal's Guard? Ever wondered how you'd have done against the Gorgon, the hydra, the bane of Heorot Hall, or the bull that walks like a man? Would you have sailed with Sinbad or Captain Blood, sought passage on the ship of Ishtar, or drunk of the Well at World's End? Did Aphrodite make Paris an offer you couldn't refuse? Would you seek a red-hued maiden beneath the hurtling moons of Barsoom, or walk the glory road with "Dr. Balsamo," knowing it might be a one-way street?

If any or all of your answers are "yes," you're a player of role-playing games — or you ought to be. (If your answers are all "no," you have either stepped through the looking glass by mistake, or Fate knows your destiny better than you do.)

Role-playing games (RPGs) allow you a chance to step outside a world grown too prosaic for magic and monsters, doomed cities and damsels in distress . . . and enter instead a universe in which only quick wits, the strength of your sword arm, and a strangely carved talisman around your neck may be the only things separating you from a pharaoh's treasure — or the mandibles of a giant mantis.

The standard (non-computer) role-playing game is not, in its commercial incarnation, much more than a rulebook — a set of guidelines a person uses to create a world colored by myth and legend, populated by brawny heroes, skilled swordsmen, skulking thieves, cunning wizards, hardy Amazons, and comely wenches, and filled with cursed treasures, spell-forged blades, flying carpets, rings of power, loathsome beasts, dark towers, and cities that stood in the *Thousand Nights and a Night* if not *The Outline of History*.

Role-playing games are not so much "played" as they are *experienced*. Instead of manipulating an army of chessmen about an abstract but visible board, or following a single piece around and around a well-defined track, collecting \$200 every time you pass Go, in RPGs you venture into an essentially unknown world with a single piece — your alter ego for the game, a character at home in a world of demons and darkness, dragons and dwarves. You see with the eyes of your character a scene described by the "author" of the adventure — and no more.

There is no board in view, no chance squares to inspect; the imaginary landscape exists only in the notebooks of the world's creator (commonly called a referee or dunjonmaster) and, gradually, in the imaginations of your fellow players. As you set off in quest of fame and fortune in company with those other player/characters, you are both a character in and a reader of an epic you are helping to create. Your character does whatever you wish him to do, subject to his human (or near-human) capabilities and the vagaries of chance. Fight, flee, or parley; take the high road or low: the choice is yours. You may climb a mountain or go around it, but since at the top may be a rock, a roc's egg, or a roc, you can find challenge and conflict without fighting with your fellow players, who are usually (in several senses) in the same boat.

Role-playing games can (and often do) become, for both you and your character, a way of life. Your character does not stop existing at the end of a game session; normally, you use the same character again and again until he dies for a final time and cannot be brought back to life by even the sorcerous means typically available. In the meantime, he will have grown richer on the treasure he (you) has accumulated from adventure to adventure, may have purchased new and better equipment, won magic weapons to help him fight better or protective devices to keep him safe. As he gains experience from his adventures, he grows in power, strength, and skill—although the mechanics and terminology of this process vary greatly from one set of rules to another.

Ordinary role-playing games require a group of reasonably experienced players, an imaginative and knowledgeable referee/dunjonmaster willing to put in the tremendous amount of time necessary to construct a functioning fantasy world, and large chunks of playing time, since the usual game session lasts four to eight hours (although twenty-hour marathons are not unheard of). DUNJONQUEST solves those problems by offering an already created world with enough detail and variety for dozens of adventures. There is only a single character—your character—pitted against the denizens of the dunjon at any one time. While there are greater practical limits to your actions than is usually the case in a non-computer RPG, there are still a large number of options to choose from.

Much of your time in the dunjon will be spent exploring the rooms, searching for treasure, or fighting the hostile denizens there who are reluctant both to relinquish their hoards and to allow any adventurer out of their clutches. While all monsters in the dunjon are basically hostile, they come in various sizes, shapes and degrees of nastiness. While one creature may go down from a single blow, another may take half-a-dozen and remain standing.

Any activity in the dunjon is potentially tiring, and fatigue is a nearly constant consideration. A young, healthy adventurer who is lightly armed and not loaded down with treasure may trot through the dunjon at a good pace without tiring much. A heavier load or a loss of blood caused by wounds would necessarily reduce his pace—or force him to stop periodically to rest. If you go too slowly, some of the dunjon's hungrier inhabitants are more likely to come across you.

Combat, of course, is a frequent occurrence, and one of the central features of the DUNJONQUEST series is a combat system designed to mirror with some degree of fidelity the nature of sword-and-shield fighting. Hundreds of things might happen in a hand-to-hand battle: your weapon might break; you might slip in a puddle of blood or trip over a fallen body; a shield might splinter; you might put an arrow right into the eye socket of an otherwise nearly invulnerable beast. However, systems which attempt to allow for huge numbers of these possibilities are tedious at best and, because they almost necessarily overemphasize such unusual

occurrences, are statistically as inaccurate as simpler systems. Historical research, a knowledge of various martial arts, and practical experience in the Society for Creative Anachronism (a group of medieval enthusiasts who get together in tournaments and similar affairs to bash each other about energetically with authentic imitations of the weaponry of the Middle Ages) have all gone into designing a system which, while simpler than some, is as accurate as any and far more authentic than most. Although you cannot, in DUNJONQUEST, succeed in chopping your own leg off (which a particularly clumsy person might in fact manage), a great many variables of equipment, strength, coordination, skill, practice, etc., are involved that determine the outcome of any particular battle. Fortunately, the procedure need not concern even a first-time player, since the computer is doing all the work.

Because it is not fatiguing and is, at least until a monster gets within chomping range, the safest form of combat, firing arrows at a beastie from a distance is often desirable. However, arrows will only hit if the monster is on a straight line vertically or horizontally away from you, and a good sword blow may very likely do more damage. Trying to play Robin Hood while an unpleasant critter with claws and teeth is chewing on your arm is also dangerous, but distance shooting certainly saves wear and tear on the armor.

If you are hit/bit/struck, the armor you are wearing will protect you from some damage. The claw/bite/stinger has to penetrate a layer of mail to get at the stuff that counts—your tender flesh. Your shield makes it harder for you to be hit, although a particularly good strike/chomp may glance off the shield onto a more vulnerable area or may even take a chunk out of the shield, the armored sleeve, and your (character's) body.

CHARACTERS AND EQUIPMENT

As in other role-playing games, in DUNJONQUEST the incredibly complex factors that make up the simplest human being have been abstracted into a few basic characteristics, rated numerically from a low of 3, through an average of 10 or 11, to a high of 18. The higher the number, the greater/higher/stronger is the attribute. A 90-lb. weakling might have a *Strength* of 6 or less, while the average football player would have a *Strength* of 14 or more.

There are six basic attributes—three physical and three mental—used in DUNJONQUEST to give a unique and distinctive character to a dunjon adventurer.

Strength, fairly obviously, is a determination of how physically strong your character is: how much weight (of treasure and equipment) he can carry, for instance. It also controls how heavy a weapon he can use and how much damage one of his blows will do to whomever or whatever he's fighting.

Constitution is a measure of health and endurance—general physical fitness. The higher the *Constitution*, the farther a character can run before collapsing, and the more wounds he can sustain before dying. Since the ability to move or fight without becoming exhausted is also largely responsible for keeping an adventurer alive, this is perhaps the single most important attribute.

Dexterity is a matter of reflexes, coordination, and even eyesight. Someone with high *Dexterity* has an edge in weapons use; he's more likely to hit what he's aiming at and is better at keeping his shield between an attacking weapon, claw, or mandible and his fragile self. Someone with a really low *Dexterity* might be so clumsy he would have trouble hitting a locked door without a running start.

Intelligence is reasonably self-explanatory, although in DUNJONQUEST it is limited to what might be termed left-brain intelligence: the ability to reason logically and to express oneself verbally. In many systems (including the one on which DUNJONQUEST is based), this is connected with the ability to work magic. In DUNJONQUEST the major function of *Intelligence* is to affect a character's ability to bargain with the innkeeper or to parley with monsters.

Intuition, the complement of *Intelligence*, is a measure of right-brain functions (real and hypothetical): spatial perception, getting an answer from "inadequate" data, an awareness of the spiritual or mystical aspects of the universe, ESP, and luck. Someone with a high *Intuition* is more likely to detect secret doors, traps, and unpleasant surprises; with an exceptionally low *Intuition* a character might be doing well to find an open doorway without a signpost.

Ego measures mental toughness and willpower. A character with a strong *Ego* can more easily influence others (the innkeeper or monsters) and is more likely to fight fiercely despite his wounds ("when the going gets tough, the tough get going," as the saying goes). Someone with a weak *Ego* will not do as well when the tide of battle turns against him.

While a DUNJONQUEST Epic Adventure can accomodate a considerable variety of characters and equipment (including characters brought from other games), *The Datestones of Ryn* provides a single character, already equipped, for each player. The characteristics, arms, and armor of Brian Hammerhand (your character for the quest) will be displayed on the computer screen at the beginning of your adventure.



The Adventures of Brian Hammerhand

'Tis a black day, indeed—the blackest ever in the annals of the obscure but proud Duchy of Ryn. A band of some two-dozen thieves and cutthroats surreptitiously made their way through the capitol to the tower keep which housed the duchy's ceremonial regalia. Led by the infamous robber baron, Rex the Reaver, they struck swiftly and surely from hiding to overcome the guards. Foiling the locks and bars of the tower itself, the thieves made off with the duchy's most revered possessions, the foundation of the ducal calendar, the datestones.

As the robbers were sneaking back through the town to where their mounts stood waiting, an officer of the watch, making his rounds, came upon the grim scene at the tower keep and raised the alarm. The thieves fled before the aroused guardsmen could assemble but were shortly pursued by a troop of the Duke's Own Cavalry. Rex the Reaver led his brigands to their cave complex in the foothills of the Haunted Mountains, there to rest until nightfall, when they could slip out a secret exit under cover of darkness.

It was late in the afternoon before Captain Morpheus of the cavalry, tortuously following the trail, led his men to the cavern entrance. Stationing them in a picket line around this shadowy opening, he pondered the situation briefly before calling for a volunteer to go inside.

If the rumor was true, and there was a secret exit, decisive action would have to be taken before sunset, and it was already hard upon dusk in the hills. Venturing *en masse* into a certain ambush was little better than suicide. Their own noise would effectively mask the rogues' actions, and torchlight would make them easy targets. Going in darkness was still worse; they'd stumble about and count themselves lucky not to be killed by their own comrades.

No, the answer to stealth was stealth. Turn the robbers' own tricks against them. One brave, sly (and, of course, junior) officer might succeed where even a small number of troopers might not

You, Brian Hammerhand, mercenary at large, presently least senior officer of the cavalry troop, and drawer of the shortest straw, have the singular honor of undertaking this hazardous but glorious mission. Will you emerge victorious, carrying the sacred stones and the head of Rex the Reaver, or will you meet ignominious defeat, pierced through by a cold steel blade thrust from the shadows? The honor of the duchy is in your hands.



Jonquille

How to Play

It's easy to learn to play DUNJONQUEST. Since the rules of the game are actually programmed into the computer's memory, there is very little you need to know to play the game. There are, however, a few basic things you should be familiar with to make the best decisions during play, so read the following paragraphs carefully.

SCORING

The time limit for your quest is **twenty minutes**. Points will be awarded for each minute you remain alive inside the caverns (i.e., the "dungeon"). There is an additional bonus for being outside the caverns at the expiration of the time limit, so be wary of risking your life just for staying in, or returning, for an additional minute or two.

The largest part of your score will probably come from recovering some of the datestones. However, victory points for the stones will be awarded **only upon their removal from the caverns**. Thus, datestones in your possession when time expires—if you are still within the caverns—will not be counted. You are allowed to shuttle stones out and then, if you have time, return to the caves for more. Victory points for stones removed from the caverns will be awarded even if you are later killed.

You will also get points for slaying opponents—**but only if you survive**. While these points will vary according to the nature of the opposition, returning one datestone is worth far more victory points than killing a single robber, so you must remember your priorities. Only Rex the Reaver is a more valuable prize than a datestone—if you can find and kill him.

A typical score for a first-time player is 500-1000 points. Anything over 2000 points is quite good, while the winners of the tournament held at the 1979 PACIFICON managed just over 3000 points!

BEGINNING

Entering and Exiting the Dungeon

When you begin play, you will be just inside the cavern entrance. From that point, you are free to explore as you wish. Whenever you want to leave the caves, return to that first room and exit to the left. After leaving any datestones in your possession safely behind (which is done automatically), you may choose to re-enter the caverns at the same point you began your adventure.

The Display

The computer both draws a map of a portion of the cavern and displays your status, including your physical condition, the number of datestones you have recovered, and the time elapsed since you entered the dungeon. Part of the display is reserved for reporting messages that are of immediate importance to you (see Figure 1). There are a number of possible messages, and more than one of these may appear at the same time. These messages are self-explanatory during play, but a few are included in Figure 1 as an example. The circled numbers in the figure correspond to the descriptions under the sample display.

COMMANDS

Altogether there are 14 commands available to you for maneuvering your character through the dungeon. These commands are discussed under three major headings: movement, special, and attack commands. Tables 1 through 3 summarize these commands and their meanings, and each is described in the following paragraphs. Note that none of the commands in Tables 1 through 3 should be followed by a carriage return. Type only the appropriate key.

Figure 1.
Sample Display



- ① WOUNDS 100%
- ② FATIGUE: 100%
- ③ WEIGHT: 54 LBS
- ④ MONSTER SLAIN!
CRUNCH!
- ⑤ SHIELD HIT!
ARROWS: 20
- ⑥ MAGIC AR: 2
- ⑦ STONES: 12
- ⑧ TIME: 18

KEY DESCRIPTION

- ① Shows that, at the moment, you are not wounded. See WOUNDS.
- ② Shows that you have all of your endurance available. See FATIGUE.
- ③ Shows how much weight (of weapons and armor) you are carrying.
- ④ Lines ④ and ⑤ only appear when appropriate. Line ④ shows that you killed the last monster you fought with. Other messages here might tell you what sort of monster you face or how many datestones you just picked up.
- ⑤ These two messages show how you fared during the last round of combat. The first line shows that you hit the monster, while the second shows that he hit your shield. Again the specific messages vary with the situation. Unless you are in combat, there will be no message here.
- ⑥ Shows how many normal and magic arrows you have left (see Attacking with Bow).
- ⑦ Shows the total number of datestones you have recovered, **including** any you may have dropped off outside the caves for safekeeping.
- ⑧ Shows that you are in the 18th minute of your adventure. Remember, you only have 20 minutes!

Table 1. Movement Commands

What You Enter	Meaning
#0 to 9	Move forward 0 to 9 feet
R	Turn right
L	Turn left
V	Turn around (volte-face)

Table 2. Special Commands

What You Enter	Meaning
E	Examine wall for secret door
S	Search for traps
G	Grab treasure
!	Speak with monster
Y	Drink a healing potion

Table 3. Attack Commands

What You Enter	Meaning
A	Normal attack
T	Thrust
P	Parry
F	Fire a normal arrow
M	Fire a magic arrow

Movement

There are four commands that allow you to move from one spot to another (see Table 1). During a turn you may move up to nine feet. Moving forward always takes one full turn, regardless of how far you move. The distance just indicates the speed you move at. You may also turn to the right or left, or turn around. Since *turning* does not take any time, you may combine it with your forward movement for one turn.

To move out of the space you are in, you must move forward. Therefore, for example, to take two steps backward, you must first turn around, then move two feet forward. On the next turn you may turn about again.

Note that to move, you must enter a whole number from 0 to 9. You *cannot* use fractions or decimals. Do not enter a "+" in front of the number and do not type 09. Type only the number itself: 9.

It is also important to remember that (although the actual speed varies) moving at maximum speed makes you tired (see *FATIGUE*). You should not need to run for more than a few turns at a time since a monster will never follow you out of a room. (Of course, if there's a monster in the next room . . .)

Special Commands

The five special commands in **The Datestones of Ryn** vary from healing yourself to attempting to talk to a monster. Each of these commands is summarized in Table 2 and described in the following paragraphs.

Secret Doors. No dungeon would be complete without its share of secret passages, and it is rumored that the caverns in which the robbers have taken refuge are not entirely free of them. Since they are hidden from view, you must search for them using the E command (see Table 2). You must be facing the wall you want to examine, but you do not have to be near the wall. For example, you could systematically search for secret doors by turning to face each wall in turn while standing in the middle of a room.

Whenever you search for and find a secret door, the message:

A SECRET DOOR!

flashes on the screen, and an opening appears in the wall. You may then go through this opening as you would enter any other room.

There is a chance that you will miss a secret door, so you may want to double check just to be sure. Don't be too surprised, either, if you find that after going through a secret door you have trouble finding it again. Perhaps a passing monster has come by and closed it.

Traps. In DUNJONQUEST a trap may come in any one of a number of forms ranging from darts that spring out from a treasure chest to a pit in the floor of a room. In **The Datestones of Ryn**, they commonly represent robbers lying in ambush. Traps can be anywhere in a room, but a room does not have to be trapped. You can search for a trap using the S command described in Table 2. As with secret doors, it is possible to miss a trap, but, again, you can search all you want. When you search for and find a trap, its location becomes obvious, and you can usually avoid it by going around it or leaping over it. For example, if you know a trap is three feet directly in front of you, you can avoid it by moving six or more feet forward.

Finding Treasure. Datestones appear as tiny rectangles on the screen. To find out how many stones are in a particular room, you must first move to within one foot and grab them. (Before doing so, it may be wise to search for traps.) This is done by typing the letter G. The computer will then reveal the number of stones and add them to your running total. Any other treasure—including magic weapons that might aid you in your mission—will be revealed to you at the same time. (If any such weapon is present, it will automatically replace the corresponding ordinary item already in your possession; no further command is required.)

Speaking with Monsters. Speaking with monsters (including robbers) is another ability you have as a traveller in the dungeon. The command (see Table 2 again) gives you a chance to avoid fighting with a monster. If the monster is in a good mood when you speak to it, it will allow you to "PASS BY" in peace. However, if you then attack it or disturb its treasure, the monster will pursue you. But beware! Some monsters hate all adventurers!

Potions. The elixir in your possession can heal (some of) your wounds. To drink it, type the letter Y. You may drink it at any time, even during combat, although you could not, of course, strike at a monster at the same time. You can rest while you are healing yourself.

Attack Commands

There are five types of attacks to choose from during a given turn: normal attack, thrust, parry, fire a normal arrow, and fire a magic arrow (see Table 3). As always, none of these commands should be followed with a carriage return.

Attacking with Sword. To attack with sword, you do not have to be facing the monster, but you do have to be close. If you try to attack when you are not within range, the DUNJONMASTER will display the message:

TOO FAR TO HIT

and you will instead rest while the monster charges you.

A normal attack is a simple swing of the sword, whereas a thrust is an all out attack. A thrust increases your chances to hit and damage the monster, but it also makes it easier for the monster to hit you. A thrust also costs substantially more in fatigue. For a normal attack, type the letter A; for a thrust, type T.

A parry helps shield you against the monster's attack while conserving fatigue, but it makes it more difficult for you to hit the monster. A parry is executed using the P command.

Attacking with Bow. When attacking with a bow, you must be facing the monster (and the further away the better, since he cannot hurt you unless he is within the melee distance). If you try to fire an arrow while the monster is within striking range of you, it becomes much easier for the monster to hit you (you cannot fend off his attack).

Both normal and magic arrows are good long range weapons; however, a magic arrow is more likely to hit its target and it does more damage.

Firing either type of arrow generally allows you to regain spent fatigue.

To fire a normal arrow, type the letter F. To fire a magic arrow (assuming you have one left), type the letter M.

FATIGUE

Expending Fatigue

Your fatigue rating simply determines how much energy you have at any given time. Exceptional exertion results in spent fatigue. Walking normally and firing arrows generally allow you to regain fatigue. Activities such as running, fighting, and carrying heavy loads all cost varying amounts of energy.

The amount of energy you expend for any activity is also affected by the wounds you have taken. The more wounded you are, the more it costs you in fatigue to perform an activity.

If you use up more fatigue than you have (if a negative number is displayed for FATIGUE), you fall on the floor and pant. You will not be allowed to attack or move until you have recovered (that is, until a positive number is displayed).

The DUNJONMASTER keeps track of and displays for you the amount of energy you have left. Therefore, if the display reads:

FATIGUE: 100%

you have all of your energy available.

Regaining Spent Fatigue

While you cannot accumulate more energy than you started with, you can regain previously spent energy in a variety of ways. The fastest way is to stop your movement altogether, but this may be dangerous. You can also regain it while firing an arrow or simply walking more slowly. Executing any of the special commands also allows you to gain back fatigue. Each time you rest, however, you have a chance of meeting a wandering monster (see MONSTERS).

WOUNDS

Any time a monster attacks you, there is a chance that it will penetrate your armor and wound you. The computer keeps track of and displays how much damage you have taken on a percentage basis. The number displayed next to WOUNDS is always the percentage that you have **left**. For example, if the display reads:

WOUNDS: 90%

you are still relatively healthy, because only 10% of you has been wounded.

You may heal yourself at any time by drinking your elixir (see Potions). You can continue to function normally until you reach 0% or less (**except** that your fatigue expenditure increases). At that point you are dead, and your venture into the caverns is over.

MONSTERS

DUNJONQUEST monsters vary from one room, dungeon level, or game to another. Since the treasure you are seeking in this game (the datestones) lies in the hands of a band of robbers, it is hardly surprising that the most common "monster" you will encounter in **The Datestones of Ryn** is one of the cutthroats hiding out in the caves. They will typically be found alone or in small groups, jealously guarding their share of the stolen gems.

While some monsters are more-or-less fixed in place, others, generated randomly by the computer, may appear anywhere at any time. These "wandering monsters" run the gamut from the commonplace (wolves, say) to the extraordinary (you'll find out!). While the effects of some are as subtle as they are deadly, all are definitely hazardous to your health! A few may be difficult or impossible to vanquish by ordinary means; sometimes it's best to run away until you can plan an effective course of action. A monster won't follow you out of a room, but, unless you kill it, it will still be waiting for you when you go back.



The Dunjonquest Series

There are two general sorts of fantasy adventure games in the DUNJONQUEST series from Automated Simulations. Although they share elements of system, program, and mechanics, they are quite different in aim, size, and scope.

Although far more sophisticated and detailed than other products on the market, a game like **The Datestones of Ryn** is only a fraction of the size of a full DUNJONQUEST adventure. Because it does not offer quite so many options and variables, it is a particularly easy way to learn the DUNJONQUEST system. Because the action is packed into a comparatively small space (20–30 rooms), the fast-paced excitement is perfect for introducing a friend to the world of computer gaming. Finally, since there is a specific goal in each of these smaller DUNJONQUESTS (e.g., recovering the datestones, or slaying a mad wizard) and a definite time limit, the competitive scoring system built into the program provides an ideal basis for a tournament; you can compare your own results on successive playings or test your prowess against that of your friends.

The challenge of the quest will have you playing a game like **The Datestones of Ryn** again and again, but it's only a taste of the action awaiting you in a full-scale DUNJONQUEST adventure.

A full dungeon adventure like **The Temple of Apshai** offers as much variety and flexibility as can be packed into a microcomputer format. Four levels of well over 200 rooms and passages allow days—even weeks—of solid playing time. You can play for five minutes—or five hours—at a time without exploring more than a small portion of the dungeon or making more than a dent in the possibilities provided by the dozens of monsters, traps, and treasures. When you have exhausted The Temple, **The Lower Reaches of Apshai** are waiting for you.

Additionally, a separate program (the INNKEEPER) allows you to bring back a favorite character (even one from another game) or have the computer “roll you up” a new one. Then you can haggle with a tight-fisted innkeeper for as much in the way of arms and equipment as the coins in your purse and your bargaining skill allow.

Once inside the dungeon, the DUNJONMASTER program brings you a wealth of new and fantastic experiences: listen at doors or break them down; tend your wounds or hack your foes; follow secret tunnels or get caught in a cave-in; search for treasure, or drop your valuables and run for your life; be eaten by a monster or brought back from the dead by a friendly priest. Trap doors and poisoned darts, lumbering monsters and swift flying things, enchanted armor and amulets of wondrous power: they're all there in DUNJONQUEST epic adventures!

