

G'narsh

The Troll, The Myth, The Legend

(a work of fiction)

by

Kevin Stillwater

P4
of
P1, P2-A, P2-B, P3-A, P3-B, P3-C, P3-D, P3-E, P4
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G'narsh - P4

--- PART 4 ---

Bonus Material

(((Note, much of this -- Bonus Material -- was laid down before I was planning on owning up to my amateur status, so if you see a disconnect of sorts in this regard, that is why.)))

Discs of Power

I question the wisdom of listing out my favorite discs or dreamers, but here I go all the same. The most obvious

shortcoming in such a list is that it is weighted heavily towards the big name players. For instance, the first fantasy disc I ever played was part of a primary school humanities enrichment program and as such we may infer that the dreamer in question had already achieved some degree of popular acclaim. It was:

The Book of Three, by Alexander

No doubt, I was a late bloomer to the genre, but I knew I had found my niche once I discovered that they actually made fantasy discs (and in fact had whole sections devoted to them both at the local store and the government sponsored exchange program at my school),.

I don't know where in the process I came upon these next three, but they were among the most influential dreams I ever played:

Herbert's, Dune, for the inclusion of spiritual material and a dream of epic proportions.

Adams', The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, for the humor but also the clever use of the Guide as a narrative device. It's not technically a wraparound, but it has a similar utility.

And, Brunner's, The Sheep Look Up. Talk about a subversive dream, and the narrative style is very unique... or at least it was to me when I first loaded the disc.

And as I say that, I should qualify that of the four discs I have mentioned by name, none are currently in my player, and I've only bothered to load up the Guide and Dune (once each) in the last twenty years. For all I really know, I'm referencing the wrong dreams.

With that in mind, one of the things I wanted to mention was that when I reloaded Dune after a decade of not playing it, the

dream turned out to be nothing like I had remembered. I recalled vast sequences of philosophy, moral teachings, and wisdom, and although the dream does go into each of these areas a great deal, it is not half as elaborate as I had remembered.

This isn't to be taken as a criticism. I find it hard to believe that this is the first time you have ever heard of Dune. There's a reason the disc is considered a masterpiece, but even after having said that, the actual dream is not as grand as the memory of the dream, which I hold in my mind. When I make a call to Dune on my compiler, since I don't actually have the original disc loaded anymore (more on this later), my rig makes assumptions on what Dune means. Over time, these assumptions have grown into a whole web of calls and interacting relations, which have little to do with the original dream. That is to say, after the dream was over, it lived on in my rig, took root in my heart, and found a place in my soul. I'm not a critic, but I'd have to say that's pretty high praise.

And this is exactly what I am hoping to achieve in the dreams which I create today. It is my greatest desire that my dreams will live on in you and that you will still see echoes of my creation in the days, weeks, months, and even years to come. This is one of the primary reasons why my calls are so vague and the story arcs so wide open. I figure, if you get into the habit of adding to the dream while the disc is in your player, with any luck this process will continue... forever, or at least for a long while even after you have hit the eject button.

A disc is just a sliver of plastic, after all. A rig is just a jumble of wires. In the end, it is the human brain that matters. It is only when a dream has taken root in the mind that it can truly grow and flourish. Until then it is merely a poor echo of reality, a mere illusion.

Beyond specific discs, I also wanted to list a few dreamers that I have been interested in over the years. Which is to say that for at least some period of time, I sought to acquire every disc of theirs that I could. These dreamers are:

Asprin - Ellison - Heinlein - Pournelle - Zelazny

It's probably not a complete list. If you're not on it, it's not an insult. There are many factors that determined who I ended up collecting including: personal style, dream substance, and what was available to me at the time (or simply given to me as a gift). If it's any consolation, I don't know that I would purchase my own discs if I saw them in a store, but I suppose if I'm going to say something like that I should elaborate.

I work in a near total vacuum. The discs in my jukeboxes ((((notice the disconnect?)))) are there for compatibility, not research or inspiration. I never load them up. If I did, they would just get in the way... and if you'll humor me, I'd like to expand on that concept a little more as well.

I work pretty much nonstop on my dreams. I only take a single day off each week, and a long weekend (which has been known to last all week long) once a month. When I take a break from my own work, I have essentially two choices. OK, I probably have a lot more than just two choices, but I'm only going to explore two different generalized concepts. The first option is to unplug and go into the real world. I've somehow failed if you haven't gathered by now that I advocate this option. There is nothing like observing the real world to drive you back into the dreams. (Please note the irony of this.) And it doesn't hurt that being in the real world also improves the depth, perception, and clarity of your dreams once you do return. So unplugging is one option (and my preferred one).

The second option is to load up somebody else's (a competitor's) disc. Now, a competitor's disc might suck, in which case, why bother? I've got plenty of my own stuff that needs to be edited, so I don't have time in my life for mediocre discs, and quite frankly, who does? The other possibility is that the disc is great, but since I'm a dreamer, this isn't such a wonderful outcome either. If the style the other dreamer uses is awesome, it's inevitable that I

will start to second guess my own style. If the other dreamer uses awesome hooks, fantastic plot points, and/or lovable proxies, I'll be tempted to use them in my own projects (and that's a big ethical no-no), or maybe even worse, I might waste time thinking about their dream endlessly (a total waste of brain power because most of what I work out in my head regarding their dream will never be usable on any of my own projects). Of course the worst possible scenario -- the very worst possible scenario -- is that this other dreamer's disc will be so unbelievably great, that my whole ego will collapse when I inevitably compare my meager ability to the grandeur of this other master's artful finesse. This can wreck havoc on my work schedule. Until my ego recovers, it has the potential to stop all progress on my current project. And as such, I very rarely load a disc while I am working on a major project.

I do, however, tend to work two months ON followed by one month OFF (for editing, doing shorts, etc.), and I've been know to load a disc or two during the OFF month. I still try to be very careful about what I load, though, and I don't view as many dreams as you might think. Moreover, when I do, I am usually far more interested in deconstructing the dream than anything else. I've been known to watch an entire dream while concentrating on camera angles or being totally mesmerized by the arty editing, and never once noticing that the proxies are straight out of the GI library. This, of course, might to some degree be self defensive, because you can copy someone else's style, editing techniques, camera angles, and emotional feel to your heart's content, whereas proxies, skins, personas, dialogue, action, and plot outlines are copyright protected. (I'm not a lawyer, so I'd guess this isn't a complete picture.) But Boilerplate aside, I'd say you're pretty safe mimicking the feel of a grainy documentary, as long as you don't copy anything that was actually part of the documentary (i.e. it's content).

(No sense not adding a commentary. I know these add-ons always seem easy. What does it take? It looks like all I have to do

is talk into microphone for a click and presto I've padded out the disc, but it takes more effort than that. Because I don't want to sound like a neurotic idiot, I spend as long polishing this type of section as any other. Granted I don't have to add calls, backgrounds, proxies, or emotions, but I do have to refine it endlessly. What I lay down here is going to be compared qualitatively with all the other editorial commentary the audience is exposed to daily like political speeches, news, propaganda, educational materials, and so on. And that stuff is really refined. The bottom line is, it's possible for me to lose a lot of good faith real quick in a two click add-on, so whether it looks that way or not, I sweat every last word.)

(It's also more personal. I don't care what you think about Artismo or a disembodied narrator, but I do care what you think about me and I guess we'll get to that again in a moment).

Where the Proxies Come From ###
a.k.a. Other Discs by Brett Paufler

In a more traditional dream, I might end with a forward looking section advising where I see the proxies (or their characters) in the future. I decided to switch it around a little this time and tell you where they came from instead.

(((Everything in this section is true. I have completed all of the following dreams. Except where noted, most of them are full 100 clickers. But having completed a dream and having sold a dream are two different things. As of this moment, I have sold nothing -- nada, zip -- not even a short. So, the implication that anything has been published is a lie, but everything else regarding the following histories is true... of course, whether anything in this section will mean anything to you is an entirely different matter.)))

G'narsh originates in a little known disc I did under my Eddie Takosori pseudonym called Schlock! In that dream, one of Eddie's dream personas was a two-headed troll named G'narsh. For reasons I will not go into here, towards the end of that dream, I had all of the proxies pitch possible story ideas for future projects and Ivory and G'narsh suggested a football hero/cheerleader love story that morphed into the current dream. I used the same skin for G'narsh in this dream that I used in Schlock! but I amended the persona to be a modified version of Buddy/Bull -- the minataur from Minataur Tails and The K'fr Road: To Ve'kahn and Back again.

Nadia costars in the aforementioned Buddy/Bull dreams as well, performing under the names of Nellie and Jack. Her evil warlord half pint pixie skin originates in the short story entitled Dem Bones Dem Bones, which is also where Bones gets his acting début.

The Charlies appear fully fleshed out for the first time as the Ve'kahn forces in The K'fr Road: To Ve'kahn and Back (hence the name Charlie). But he/they also draw heavily on both Grt from The Dragon Bound Quartet and the unnamed stars of Portrait of an Imaginary Friend. Fans of my work will recognize this persona in most of the cute/lovable sidekick proxies, which I design and they remain one of the major reasons I stay unplugged at night. If the reason for this remains unclear, you may wish to revisit the name of that last title: Portrait of an Imaginary Friend.

Mi'lay has her origins, as I have previously said, in a random skin I found whilst cruising the Inter Server. She draws heavily on Ivory/Eve, but for the most part, I consider her a new creation for this dream.

Before Eileen appeared in this dream, I was grooming her for a starring role in a cult/dark forces saga that is still in the planning

stages. That dream is tentatively entitled Cocoa Crazy. If ever made, I expect that it will be marketed under my Fritz Heinmillerstien pseudonym. Beyond these points, her inspiration is very similar to that of Mi'lay's.

(Note: Cocoa Crazy has subsequently been cannibalized (and/or expanded) to become part of Babel. Eileen plays no role (not as of yet). And in lieu of Fritz, the dream is being recorded by a one Kevin Stillwater. Babel will be Kevin's second disc, the first being the first half of an unfinished two disc set entitled, Transparency.)

Although Lane's personality draws heavily on my Rebecca characters, her four armed nature originates in a short work entitled The Black Caldron. Overall I consider her an original for this dream.

As are both Doug and Stef'fan. As far as I am concerned, they originate with this dream, and for the most part, all of their evolution is right there down at the code level should you wish to examine it.

I did use other proxies, but the only other one I am going to get into further is Artismo. Although I have used him on numerous projects, he is a proxy. He is nothing like me. He is far more confident, arrogant, and clownish than I am, and he takes far more liberties with the ladies. As I say that, I should also mention that "I" is not a call to Brett Paufler. I wrap myself in multiple layers and what you see in the finished version is not what I refer to as myself. Certainly it is influenced by me (to a profound degree), but we are not one and the same. No more than (I hope) you would consider your proxy on Slaughter Quest or an other avatar that you ride in a dream to be an adequate representation of your true self. I don't like having to explain this in person, and neither do Fritz or Eddie.

(I apologize if I sound aggressive. I'll be happy to shake your hand, autograph your disc, talk story, or whatever, but don't expect me to interact with you as Artismo would, has, or might at some time in the future.)

(Of course, at some point you might be reassured to know that I'm not actually Bones either.)

Editing Layers

(-- Do Not Edit --)

(-- Leave Sloppy --)

(-- The First Take --)

This is just an example of how a scene evolves and the editing process over time. It's fairly hard to portray, because it happens in bits and pieces and since I'm so self conscious, it's sort of hard for me to forget that I am explicitly laying this down to show how it evolves. Anyhow, we're going to use an scene that never took place to make it all come to life.

"You need to do something," Nadia points out as she flutters into view. "And why do you get to start the scene in the tub already?" she asks petulantly (probably a qualifier I should have left in for later).

"I'm the dreamer," Artie Bones says as he splashes around in the tub in Mi'lay's room.

"It doesn't explain a lot," Nadia observes.

"True. True," Artie agrees. "Look just come over."

"No."

And that's where we will end it.

(-- Do Not Edit --)

(-- Leave Sloppy --)

(-- The Second Take --)

Like I said, the intent here is to lay down an example of how a scene evolves and the editing process changes the content, feel, and delivery of a sequence. It's fairly hard to portray, because it happens in bits and pieces (and it would just get boring to repeat the same track ad infinitum -- ad nauseum -- ad tedium), besides I'm fairly self-conscious. It's hard for me not to let the knowledge of what I am doing, change the result. All things change with observation (especially one's life).

Anyhow, I'm doing my best to just do it, but even now, I can't help but notice that the multiple edits (within the edits) that are taking place (sight unseen), so I don't know how much is really being shown. Nonetheless, we've come this far, no sense backing out now. All we need to do now is go back to our scene and bring it to life -- i.e. add some color, action, or something... maybe a little... um, ahem. Who knows?

"I do," Nadia says as she arrives on the scene indignantly. Artie Bones is splashing away in Mi'lay's bathtub and she stands on the wooden lip. She is obviously in a huff and all worked up about something. "You're not even following the previous dialogue," she points out. "You need to do something," to get it back on track she continues, and she'd probably go on about this and that (and criticizing Artie technique to boot), so he take the opportunity to splash her with the soapy water.

"That's uncalled for," she says as she wipes her face. "Why did you start the scene in the tub anyway?" she asks with growing annoyance.

"I'm the dreamer," Artie Bones replies as if that explains anything (and everything). "Look, I just wanted to redo this scene," where Mi'lay comes up from the seeing G'narsh off and finds Bones in her room, "and you get to be the Mi'lay's stand in."

"I'm not playing second fiddle to anyone," Nadia protests (and got me as to what's gotten into her bonnet).

"Look, just forget all that," Artie suggests. "It's really just color. Come on just take off your clothes and hop in."

“I’m not really that type of girl,” Nadia observes.

“Um, yes you are,” Artie corrects.

“No - I’m - Not!” Nadia begs to disagree.

“This isn’t going how I intended... It’s not even an accurate repeat of the previous round.”

“Tough,” Nadia says standing her ground.

“Look just come over here,” Artie requests one last time to which Nadia gives a final, heart felt, “No!”

And that’s where we will end it.

(-- Edit to Death --)

(-- Take Three --)

(-- 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 final --)

Like I said, the intent here is to do the nasty with Nadia. (Forget all that rubbish I said about wanting to show off my editing technique.) It’s in the appendix, so M.O.M won’t care (and usually Nadia wouldn’t either), so I don’t know what the big deal is.

The third (fourth, or fifth) time’s the charm like they say, so we’ll just edit the scene until we’ve got the feel we’re looking for -- i.e. where Nadia is snuggling up next to us in the bathtub (and/or the sack) -- but that all seems a long way off, because right now she’s still being cantankerous.

“I’m not being cantankerous,” Nadia objects (in a way that can only be described as cantankerous), as she appears early and cuts off the rest of the dreamer’s introduction.

“Too bad,” Nadia continues as she preemptively splashes the narrator with a handful of soapy suds. “Let’s see how you like it,” she snorts.

Oddly, he doesn’t (like it). “Ow! Why’d you do that?” Artie howls as he struggles to get the stinging bubbles out of his eyes.

Nadia is unsympathetic and watches on in disdain as Artie turns on the tap and tries to wash out his eyes.

“You’re always portraying me as a slut. I am not a slut. I’m a fairy and there’s a big difference.”

Nadia could probably continue down this line of thought for a while, but the fact is Artie’s not paying her much mind. It’s hard to concentrate on anything else when your eyes are burning with pain. “Now I know why I always did this scene as Bones before,” Artie states. Bones doesn’t have eyes (just rubies), so the whole soap in the eyes thing is lost on him.

Not carrying one wit about the interior dialogue, Nadia observes, “You started it,” (that whole splashing in the face thing).

“I was just trying to play,” Artie cries, but it’s a poor excuse (for a stupid game).

Nadia can only agree as she defiantly states, “Yeah. Well. I don’t want to play your stupid game.”

Artie has gotten as much of the soap out of his eyes as he is going to. The worst of the pain is over, but his eyes still sting as he tries to move the scene forward. “This is Mi’lay’s room,”

“I know where we are,” Nadia spits back.

“Just relax for a moment. We’ve been calling this Mi’lay’s room. How would you like it if we started calling this Nadia’s room?”

“You’re just trying to buy me off,” but you can see that the idea is already softening her up. “What do I have to do?”

“Don’t be like that,” Artie says trying to soothe her. “This is your room, your spacious bathroom... Maybe you’d like to break it in by starting with a nice long relaxing bubble bath.”

“With you?” Nadia asks suspiciously.

“I’ll stay way over here, and you can do what you want,” Artie assures her (from -- way, way over -- on the other side of the tub).

“OK,” Nadia acquiesces as she slips into the water, and this is where we will leave them...

Ah, what the H\$rlk, one last line. It really wouldn't be the same if we cut away before Nadia said, "It's lonely over here. Mind if I join you on that side?"

"Why don't you invite your sisters?" Artie suggests hopefully.

"Maybe later," (for now I want you all to myself), and with that we will finally fade out.

((Editing is so ingraining, that when I came to this section the second time, I completely ignored my notation not to edit, and had to load up an unedited version to maintain the original errors. Go figure.))

Editing Layers - Take Two

Although I am pleased with the outcome (the content) of the preceding section, I do not believe it shows what I had intended (originally) from an editing standpoint, so at the risk of being boring and repetitive I will give it another go. (That is to say the remainder of this section will be six or seven refinements of a relatively simple cut scene).

(-- Do Not Edit - Leave Sloppy --)

(-- The basic idea --)

Lane is dancing in a garden.

(-- Do Not Edit - Leave Sloppy --)

(-- An expansion of the idea --)

Nadia watches from her window as Lane dances in the gardens below.

(-- Do Not Edit - Leave Sloppy --)

(-- Giving the idea life --)

Bones is gone and it is time for Nadia to return to G'narsh, the pizza parlor, and the life she knows. This is just a moment away from it all -- a dream within a dream -- as it were.

Nadia looks about her new room, the finery, and the untold wealth which the room contains. Bones must really love her, she thinks, to trust her with all this, and as she her attention is drawn to the window and the form of Lane dancing below in the gardens.

I don't how well it has been defined that Lane is a courtesan from the Courts of Chaos. She knows all the arts (of pleasing men) and the art of the dance is one of the most primeval.

Nadia watches entranced as Lane moves her arms in ways that only those from the Realms of Chaos can. It is alluring, beguiling, and hypnotizing.

As she watches, Lane dances through the seasons, Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. When she is done, Lane dives into a waiting pool of steaming water, and Nadia departs.

(-- Do Not Edit - Leave Sloppy --)

(-- A rearrangement of the order of events and more expansion --)

Nadia looks about her new room (Mi'lay's old room). It is full of finery and untold wealth. The most exquisite gems, fabulous pieces of jewelry and great piles of magical artifacts are heaped in disarray. Bones must really love her to trust her with all this, she thinks, not really considering that it is not real -- none of it.

In her musings, Nadia's attention is drawn to the window and as she flies over to it, she sees the form of Lane dancing below in the gardens. Nadia is entranced as she watches Lane moves her arms (and body) in ways that only those from the Realms of Chaos can. It is alluring, beguiling, hypnotizing, and amazingly erotic. Nadia cannot help but to be a little envious of Lane, her body, and her skill. She knows (both of them do) that Bones (or Artie, or

whatever name, skin, or form he chooses) visits both of them. Although they are friend, it is difficult not to be (just a little bit) jealous.

But these thoughts do not go through Nadia's head as she watches Lane, her fine flowing arms, legs, and limbs. How does one call this out without laying down the code movement by movement? I draw your attention to the tendons of her flesh. How they are drawn tight, slow motion mixed with speed, and an indescribably power backed by certainty of purpose. But are these erotic? Then know that she dances for you. For your return and to pass the time until (by your presence) she is made whole.

Take it as a given that Lane is a courtesan from the Courts of Chaos. She knows all the arts (of pleasing men) and the art of the dance is one of the most primeval.

This is a magical place and as we (Nadia, you, and I) watch, Lane will dance through the seasons. In Spring as the flowers bloom, she will shed her clothes. No doubt M.O.M. will cause flowers to bloom and young budding leaves to block the view, but just out of sight it is all there. Come summer, in the heat of the day, and the cool of the night, she will quicken her pace. Sweat pours off her body and as she spins, sprays of water leave her hair. In Autumn the leaves fall and from where I know not, Lane has found a fur coat. She wears it, and does not, all at the same time, as if the scene was choreographed by a master dancer and then just as suddenly it is Winter. The snow falls. She dances to stay warm and pulls her coat in tight. When that fails she disrobes, dives into a waiting hot spring (an oasis of warm in a sea of cold icy snow), and disappears from view.

It is time for Nadia to depart as well, for her to return to G'narsh, the pizza parlor, and the life she knows. For in the end, this is just a moment away from it all -- a dream within a dream -- as it were.

For even proxies must dream (and have dreams) of their own.

(-- Final Cut - Revision 1 --)

(-- Fine tuning the sequence --)
(-- Except for a few minor changes this is basically repetition --)
--)

Nadia looks about her new room (i.e. Mi'lay's old room). It is full of finery and untold wealth. The most exquisite gems, fabulous pieces of jewelry, and great piles of magical artifacts are heaped in disarray. Bones must really love her to trust her with all this, she thinks, not really considering that it is not real -- none of it.

In her musings, Nadia's attention is drawn to the window and as she flies over to it, she notices the form of Lane dancing below her in the gardens. Nadia is entranced by Lane's movements. Her arms, legs, and body move in unnatural ways -- ways that only those from the Realms of Chaos could find natural (or even possible). It is alluring, beguiling, hypnotizing, and amazingly erotic. Nadia cannot help but to be a little envious of Lane, her body, and the skill of her movements. She knows (both of them do) that Bones (and/or Artie, or whatever name, skin, or form he is choosing at the moment) visits both of them (regularly). And although they are friends, it is difficult not to be (just a little bit) jealous.

For the most, these thoughts do not go through Nadia's head as she watches Lane and her fine flowing -- graceful -- movements. How does one call this out without painstakingly laying down the code bit by bit? I draw your attention to the tendons of her flesh. How they are drawn tight. How her motion (slow and steady) is mixed with unnatural speed, quickness, and an indescribably power backed as it is by a certainty of purpose.

But are these calls erotic? If not, then know that she dances for you (and you alone). She dances for your return (to cause and bring about your return) and to pass the time until (by your presence) she is once again made whole.

Take it as a given that Lane is a courtesan from the Courts of Chaos. She knows all the arts (of pleasing men) and the art of the

dance is one of the most primeval. Of the appeal (sexual and/or otherwise) I can say no more.

This is a magical place and as we (Nadia, you, and I) watch, Lane will dance through the seasons. In Spring as the flowers bloom, she sheds her clothes. No doubt M.O.M. causes bits of greenery (budding leaves and fragrant petals) to block the view, but just out of sight it is all there (beyond a branch or a humming bird). Come summer, in the heat of the day, and the cool of the night, Lane quickens her pace. Sweat pours off her body and as she spins, sprays of water are flung off the tips of her hair. In the falling leaves of Autumn Lane wears a fur coat (from where it has come I know not). The coat covers her and does not (all at the same time) as if the scene was choreographed by a master, and then just as suddenly it is Winter. The snow falls. She pulls her coat in tight and dances to stay warm as she fights off the cool (of death and its coming?) When the end is near, and it is apparent she will fail, she disrobes, dives into a waiting hot spring (an oasis of warm in a sea of cold icy snow -- and death), and disappears from view. (Her time is over.)

As is Nadia's. The appointed hour, the time of her departure is at hand. She must return to G'narsh, the pizza parlor, and the life she knows. For in the end, this is but a brief requiem (for a dream?), a moment away from it all, or if you prefer -- a dream within a dream -- as it were.

And the time for its dissolution has come.

(I'd like to think that's a little more poetic.)

(-- EDIT - Ad Infinitum --)

(-- Final Cut - Revision 2 --)

(-- Repetition once again --)

(-- Only minor changes --)

(-- .65 clicks Edited (2, 3, 4 - 5 -6 -7 -8 final) --)

Nadia looks about her new room (i.e. Mi'lay's old room). It is full of finery and untold wealth. The most exquisite gems, fabulous pieces of jewelry, and great piles of magical artifacts are heaped in disarray. She thinks Bones must really love her to trust her with all this, (but not really. Not when you stop and consider that none of it is real -- none of it.)

In her musings, Nadia's attention is drawn to the open window that overlooks the garden and as she gazes wistfully out of it, she notices the dancing form of Lane far below. Nadia is entranced by Lane's movements. Lane's arms, legs, and (the rest of her) body (nudge-nudge, hint-hint) move in unnatural ways -- ways that only those from the Realms of Chaos could find natural (or even possible). It is alluring, beguiling, hypnotizing, and amazingly erotic. Nadia cannot help but to be a little envious of Lane, her body, and the skillful movements of her dance. She knows (both of them do -- so the ambiguity need not be addressed) that Bones (and/or Artie, by whatever name, skin, or form he is choosing at the moment) visits both of them (regularly). And although they are all friends, it is hard not to be (just a little bit) jealous.

For the most part though, these thoughts are ours (or mine at least) and do not flow through Nadia's head. Instead her entire being is focused on Lane's performance and the fine flowing -- graceful -- movements of her limbs (numerous as they might be). How does one call this out without painstakingly laying down the code bit by bit? I draw your attention to the tendons of Lane's flesh -- arms, legs, and thighs. How they are drawn tight and taunt. How her motion (slow and steady) is mixed with unnatural speed, quickness, and an indescribably power (backed as it is by a certainty of purpose).

But are these calls erotic? If not, then know that she dances for you (and you alone). She dances for your return (to cause and bring it about) and to pass the time until (by your presence) she is once again made whole.

Take it as a given that Lane is a courtesan from the Courts of Chaos. She knows all the arts (of pleasing men -- and/or women) and the enticing art of dance is one of the most primeval. Of the appeal (sexual and/or otherwise), I can say no more.

This -- Elvin Home -- and/or -- Elf Central -- is a magical place and as we (Nadia, you, and I) watch, Lane will dance her way through the seasons. In Spring as the flowers bloom, she sheds her clothes. No doubt M.O.M. causes bits of greenery (budding leaves and fragrant petals) to block the view, but just out of sight it is all there (beyond a branch, a humming bird, or a wayward butterfly). Come summer, in the heat of the day, and the cool of the night, Lane quickens her pace. Sweat pours off her body and cascades in endless swirls off the tips of her hair as she spins and twirls. In the falling leaves of Autumn, Lane finds a fur coat to wear (from where it comes I know not). The coat covers her -- and does not -- (all at the same time) as if the scene was choreographed by some master, and then just as suddenly it is Winter. The snow falls heavy and thick. She pulls her coat around her tightly as she dances to stay warm in a futile effort to fight off the cold (of death (and its coming?)) But then, when the end is near, and it is apparent she will fail (that her dance is at an end and she will run out of energy before she has called her heart's desire to her side), she disrobes gracefully, and (in one fluid motion) disappears from view as she dives into a waiting hot spring (an oasis of warmth in a sea of cold, icy snow -- and death).

(It would appear, her time is over.)

As is Nadia's. The appointed hour, the time of her departure is at hand. She must return to G'narsh, the pizza parlor, and the life she knows. For in the end, this is but a brief requiem, a moment away from it all, or if you prefer -- a dream within a dream within a dream.

And the time for its dissolution has come.

(In the end it's .75 (edited) clicks, and between this and the preceding section I've spent a good day (or more likely a half

day, a vacation day) laying down the rough dream and editing it to death.)

(It's probably the best I'll be able to do (short of sitting down with you) to walk you through the layers of creation... or at least how I do it.)

(And just in case anything major changes, I should time stamp this. I did this while I was working on my sister's (and the Swami Yamma's) party. It would be my intention that this would flow to some degree from the final/beginning sequence (at G'narsh's Ray's Pizza) provided that we assume Nadia is dreaming and the Midnight Society is a euphemism for Lane dancing in the woods and/or heeding her master's call.)

Contests

This is the last blurb that I will lay down. The sequence after this -- Alternate Beginnings -- I did previously.

It has been two weeks since I've done anything else on this project, and my mind is on other things. If I didn't feel that I owed this section to you, I simply would have excluded it, but way back when (perhaps on the -- Back Jacket) I indicated -- promised really-- that I would go into contests.

Clearly I haven't won any of the majors, so take what I have to say with a grain of salt, but if you're looking for the advice of a two-bit hack, here it goes.

A Contest Primer

- 1) Read the rules. Sounds simple. It is. So do it.
- 2) Having read them, follow them. This (then) is the hard part.
- 3) Pander to type. Everyone -- judges, etc. -- have their favorites. Find out what it is and give it to them.
- 4) View last year's winners if you have any doubts as to what they want. H\$rlk. View them anyway.
- 5) Keep to standard code. Note that I don't tend to and that I haven't won yet. In the first rounds they -- the judges -- are simply

looking for a reason (any reason) to disqualify entrants. Poor editing is on the top of the list. Don't believe me? Go back to #1 and read the rules. Standard code is always -- always -- mentioned.

6) Lay down a custom dream for the each contest you are entering. If it's not specifically crafted for them, with their needs and idiosyncrasies in mind, they'll know, and the odds of making it are slim.

7) It's a numbers game. You probably won't win -- not ever. Take it to heart. If you aren't enjoying yourself, you should be doing something else with your time.

Production Ideas

1) Dreamer's Block: What a concept. All it means is that what's going on in your mind is not suitable for the dream you are working on (or want to be working on). Some folks say push through it and work anyway. Me, I say take a day off.

2) The best way to end a block is to lay down some excellent code, the type that'll impress even your cynical heart when you review it a day later.

3) Dream from your life. It doesn't matter how boring your life is. Everybody's life is boring.

4) Of course, what this really means is dream about what you know. If you've never been in the military, don't try to pretend that you have been or lay down (micro-detailed) combat tracks. It won't seem real. The way around this is to qualify the dream. Want to do combat, but you've never seen the real thing, then do a dream within a dream from the point of view of someone on the production crew, a young lad idolizing the conflict, or a green horn recruit imaging the big battle the night before. The list of variations is endless. If your lead is ignorant, it only makes sense that the dream is being told from an ignorant point of view. Basically, don't do medical drama specialty discs unless you work in medicine -- or are willing to work the dream from within the context of your own ignorance.

- 5) Work your philosophy into the dream. A bunch of sword swinging barbarians gets boring after awhile, but if you add in their thoughts, religion, and motivation the whole thing comes to life.
- 6) Chicks dig emotion and interpersonal relationships ((and chicks buy over half of the discs. They drive the market. Pander to the market.))
- 7) Dialogue is the great click killer. Want an exercise? Try laying down a dream using only dialogue. Forget about laying calls. Compilers are smarter than you think.
- 8) If you unplug at night, use your REM cycle for inspiration.
- 9) Practice. Some folks will say this is the most important bit of advice. I suppose it matters what you mean by practice. The bottom line is if you dream for an hour every day, by the end of the year, you'll be years ahead of someone who doesn't. But if you really want to make progress, what you'll need to do is dream for a half hour and then edit for an hour. It's the endless editing and revisions that make a dream great. The raw footage is almost universally crap ((and therefore worthless)).
- 10) There's nothing special about an hour a day. Do an hour a week on Saturday morning. Spend all day Sunday. Try alternating, three hours one day and none the next. You'll find a pattern that works ((for you)).
- 11) Don't be afraid to take time off. Take a month off and you're not getting anywhere, but a weekend here and there is called rejuvenating the mind.
- 12) Dream about your passion, be it drugs, sex, violence, gore -- or, whatever. You won't get it past M.O.M., but getting your stuff onto the store shelves isn't everything. If you're going to spend one, two, three, four, or more hours a day dreaming away, you're going to have to work on something that interests you. Start with a gore laden kill-fest or whatever rocks your boat. Then, find a way to tone it down for the MM.
- 13) Your best bet is starting small. Dreams don't have to be epic, and many markets -- Romance for instance -- aren't really interested in the epic at all.

14) Some folks will say start small and add, or go through the dream from start to finish (no matter how long it is), and then, once you know what the dream's about, do it all again all over from the start. Never works for me, but its an idea. (I edit and refine as I go.)

15) Some dreams work best when the most important factors are left untold. Try leaving out the beginning, middle, or end, and simply let it be presumed. The war... I still don't know exactly which one. Do you?

It's not much of a primer, but then there is the rest of the dream to pull from as well.

I have the urge to end it here by trying to set it up for a sequel, maybe by implying that someone might finally want to hire G'narsh for a remodeling job in some far off vortex, let Bones escape from jail, or simply continue the action in the college town. I'm sure we could set G'narsh up as a guest lecturer or as a PE instructor at the school.

Anyway, although, I have the urge, I don't have any well developed ideas, so this is where I will end it.

I hope you have enjoyed the ride, and don't forget you got another sequence to go -- the beginnings I never used.

Maybe we should start there in our quest for a sequel?

G'narsh Alternate Beginnings

(### Schlock! ###)

(As I think I've said, the formative seed for this dream -- G'narsh TML -- originates in a hyper-flow micro-segmented (100 odd click) dream I did entitled -- Schlock! It was the last (major) work that I attempted prior to beginning this one.)

(Schlock! jumps from cut scene to cut scene without any connecting fiber utilizing a modified -- flash -- format. It relies

heavily on audience participation (filling in cognitive gaps with a users' own discs and equipment), so it can be hard to predict exactly how random this will all appear. The outtakes that follow take place late in the dream and all the intervening segments having to do with other characters have been cut out. This is essentially G'narsh at his most raw, and where the dream you have just enjoyed (???) originates.)

(Plug in -- Mi'lay, if you desire -- whenever you see a reference to -- Ivory.)

(The outtake might also make a little more sense if you realize that the narrator has taken on the name -- and role -- of Eddie -- sort of like Art.)

###

G'narsh walks down the temple steps killing indiscriminately as he goes. On the way he sees a lovely elvin lass with skin like the moon. He throws her over his shoulder as he kills her mother, sister, brother, and uncle. He thinks that he will call her Ivory. He wonders how many minutes she will last.

At the bottom of the steps her throws her to his heavily armored second in command. It could be Kelly standing in chain mail, or it could be Rebecca in full plate. "Prepare her," he commands as he walks toward Kat.

/ ### (-- random jump ahead -- missing extraneous material)

"So, you got your land."

"And you got your dream."

"Almost."

"No almost. You're on the home stretch. You're saying your goodbyes. If you can't cross the finish line at this point, you don't deserve to be called a dreamer."

"So, is there any point..."

“You’re going to do that short subject with Ivory.” It is not so much of a question.

/

They, Eddie and the child Pe’le (Ivory -- Mi’lay), are in the mansion and a trio of unknown, unnamed extras lie face down in pools of their own blood... one of them is Fritz... another is Rebecca... and the third? If I had to guess, I would say that it is a younger version of Stephen...

###

(It’s ironic that the Stephen in Schlock has no relation (and/or relationship) to the Stef’fan in G’narsh.)

###

Eddie holds a gun. Ivory looks at him and looks at her dead parents and brother. “Your going to kill me... aren’t you?” and then she adds sweetly, innocently, without undo emotion... just matter of factly, “Can I do anything... to make you change your mind?”

There’s a whole psycho, prepubescent Lolita killing spree dream in there somewhere just aching to come out... and leave its mark on the dream culture as it were...

###

(Which I subsequently did as Victoria I -- a.k.a. See Ya in the Funny Papers.)

###

(Even then...)

###

Maybe (there's) more than one dream (in there)...

###

But, Ivory and Pe'le fade away.
That is a dream for another day... another collection.

###

For now, there is nothing left to do, but saddle up Shadow
and go after Kia.

/

The troll, G'narsh, walks up to Eddie, lifts him up, snaps him
in half, and drinks his blood. It does not matter. Eddie cannot die.

###

“No... I'm not doing that this time,” the troll says
interrupting. He is wearing a red and white letterman jacket and is
carrying a football. “Everybody else is going on about the dreams
they want to be in...” He looks down, digs at the dirt with his
tennis shoes. “... I guess the thing is...” He looks up
embarrassed. “The thing is it would mean a lot to my mom... a lot
to me... if I went to college. No one in my family has ever gotten
a degree... and well...” A big grin flashes across his face. “Come
on. I'm a two-headed troll. Tell me you don't want to dream that
story. Ivory could become a sweet little elvin cheerleader... It
could be a tale of romance. Monster on the field...”

###

Monster in bed... or a pure romantic with a heart of gold.
But, what's got me stopped cold for the moment is what is G'narsh
going to study?

###

“Political science?”

“I don't think so.”

“Military history?”

“No,” Eddie responds firmly. “To write about those things
you have to know them... at least a little. It's got to be something I
know or can BS.”

“Fey'an Art?”

“Too complicated.”

###

“I think he should just be studying physical education,” Ivory
Moon River the elvin princess from the dark side of the night
suggests as she walks into view. You can hardly call what she is
wearing a cheerleader outfit.

###

Not waiting for the dreamer to come up with a suitable
commentary, narrative, or plot progression they link arms...
G'narsh picks her up... and together they disappear into the void.

###

Eddie is alone. He has killed all of his demons...

###

And all of his demons have killed him.

###

There is nothing left to lose...

###

No. There is. There always is.

###

Eddie looks around. Even the mist is fading. His hands are loosing substance. In moments he won't exist, but that does not matter. We have reached the end of the dream... and his utility has come to a close...

###/###

(Schlock! continues, but short of providing dozens of extraneous clicks (or the whole dream) those are the most relevant clips.)

(A month and a half after I had finished Schlock!, I started working on G'narsh TML.)

(I laid down at least four alternate beginnings before I finally settled on one that I liked (and ultimately used.)

(As a note, all of these alternate tracks were laid down three weeks before I began the project in earnest. The first three I put down in one day, and the last one I did two days later.)

(For the most part they are unedited, so take them as you will -- perhaps as an object lesson in why things needed to be edited and checked for code.)

(Although I present the raw -- unadulterated -- code, I should note that (MM EDIT) indicates something has been cut -- often quite a bit.)

(### Version 1 -- Ride Tall -- Day 1 -- 11:52AM ###)

Ride tall. Feel the wind in your hair, the rain on your face, and the muscles from your mount rippling beneath you. You are G'narsh, the two-headed troll, the warrior, the conquer... the ruthless and unmerciful.

Twirl a spiked club in your right hand. Test its heft. Get its feel. Do the same with the axe in your left hand. At five feet long, with a ten stone blade, the ax is bigger than most could lift, but you wield it like a blade, an accessory... an extension of you arm.

What do you want to know about your body? You are large. At six, seven, eight feet tall, you stand above most... Certainly, you stand above the orcs, goblins, cobalts, and ogres in your cohort, but you also stand above men, other trolls, and even some giants. Take a moment to savor the irony. All a giant has going for it is its size, and you make a mockery of this.

Your body is strong -- solid muscle. Two, three, four hundred stone, your body is immense. When you stand in victory, it is nothing to raise your defeated foe's body above your head, and tear him apart with your bare hands, be that foe a man, elf, or even an ogre. Though to be fair, you only did this once to an ogre, and it pushed you to your limits.

Swing your club. Swing your ax. Bring yourself back to the moment. Reconnect with the creature on which you ride, a tusked wilde' beast from the northern plains. It runs berserk -- afraid -- in a desperate attempt to get away from you and to save its life, but it is too stupid to realize it carries you along on its back. You guide its direction by kicking its gut. A kick on the left and it veers to the right. A kick on the right and it veers to the left. It is untrained. It does this by instinct. When you reach your destination you will release the beast and in a frenzy to return to the wild, it will carve a

path of death and destruction through friend and foe alike, but that is not your concern. The weak die. That is the way. And, the strong. They kill the weak... and do whatever else to them that they desire.

(The objective this night is a small elvin enclave. Probably a few gnomes, maybe a winged beast, a trained spider, and quite possibly a visiting human or a dwarf or two. The advance scouts indicated that their forces were small, a few dozen at best. Your hundred plus riders will make small work of them. It is overkill. It will be a massacre. It will be an orgy of death and destruction. It is to be a reward for your troop's success during the fall of Hals'bad. You may do with the prisoners as you like. By morning there are not expected to be any survivors.)

Turn your mount into the forest. You ride like thunder. In the distance the defenders' alarm horns blow, but it is a futile gesture. Moments later your club finds the sentry and both the horn and his head fly into the distance. It reminds you of a field sport from your youth. The cry of, "Goal!" leaves your lips, and you notice Farthr chuckle in appreciation at your joke.

In the middle of the enclave you dismount, letting the wilde' beast free. It immediately tramples a goblin, then an orc, and then a bog slithe... It is a good riddance. Bog slithes are not much use in a fight and they smell. Your only regret is that you did not kill him personally.

A blast from some spell hits you in the face as you are distracted. Elves and their magic. Let loose your ax and it finds the miserable cretin's heart. Take a moment to watch his fall from the treetop... and then the battle is over... almost before it began. Now is when the fun really begins.

There are only three of them... elvin wenches, the quarry, the real reason for this mission. They will not last long. It seems unlikely that they will make it through the hour, much less the

night. To put it bluntly, your troops are not known for their restraint... and neither are you.

###

You are Mi'lay, princess of the Lunar Night, high elf, and daughter of the king. A thousand warriors have kissed your hand as they left for battle against the forces of Chaos... and for a thousand warriors it was the last kiss they gave. Your body is divine, a temple for the gods, and in another fifty, or one hundred years, when you are of age, you will be married off to seal an alliance, bring another world into the fray, or to reward a suitable champion, that has brought the fighting to an end.

You are in bed. You wake in a fright. Your breath is heavy. You sweat. Almost forgetting yourself, you yearn to cry out.

As you sit up, your handmaiden hands you a goblet of water, and you close your eyes to remember your vision, to remember your dream.

Ka'ley is dead. As is H'oey and Le'tte. Killed by the troll G'narsh and his forces.

Killed. Ravaged. Raped.

Float into the vision. Let it take over your mind. Look up at the face of evil. Feel the hatred in the troll's eyes. Feel his calloused hands... everywhere.

Shake your head. Let it dissipate. "Fre'lan has fallen," you inform your runner and then you coldly inform Se'ro, your handmaiden, "There were no survivors... none."

Let her inform the others... "You do not want to know the details," you assure her.

(I think the evil of G'narsh is most apparent in this version... indeed, it was too much so.)

(((But please, in there find the truth. Back in the day, back in the beginning, G'narsh was evil. I like to think that he's come a long, long way since then.)))

(# # # Version 2 -- G'narsh & Mi'lye 'Ena -- Day 1 -- 3:47PM # #
#)

(Notice the significant change in roles and names. At this point, I am still casting about for the "in" -- the voice that will make it all work.)

"Are you a real troll?"

Somebody is talking to him. G'narsh pulls himself out of his stupor... only just barely. Behind drooped lids, his eyes are dim. Both of his heads bob back and forth as if they can't quite decide which way they are supposed to fall over.

The... pixie? The pixie slaps him again. She had already slapped him once and he didn't even remember. Seeing as it doesn't have the desired effect, she slaps him again, and again... First on one cheek, and then the other, going from head to head. After a while, when it looks like the troll might be conscious, she asks him again, "Are you a real troll? Or, am I just wasting my time."

G'narsh finds the will to sit up. He finds that he is lying in the gutter. "I thought I was sitting at a bar."

"You must have passed out," the pixie looking creature suggests. "That's what they do around here if you pass out... they throw you in the gutter. Oh, by the way, my name is Mi'lye 'Ena, but most folks just call me Millie... Or, Molly."

"Mi'le?"

"Yeah. I suppose that's close enough... So, are you a real troll?"

Ignoring the question yet again, G'narsh instead asks, "Do you have a cigarette?"

"No," Mi'le replies curtly. "You know beer, whiskey... (H\$rlk), even K'fr I can understand, but cigarettes... What's the point?"

“I picked the habit up in the war,” G’narsh replies off handedly as he surveys the gutter for a stub.

“Damn, you’re hurting. Look, if...” but whatever else Mi’le has to say is cut short by the rock hard, iron grip of G’narsh’s hands wrapped around her throat.

“You’re not one of those do good, (Fr@cking) fairies are you?” he asks as he tightens his grip... and then realizing the (Fr@cking) thing can’t talk, he looses it up a bit.

For her part, Mi’le struggles against his grip. “No! Let me go you (Fr@cker)! This is the last (Fr@cking) time, I try...” but once again her words are cut off by G’narsh’s grip.

“Then why did you wake me?” G’narsh asks simply as he grabs hold of her body with his other hand closing his fingers around her wings and making it clear that the wrong answer will result in her head being popped off like a cork from a champagne bottle.

“Because I thought you were a (Fr@cking) troll,” Mi’le answers truthfully... not having enough time to come up with a suitable lie and being too afraid for her life not to answer immediately.

It is not an answer that mollifies G’narsh. “Why are you looking for a troll?”

“Because I’m a (Fr@cking) gutter fairy,” Mi’lye ‘Ena answers as if that explains it all... and for G’narsh it does. He lets go of her, dropping her to the ground.

“I think you broke my wings,” Mi’le says as she tries to move her wings. They are clearly crumpled... damaged.

G’narsh ignores her theatrics as he stands up. “You’re lucky I didn’t kill you.”

“Murder’s illegal here,” Mi’le responds angrily as she hops backwards a few feet and finds, just as she suspected, that her wings are broken. “You broke my (Fr@cking) wings.”

G’narsh squats down and regards the... gutter fairy (with the gutter mouth to match) with both pairs of his eyes. He examines

the wing briefly, flips it callously with his fingers, and then agrees. “Looks like I did... So, why are you looking for a troll anyhow?” G’narsh asks as he stands back up... and then thinking better of it, kneels down again as he props himself up against the streetlight.

“(Sch©lte)! If you’re a troll, you’d know.” Seeing as, once again, this was the wrong thing to say to G’narsh at this particular moment, she finds herself hopping backwards out of his reach again and trying to calm him down, one more time. “You know, if you’re going to be like this, I’m sure we can do better... me and my sisters.”

Holding onto the streetlight and regaining his full height... nearly one and a half times that of a man... G’narsh snorts out of both noses as each mouth vies to be the first to say it. “There’s no (Fr@cking) way you have any sisters.”

And, Mi’le has to give him that. She’s a renegade... on her own and all alone. “Fine,” she agrees sullenly. “I’m all alone, just like you,” but after a moment she brightens up. “Want to change that?”

###

(It sort of breaks down here as I never went back and edited this and filled in with any flavor -- or at least I hope that’s the case.)

Without a word, G’narsh picks Mi’le up and flips her onto his shoulder, between his heads. “You comfortable?”

“So you’re really a troll?”

“You really a gutter fairy?”

“Just follow the water.”

“It’s a (Fr@cking) dump,” G’narsh observes when they finally reach the end of the gutter down by the river.

“What do you expect? Gutter - (Fr@cking) - fairy. Read between the lines.”

“Uh-huh,” G’narsh replies noncommittally as he jumps down the embankment and wades into the water.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m a troll. It’s a (Fr@cking) bridge. I’m checking out the supports.”

“They’re concrete. What more do you want?” But, there need not be much more said at this point. G’narsh walks into the grimy water. It is filthy with discarded shopping carts, bottles, cans, and other assorted refuse. Even the odd refrigerator and a flit engine or two. At the buttress, G’narsh (MM EDIT) Mi’le...

“What was your name again?”

“Mi’lye ‘Ena. Your name is G’narsh and mine is Mi’lye ‘Ena.”

“Uh-huh,” G’narsh murmurs to himself as he looks into her eyes. “You’re going to obey me Mi’lye ‘Ena,” he says slowly and deliberately making sure to pronounce it correctly. “You and all your sisters... from now till forever... in every (Fr@cking) way.”

“I don’t...” but Mi’le gets no farther...

(MM EDIT)

(MM EDIT)

(MM EDIT)

(Clearly this was little gem was never intended for the Mass Market.)

... using her body as a sleeve.

(I think that says it all.)

(### Version 3 -- Are You G’narsh? -- Day 1 -- 6:20PM ###)

“Are you G’narsh? The troll?”

Yes. He was. Years back G’narsh would have welcomed the question. Double agent... double traitor, during the war he had betrayed his brothers, the fallen, the Sons of Chaos, and the others... and in return he had been given amnesty, a king’s ransom,

and full honors and prestige in all the realms. It was still a little hard to believe. The dark side did not honor its pledges, but the light... they did. And, after the war, they had made him a hero. Fallen son returned... the groupies, the parties, and (MM EDIT)... wild, out of control, who would have thought humans were bigger (MM EDIT) than goblins or orcs combined... but it grew old... tiresome. Perhaps cliché, but true nonetheless... and G'narsh had taken to wearing dark sunglasses to hide his identity... but it really wasn't very effective. He was a troll... and he had two heads. He tended to stick out in a crowd, especially in the human dominant worlds where he found himself wandering as of late.

“Are you G'narsh?” the voice asked again, and then thinking better of it added, “Look, it doesn't matter if you're G'narsh or not. Are you a troll... a real troll.”

G'narsh looked at the... “Pixie?” his one head asked the other. “Maybe a fairy.”

The three foot tall fairy flapped her wings and floated above the booth where G'narsh was sitting. She was wearing dark fishnet stockings, a black miniskirt, and a yellow tube top that strained to cover (MM EDIT) that were all out of proportion to the rest of her body. All in all, she looked sort of like a top heavy bumble bee... in a calculated, predatory, available by the hour for whatever you want type way.

When she was sure both of G'narsh's heads were staring at... (MM EDIT)

(I don't know where this one was going to go next, but I'm guessing it was headed for the gutter again. No doubt this is why I stopped. I like alternative projects, but I'm smart enough to know the big bucks flow towards the MM stuff.)

(# # # Version 4 -- G'narsh -- 2 days later -- 6:31PM -- 3rd save file # # #)

(((And this section is extreme enough to make even me cringe (and wonder about the wisdom of including such tracks on a MM disc), but perhaps that is because I know what lies behind the edits.)))

(((No matter. If you ever had any doubts about G'narsh's origination as a creature of evil, this track should lay that to rest. Months later, all I can say is that even I find it distasteful.)))

(((I like to think that it is beyond even what I could do today, but that's probably just wishful thinking, a bit of face saving denial.)))

0

I'm intending this to be a straightforward walkthrough of a regulation length fantasy. I have other projects going, some consultant work, and, believe it or not, a personal life, so I'm going to try to limit my working time on this project to about an hour a day, which breaks down to a few minutes to review the previous days work, a half hour putting together new material, and then spending another half hour going over the material for consistency, flow, and all of the other behind the scenes activities that go into making a finished dream... I will try to highlight this activity as much as possible, but for the most part, it is my intent to focus on the creative side, and just assume you've got the technical background required to put the finishing polish on any project you might be considering yourself.

That being said, we need to start our story. I've selected a character who I've been working with a little lately and for whatever reason he has captivated my attention.

Lets go down some boring statistics. 6', 7', 8' tall... Kind of reminds me of a song. Maybe 250-500 lbs. Green skin... sometimes brown with a moldy overlay... think a tree trunk covered in moss... and the big part. He's a two-headed troll.

Perhaps you should forget everything you know about trolls. He can regenerate... borderlines on the immortal... is smarter than your average troll... and, is a veteran of the war...

Let's start there.

This is a scene that's been going through my mind and needs to be in the story somewhere, so let's just get it over and put it here, right at the beginning.

You are G'narsh, the two-headed troll. You are a great warrior, a great beast, a fearsome opponent, and an alpha male...

Using a rock... a boulder... or a log...

I've got to admit most details not related to the main flow... side items as it were... don't concern me. You'll have to fill them in yourself. Or, just come to the realization that they probably don't matter.

The focus of this scene is a (MM EDIT) of a fey'an creature... so step into the role.

You, G'narsh, are (MM EDIT) an elf, a fairy, or a pixie. Take your pick... or don't (MM EDIT) her if the concept annoys you or you are one of those insufferable do-gooders... but trust me, if given the chance, plenty of folks will (MM EDIT) the elf...

G'narsh for instance.

(.04 clicks go the way of the MM EDIT)

So, take a moment, enjoy the scene. The great G'narsh (MM EDIT) the elvin maiden. She's probably 50, 75, maybe a 100 years

old, so just a wee babe by elvin standards. Listen to her (MM EDIT).

Just stop for a second and enjoy her (MM EDIT)...

Now. We won't go into too much detail here. (MM EDIT) is a word, a symbol... a trigger (-- a call). You've got to let the audience take the call how they want to. Some folks are going to load up their (.022 - MM EDIT) It's their choice after all. Let them roll with it however they want to. Your job is to simply set up the conditions... the framework... in the end it's on the consumer to flesh out the experience.

Stylistically, I like going into greater depth... but if you're in a competition, the judges won't go for it... and the mainstream media is OK with it being at the edges... but they won't take a (MM EDIT) scene straight up... or most any other type of (MM EDIT) scene straight up... so you've just got to lay it out there and let the different viewers make what they will of it.

Got it?

Good.

So, we need not cut below the waist. Above the waist you are naked. Your muscles ripple in the night air. A breeze blows. The smell of the forest fills your nostrils. Sweat drops from your chin, your nose, down your hair, and covers your body.

You're really getting into (.011 - MM EDIT). This is why you became a warlord in the first place...

And, the elf... (.035 - MM EDIT)

(.010 - MM EDIT)

And, just as an aside, I called Stare as Stair the first time around. That's why you need to edit, and rework it... (Sch©lte) like that will get you docked. Most of the judges are (MM EDIT) on code and calls... to the point that they aren't very eager to give high marks to anything that doesn't stick to formal editing standards...

The bottom line is, you're going against the grain if you leave conservative dream flow and narrative consistency behind. The judges don't go for it... but the fans... Hell, they're bored to tears with the same (Sch©lte)...

Just remember you've got to play to both sides, and walk the fine line.

(.080 - MM EDIT)

(MM EDIT)

Damn!

It's probably a little over the limit. You'd have to tone it down in competition... so... we should back off.

Turn away from the elf...

"She's yours," G'narsh says offhandedly to Fran'fr...

Look, I admit it I just make up the names... they don't matter.

(.051 - MM EDIT)

Once again, something I'd usually cut out in the final edit... maybe go with a gore laden kill fest instead...

But, the real question is, can you see the scene? Does it come to life for you? The giant, massive, larger than life two-headed troll laying waste to a little elvin girl... who is a representation of the force of good, or something like that.

Watch the scene cut out as G'narsh walks out of the forest into a nearby bog that lines a small lake. He'll go swimming... take a bath... in the dark moonlight... as he washed the blood... (.005 - MM EDIT)...

Reenter G'narsh's body for a moment. Enjoy the cool water. The smell of burning wood. The forest will be ablaze by morning, but for now it burns in isolated patches, a tree house here, a grass hut there... under a tree a dwarf is tied to pole... cobalts... small, alligator type, walking lizard men... roast marshmallows at his feet and poke him with spears whenever his screams die down.

And, there goes the buzzer. My half hour is up... so I'll wrap it up for the day.

I want to introduce Laney, or Lane. I haven't really decided on the exact name yet... maybe I'll go with both. Anyhow, she's there in the water with you... G'narsh. She is your cohort, your second, your trusted equal... a friend.

For now imagine her how you desire.

If you wish to play along at home. Now might be a good time to pause. Perhaps pause the disc for a day and in between your time at work... or whatever it is that you do... reenter G'narsh. Make your peace with being a two-headed troll, a force of evil, an agent of chaos, and a dark warrior.

He will get lighter... more friendly... but for now start with the evil...

And then revisit the child being (MM EDIT). Skin the color of a cracked eggshell... or the pale glow of a new moon... young, innocent... and you (.006 - MM EDIT)...

And then fall back into the pond, the lake... the pool... A remote Wisconsin lake during a summer's night comes to mind. Listening to the insects chirp, enjoy your swim. Enjoy your bath... as you wash the blood of the child off... your hands...

And put her out of your mind... for you are done with her.

And then take a moment to regard your troop's destruction of the elvin outpost. Take a mouthful of murky water into both of your mouths, squirt the water playfully in the air, and then let Laney join you... the four armed... demoness? From the great halls of chaos itself?

Enjoy your time with her... enjoy the lake, her body, and the rest of the warm summer night.

But for me... Right now, that is it.

I will be back tomorrow... and I expect we will begin anew, far away from this world, this place, and even this mindset of pointless... if not needless... destruction.

1250 : 1500 : 1550

The End

(I don't know if I mentioned it or not, but there was a time when G'narsh was evil -- like really, really, really evil. However,

in time all things change, and evil can become good, and good can (once again) become evil.)

(This then is the beginning (that is the end), and as we have already gone over the end (which is a beginning), I suppose the only question left to ask is whether the Son of Chaos, the Grandson of Gra'gl himself... Can G'narsh, the two-headed troll of the black heart, the namesake of the rays, the betrayer of both friend and foe alike, the cold blooded killer, gun for hire, paid mercenary and defiler... can such a beast as G'narsh find redemption?)

(But, more than that: Can evil become good? Can a thug turn hero? Or, even more important than that (much more important indeed): Can a light hearted fantasy farce revolve around a villain such as G'narsh... while still staying true to the original legend?)

(These my friends are things which I do not know, for they are simply not for me to decide.)

((I can only hope you have enjoyed the ride...))

(((And if I am lucky, you would like to take it again...)))

---THE END---

G'narsh

The Troll, The Myth, The Legend

(a work of fiction)

by

Kevin Stillwater

P4

of

P1, P2-A, P2-B, P3-A, P3-B, P3-C, P3-D, P3-E, P4

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