

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®
2nd Edition



An updated tour of the Heartlands for the AD&D® 2nd Edition game.

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*Be it ever so humble,
There's no place like home.*
J.H. Payne

Sample file

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Welcome back, my friends, to the show that never ends.

OK, rock anthems aside, welcome back to the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ campaign setting. The 2nd Edition, post-Avatar, new and improved Realms, created for your fun and amusement by the planetary engineering firm of Grubb and Greenwood, Unlimited, aided and abetted by Messrs. Winter, LaForce, Caldwell, Fabian, and Dameron.

Many of you reading this are old friends of the Realms, coming from long exposure in the pages of DRAGON® magazine, from the adventures and novels that have played out across this humble stage over the years, and/or from the growing amount of projects (from TSR and from licensors) set in the Realms. Some are newcomers looking to figure out what all the excitement is about.

The excitement is about a campaign setting greater in size than North America and still growing. The excitement is about interesting characters and amazing adventures. The excitement is about a magical world that was a home for the AD&D® game, and now, with publication of this text, is the home for AD&D 2nd Edition.

The excitement is about the Forgotten Realms.

Those familiar with the Realms, and in particular those who have the original campaign set, are familiar with the story behind the Realms. It was created by Ed Greenwood as a setting for his own fantasy stories. With the introduction of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, it became the home of his own personal campaign, and with the introduction of the AD&D game, it took that next step forward. During this time, Ed wrote voluminous entries to DRAGON magazine, using the Realms as a setting for his descriptions of magical items, monsters, and spells.

Meanwhile, down in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, TSR was looking for a new campaign setting for the AD&D game. I remembered Ed's articles in DRAGON magazine and was assigned to see if there was a world behind it, or if Ed was just making things up as he went along.

Eight months and two file-cabinets worth of material later, the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign set was unleashed on an unsuspecting world. And we haven't slowed down since.

The book you hold in your hand has several purposes. The first is to create a

common reference for the Realms as it moves into its fourth year. The Realms has changed in the course of its development, with new lands, characters, and tales added by a host of contributors over its young life. In its original inception, we never anticipated the Avatars or the upcoming barbarian invasion. This book is a chance for us to gather our breath, take stock, and then plan for the future.

Its second task is to bring the Realms fully into AD&D 2nd Edition. Enough has been added in the 2nd Edition rules to merit our reflecting those changes in the campaign setting, and to show DMs what we have done in our 2nd Edition campaigns so that they can bring their own Realms up to date. (As a dinosaur of gaming, I remember the S-L-O-W process of upgrading our campaigns from the D&D game to the AD&D game with the release of one hardback book a year.)

The third task of this book is to prepare for the future, to create a common sourcebook for DMs and everyone else to use while adventuring in the Realms. Rather than repeat a great deal of character and country information from the original boxed set (most of which is still on target), we concentrated on the cities of the Realms, from an adventurer's point of view, including the nation of Sembia. While my original intent was to leave Sembia completely untouched by the whims of our design team, upcoming projects have made that impossible, and for that reason I have included details on many Sembian cities.

Finally, this book is intended to smooth over a few of the problems that DMs encounter, from switching fully over to the 2nd Edition rules on creating new specialty priests to introducing firearms without overturning play balance. In addition, I've redone the magic tables to reflect the new spells of the Realms, and broken them down into bite-sized chunks to create scrolls and random spell lists (something the 2nd Edition books, with their packed tables, did not get a chance to do).

What this text is not going to do is replace the original FORGOTTEN REALMS box or the huge volume of material generated under the original AD&D system for use in the Realms. It will point DMs in the right direction for using that material, but is intended to be both a supplement to it, and to stand alone for anyone interested in the Realms at large.

The Realms began in the mind of Ed Greenwood, but has benefitted and

grown with the contributions of a large number of brilliant individuals. Lands and kingdoms have grown from areas on the map to full-blooded nations under their command, and characters have sprung to life under their supervision. The Realms began with one man, but bloomed under the care of many.

I'd like to thank here those who have increased the richness and diversity of the Realms: Doug Niles, Bob Salvatore, Kate Novak, Scott Ciencin, Jim Lowder, Troy Denning (these last three were the famous Richard Awlinton (All-in-one) of the Avatar trilogy); Zeb Cook, Jim Ward, Scott Haring, Scott Bennie, Paul Jaquays, Steve Perrin, Mike Dobson, Jean Rabe, Skip Williams, Jay Batista, Rick Swan, John Nephew, Mike Pondsmith, Karen Boomgarden, Deborah Christian, David E. Martin, and Bruce Nesmith. These are just the authors, designers, and editors who have expanded the Realms in the past four years.

Those who have literally put the Realms on the map, turning the tightly-crabbed notes of Mr. Greenwood into a final form, are cartographers extraordinaire Dave LaForce, Dave Sutherland, Dennis Kauth, and John Knecht.

And those who have given the Realms its appearance and look: artists Keith Parkinson, Clyde Caldwell, Larry Elmore, Jeff Easley, Gerald Brom, Steve Fabian, Val Valusek, Ned Dameron, and graphics wizards Stephanie Tabat, Roy Parker, and Colleen O'Malley.

And while we're at it, those who have taken the Realms outside the ranks of TSR into new areas: George MacDonald and the folk at SSI, Chuck Crane and the Ral Partha team, and Barbara Kesel, Mike Gold, Elliot S. Maggin, Dan Mishkin, Rags Morales and a horde of other wonderful people at DC Comics.

Is that all? No, lest we forget where all this came from in the first place, thanks to Dave and Gary for the D&D game, which got the whole ball of wax moving.

And to Ed Greenwood and Elminster. After all these years, I can't really call Elminster Ed's creation, or even his alter ego. The best I can do is to say that the old wizard time-shares in Ed's brain, and the two (?) of them produce wonderful things together.

Enough thank yous. Enjoy the Realms as we move forward into its 2nd Edition.

Jeff Grubb
January 1990



Well met and welcome, as we say in the Realms. Welcome to my world again.

Those were Elminster's words to me, on a recent visit to his dusty, cluttered tower in Shadowdale. I can find none better to serve, as you open this handy guide to the Realms.

I hope you'll open it often, for the Realms belongs now to all of us. Elminster showed it to me for the first time over twenty years ago, and I've since shown it to you. I wish you the same fun exploring its life, mysteries, splendors, and odd corners that I've had, thus far.

Elminster relates a tale of visiting Silverymoon recently, to meet the High Lady Alustriel. He complimented her on the beautiful towers and clean streets of the city, its clever gardens and welcoming warmth amid the harsh rock and wilderlands of the North. She merely smiled and said, "Whatever I may have done in what you have seen was not done alone. You are thanking me for the work of many. I accept on their behalf."

In like manner, the Forgotten Realms you see in these pages and other works from TSR is the work of many hands. I was the first chronicler of the Realms, its creator and guiding hand for the first eighteen years or so of its existence. Many other hands have joined mine to bring you scenes of the Realms, maps, adventures and descriptions, novels and shorter tales of the splendid world Elminster came from. I do not walk Faerun alone, now.

Jeff Grubb, in particular, deserves recognition as the guiding hand on the creative reins. He keeps all of the various creative forces TSR has unleashed in Faerun consistent with each other, to present gamers with coherent, useful, and entertaining products. For this service, Jeff—the careful, unseen work behind the scenes, keeping everything straight—my thanks. You deserve it.

TSR itself deserves thanks, also, for bringing the Realms to you. Once, the Realms lived only in the heads of my players, a few readers, myself, and in scrawled notes and articles cluttering up my study.

Now, the study—and lots of other rooms, all over the world—are also cluttered with the Realms, in the form of beautiful maps, modules, novels, boxed game sets, and other goodies, none of which would ever have come into being if I was still sitting in the study with Elminster, jawing late into many nights.

My deepest thanks for the Realms must

always go to my longtime players. I thank them, you see, for bringing the Realms to life.

They play their characters with vim and delight, always challenging me to delve ever more deeply, explore this and that detail and nuance of life in the Realms, and to roleplay with skill, love, and gusto. They are Jim Clarke, Andrew Dewar, Jenny Glicksohn, Ian Hunter, John Hunter, Victor Selby, and many others who have joined us for shorter periods, and played (so far) lesser roles. I salute you and thank you, companions and friends. This is your book, too.

To you who read these pages, from Chris and Leo in Stockholm to Stephen and Dave in Don Mills, this is your book, too. It contains a small slice of the Realms; we hope a useful slice, for those who like to adventure in it. It is like a window, giving all who read it a glimpse of the wonders I can see in the Realms whenever I close my eyes.

Keeping the Realms straight is comparatively easy for me; I've been doing it for so long now that I can't even find our places in the Realms in my head, as if I was walking our world. Reading these pages may not do the same for you, but it's a start.

At conventions, I'm often asked to provide a helpful start to beginning DMs planning to use the Realms as the setting of their campaign. This book is that helpful start. So here you go.

So far, such convention requests usually run along the lines of "explain the 'right way' to run a campaign in the Forgotten Realms." My blithe reply to that is usually that the only "right" way is whatever way works best for you. Nice, neat, and true, but rather unhelpful for DMs eager to learn the True Secrets of Running a Realms Campaign.

So here is one of those True Secrets (which, like all true secrets, is no secret at all). The DM's key to making the Realms come alive is to act the roles of all of the non-player characters to the hilt. That means funny voices, mannerisms, catch-phrases and colloquialisms and all. Try to think and speak as a character would, when dealing with the player characters, and adventures will unfold easily and naturally.

Your Realms will come alive if you make the characters live, for they *are* the world. That's all there is to it. Those who have trouble remembering what funny voices and phrases they used for "NPC X" (or just what NPC X's name was!) are ad-

vised to use a tape recorder during play sessions, for the amusement of their players and for their own reference.

Elminster would have far more to say about the Realms—and my temerity in speaking thus of it—if we let him have his say here. So we won't. This time.

He'll be looking for a chance to speak to you himself, of course, in other pages, in times to come.

Until then, swords high, may your spells fail not, and may your adventures be high and glorious and end happily!

Oh, yes. Ummm. A note just appeared on my table, amid a twinkling of lights. Elminster, of course; I should have known he'd be eavesd—er, advising me at this critical time. It's a simple reminder of the definition of adventure: "Forget ye not; what is so grandly called 'adventure' is merely someone (preferably someone *else*) having a dangerous, uncomfortable, and generally nasty time, in the past, and hopefully somewhere else, far from the chair in which ye sit, scoffing chips and dip." Well, yes. Thanks, Elminster. We'll bear that in mind, as we read FORGOTTEN REALMS™ *Adventures*, together. Bye.

Ed Greenwood
January 1990



