Welcome to In The Shade of the Pango Tree. This is the first in a series of Fighting Fantasy Micro -adventures that come free with your copy of the monthly Fighting Fantasy Newsletter. All you need to play are a pencil, an eraser, and dice. Read the rules and background, enter your adventurer’s details on the Adventure Sheet, and begin your adventure by turning over the page!

HOW TO FIGHT THE CREATURES OF THE PANGO TREE

Your adventurer is measured by three scores: SKILL, STAMINA, and LUCK. These scores can never exceed your starting scores. Note that if your STAMINA ever reaches zero you have died.

Battles

To fight a creature, roll two dice and add its SKILL. Then roll two dice and add your SKILL. These two numbers are called Attack Strengths. If they are the same, nothing happens – start again. If yours is higher, deduct 2 STAMINA points from the creature’s score. If the creature’s is higher, deduct 2 points from your STAMINA score. Continue until either yours or the creature’s STAMINA score is zero (death).

Testing your Luck and Skill

When you are told to do this, roll two dice. If the result is equal to or less than your LUCK or SKILL you are successful. If the result is greater than your LUCK or SKILL, you are unsuccessful. Every time you Test your Luck, you must deduct one point from your LUCK score.

Using Luck in Battles

If you have wounded a creature, you can Test your Luck. Success means you do 4 STAMINA points damage; failure means you do 1 STAMINA point damage. If you have been wounded, you can also Test your Luck. Success means you suffer 1 STAMINA point damage; failure means you suffer 3 STAMINA points damage. Don’t forget to subtract 1 LUCK point every time you do this however.

BACKGROUND

‘Run away!’ yelled the captain of your mercenary battalion as you were attacked by a horde of nomad horsemen at the border where the Mauristatian foothills meet the rolling plains of Lendleland. You and several comrades managed to flee the carnage and run to the hills, finally finding refuge at dusk. You camped in a wooded hollow at the base of a grassy hill surmounted by a single large, broad-leafed tree. Not wishing to light a fire that would give away your position, you fell into a fitful slumber – all except Mhurg Ironhelm, who took the first watch.

What was that! You awaken with a start in the clear light of morning, but there is nothing there. In fact there is nobody here! All of your fellow mercenaries, including Mhurg, have disappeared! In their place are a series of messy bloodstains, culminating in a crimson trail of gore that leads up the grassy knoll towards the lone tree at its summit.

Drawing your sword, you begin the ascent, determined to find out what terrible doom has befallen your comrades in the shade of the Pango tree…

NOW TURN OVER
The immense Pango Tree stands at the top of the hill, its wide leafy branches shading you from the sun. At the foot of the tree, amongst gnarled roots, are two small tunnels you can investigate. The entrance to one is littered with animal droppings (turn to 19); the other with broken bones (turn to 5). Alternatively, you could follow the bloodstains and climb the tree (turn to 14).

2 Climbing into the canopy requires great care. Test your Skill. Are you successful (turn to 18) or not (turn to 13)?

3 You fall from the trunk of the Pango Tree. Ouch! Deduct 2 STAMINA points for your troubles, and turn to 14.

4 Your previous altercation has awakened the Champaque that dwells in the Pango Tree! The great flesh-eating ape leaps upon you and fastens its fangs around your neck, before you manage to beat it off. Deduct 2 STAMINA points and turn to 8 to continue fighting the creature.

5 The burrow ends in a bone-filled chamber containing a nebulous ball of mist. You see gold glinting amongst the bones. Will you take the gold and risk disturbing the mist (turn to 9), or leave this burrow, and enter the other burrow if you haven’t already (turn to 19), or climb the tree (turn to 14)?

6 You have survived largely unscathed! Turn to 25.

7 Treehopper squirrels suddenly leap out of the holes and into your backpack, devouring 1 Provision! Cross it off your Adventure Sheet.

8 The bloody corpses of all your comrades are impaled on branches here, skulls ripped open and limbs torn asunder. Their slayer, a fearsome green-furred CHAMPAQUE ape (SKILL 10 STAMINA 10) snarls at you and attacks! If you kill the primate, turn to 17.

9 You have disturbed a FOG DEVIL (SKILL 8 STAMINA 6: deduct 2 SKILL points only when fighting this misty monster), which uncoils its vaporous body and attacks. If you slay the Fog Devil, you find 3 Gold Pieces. Now, will you enter the other burrow if you haven’t already (turn to 19), or climb the tree (turn to 14)?

10 You begin the descent. It’s a long way down! Test your Skill. Are you successful (turn to 22) or not (turn to 13)?

11 While climbing the trunk you pass several large holes tunneling into the bark. Test your Luck. Are you Unlucky (turn to 7)? If you are Lucky, you can stick your arm in one of the holes (turn to 24), or climb the tree (turn to 20).

12 Lurking in the canopy are a nervous flock of Woodgulls. Test your Skill to see if you can capture one without falling out of the tree. Are you successful (turn to 21) or not (turn to 13)? Or do you wish to just descend the tree (turn to 10)?

13 You have fallen from the top of the Pango Tree and broken your neck on the ground below! Your adventure ends here…

14 You climb the trunk of the Pango Tree. Test your Skill. Are you successful (turn to 11) or not (turn to 3)?

15 You have picked up an infestation of Wood Beetles, which have gnawed a hole in your backpack, and you must cross everything off your Adventure Sheet except your sword and the Winged Helmet. Turn to 25.

16 You are terrified and deafened by a sudden fearsome howl! The noise is made by the screaming JIB-JIB (SKILL 1 STAMINA 1), which leaps forward to defend its lair. You must fight! If you win, will you enter the other burrow if you haven’t already (turn to 5), or climb the tree (turn to 14)?

17 Searching the dead, you see that their brains have all been devoured! You shudder and say a quick prayer to Osmani, god of mercenaries, for the souls of your murdered comrades. You also find 2 Gold Pieces and Mhurg’s Winged Helmet (+1 Attack Strength in combat). Now, will you descend from the Pango Tree (turn to 10), or will you climb up further into the canopy (turn to 2)?

18 The broad, dark green leaves of the Pango Tree canopy surround you. Did you fight the Jib-Jib (turn to 23), or not (turn to 12)?

19 You almost get stuck in the burrow but it eventually opens into a tiny chamber. You can’t see much but hear a low snuffling sound coming from a small ball of fur up ahead. Will you confront this creature (turn to 16), or leave the burrow, and enter the other burrow if you haven’t already (turn to 5), or climb the tree (turn to 14)?

20 The Pango Tree’s trunk splits here into many leafy branches. Did you fight the Jib-Jib (turn to 4), or not (turn to 8)?

21 You manage to grab a Woodgull and swiftly wring its neck. Add 1 Provision to your Adventure Sheet and turn to 10.

22 You make it back down to the ground. Test your Luck. Are you Lucky (turn to 6) or Unlucky (turn to 15)?

23 There is nothing here in the canopy except plenty of bird guano. Turn to 10 to descend the tree.

24 You get bitten by a Treehopper (deduct 1 STAMINA point) but find a Bomba Fruit. This will double your STAMINA gain when you eat a Provision. Now turn to 20.

25 Congratulations are in order as you have successfully avenged the deaths of your fellow mercenaries! Well done! You settle down for a well-earned nap in the shade of the Pango Tree… You can keep your adventurer and carry them over to the next thrilling installment in the Fighting Fantasy Micro-adventure series: Debacle at Dead Man’s Inn.

(Thoughts? Comments? Email me: greyarea13@hotmail.com)