

Shadowman's Twisted Treasury

Greetings fellow puzzler, I am Shadowman. Like you, I am a trap defier, truth seeker, riddle solver — call it what you will.

“Shadowman? What a strange name?” I hear that a lot. Now it's true that this isn't the name Mom and Dad gave me when I first crawled around collecting loose coins from the floor, but it is the name that's stuck. Some people think it's because I'm thin; some due to my raven-hued hair (with just the merest hint of silver). But in truth the name has stuck because I have a certain knack for entering places that are difficult to get into and then exiting without anyone the wiser.

Some people, when traveling, get souvenirs — you know; knick-knacks and whatnot. So do I. Unlike most people, my souvenirs don't come from little shops or push-cart stands. Mine all tend to come out of locked rooms and safes or from deep in caverns guarded by horrible monsters.

Once you've seen the puzzles in this collection, I think you'll understand.

In this book you'll find thirty different puzzles that I've encountered in my journeys. Together with a special puzzle I've made just for you.

Unfortunately I cannot accompany you through these challenges, so I've written up what I call “Hints” and “Steps.” In each of my puzzles, you'll find a box like this:

#31 Eggplant Revenge		
Hints: pages 87, 83, 86	Steps: pages 89, 91, 92, 93	d20: page102

Hints will give you — well — hints on how to solve a puzzle. Use Hints when you are stuck on a puzzle. They're listed in order. If Eggplant Revenge were a puzzle, Hint 1 would be on page 87, Hint 2 on page 83, and the Last Hint on page 86. Each extra hint you read will give you more of an idea of how to proceed.

Use the Steps when you are pretty sure you know the solution. Start with the first Step (page 89 for Eggplant Revenge) and check them in sequence. The more Steps you check, the more specific I will be, until you reach the Final Step (page 93) which provides the complete solution.

Looking at the Steps isn't cheating! It's the only way to check that you've solved the puzzle, so don't be afraid to look.

In many of the puzzles you will need to figure out how to manipulate something in the scenario provided. For example, the solution to one puzzle may be to place eleven peanuts on the pedestal and smash them with a hammer.

In this case the Steps might say:

Step 1: Were the things you put on the pedestal something that comes from a plant?

Step 2: Did you put some things with shells on the pedestal?

Step 3: Did you make a mess and smash them with the hammer? Watch out for your thumb!

Final Step: You should have put eleven peanuts on the pedestal and hit them with a hammer.

As you can see, if you were thinking that to solve the room you needed to wear a hat with blue feathers, you would catch yourself on the first Step. If you had thought of putting down peanuts, you would know you're on the right track. But let's say you thought you had to place an eggplant on the pedestal and smash it, well that certainly fits the first Step, but it's back to the drawing board when you see the second Step.

The Steps and Hints for a puzzle are placed on different pages to make it harder for you to accidentally see a Step or Hint you're not ready for.

For those of you who are role-players, there's a section on how to use these puzzles as Riddle Rooms™, with d20 system-compatible role-playing instructions. At the bottom of each puzzle, together with the page numbers of the Hints and Steps, I'll also give you the page number for the d20 information (it would be on page 102 for Eggplant Revenge).

Have fun. I know I will.

Shadowman

#1 Pazzli

One time I found myself wandering through the mountains with no particular place to go. Or to be more precise, the number of places I didn't want to go was pretty large. So I decided to go to Green River. There were two decent roads into Green River as well as the usual half dozen paths suitable for bringing produce to market. I was following the road in from the west when I came to a fairly unusual clearing.

Actually, the clearing itself wasn't strange; it was what was inside it – a large altar in the middle of an otherwise boring forest. The altar was in the shape of a hexagon. Surrounding it were six huge tree stumps, each about four feet in diameter. One stump was coated in black paint, one in white, one in red, one in green, one in yellow and one was not painted at all.

In the center of the altar was a hole about as wide as my thumb. Lying on the altar was a wooden bell, a stick with many colored feathers tied to it, a ball-shaped candle with a wick that showed that it had been burnt at least once, a small wooden rod that had been sanded and polished, a small figurine that was vaguely female in appearance and a small sealed jar.

The altar itself was made of solid stone and was about three feet tall and four feet in diameter.

I had nothing better to do, so I tried a bunch of things. I rang the bell, lit the candle and rubbed the figurine's head. When I opened the jar I found that it contained perfume – nothing fancy.

Looking around, I found what looked like a signpost, pegged together from five rough-cut pieces of wood.

Aha! A clue!

Well now, this was better. I followed the instructions and lo and behold, the figurine started talking. And talking. And talking. Such advice it gave me.

As you can imagine, I undid what I had done and the figurine shut up again.

Could you have gotten an earful too?



#1 Pazzli

Hints: pages 87, 83, 86

Steps: pages 89, 91, 92, 93

D20: page page 21

SPOILER ALERT: next page has the hints, steps, and answers

Hints

#1 Pazzli

Hint 1: The instructions are all there on the piece of wood. “Huli” is a pretty odd word, isn’t it?

#1 Pazzli

Hint 2: Ot’s elmust loki thiri’s sumthong udd ebuat thi vuwils, dun’t yua egrii?

#1 Pazzli

Last hint: A-E-I-O-U but never Y.

Steps

#1 Pazzli

Step 1: If the title “Pazzli” doesn’t make sense at this point, you might want to check again.

#1 Pazzli

Step 2: You should have applied fire to an object in a place and then put something somewhere. Well? I’m waiting. Is that what you did?

#1 Pazzli

Step 3: O ← U ← A ← E ← I ← O. Does this make sense?

#1 Pazzli

Final Step: “Find red stump and burn ball then put stick in hole”. Heck, not much of a “Puzzle,” is it?

D20 Riddle Room.

#1 Pazzli – CR 3

While the ball shaped candle — or actually, any candle — is burning on the red stump and the feathered stick is in the hole on the altar, the figurine is animated with a Commune spell to the spirit of a lawful neutral wise woman of ages past.

The figurine will provide advice, however the advice is not always what’s wanted. She will tend to nag the players about their clothing, proper care of their weapons, and so on. Once a day, a truthful answer to a yes or no question can be gotten from the figurine. This advice is the equivalent of a Commune spell.

If the players remove the figurine from the area of the altar, the figurine will remain animate as long as there is a candle burning on the red stump. The ball shaped candle will burn for eight hours.

Knowledge/Local – DC15, hint #1, pg 87

Oh no, I think I’ve heard about this.

Knowledge/Religion – DC18, hint #2, pg 83

As I recall, the big trick here is shutting her up.

Search – DC28, hint #3, pg 86

Hey look, there’s a clearing and... oh, you guys saw that already?

Players may make a single skill roll to attempt to gain a hint for the puzzle.