

# ADVENTURE THREE: Mystara

"It is a tribute to BECMI D&D and the game world primarily associated to it, Mystara, that so many people still use/revere these titles. Some even return or "discover" BECMI and enjoy what it was created for: a simplified, yet colorful version of D&D.

After all those years, though these titles were produced before many gamers (if not most of them) were even born, they still work well!"

- Bruce Heard, *Mystara's Godfather*

## Welcome to Mystara

Look at you - all geared up and ready for adventure! I love to see it!

Welcome to **Thyatis!** (The capital that is; don't let the locals catch you calling it "*Thyatis City*". They'd be in for a right laugh!)

Anybody who's somebody can be found here. We've got famous gladiators; world-renowned scholars; mighty generals. Not to mention all the out-of-towners: from fair-haired skalds to bow-slung steppe nomads!

That's right: all roads lead to Thyatis! We're a vertical slice of the known world: **all kinds, all creeds**, all with that spark of adventure in us.

But that's enough about *here*. What about *out there*? That's where you're going, after all!

Explorers' Rule #1: **Have fun!**

Explorers' Rule #2: **Watch your back!**

You think getting your coin purse nicked will be the worst of your troubles? Try wriggling down a giant's gullet, being snatched up by a skinwing, or snaffled by a slime worm!

It's a gnoll-eat-gnoll world out there. Good thing you've got your companions journeying with you.

Now go: Find some treasure, make some friends, and enjoy yourself! May the Immortals guide your way!

## Flavour of the World

There is no word that sums this setting up better than "**Wanderlust**". Mystara is all about the journey - in terms of miles as well as in character. It's a wide, varied world to explore - filled with exciting people, exotic beasts, and amazing locales.

Variety is the name of the game. As our heroes gain fame and fortune, they might explore an ancient city one week, fight space aliens the next, lead an army against an orc horde, and then delve to the planet's core. The various places and cultures are as much characters in Mystara as the NPCs are.

Mystara is intended as a more **light-hearted** expression of D&D. It can be a bit

silly and a bit self-referential, but it's backed up by expansive lore and **intricate worldbuilding**: the writers have ensured their playground is built on solid foundations.

As one might expect: this is a setting **designed for all ages**. It has its share of more mature inspirations - such as the dark eccentricity of Clark Ashton Smith and the **fantastical ahistoricity** of Robert E. Howard. Centrally, however, Mystara heeds adventures for younger audiences: specifically citing the likes of L. Frank Baum's *Oz*, Lloyd Alexander's *Black Cauldron*, C. S. Lewis' *Narnia*, and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

## The Adventure

Far from the Empire of Thyatis is a craterous landscape known as the **Broken Lands**. It is a hostile place, filled with all manner of ugly orcs, trolls, kobolds and other such nasties.

Usually it is a place not spared a second thought. Well, besides by the occasional heavily-guarded trade caravan forced to traverse the area.

That was until a Glantrian skyship bound for Thyatis noticed what seemed to be a **face sticking out from the rock!** Now, I'm not just talking one slack-jawed ogre spotted through a spyglass. I mean a **titanic, building-sized iron mug** staring blankly into the sky!

For years, adventurers have reported delving ruins of a **long-dead people said to be able to build wondrous machines**. Heck - the flying city of Serraine may be built atop one of their inventions!

If those suspicions are correct: face marks the spot for **miraculous artefacts** beyond our wildest dreams!

(Better get to it before those Glantrians do!)

## Who Are You?

You are famed Thyatian heroes: members of the Retebius Air Fleet. You explore in the name of empire: meeting new peoples, finding great treasures, and fighting all sorts of ne'er-do-wells.

Aboard your skyship - the *RAF Sacrilege* - are found the following adventurers:

**A Fighter:** Scimitar in hand, you are a proud warrior from the sandy province of Tel Akbir.

**A Cleric:** A member of the Brotherhood of the Grey Lady (*All genders may apply!*), you are a priest of the war immortal Vanya.

**A Magic-User:** A member of the dark-skinned Nuari people of the Pearl Islands, your culture embraces knowledge and wisdom.

**An Elf:** Swift in blade and sharp in spell,

you live in balance with nature.

**A Dwarf:** Always up for a drink or a fight, you are from the Dwarven enclave of Buhrohur.

**A Sprite:** At barely a foot tall, you are certainly a pint-sized hero - but you make up for it with your powerful faerie magic!

**An Alley Rakasta:** From the mean streets of Thyatis (again: the city!), you are a swashbuckling, five-foot pussycat!

**A Sky Gnome:** Not from Thyatis but instead the flying city of Serraine, you are an expert in all things aerial and mechanical.

## What Makes This Game?

The game is **BECMI Dungeons & Dragons**. It is the sister-system to the concurrent *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*.

While this game began life as an entry product, it soon developed a strong and distinct identity separate from its advanced counterpart. Some of the most notable differences are:

**Race-as-Class:** One does not choose their race and their class. Instead their race *is* their class - ensuring that demihumans retain their archetypal nature from fiction. As a trade-off, BECMI is teeming with additional races - such as fey, rakasta, humanoids, and more.

**No gods.** The BECMI game instead has **immortals**. Rather than eternal beings predated time, these Immortals were once mortal inhabitants of Mystara who ascended beyond the material plane.

**Tiered progression:** Indeed **all characters have the capacity to become Immortal**: they just have to exceed 37th level! On the way to that reward, characters go through a number of adventuring tiers: the *Basic* dungeon-delving tier, *Expert* tier (becoming heroes of the land), *Companion* tier - all about being leaders of nations - and *Master*: engaging in events affecting the whole world. Put those together with *Immortals* to get "BECMI".

**Obscenely powerful NPCs:** The PCs' ultimate goal (even if they don't know it yet) is to become Immortal. That goal is shared with many of the game's NPCs. It isn't uncommon to meet NPCs of very high levels - into the twenties and even thirties. Watch who you pick a fight with!

## How Do You Die?

As per the variant rule in the D&D Rules Cyclopeda, player characters **fall unconscious at zero hit points** and must make a **saving throw versus death ray or die**. This saving throw must be repeated every ten minutes (plus each time additional damage is suffered).