

HISTORY OF
THE GAME
(PART ONE):

FROM ENGLISH CLASS TO JORUNE

I first caught a glimpse of the 3 book *Dungeons and Dragons* set back in 1976/1977. I was amazed. Until that time I had played only war-games with my friends and had no concept as to what a role-playing game was. Soon after I was introduced to *Empire of the Petal Throne*, a game which found a place into my heart, but a game which I never played. Its world was dark and in it humanity was in a downward spiral from which there was no return. I believe that "Darkness, not only of the sky but also of the mind descended upon Tekumel forever." (or something like that.) The rules for *D&D*, particularly combat, left me unimpressed. I wanted tactical options in combat that would allow players to play, rather than simply resolve combat.

A problem with doing detailed design work was that I didn't own any of the games I had mentioned. I had no reference works. I was a 7th grader with a buck twenty-five allowance and a passion for the movies. If I wanted to get into this hobby, I'd need to own a game system. I purchased a copy of *Metamorphosis Alpha* and set out to turn it into "my" game. After months of work, we played our first few sessions. I had designed a combat system (similar to the one in *Jorune* today), modified the creatures, and

created my own "Warden", the name of the space vessel in the game. I presented this work as my science-fiction project in my 8th grade English class and received a top grade.

I was lucky (in a way I would not understand for years) to meet Miles Teves during my first day of my first class of 7th grade. We met in Mr. Leonard's English class where we became friends and partners working on class projects together and later *Jorune*. We'd come up with ideas together and he'd illustrate them. I'd work out the system and the numbers. He'd play, I'd referee.

In the beginning we called it *Metamorphosis Alpha*, but over time it diverged more and more until the game took place on Earth. It was "Earth 2220" for a couple of years ('79 & '80), and then in 1981 Miles and I took the plunge. We decided that the alien creatures and abilities we had created could not be confined to



Chodi Ichi
Coven watches
something
horrible.



A wallusk (from First Edition *Jorune*)
prepares to smile.

Earth, but needed a world of their own, one with realms and savage beasts and alien societies.

The first step was to understand the subterranean natives of our world. The name "shantha" was finally settled upon and design of their culture was begun. The world still had no name and it wasn't until the summer of 1981 that I came up with the name "Jorune." I was sitting in on one of Miles figure-drawing classes at Otis-Parsons Art School in Los Angeles when the name came to me. I remember the rush as I realized that I had it. Over twenty hours had been spent searching and in that instant I felt certain that the search was over. The term "skyrealm" came a few months later and eventually we made the connection to "SkyRealms of Jorune."

All this rough material was in no shape for anything but gaming. And game we did. A regular *Jorune* group met each Sunday. Ideas were revised, numbers tweaked, new concepts were introduced. Two years passed quickly as I attended Hartnell

Community College in Salinas and then moved to Berkeley for more schooling in math and physics.

In Berkeley I met Mark Wallace (again, my first day at a new school), who would become one of the game's co-designers and chief architect of the revised combat system (which first showed up in 2nd edition). It was the fall of 1983, and *Jorune* was a hobby that took no more than 5-10 hours a week. During the course of that year, my sister Amy became involved in *Jorune*. She incorporated us into SkyRealms Publishing in April of 1984, wrote a business plan and defined the format we would publish 1st edition as. We printed 400 copies as proto-types and learned greatly from our mistakes. GenCon 1984 was an incredible experience. Held in Kenosha back then, it was in a beautiful, rural setting where Miles and I were devoured by mosquitoes.

— Andrew Leker

Next issue:

**FROM KENOSHA TO
2ND EDITION**

Artwork by Miles Teves.
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An unfortunate
adventurer attacked
by "weaches."



a "slarcha"
checks the source of
the arrows in its
back!