In Earthworld grim, these Twins have fought  
Twelve beasts of Zodiac birth,  
And mastered thieving as they sought  
For Sword of ultimate worth.

Through Fireworld’s flames they now do rage  
While Time its toll does add—  
To seven days? A year? An Age?  
Who knows, in a world gone mad?

CREATED AND WRITTEN BY:  
Roy Thomas & Gerry Conway  

VISUAL CONCEPTS AND ART:  
George Perez & Dick Giordano  

DESIGN:  
Neal Pozner  

LETTERING:  
Adam Kubert  

COLORING:  
Adrienne Roy  

EDITOR:  
Dick Giordano
One moment ago:

The sword of ultimate sorcery, sought by the sibling adventurers Torr and Tarra in the underground kingdom called Earthworld, vanished downward in a sudden blinding, withering blaze...

...leaving the two young and unwilling thieves holding mere metal copies of the sword, and not the mystic blade itself...
So naturally, brother and sister have plunged headlong after it!*

Our ghostly mentors challenged us to enter the second world that lies below—to claim both the sword and our own destinies!

Well, we've come this far and by the gods, we won't stop now!

*As seen in our companion volume "Earthisworld!"—sold with game one of "Swordquest."
TORR: YOU MAY THINK I'M MAD, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT A CHILL JUST RAN DOWN MY SPINE

--AS IF, SOMEHOW, WE WERE BEING WATCHED!

THIS DOES ONE ENDING BECOME A SECOND BEGINNING.

AND IN HIS CASTLE KEEP HIGH ABOVE, THE MALEVOLENT WIZARD KONJURÓ SMILES.

It is a smile without humor... A smile like the grin of death...

BOOK TWO

FireWorld!
...yet a smile that swiftly fades, when...

WELL, KONJURO? HAVE YOU LOCATED THOSE TWO THIEVING WHELP'S YET?

OF COURSE, MY LORD TYRANNUS. THE POWERS OF KONJURO ARE NOT LONG MOCKED... BY ANYONE.

IF THAT WRY COMMENT WAS MEANT FOR YOUR KINGS, WIZARD, BEST KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE IN YOUR HEAD.

WHERE ARE THEY? HAS YOUR DEMON DISPATCHED THEM YET?

ALAS, THEY ARE BEYOND THE REACH OF MY POWERS... FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST...

...IN THE PLACE CALLED FIREWORLD, WHICH LIES FAR BENEATH OUR VERY FEET!

AND IS IT AS YOU SAID?

ARE THEY INDEED THE GOLD-HAIRED ONES WHO, 'TWAS PROPHESIED, WILL CLAIM MY VERY THRONE, WITH "A SWORD SHINING BRIGHTLY AS SUMMER'S SUN"?

BUT HOW CAN THEY HAVE ELUDED ME ALL THESE YEARS -- SO THAT I THOUGHT THEM DEAD FROM INFANCY?

AFTER YOU SLEW THEIR FATHER, THEIR MOTHER LEAPED TO HER WATERY DEATH HOLDING TWO SWADDLED JARS...

NOT HER NEWBORN TWINS AS WE THEN IMAGINED.

AS YOU CLAIMED THEIR PARENTS' LIVES, AYE, MY KING.

I HAVE PIERCED THE FUTURE'S VEIL JUST ENOUGH TO LEARN THAT, AND A BIT MORE...
"...for when they stole near my tower this night, intent on robbing me, their thoughts of vengeance were strong..."

"...so strong that they hovered wrath-like in the air, long enough for my spell to gather and read them, like so many tea-leaves.

"They were thinking of their warrior-father's death at your hands, and of their own orphaning when their mother sacrificed herself for them...

"As well as of what happened in the months and years which followed:"

Young Torr grows straight and tall, eh?

No taller than Tarra, husband.

They're twing, after all.

Ah, if only you could, child!

But no one dares walk abroad in the shadow of Darkspire Castle, after the night-bell has sounded, and--

Listen! it tolls--and all must obey the curfew, this night as every night for five years now--!

MAY WE GO OUT AND PLAY NOW, FELECIA?

BONG BONG
"And we know full well why Freeman and slave alike were forced to hide their fearful heads indoors from dusk to dawn. Do we not, Tyrannus?"

"To forestall possible rebellion against your rule, you bade me unleash two sword-wielding Nether demons each day as the sun died burning in the west..."

"...demons who could not be perceived by human eye...

"...yet who appeared to the cringing populace as a sinister mist which snaked its way through street and alleyway of the city below..."
"...Bringing a hideous death to all who could not reach home and hearth in time!"

"While, within one of those hovels..."

"If only we dared reveal their true selves, Felecia -- instead of hiding their golden locks beneath that crude, dark dye--"

"They're but children, Garth -- not warriors like their sire."

"Would you seal their death warrants?"

"And so, unknowing, you have reigned for a score of years, thinking yourself safe from the prophecy revealed to me in a magical trance..."

"How often you must have passed close by those two dark-haired brats as they grew up..."

"...riding like a helmeted deity among your quivering subjects."

"...considering them beneath your royal notice."
“When they were of an age to understand such things, they were told of their true heritage...”

“They merely worked at the homely tasks their pseudo-parents set for them, till one day quite recently...”

“...But still, having never known their real parents, they did not hate.”

“Torr...!?"

“I--I heard it, my sister--cries from the street below!

It sounded like--

“Look!

It can't be...”

“...To see those they had called mother and father for so long, lying lifeless in the dirt of the street.”

“And over their bodies, the armored form of Malavol, your captain of guards...”

“...The man who had presided over the slaying of their true parents so many years before.”

Let this be a lesson to all you peasants!

“How horrified and speechless they must have been, for an eternal moment...”

“But torn between what they saw, and desired to do...”

“If I were a normal mortal, my king, I might almost sympathize with the two wide-eyed striplings, as they gazed out the window...”

“Clear the way when the king's guards come riding--or suffer the consequences of your folly!”

“And the years of admonition from their foster parents to keep hidden, and give no offense to the king or his men.”
"Yet so ingrained in them were the habits of obedience that neither boy nor girl lifted a hand against Malavol at that moment...

"...but merely embraced the poor dead figures, as if hoping to breathe precious life back into them."

"And so it might have remained, had Malavol possessed the good sense to keep his own mouth shut."

"Oh, father... father...!

Mother..."

"But of course he did not! You two! Be sure these carcasses are buried at once..."

For, I'll be riding back through here in a little while...

...and I wouldn't want my valuable new steed to stumble over such peasant carrion!"
"WHAT IN THE NAME OF ALL THE GODS--?"

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WHO THREW THAT STONE?? SPEAK!  
DON'T TRY TO HIDE OR I'LL BURN DOWN THE WHOLE CITY TILL I FIND--
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I THREW IT, YOU LAPDOG TO A MURDEROUS TYRANT!  
TARRA--NO! YOU'LL JUST GET YOURSELF KILLED--LIKE THEY WERE!  
NO! IT WAS I!  
DO YOU THINK I CARE--WHILE THE MAN WHO SLEW GARTH AND FELECIA LIVES?
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"CONSIDER THE IRONY, MY KING: IF NOT FOR THIS PETTY INCIDENT, THE DISGUISED TWINS MIGHT HAVE LIVED ALL THEIR LIVES, WITHOUT STRIKING A BLOW IN VENGEANCE."
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"BUT NOW, WITH A HASTY BLOWING OF HIS SHRILL WHISTLE--"
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IF IT'S DEATH YOU COURT, WHelps -- THEN DEATH SHALL YOU BOTH HAVE!
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""
"-Malavol made that impossible."

"Strike, men! This blow at my honor must be punished!"

"They're mere striplings, captain! We'll gut them without much trouble."

"Ready, Tarra?"

"Ready, dear brother!"

"The Peasant called Garth, however, had been a wandering acrobat in his youth as well as a master thief..."

"...and he had taught both his foster-children well..."

"...too well, in fact, for the unfortunate Malavol..."

"...who broke his neck, next moment, when the boy tripped his chariots."
"Fugitives now, the pair became thieves... and thus came to pass where we now behold them, my king. They..."

"The flames they plunge through do not seem to harm them. I must talk with them, Konjuro!"

"Heed my words, ye poor off-springs of my most faithful warrior, my most beloved friend, Tarr!"

"Sister! That voice—it seems to come from everywhere—yet from inside my own brain—!

"As you wish, royal Tyrannus. Speak... and they shall instantly hear."

"And from the words it speaks—there's only one man it can be--!

"I hear it, too."

"Do so, I pray you... for your own sakes!"

"Aye, children! I am Tyrannus—... and I speak to you as a friend, who has seen the folly of his ways.

Konjuro says that if you willingly surrender your own wills to his, he can draw you back from the inferno into which you have rashly hurled yourselves.

"Tyrannus!"

"The man who slew our true father... and hounded our mother to her death!"
Too true, alas... but a man now vastly changed and repentant, and willing to share his throne with those he wronged in his tragic youth!

Think of what I offer--compared to what lies below, even if you survive your fall!

--The adventure in Konjuro's lonely tower, from which they fled, pursued by a thing from beyond.

They remember the ghost-like Mentor who appeared, and bade them seek out the sword of ultimate sorcery--

--Down a dark-yawning pit which led down to the place called Earthworld.

You--who, they say, murdered even his own royal father?

What means that to you, compared to the riches and power I will grant you?

And, because they are only human, after all, Tarra and Tork do indeed think--and they remember this night's strange doings--

It was, the mentors said, but the first of four worlds the young thieves must follow in pursuit of whatever destiny is held in store for them.
Yet what a world it turned out to be!

Twelve separate and interconnected chambers, each lorded over by a living incarnation of a zodiac symbol--

--who either attacked or aided the youthful siblings on their quest for the mystic sword.

--gaining not the sword, but at least the zodiacal talisman with it--

Still Torr and Tarra persevered--and eventually triumphed--

--a talisman which had metamorphosed, in turn, into twin swords for twin adventurers!
Such are Torr's and Tarrka's thoughts as well, my young friends? Have you considered my generous offer?

Aye, Tyrannus—And we hurl it back in your teeth!

We'll make no deals with the slayers of all those who loved us!

For once, brother, you're no more impetuous than I'd be!

Milord King...

And now, even though they have entered an ethereal state, it seems they hold it over your head, eh, my king?

Give up not so easily! The way before the young thieves is long and hard... and they may yet falter and fail... and die.

As no longer within even sorcerous ear-shot of the usurper of Darkspire...

By the gods! The flames don't really burn us—Even slow our fall—but it seems we've been descending forever.

It's no mere land of flame we enter, Torr—but of wizardry and wonder.

In fact, it seems our downward plunge is about to end—

My spell fades as they pass further into the world below, and they can no longer hear you.

Curse those infernal meddlers, Mentor and Mentaarba—My former councilors!

It was they who forged that magical sword—

If they don't, Konjuro, I depend upon you to find still another way to reach and destroy them.

For if I fall before them and the sword—so shall you!
--but I don't know if that's a cause for rejoicing or despairing!

Shades of a thousand spirits!

Gentle if stiflingly hot winds seem to buoy the startled pair to a feather-soft landing...
- IN THE SCARLET WORLD CALLED -

FIREWORLD!
AND NEVER WAS A PLACE MORE APTLY NAMED!

VOLCANOES--
BLAZING GEYSERS--
RIVERS OF LAVA--
AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE!

WE'LL PASS OUT FROM THIS TERRIBLE HEAT--UNLESS WE FIND A COOLER SPOT, AND QUICKLY.

NO TIME FOR THAT!

WE'D BETTER TALK THIS OVER, AND FIGURE OUT WHICH DIRECTION WE SHOULD--

THIS WAY LIES AS OPEN AS ANY! COME ON!

I WILL NOT!

YOU'RE CONSTANTLY ORDERING ME AROUND-- AND I'M SICK AND TIRED OF IT, DO YOU HEAR ME?

WAIT! THAT PATH LOOKS EVEN WORSE TO--

I DON'T CLAIM TO KNOW WHICH WAY IS SAFER, OR COOLER, OR WHATEVER--

--BUT I'M GOING THIS WAY, AND YOU CAN DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO FOLLOW ME FOR A CHANGE!

TO BLAZES WITH YOU THEN!

I'LL GO MY OWN WAY!
Yet, as Tarra’s lithe form vanishes from view...

Now, what made me pick a fight with her that way?

Well, nothing to be done for it now.

My only hope is to find the sword, wherever it fell...

Then use it to find her, and get us both out of here...

Before we both perish of this horrible heat!

Well, well, well...

Hermes, old thief, it seems you were right to follow those two cubs!

One of them’s likely to find the Sword of Ultimate Sorcery you’ve been seeking for so long.

’Twill then be no trick for a professional thief like yourself to wrest it from those amateurs.

But... which to follow?

What say we let the gods decide?
Soon afterward, upon the leftward path chosen by the headstrong Torr...

So hot—and getting hotter every minute!

Can't see far enough ahead to know if I took the right path or not!

Too late now, though. My way back is already blocked by fire and lava.

Got to keep going—find the sword, and then Tarraa, before...

Oh, mentors—where are you, now that I really need you?!

Why did I get so pushy with Tarraa, anyway?

We should've stuck together, not separated.

Gods! Now the flames are shooting up before me, as well!

Wait! I just remembered--the zodiacal talisman that we received along with our blades!

You are correct, Torr.

Mentarra is even now appearing to your wandering sister--

We kept them when we jumped, and perhaps--

--but mentor may be of small service to you.

I had no idea I could summon you once I reached Fireworld!
ONCE AND ONCE
ONLY IN EACH OF
THE FOUR WORLDS
OF THE ELEMENTS
CAN YOU CALL UPON
US, LAD.

THIS IS
THAT TIME.
SPEAK!

C-CAN YOU
TAKE ME TO
THE SWORD--
OR TO TARRA?

AH, NOW AT LEAST
YOU HAVE ASKED
THE PROPER
QUESTION--WHICH
ALONE IS HALF
THE STRUGGLE
TO FINDING THE
ANSWER.

I SHALL
SHOW YOU
WHAT YOU
ASK, TORR--

--AYE,
AND SO
VERY MUCH
MORE--

--IN THE
CHALICE OF
LIGHT!

THAT IS A
WAY YOU MUST
FIND FOR YOURSELF, ALAS.

THEN SHOW ME
SOMETHING COOL TO
QUENCH MY THIRST,
I BEG OF YOU... BEFORE I PERISH!

IT--IT'S
TRULY A THING
OF BEAUTY,
MENTOR!

BUT WHERE IS IT?
HOW CAN I REACH IT AND
QUENCH MY THIRST--SO I
CAN STAY ALIVE LONG
ENOUGH TO FIND TARRA
AND THE SWORD?
YOU WILL FIND IT WHEN YOU BECOME THE MIGHTIEST WARRIOR IN THIS WORLD--AND NOT BEFORE.

YET, IF AND WHEN YOU DRINK OF THE CHALICE OF LIGHT, NOT ONLY SHALL YOU KNOW NO MORE THIRST IN THIS FIERY PLACE--

--BUT YOU WILL BE IMMUNE TO HER FLAMES, AND THUS WILL CONQUER!

NOW, I MUST DEPART...!

HOLD IT! DON'T GO! I'M NOT THROUGH WITH--

BLAST! I SHOULD'VE KNOWN--NOBODY KEEPS MENTOR AROUND WHEN HE DECIDES IT'S TIME TO GO.

JUST SEEING THAT CHALICE GAVE ME STRENGTH--AND HOPE.

I'LL FIND IT--AND I'LL BECOME THE GREAT WARRIOR MENTOR SAID I MUST BE--

--FOR THE SAKE OF THE REVENGE WE SEEK-- AND FOR TARRA!

MEANWHILE, HIS SISTER HAS LIKewise COMMUNICATED WITH THE FEMININE WRAITH MENTARRA, AND NOW--

THIS IS ONE TIME I WAS JUST AS STUPIDLY STUBBORN AS TORR.

CAN'T GO THAT WAY--BUT MAYBE I'LL FIND RESPITE FROM THE HEAT IN THIS CAVE.

WH-WHAT--?

I LET THE STIFLING HEAT IN THIS PLACE WARP MY JUDGMENT.

IT'S NOT REALLY A CAVE AT ALL--
--IT'S A TREASURE CHAMBER!
Even Konjuro's Sea Keep didn't possess so much gold--so many sparkling jewels!

Still, they won't get me the Chalice Mentarra told me about.

I've got to become a warrior if I want to quench my thirst--let alone triumph!

This sword--so much lovelier than the one I gained above--

And this armor! Perhaps it's time I looked no more like a starving thief--

...and more like the daughter of the greatest warrior of the outer world.

No--not just his daughter--but a warrior in my own right!

Still hot, though--so thirsty! I'd better find the Chalice quickly, before--

Eh?

And this armor--shield--sword--so rich and gleaming--I feel I really could conquer this world of fire!

What's that--in that second chamber beyond, framed by a crimson blaze?
I... CAN'T RESIST...

... AND WHY SHOULD I WANT TO?

SOMETHING... DRAWS ME TOWARD IT...!

IT'S A UNICORN-- CARVED OF GOLD, LIKE MY ARMOR!

B-BY THE GODS--
Next moment, it seems as if treasure chamber, profusely-scattered wealth, ave, even fireworld itself, have all but vanished from Tarra's fevered sight.

—As the glistening metallic stallion bucks and heaves, as if to hurl its human rider to a fiery death, a million miles below and away!

And Tarra hangs on—
For life, for vengeance—

—And perhaps most of all, for the sake of her brother Torr!
Meanwhile, using the words of Mentor as the foundation of his actions, Torr himself has wandered into yet another of the strange circular chambers which seem to dot the crimson face of Fireworld...

Warlocks and wizards! I came seeking a chalice to drink from—perhaps refuge from the numbing heat—

—and I've found a weirdling altar instead!

Well, might as well search it before I go on...

But I can't imagine whose altar it could be in this devilish place...
LIKE HIS SISTER BEFORE HIM, TORR FINDS ARMOR ENOUGH TO EQUIP A SMALL ARMY...

...FOR I'VE CERTAINLY SEEN NO ONE ABOUT!

A KING'S RANSOM WORTH OF SHIELDS AND SWORDS AND BREASTPLATES--AND ALL OF FINE-CARVED SILVER!

IF I'M TO BECOME A WARRIOR--MAYBE IT WAS MEANT THAT I FIND SUCH ARMOR.

AND IF NOT--WHY, I'M STILL CALLED A THIEF BACK IN TYRANNUS' KINGDOM, AFTER ALL.

THIS HELMET--indeed, all the armor--fits me like a well-tailored glove!

IT'S AN Omen, all right--and who am I to disregard an omen?

THE BOWS AND ARROWS I CAN DO WITHOUT--they're the weapons of cowards and weaklings, but...

WHAT--?
Loathsome monsters, all aflame and leaping from out of the very fire!

And where else should fire-goblins dwell, pray?

Come! Put down your weapons, and we'll take you home with us to see, eh?

No? Well, stripling, if you'll not come willingly--!

Balls of flame-- leaping from their very fingertips!

Only my silver shield saves me from them, even for the moment--

HSSSS

--and my sword--
IT MELTED AT THEIR TOUCH—LIKE AN ICICLE UNDER THE SUMMER SUN!

NOW YOU COME PLAY WITH US, INTRUDER FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

SURE! WHEN THIS PLACE FREEZES OVER!

NO SWORD—AND MY KNIFE SURE ISN'T GOING TO STOP THOSE THINGS.

BUT—THE ARROWHEADS ARE ALL MADE OF ICE!

THEY'LL PROBABLY TURN TO STEAM LONG BEFORE THEY HIT THOSE GOBLINS.

OH, WELL... BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS...

AND RIGHT ABOUT NOW, NEITHER CAN THIEVES!

TOGETHER NOW, MY BROTHER! WE MUST--
The fire-goblins cry is cut off in mid-sentence, however, as Torq's great shock—the ice-arrow strikes home.

And when clouds of steam and smoke have blown away...

Well, what do you know? He's frozen stiff!

All right— you fugitives from a fireplace—come ahead!

The snow-shoe's on the other foot now, isn't it?

Good! They're all fleeing—those who still can, anyway.

I didn't care much for icing you down, old buddy, but you ought to be more hospitable to strangers.

You'll probably melt back to normal in a little while—

But I won't be here to see it.

I will say this, though—

—even when your mouth's as dry as the desert, victory still tastes sweet!
Well, at least it's stopped trying to toss me into the lava, thank Helios for small favors!

It even responds to my commands already, and—

Wait! What's that??

Is it just that overwhelming heat getting to me—baking me inside this armor—

—or is that a man lying there, upon that bier in the middle of this lake of lava?

Aye, that it is—unless the heat's driven me balmy!

A handsome lad, too—full of manly beauty—a strange sort of harmony about his features, somehow.

I feel—I've seen him before, somewhere—but that's impossible.

I... don't know quite why...

...but I can't resist kissing him.

Ah! He's waking up! I hope he won't mind that I—

Mind, lad's?!

Resist? NAY—I want to kiss him!
NAY, WHY SHOULD I MIND?

WHEN IT WAS I WHO PUT THE VERY IDEA INTO YOUR MIND??

BY THE GODS!

THE MAN I KISSED--HE'S TURNED INTO SOME KIND OF TENTACLED MONSTER--

--IF HE WAS EVER TRULY HUMAN AT ALL!

CAN'T--GET FREE! CHOKING ME--I CAN'T--

HOLD! WHAT'S THAT MOVEMENT OVER THERE--NEAR MY MOUNT?

I HOPE YOU WON'T OBJECT TO MY BORROWING YOUR HORNS, DEAR CHILD;

SOMEHOW, YOU DON'T LOOK AS IF YOU'LL BE NEEDING HIM AGAIN.

I'M SORRY TO DO THIS LASS--REALLY I AM.

--AND TARRA HAS FAR MORE PRESSING CONCERNS:

HERE'S WHERE I FIND OUT IF THIS FANCY SWORD I TRADED MY OLD ONE FOR IS GOOD FOR ANYTHING BUT SORCERY, TOO, YOU KNOW!

HERMINUS!

THEN, THE MASTER THIEF IS GONE--
APPARENTLY NOT!

THE OCTOPOID'S STRENGTH! MY OWN'S LIKE A CHILD'S BESIDE IT!

IT'S DRAWING ME TOWARD IT--INTO ITS Gaping Maw!

MY SHIELD-- IT's MY ONLY CHANCE!

I--I DID IT!

IT's SCUTTling BACK INTO THE MOLten LAVA Where IT MUST LIVE!

IF IT's PAW HADN'T DISTRACTED IT--IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN ME WITH IT!

THE MONSTER MUST HAVE READ MY MIND SOMEHOW--USED AN IMAGE OF MANLY BEAUTy BURIED THERE--TO LURE Me.

WELL, I SURVIVED ITS ATTACK--JUST BARELY--

--BUT I LOST MY UNICORN--MY WEAPONS--EVERYTHING!

STILL SO HOT--AND WEARIER THAN EVER--BUT I CAN'T GO ON WITHOUT A SWORD.

MUST GO BACK TO THE CHAMBER OF SPLENDOR--FOR MY OLD ONE--

--AND IF IT ISN'T THERE--I'M IN DEEP TROUBLE!
As, on another of the myriad rock-bridges which form the sole roadways of fireworld...

So! I thought you two fire-goblins had all gone skittering back into the lava pool.

Too scared even for that, huh?

Please... don't hurt us, master!

We just wanted to protect our land!

P-please...!

Oh, thank you, master! We... now don't get mad on me, or I'm liable to change my mind.

Get away from there! You want to get my boots on fire?

Don't know why I showed you guys any mercy... unless it's because I'm not used to winning fights.

If you really want to show me some gratitude... --you can point me to my sister Tarr-a--or the chalice of light--

--or just a plain drink of--

Well, you're going to wish you'd taken a swan dive into the lava--

When this ice arrow turns you both into so much ugly sculpture!
BY THE GODS, THIS FEELS GOOD—AND COOL! IT'S NOT THE CHALICE OF LIGHT, BUT IT'LL DO.

JUST HOPE TARRA'S FOUND SOMEPLACE LIKE IT! IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HER—!

DO YOU ALWAYS TALK TO YOURSELF THIS WAY, BOY?

You!?

I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THAT THIEF CALLED HERMINUS!

YOU TRIED TO GET MY SISTER AND ME KILLED—BACK IN EARTHWORLD.

GET DOWN OFF THAT FANCY HORSE, AND I'LL—

AFTER ALL, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, I'VE BEEN SEEKING THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY A LOT LONGER THAN YOU TWO HAVE.

AND, THOUGH I'LL ADMIT I WOULDN'T MIND QUENCHING MY CONSIDERABLE THIRST AT THAT FOUNTAIN—

MAYBE YOU GUYS ARE MY GOOD-LUCK CHARM AFTER ALL, AND—

NOW WHERE'D THEY GO? OH WELL, LIVE AND LET LIVE, I ALWAYS SAY.

I'VE REALLY NO TIME, BOY.
--But I don't think I'll settle till I find the same chalice you're looking for!

Wait! How'd you latch onto--a unicorn that flies?

That guy'd steal the coins off a dead man's eyes!

Nice-looking unicorn, though. Wish I had--

Huh??

There's something at the bottom of the fountain--some kind of rolled-up parchment!

Don't like wasting time when I might be looking for Takka or the sword.

But who knows? The way things go in this underground world...

Besides, a fast, cool dip would sure feel good right about now.

A few minutes ago, my tongue was hanging out like a dog's from the heat...

...maybe that scroll will tell me how to find them.

And now...
OH NO!

SOME KIND OF
GIGANTIC REPTILE
-- IT MUST'VE BEEN LYING
IN WAIT BENEATH THE
FOUNTAIN FLOOR!

IT'S GOT MY
LEG-- PULLING
ME DOWN--!

GLOMP!
IN THE MEAN-
TIME, TORR'S
GOLD-HAIRED
TWIN HAS
RETRIEVED A
SECOND OUTFIT
FITTING FROM
THE CHAMBER
OF SPLENDOR,
AND...

SPEAK OF
THE DEVIL!

THERE'S A
FULL
SUIT OF ARMOR--
HANGING ON THAT
BLAZING TREE--

--AND IT LOOKS AS
IF IT WOULD FIT ME
PERFECTLY!

NO! WHAT IN
THE NAME OF
THIS TERRIBLE
HEAT AM I
THINKING OF?

NOW I GET IT! THIS
PLACE JUST THROWS ONE
TEMPTATION AFTER
ANOTHER AT YOU--LIKE
THE "SLEEPING PRINCE"
BEFORE, AND NOW THIS--

--TAKING IMAGES
FROM MY MIND, AND
USING THEM TO
DISARM ME!

THINGS
SHOULD GO
A BIT MORE
SMOOTHLY
FROM HERE
ON.

MAYBE
I COULD JUST--

THIS TIME,
I CHOOSE MY
WEAPONS FOR
STURDINESS,
NOT SHEEN.

TOO BAD
THERE WASN'T
A SECOND SUIT
OF ARMOR LYING
AROUND, BUT--
BY THE
GODS!

I'D TAKE OFF THIS
BIT OF ARMOR, AND
THEN BE TOTALLY
UNPROTECTED
IF--

OWHANNA!

THAT BLAST OF
HEAT! WH-WHERE'D
IT COME FROM??
I had to ask!?

This place never gives up, does it?

Unicorns—hypnotic octopoids and now this fire-hawk!

Well, at least this armor's protecting me better than the other did—

But that last pass by the hawk left me so faint—

From its sheer, unrelenting heat!

Another one like it—and I'm done for—
--UNLESS I TAKE THE BULL BY THE HORN--

--AND SEE IF THIS FEATHERED FIREBALL WILL OBEY A RIDER AS READILY AS THE UNICORN DID.

--WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW? IT DOES!

MAYBE I AM ON MY WAY TO BECOMING THE WARRIOR MENTARRA TALKED ABOUT, AFTER ALL!

BEST THING IS--FROM UP HERE, MAYBE I CAN CATCH A GLIMPSE OF TORR, IF HE'S--

HUUH? THOSE WEIRD LITTLE CREATURES BELOW--GESTURING FRANTICALLY AT ME, AS IF THEY'RE TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING!

BY DARKSPIRE'S WALLS--IT'S TORR!

AND IT LOOKS AS IF HE'S IN DEEP TROUBLE!

MY BLAZING BIRDIE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FOLLOW WHEN HE AND THAT THING GO UNDERWATER AGAIN--

BETTER TAKE A LOOK OVER WHERE THEY'RE--
UNLESS THIS IS ANOTHER OF FIREWORLD'S EERIE ILLUSIONS!

BUT NO! THE OTHER IMAGES SHOWED ME THINGS I WANTED TO SEE--

--NOT THINGS LIKE TORR IN DANGER!

--SO I'D BETTER DIVE FOR IT, AND HOPE THIS ARMOR IS AS LIGHT AS IT FEELS!

TOO BAD! I COULVE GROWN TO LIKE TRAVELING BY FIRE-WING!

GOT TO MAKE THAT LIZARD, OR WHATEVER IT IS, LET GO OF TORR!

WELL, I WAS DESPERATE FOR WATER--AND IT LOOKS LIKE I GOT MY WISH!

THIS ARMOR'S LIGHT, ALL RIGHT! I'M POPPING UP LIKE A CORK.

NOTHING LIKE THE DIRECT APPROACH!

GRONK

GOOD THING I DIDN'T TRADE IT IN.

TORR--ARE YOU--?

I WON'T FEEL LIKE GOING SWIMMING--FOR A WHILE--BUT OTHERWISE--

SAME OLD BROTHER-OF-MINE, ALL RIGHT--THANK THE GODS!
WELL? WHAT'S WRONG, TORR? AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME?

WHAT ARE YOU GASPING AT?

YOU, SISTER--

--BUT NOT THAT!

WOULDN'T YOU JUST KNOW IT--IN A FIRE-HAPPY PLACE LIKE THIS--

--THAT THING WOULD BE A FIRE-BREATHER!?

TORR! WILL YOUR SHIELD--?

I DON'T KNOW!

BUT OUR ONLY HOPE--IS TO FIGHT FIRE--WITH FIRE--

--AND PRAY!

FROOOSH!
IT--IT WORKED!

I DON'T KNOW IF THAT THING'S DEAD OR NOT--AND I DON'T MUCH CARE--

--AS LONG AS IT STAYS DOWN THERE, AND WE'RE UP HERE.

NOW, ABOUT THAT QUESTION YOU ASKED BEFORE, TARRA...

I HOPE THIS SHOWS YOU I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU!

OH, TORR, MY BROTHER--WE WERE MAD TO ARGUE!

WE'VE GOT TO STICK TOGETHER AGAINST THIS INSANE WORLD!

...SO THE WAY I FIGURE IT, I GAINED SOME SORT OF UNDERSTANDING OF FIREWORLD, AND THAT'S WHAT ENABLED ME TO MASTER THE FIRE-HAWK.

I GOT A LITTLE BIT WISER MYSELF--WHEN I LEARNED I'M NOT THE BIG STRONG LONER I PRETENDED TO BE.

AND IF THIS GATEWAY IS ANY EVIDENCE--I'M NOT SURE WE'RE GOING TO!

IT'S LIKE A ROARING FURNACE--THE GREATEST INFERNAL WE'VE ENCOUNTERED YET!

WE STILL DIDN'T FIND THE CHALICE, THOUGH, LET ALONE THE SWORD...
WE CAN'T HAVE COME SO FAR, GOTTEN SO CLOSE--ONLY TO FAIL--
--CAN WE?

YOU Didn'T LET ME FINISH Before, TERRR--TELLING YOU ABOUT MY UNDERSTANDING OF FIREWORLD.

I MASTERED THE FIREHAWK BECAUSE I'D BEATEN THE OCTOPOLY, DON'T YOU SEE?

CONQUER ONE ASPECT OF THIS WORLD-- AND YOU CONQUER IT ALL!

I'D HAVE STOOD UP TO THAT DRAGON, TOO-- IF I HADN'T PANICKED.

BUT WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH-- TARRA! STOP!

NO! THE FLAMES CAN'T HURT ME-- IF I DON'T BELIEVE THEY CAN!

FOLLOW ME, TERRR! HURRY!

IT-- IT'S NO GOOD, TARRA! THAT WAY WOULDN'T WORK FOR ME!

WAIT! I FORGOT ABOUT-- THE PARCHMENT! MAYBE-- THE ANCIENT WISDOM WRITTEN ON IT--

BUT-- CAN I READ IT??

TERRR'S RIGHT! HE COULDN'T HAVE COME WITH ME.

HE'D HAVE BEEN BURNED-- EVEN IF I'M NOT.

MUST GO ON-- FIND OUT WHAT'S AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY!

THEN I'LL GO BACK FOR TERRR, AND--

HOLD ON, TARRA! I'M COMING!

THAT PARCHMENT TOLD ME THE PATHWAY THROUGH THE FLAMES!
Somehow, the water I swallowed back at that weird fountain gave me the wisdom to—

Huh??

Don't tell me—let me guess—!

The Chalice of Light!

Just think, Torr—once we drink from it, we won't feel the heat any more—we won't feel any thirst!

We'll have conquered Fireworld, just as we did Earthworld—

—and become the warriors our mentors told us we could be!
I'll drink to that—WILL ANYBODY TO GET IT, TOO!

Yes, and all without slaying anybody. So will I!

Huh? Who--?

As a matter of fact--THE CHALICE--IT SHATTERED INTO A MILLION PIECES!

THEN I'M BETTING—IT WASN'T THE REAL CHALICE OF LIGHT AT ALL!

Aye, lad and lass—HERMINUS, AND DRINKING A JOLLY TOAST TO THE BOTH OF YOU!

Fact is, I was quite thirsty, and since this TRUE CHALICE NEVER GETS EMPTY--

GIVE US THAT CHALICE, THIEF!

BUT OF COURSE! WHY NOT? I'VE DRUNK MY FILL... AND LEARNED ALL THAT'S TO BE LEARNED FROM IT.

This is what he means, Torr Look!

Ah, but you are a perceptive wench, aren't you?

IT'S HERMINUS!

--I'M TOO WATER-LOGGED EVEN TO RUN FROM YOU!

THERE--ON THE BOTTOM OF THE CHALICE--

THE IMAGE OF--A CROWN!
That it is, my hearties! A crown that waits for me - in the third world where hides the sword of ultimate sorcery!

He's getting away - on that weird unicorn!

Let him.

After all, we've got the chalice, right?

And if what happened in Earthworld was any clue, it should be the key to our next destination.

I guess so... but I don't trust that Herminus!

Why should you? He's a thief, isn't he - just like us!

Not like us! We're war-riors now, remember?

Tarka! Something's happening - to the chalice!

Huh? Where'd all this water?

Come

-- from?
Don't you see, brother? If the first world was inside the Earth—and the second was ringed in fire—

then this world is all water!

Of course! A world for each of the primal elements!

And if we can't go back up—or even sideways—

Torr! Now I understand! We're inside the Chalice!

The Chalice itself—was the gateway to the third world!

Right! Then the only way to go is—

Down!

But the sides of the Chalice—they're fading—and there's no land anywhere in sight!

Where is this third world—with its crown, and the sword of ultimate sorcery?

Well, Konjuro?...

You told me those whelps would perish in Fireworld—but you were wrong! They live!

Not for long, Milord King. My magic will follow them through all four worlds, if need be—

—till they menace our cause no more!

I assure you, the gold-tressed young thieves named Torr and Tarra shall find their final doom in...

WATERWORLD!

In Swordquest Book 3
Available soon!

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