

IN DECAY.

MELNIBONE IS AN ISLAND, AN ARCHEPELAGO SET AMIDST THE OLDEST OCEAN. RULER OF THE YOUNG KINGDOMS FOR THE PAST 10,000 YEARS, MELNIBONE HAS SEEN THE MIGHT OF ITS ONCE ALL-POWERFUL DRAGONS WANE. THEIR TERRIFYING FLIGHTS ARE NO LONGER COMMON, AND THE DRAGONS SLEEP LONGER AFTER EACH FORAY.

IMRRYR, THE DRAMING CITY, IS THE CAPITAL OF MELNIBONE, IT IS RICH BEYOND IMAGINING, BUT ITS PEOPLE ARE QUIESCENT, SLUMBERING IN A STUPOR OF NEGLECT AND DECAY.

ELRIC IS EMPEROR, 428TH IN LINE OF DIRECT-DESCENT FROM THE FIRST DRAGON-LORD. ELRIC IS A BROODING ALBINO, UNLIKE HIS ANCESTORS IN MANY WAYS. YET IN HIS HANDS RESTS THE FUTURE. TO BE COUNTED ELRIC'S FRIEND IS TO BE FOUND, DEAD.

STORMBRINGER IS ELRIC'S FEARSOME RUNESWORD, INTELLIGENT AND MALICIOUS, WITH ITS OWN PLAN FOR TOMORROW. STORMBRINGER IS HIGHLY MAGICAL, HARKENING FROM AN AGE WHEN CHAOS HELD GREATER SWAY UPON THE WORLD.

THE YOUNG KINGDOMS ARE A HANDFUL OF UPSTART NATIONS, ONCE PART OF THE BRIGHT EMPIRE, WHO IN THE PAST FEW CENTURIES HAVE DARED TO DEFY ONCE-MIGHTY MELNIBONE.



ELRIC! ADVENTURE BOOKS:

- Melnibone (#2901)
- Rogue Mistress (#2111)
- Sorcerers of Pan Tang (#2112)
- Perils of the Young Kingdoms (#2113)
- Sea Kings of the Purple Towns (#2114)

ELRIC! is a roleplaying game set in the fantasy world of the Young Kingdoms. Exhaustive BACKGROUND features detailed descriptions of the island of Melnibone and of her former holdings, known collectively as the Young Kingdoms. CHARACTER GENERATION is quick and complete, if you would like to create a character right away, turn to pages 30-31. The forces of Law, Chaos, and the Cosmic Balance affect every adventurer, their allegiances reflect the choices you make for him or her. MAGIC includes rules for demon summonings, a cast spells system, and invocations and enchantments. CREATURES & PERSONALITY chapters describe the multitude of beasts, denizens, and human-like inhabitants of the world. SPOT RULES highlight important game details. The GAMEMASTER CHAPTER (recommended reading for new gamemasters), TWO SCENARIOS, SIX READY-TO-COPY ADVENTURERS, A NEW WORLD MAP, INDEX, LIST OF TERMS, STORMBRINGER CONVERSION RULES and PLAY AIDS complete this book.

Summaries of important game features occurs in the Foreword and Introduction.



Chaosium Inc.

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ELRIC!™

DARK FANTASY ROLEPLAYING IN THE YOUNG KINGDOMS





ELRIC'S STORMBRINGER EMITTED BLACK RADIANCE AS IT CARVED A BLOODY PATH THROUGH THE BEGGAR ARMY, LEAVING IN ITS WAKE A MESS OF DISMEMBERED BODIES, ENTRAILS AND DEAD, HORRIFIED EYES.

THE VANISHING TOWER

ELRIC!™



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It shows Elric shortly before the climactic battle at the end of the world.

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Please do not phone in game questions; the quickest answer is often not the best answer.

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FOREWORD

Michael Moorcock's energetic tales of Elric, Stormbringer, Melniboné, and the Young Kingdoms gave fantasy-writing a new direction. Heroic fantasy had been the vague province of Dunsany and a few deft Americans, notably Howard and then Leiber. Generations of Englishmen from Morris on had published measured but (with Peake among the exceptions) curiously passionless books that admixed childlike behavior and adult sentences to produce a literature that was, whatever else, monumentally safe and tidy.

The Elric tales are anything but that. They seem written at break-neck speed. They begin and break off plot-lines unexpectedly. They madly invent and then slaughter whole armies within a few pages. Their language is by turn baroque, filled with color, sparse, bare, sensual, and terrifying. There are dangerous encounters, cunning and abrupt turns of phrase, sometimes an unexpected interest in the strategy of hand-to-hand fighting, and things like Stormbringer: the sentient, soul-drinking, almost insatiable great sword, that can never be forgotten. Later tales change important matters, such as the origins of Melniboné and of the runeswords. The tales murder (no one dies of old age here) every character the reader loves, and then the last one destroys the universe. These are stories in a hurry, and the best of them roar with creativity.

THIS A NEW roleplaying game about the Elric saga. It is approved of by Michael Moorcock, who has written three more and more books since Elric first sat upon the Throne and pondered his fate and that of the Bright Empire's.

This game maintains some continuity with *Stormbringer*; since the background universe is the same Young Kingdoms. Elric is a different game, however. This is not a re-write, as a glance at the Spot Rules for Combat chapter will show. Even the background details and their implications in the Young Kingdoms chapter are new and different. Some values for the personalities and creatures are unchanged, since the fundamental mechanics of both games are similar, and since they draw from the same literary source. The new game includes elements from the three newest Elric books as well as the earlier six.

Adventum creation is more complete and quicker to accomplish. Combat and magic are more detailed, seem closer to the saga.

Combat is more realistic, with more tricks and special effects available to it. The quickness of combat, and the potency of an attacker with high Dexterity and high skill percentiles can be stunning. Fights between evenly-matched opponents can be stately, almost dance-like for a round or two; when someone finds an advantage, a crippling or a deadly blow ensues.

Magic is less high-level, so that something powerful is memorable. A more-or-less parallel set of spells and summonings exist, following clues in the saga. Invocations and enchantments,

two more sorts of magic, are also distinguished. Much magic exists in this world, but some of it has blended with reality, and more is impossible to mew. There is little in the saga about demons: in consequence the game centers less on summoning for magic effect, but those who like that a p c h will find they can achieve a wide variety of effects.

Using or foregoing magic is an important consideration for new adventurers. *Elric* persistently reminds the player that a cosmic battle is being waged for his or her soul. But allegiance to Chaos, the Balance, or Law is more a matter of deeds than of signing up and carrying a membership card, adventurers can wobble from one force to another as they will, and most need not much worry about the consequences, at least for a while. The free will of every character is upheld, as it was even for Elric. No game rule ever forces an adventurer to do something he or she chooses not to.

IN PREPARATION FOR ELRIC

Melniboné, a sourcebook and scenarios about the Dreaming City and the Dragon Isle, will be on store shelves in August. A set of scenarios tentatively titled *The Fate of Fools* appears later this year. *The Atlas of the Young Kingdoms* is in preparation. A sourcebook and scenarios for *Corum* is being worked on, and is anticipated for the first half of 1994.

Stormbringer is a supplementary game. Information exists in it and its supplements nowhere else available. Conversion of scenarios from it is mostly simple and quick; see pages 148-149.

WHO DID WHAT

RICHARD WATTS wrote the Young Kingdoms chapter, the Elrician portions in the introduction, and part of the personalities chapter. I do not dare guess that he knows more about the Young Kingdoms than Michael Moorcock, but Richard has been living there a lot lately. His advice everywhere was 'Darker, please—more gloom!'

Mark Morrison contributed scores of improvements, specific spells, spell and demon summaries, the *Stormbringer* conversion notes, part of the scenario 'The Weight of Doom,' and many wise observations. I chided him to the effect that he seemed best able to think up things for me to do, an ignoble and desperate slur since his touches are everywhere. In great part he and Allen Varney (who had fortuitously turned up in Australia) created the allegiance system.

Jimmie W. Pursell Jr. wrote extensively about the draft manuscripts and, like Mark Morrison and Josh Shaw, added so many details, expansions, and new thoughts that they cannot be easily distinguished. To my mind, harmonizing dodge and parry was his best touch, but there are many.

Josh Shaw took the system where no man or woman had gone with it before, leaving combat flexible and fluid, and pressing the game mechanics toward their limits. He has a keen knowledge of arms and combat, and a sense of what's fitting for a game.

Sam Shirley, whose desk is eight feet from mine, wrote the scenario, "The Thought That Counts," part of the personalities chapter, and cheerfully furnished counsel upon demand. I was absent from the office so much of the time, dealing with deaths in my family, that he was in the end cheated

of the greater influence that his skills and sense of proportion demand.

Charlie Krank contributed the pronunciations and he and his family helped shape adventurer generation. If adventurers seem understandable as individuals, then the Krank household's indefatigable efforts succeeded. Others contributed invaluable insights, and the most important of them are listed on the title page. Most wrote long commentaries; **Mark Jason Durall** also contributed most of the description of High Speech quoted in the skills chapter.

If you like this game, you are in their debt. Notwithstanding this aid and more which must go unmentioned, I remain responsible for the great part of this book, for any annoyances, and for all mistakes.

We have worked hard on this book. We hope you enjoy it. — **Lynn Willis**