CASTLE OF PUZZLES

The land of Ziuq was once peaceful and prosperous, its harmony ensured by the power of the Blue Diamond and its guardians, the Forest Elves.
That is, until the day the evil Quizard stole it and locked it away in his castle, along with all the Elves, and anyone else who dared to stand in his way.
His stronghold is defended not only with sorcery, and not merely with stone, but with riddles and mazes, with questions and codes…and so for hundreds of years Quizard Castle has held its own title among the people:

Welcome to the Castle of Puzzles…Enter, if you dare.

If you've no desire to test your life against your wit, the lands beyond the Castle await, but be warned: there are few green pastures, and few places where the Quizard does not in some way interfere – his minions take tribute from distant villages of farmers in the form of food for his armies, oversee slave mines for iron and salt, and quarry the living rock from the hearts of mountains.
That said, there are still places to find refuge – in the lost homes of the rare elves who escaped capture, the ruined towers of the many sorcerers who came before him, or isolated villages away on isles in the grey seas.

You have +1000 Conundrum Points to spend – use them wisely.

Time & Place

You will enter the jump many years after the Quizard seized the Blue Diamond and imprisoned all the Forest Elves; when many of those in chains have lost hope of ever being set free.
Drop Ins begin in the Castle's Courtyard.
Prisoners, Minions and Quizard's Apprentices may select their starting location from the following puzzle:

C	O	U	R	T	Y	A	R	D
Y	S	L	M	A	G	S	U	G
R	T	A	A	O	M	N	T	A
A	U	B	Z	M	G	A	W	R
R	D	K	E	E	P	A	E	D
B	Y	K	O	S	L	W	H	E
I	A	N	E	L	O	F	M	N
L	S	K	I	T	C	H	E	N
M	O	O	R	D	R	A	U	G

Backgrounds

Drop In

You've appeared in the courtyard of Quizard Castle, home of the mighty Quizard. The orcs on guard on the drawbridge didn't seem at all concerned with your entry - it seems they don't care about a single interloper, or even a small group.
The reason why soon becomes clear - the Quizard himself dares would-be heroes and rivals alike to enter and attempt to defeat his dastardly riddles and conundrums...at their own risk. Being stumped and unable to progress further is the least harm a wrong answer may cause - those who give the wrong answers to the wrong puzzles may find the penalty for failure is death from pitfalls or hungry beasts, or to be cursed to wander the castle’s mazelike halls, lost forevermore.

Prisoner

You were recently held captive in Quizard Castle; in the dungeons, or one of the many cells scattered throughout its many rooms. To escape the fiendish Quizard required a great deal of patience and skill, something you hope to put to use in finding the Blue Diamond and vanquishing the Quizard.
You are probably a Forest Elf, or a 'good' fantasy race like a naiad, human, pixie or the like, but it's also possible you're one of the many other ‘neutral’ or ‘evil’ races, originally locked away for failing to please the Quizard or abide by his labyrinthine rules.

Minion
You are an inhabitant of Quizard Castle - one of the Quizard's minions, whether you consider yourself his servant or not. While it is your sworn duty to protect the castle against all invaders, there exists no army in all the lands to threaten its walls – and if there did, the Quizard's magical might would see them off. Instead, the Quizard himself welcomes heroes to test their wit against his – many have come, but none have claimed victory.
Duty is lenient, provided you abide by your master's rules, though the odd nature of the place sometimes poses troubles of its own – you've spent more time counting spiders in the arbour or sorting keys to the many dungeon cells by material and weight than you have practicing your swordsmanship.

Quizard's Apprentice
Oh? This is as high up the ranks as you can go without being the Quizard yourself. There is only one being who can countermand your authority, and no chamber within these walls is barred to you. The Quizard has trained you as his apprentice, a position which you've earned purely on your merits – not only are you a skilled sorcerer yourself, but your mind is one which churns with puzzles and riddles…much like the Quizard himself.
While you may know every password and can order open any door, the Quizard still keeps many secrets hidden away from you, some hidden behind riddles that might perplex even you.

Race

Usual – Free, mandatory for all
In order to fit in a little better, you may select a fantasy being as your race. You might be an orc or a goblin, gnome or elf, a dwarf or a troll, or even a talking animal or 'mysterious hooded figure'. Or simply pick the default - human - and be done with it.
Essentially, freely pick from the usual fantasy fare, with your size anywhere from child-sized to twice as large as a human, so long as you have no unusual traits or overly useful physiology, like the strength to lift boulders, wings, or dark-vision.
Fantasy racism or their likely upbringing aside, there's no obligation for elves to be good or orcs to be evil.

Un-Usual – 100cp, discount Prisoner, Minion, Apprentice
Or maybe you *do* have hulking strength or wings? Or both? Your race may have an unusual or helpful physiological or magical trait, such as a set of wings, a prehensile tail, a sense of smell to rival a greyhound, the ability to conjure faerie lights, see in total darkness, skin as tough as stone, or something similar. Size can be between mouse and two storeys tall.
If a magical ability is selected, it should be something a 'proper wizard' might class as a 'parlour trick' in its power and scale – a minor illusion or enchantment at best.
You can purchase this multiple times to stack multiple traits into one species
(eg: three purchases "tiny size, wings, faerie lights" to be some kind of fairy or pixie).

You may also select your age and gender in the jump at this point as well.

Perks

Perks discounted 50% to their listed backgrounds, 100cp perks are free unless noted.

Sagacious – 100cp, Drop In

Patterns, shapes and sequences seem much more obvious to you, and as a consequence you can better spot hidden puzzles, concealed messages or objects, and are better at breaking codes.

Simple puzzles like kids' word finds, letter substitution codes, hidden objects and mathematical equations can be solved in moments, more complicated ones in a few minutes, and the time it takes to complete a complicated cypher or equation is cut at least by half, if not more.

Scribble Pad – 100cp, Drop In

What to do when you have no parchment or ink, but simply must take a note? Fret no more. You have a mental construct – a permanent 'piece of paper' held in your mind's eye. You can imagine drawings, writing, sketches or even images in any color (even 'copying' or tracing over what you can see), re-arranging, altering, annotating or erasing them as you like, with no chance of forgetting or losing any details by accident – just the thing for working out a cypher wheel or noting down a clue.

This "sheet" holds as much information as can fit in your field of vision, and retains information written on it no matter where you left off, how long ago you last used it or even if you were knocked out.

Lateral Logic – 200cp, Drop In

Your train of thought can follow even very convoluted lines of logic, the sort that features in brain-teasers that make you scratch your head for hours and then smack your head at the obvious solution – though for you, subtract the hours of head-scratching.

You see conundrums in their entirety, and are talented at 'turning them on their side' to look at them from different angles, thinking outside of the box when it comes to solving them – you are almost never misdirected by irrelevant information, or find yourself limited by the stated facts: what goes un-stated in a problem is as clear to you as if it was explicitly mentioned.

Mortal Reply - 400cp, Drop In

When your life is on the line, you've only got once chance to get it right. You will receive an unmistakable mental 'warning' when you're about to give a wrong answer to a question, puzzle, riddle or the like that will surely result in your demise - or at least result in a potentially harmful reaction, even if you could survive it. This warning only appears in the context of a deliberate question or puzzle - it would not warn you about your own choices in choosing one bridge over another that is perilously unstable.

Clued In - 600cp, Drop In
It's a sad fact that not all puzzles are clearly stated as such. Is that poorly-spelled graffiti a clue, or just scribble? Would re-arranging the jumbled books on that shelf reveal a secret door, or is it a waste of time?
Well, puzzle over it no more. You now instinctively sense when a cryptic action can be taken to reveal something hidden, and what objects in front of you bear some relation to each other. It's almost like a little voice – or a narrator? – is telling you there's a puzzle to be solved and the clues are in front of you.
You will quickly determine that the positioning of objects in the room bears some relation to the combination of a wall safe, that a shopping list in a desk draw is actually a password reminder, or that the cryptic message carved into a wall is in fact a separate puzzle not related to finding a hidden pirate treasure. When every conundrum is clearly presented, none will go unsolved.

Skin And Bones – 100cp, Prisoner
It's been a long time since you got three square meals a day – you're thin as a bundle of twigs from years of surviving on old bread and thin gruel in the Quizard's prisons, but that has its own advantages. Your body seems longer, thinner, able to stretch further through the gaps in bars, slip out of manacles, or squeeze you further into confined spaces than even your malnourished compatriots.

Message In A Bottle – 100cp, Prisoner
You are good at hiding messages and clues where the intended recipient will find them, even if you don't precisely know their identity…or when they'll come along next. When you leave a message or sign for someone – but especially 'a hero' – to find, you can be sure that it will last intact and readable until they find it – whether the hero comes along in a timely fashion is a whole other issue.
You also have a knack for hiding these messages where they will catch the attention of the intended recipient, and pass beneath the notice of anyone hostile to you and yours – whether that's a message scribbled some place they never look, or by rearranging the letters of a signpost the guards see at but never notice has been altered.

Unseen Hands – 200cp, Prisoner
You've got the ability to somehow get things done even when you're locked up. Even if the Quizard's guards keep you confined to a cage (or you simply never leave your room), you could organise for specific messages to appear on certain walls, for stashes of equipment to be placed in hidden locations, small items to be purloined or misplaced, or stay in touch with the other Forest Elves who are still imprisoned throughout the castle. To someone else, it might look like these things just magically happen when nobody's looking, but in reality you're just that good at networking with other, less confined prisoners or getting the castle's guards and other staff to do 'harmless' favors for you.

Guidance – 400cp, Prisoner
There's a lot riding on the Hero winning at the end of the day, so if it falls on you to nudge them along, you'd better not blow it. You are perfectly capable of mentoring or tutoring heroes in the basics of the necessary arts – sword-fighting, riddle-solving, and damsel-saving, though the greater part of the effort must come from them, not you – they've got to be 'Hero material' to start with. As they face trials and tribulations, your advice will cause would-be protagonist types to develop their character, moulding them into the Hero you need them to be to overcome the odds and vanquish evil wherever it lies.

Guardian of the Diamond – 600cp, Prisoner
Contained inside you is but a fragment of the Blue Diamond's power, yet which radiates outwards like ripples from a pond. Any action you take to spread harmony, peace and goodwill will cascade into lasting benefits to yourself and the rest of the community. Something as small as giving scraps of bread to mice could result in a small swarm of the friendly creatures doing your bidding; a few coins to a beggar might sow the seeds of goodwill or open-mindedness throughout a xenophobic village; settling a dispute fairly might eventually cause a centuries-old feud to be resolved and forgiven. The more acts of goodwill you partake in, the more likely these cascades are to intermesh and combine and the faster you will see results, but it still takes time for such sparks of goodwill to ignite in the hearts of people and spread throughout the community. Don't expect to transform the place overnight – but you could definitely bring about great changes if you go forth and do good.

Ubiquitous - 100cp, Minion
It's not that people don't notice you, it's more that they don't object to you being there if you look like you belong. As the guard of a castle, a Hero might disregard you and walk right past if you didn't step in their way, at least until you chose to bar their path.

Tireless Vigilance - 100cp, Minion
So long as you remain in one spot with the intention of keeping an eye on your surroundings, you can maintain as long a watch as you like, suffering no discomfort or distractions - you don't get bored or tired, don't seem get back-aches or sore legs, don't need to go for a pee or need anything to eat, or even suffer a dulling of your reaction times, ready to snap into action like you started your shift a moment ago. 'Course, it means you can't do anything but watch and wait, but you're not supposed to be doing anything else on watch duty, anyway.

Halt, Who Goes There? - 200cp, Minion
Did one of the wizards teach you a spell? With a single cry of "Halt!", your voice will stop anyone in their tracks like the proverbial deer in the headlights before they snap out of it, and on your demand of "Who goes there?", they will have blurted out their name and reason for being there before they can stop themselves.
Only the most sneaky-minded or magically-defended of intruders seem able to resist the compulsion altogether, and only those who have deeply engrossed themselves into a role can resist blurting out their true name and purpose despite any disguises or assumed names to the contrary.

Mentally Mazed - 400cp, Minion
Living in a mazelike castle beneath a riddle-mad wizard certainly takes its toll on its inhabitants. Guards might find their rosters posted as anagrams, kitchen hands might find meals ordered in code, and woe betide you if you brought Quizard his striped socks on a Tuesday instead of a Wednesday. However, the Quizard considers you to be a 'good' minion: you're rather quick-thinking on your feet, mentally flexible, and able to adapt to absurd situations with a straight face.
This mental adaptability serves you well both in acquiring whatever new skills the Quizard demands you be capable of, untangling your (often seemingly contradictory) orders, and also in avoiding or escaping beguilement, compulsions and mental traps, magical or not.

Labyrinther - 600cp, Minion
The maze-like castle is your home, and you know its shifting, twisting hallways like the back of your hand. It's not that you know where you are at all times – you just always know where you're going. You can navigate any enclosed environment - from manors to mazes, castles to crypts, tunnels to towers, offices to oubliettes - along the shortest possible path, so long as you can describe your destination or name it in terms of a location (like "Lab B", "the castle at the centre of the labyrinth" or "the nearest exit"). While you walk, paths seem more straightforward - bizarre architecture doesn't seem to hinder your progress, elevators just happen to open on your floor when you need them, and in a truly shifting maze you might find new doorways opening right where you want them to.
This shortest path takes your access capabilities into account - it will not guide you through doors you don't have a key for, or through a puzzle area you don't know the answer for - but it doesn't take into account monsters, and may indicate there is no clear way to your intended destination if you lack the right keys.
This sense doesn't work with reference to things like objects and beings; you can't find a path to "The Quizard", even if you word it as "The room where the Quizard is now". In the case of multiple possible destinations, it will provide the closest one.

Workings – 100cp, Apprentice
You possess working knowledge of a single branch of magic – one of several which the Quizard demands his students learn. For the most part these are minor magics that require some preparation to perform. You would be considered moderately talented in your selected school(s), with some time and work becoming a grandmaster.
You can purchase this perk multiple times for different types of magic, and further purchases are discounted. You can buy Elementalism more than once, for each of the four elements.
Some examples of what these magics can be used to accomplish can be found in the Notes section.

- Runes – Divining solutions or auguries via cast rune stones and conducting magic through carving inscriptions on items.
- Astrology – Forecasting the future via the study of astrological movements.
- Charms – The creation of magical charms to buff the bearer or ward off harm.
- Illusions – Altering the perceptions of others, usually through vision, but also the other senses.
- Alchemy – The creation of magical potions, poisons, powders and other materials.
- Elementalism – Control or conjure one element; select from: Fire, Water, Air, or Earth.

Promising Apprentice – 100cp, Apprentice
Something about your demeanour – perhaps the illusion of unbridled potential, a staggering ambition, or just the way you suck up – makes you seem like the optimal choice for apprenticeship to those seeking a protégé, winning out against other potentials who might perhaps be a bit better qualified. It also seems that you have a powerful tolerance for the trials that evil masters will put you through, especially those with no sense of right or wrong. I guess you're more power-hungry than you thought?

Riddler – 200cp, Apprentice
With some magical preparation, you can turn any room into a puzzle room, transforming it with magic and altering or conjuring the features you need. When complete, the room will automatically seal all entrances and exits when someone enters, and will only open them again once the puzzle you set within it has been properly solved, resetting itself for the next luckless victim. This magic will use the room's existing contents or design as cues, though you must actually design the puzzle's mechanics itself – the magic will take care of, say, hooking an office's computer up to the door's lock, but devising *how* the computer is to be used to unlock the door is left to you.
It takes a couple of minutes to prepare a room thusly, and the difficulty of the puzzle naturally depends on your own twisted mind, though it must be solvable with the features and clues inside it.

Sacred Geometry – 400cp, Apprentice
You find that your magic is enhanced by correctly-prepared geometric figures or objects around you. You might cast from the centre of a heptagram, inscribe a sigil as part of the casting process, or use crystal spheres or cubes as a focus.
The size of this boost is determined by the scale, complexity and permanency of the figure - the tiniest enhancement might come from standing inside a circle of arranged pebbles, moderate enhancements might come from complex magical circles burned into the floor, and performing your castings from the centre of a massive stone pyramid formation could give even a mediocre mage the might to fend off an army single-handedly.

Puzzlemaster - 600cp, Apprentice
You truly have learned the ways of the Quizard, haven't you? You are an undisputed master of creating riddles and puzzles – you could pose an enigma to stump a whole flock of sphinxes, create mazes that could trap a minotaur forever, or devise codes that could keep your secrets safe for hundreds of years. Your mastery also means you can invent puzzles or riddles which might be obscenely difficult for most people, but a piece of cake for a particular type of person or demographic.
Furthermore, you can choose to reflexively add conundrums to your magic in order to obscure it – instead of shouting "fireball!", you might shout its anagram "illberaf!", your scrolls or magical texts may be written in pictographic code, magic circles may seem like they're distorted or missing sections, or your magical effects might incorporate mazelike patterns or geometry. These obfuscations do not affect the magic in any negative manner, being treated as though they were the true and correct invocations or diagrams, and are likely to throw off anyone observing your casting or seeing your magic at work. Only brilliant rivals would be able to correctly counter, break, dispel or reverse-engineer your magic in a timely manner – for anyone else, it's likely to be a brain-wracking slog.
You can teach your own students to understand your code, if you aren't paranoid about them stealing your research.

Items

You may buy multiples of items unless noted otherwise. 100cp items are free to their background, others are discounted. Destroyed or lost items respawn in the warehouse within a week.

Map of Quizard Castle – One Free All
Not actually a map in the true sense of the word – it's an unusual grid of numbers, letters, and illuminations that doesn't seem to correspond to the real-world layout of the castle.
In fact, this is a cypher to locate the Blue Diamond - each numbered square does represent a room of the castle, but it will only make sense with clues from the imprisoned Forest Elves and after solving many of the Quizard's puzzles. Good luck, hero.

Quizard's Games – 50cp
A copy of several of the board games to be found in Quizard's Game Rooms – including Houses and Humans: The Roleplaying Game, many genuine bone dice, carved figurines and a board for the game of Gorgons, a set of Elf Trap! (a game about capturing elves), and many more traditional games like chess, checkers, card games, etc.

Zidur – 50cp
A flagon of alchemically-brewed alcohol, similar to cider, made from crab apples and honey. This flagon never runs out, and will not break in the event it is used as a bludgeon in a tavern brawl.

Book of Riddles - 100cp, Drop In
A thin parchment book of brain-twisting puzzles – the sort of thing that might be found in one of the Castle's classrooms. Each time it's opened, new sets of puzzles are revealed, though they tend to be couched in the Castle's language – "An orc rules a castle with four high walls forming a square. All the walls face South; how is this possible?", "Which of these four dragons is the odd one out?" etc.

Reward Chest – 200cp, Drop In
A small, empty chest, about a foot wide with a sturdy lock. When filled with items of value – coins or gems being the norm, but anything valuable will work - the treasure within seems to be something more…symbolic than their actual worth – it's like each item holds the very idea of 'reward' or 'greed'. People find that they'll do a lot more for a coin from this chest than they might usually place on their value.
In the eyes of heroes, this chest holds a treasure which quests are begun for. To minions, a handful of its coins are the bribe to guide you through a maze, and if you're being chased by a greedy dragon it's certainly not the worst plan to toss this chest as far as you can throw it and then run in the other direction.

Thinking Cap – 400cp, Drop In
A soft leather or padded cloth cap. While it is donned, you can accelerate your thoughts to the point where time seems frozen for up to an hour, subjectively. While thinking at this rate, you are unable to move or take any physical action. You can divide the hour up into whatever increments as you see fit, and it lets you know how much time is remaining. Once this hour is used up, the Thinking Cap must be recharged by wearing it for an uninterrupted eight hours of sleep.

False Chains – 100cp, Prisoner
A couple of sets of steel manacles or hand-cuffs which allow you to 'play prisoner'. To all external examination, the False Chains appear to sturdily secure you, and make it seem like you're much less dangerous and much more docile than you really are, giving guards and onlookers the impression that you are constrained, powerless and wouldn't even dare to try and make trouble. In truth, these manacles can be discarded with a flick of your wrists and even if you don't shuck them, still allow almost complete freedom of movement.

Piece of Cheese - 200cp, Prisoner
This hard, old wedge of holey cheese was probably nicked from the kitchens. By placing it on the ground and waiting a minute, it will attract (or summon) a rat or mouse from an overlooked corner. After gnawing at the cheese, the mouse will stop and listen intently to you, and carries out your instructions to the best of its ability before disappearing – it's probably more intelligent than most of the orcs in the castle, and knows its way around. It still can't read or talk, though, but is just the kind of servant to take a note between prison cells or lift a misplaced key.
This cheese also has a good chance of attracting any unusual rodents of the local setting to act as your temporary servants, too – like dire rats, giant space hamsters, R.O.U.S.s, etc.
The wedge of cheese never seems to diminish no matter how many times it is gnawed, and it doesn't go off, though you'd have to be desperately hungry to consider this suitable food for a person.

Dragon – 400cp, Prisoner
Like you, this dragon is a former prisoner of the castle, broken free of its chains. It's smarter and more loyal than a well-trained dog, but still holds no chance of solving any riddles itself. Its poisonous breath, brute strength, size, and powerful wings are more suited towards finding non-intellectual solutions to problems. This is a young dragon, so it could probably squeeze itself into a large house, but after centuries it would become large enough to crush that house if it landed on it.
It understands the tongues of humans, elves, and other dragons, but not writing, and lacks vocal chords. It occasionally sheds fireproof green scales which could be collected and made into armor or cover a shield, and a few drops of its venom could kill an ox (but normally its swordlike teeth are more than sufficient for the job). It doesn't count as a companion unless you import it as one, when it will gain full humanlike faculties.

Pet – 100cp, Minion
An animal kept for its companionship – its presence is reassuring and comfy, and whether it's covered in soft fur, scales or leathery hide, is calming to pet. Provided it is no bigger than your own form in this jump (as chosen in Race) and doesn't have any magical powers, you can select more or less any sort of animal, even exotic fantasy creatures like a giant spider or a dog-sized mouse, a pocket-dragon or if you were a Giant you could have a griffon or a massive snail larger than a caravan. Does not take up a companion slot.

Oubliette – 200cp, Minion
A metal grate trapdoor installed in the lowest part of your warehouse (or other property). A sheer drop into a tall cylindrical room, this is where you throw things to be forgotten. Anything (or anyone) who is put into this stonework chamber will slowly have all memories, records, and traces forgotten by the rest of the world – over the course of a year or so, people's memories of the thing will fade into forgetfulness, digital records will become corrupted or inaccessible, text becomes illegible, photographs of the thing will fade into an unrecognisable blur. Only you, and anyone present when the thing is thrown into the oubliette, will retain their memories of the thing to be forgotten.
Things removed from the chamber will have appropriate memories and records return at a slightly faster rate than they were forgotten – photographs un-blur, records become readable again etc.

The Castle's Keys – 400cp, Minion
This is a very large (and heavy) ring of keys. Keys of every type - from massive wrought-iron things to tiny metal stamped ones - can be found on it…in fact, I guarantee you that whatever key you're looking for is on it, whether it fits a door or a chest, a padlock or an automobile. It might just take you a little while to find the right one. If you know what the key looks like, you'll find it much faster. Also handy in case you need to belt something over the head and don't have a sword ready.

Mirror of Illusions - 100cp, Apprentice
This full-length mirror can show whoever looks into it whatever they like. Need to envisage yourself with a different haircut? Want to show someone what you're thinking without painstakingly describing it? Or simply engage in some wish fulfilment and want it to show your foe being thrown into a dragon's maw? This is your ticket.
You can also give a lasting order to the mirror to show something when other people stand before it – like "show the worst fear of whoever looks into it".
The mirror has a limited ability to scan the minds and memories of the people before it for images, and a small amount of creativity to fill in any gaps, but whatever it displays doesn't necessarily have any basis in reality – attempts to divine information from it are fruitless at best and misleading at worst.

Chamber of Eyes – 200cp, Apprentice
A small, arcane chamber with walls covered with leathery green skin and countless eyes. After attuning yourself to it with some simple meditation, all that goes on in this chamber is relentlessly observed and analysed to the tiniest detail, even things which should be invisible or beyond the senses of mere mortals, from the unseen passage of currents of air, to the blink of a neutrino zipping through it, to a soul escaping from a body at death. The eyes which cover the walls will also channel whatever unusual powers your own eyes have to analyse or affect someone inside it. This chamber may be added as an antechamber to your warehouse or another of your properties, so that anything entering via the main door must pass through it first, or as a side room for experiments.

Spellbooks – 400cp, Apprentice
A collection of spellbooks - one for each of the various schools or types of magic you know. Each page of these books holds one predetermined spell you can cast, and each spell can be cast once at no cost to you – without any sacrifices, unusual materials, or even using any of your mana. If the spell has a variable effect based on its cost (eg: use more mana to make a bigger fireball, raise more zombies the more gold pieces are sacrificed), it is cast at 'minimum expenditure'.
Once cast, the page holding the spell burns up, and the books are only restored at the start of each jump. These books can be used by anyone who can use the type of magic the book is for, but the spell is cast as though you were the one to perform it.

Quizard Castle – 600cp, One Purchase Only
This is it – a copy of the very castle that has dominated kingdoms far and wide.
Constructed according to powerful magical principles with seven times seven chambers on each of the seven levels, it provides many benefits to its master or mistress.
Firstly, as a seat of magical power, it enhances any magic its owner casts within it by a massive degree, and stifles (but does not outright block) the magic of invading spellcasters.
Secondly, it has all the facilities and space the Quizard needed - three hundred and forty-three separate rooms or areas that hold laboratories, groves of trees, menageries, dungeons, guest rooms, guard's barracks, astrology rooms, vaults, libraries, game rooms, gardens and many, many more. It's a huge, fantastic sprawling castle, after all.
Thirdly, its architecture forces invaders into its maze-like depths; sorry souls who don't keep their wits about them and choose the right paths might wander off into hallways without ends, a series of looping rooms, or a courtyard which can be entered, but never left. You, and those you knight as your minions or apprentices, are immune to this bamboozling architecture and the spell-dampening effect.
Quizard Castle may either import into new settings in a suitably vacant location, or may become a warehouse attachment at your choice (you can choose which at the start of each jump). Minions not included.

Companions

Friends New Or Old – 50cp each, up to Eight.
Import or create a new companion. They gain a background of their choice and 600cp to spend with the appropriate freebies and discounts for their background, but must abide by the following rules:

- Only one person among the Jumper and their companions may be Quizard's Apprentice.
- Only one purchase of Quizard Castle can be taken.

Drawbacks

You may select up to +600cp worth of drawbacks in exchange for more cp.

Last Hope +0cp

The duration of your stay is no longer 10 years: instead, you will leave one week after you locate the Blue Diamond. Perhaps it will only take you a few days, or perhaps a lifetime from now you'll finally vanquish the Quizard.

Imprisoned +100cp

You're starting in a prison cell. Perhaps in the Prison on Level One, the Dungeons on Level Five, or a tiny cage somewhere else in the castle (caged Forest Elves are found almost everywhere, even in the classrooms and gardens). While you're guaranteed old bread and thin gruel to live on if you remain inside, your first challenge will be to escape your confinement. The cage inhibits magical power and brute strength until you can overcome its lock by wits, guile, charisma or skill.

The Quizard's Curse +100cp

You will perceive every attempt by others to communicate with you as a riddle. Even a simple "yes" or "no" will turn into a fully-formed question, but complex or long-winded replies might turn into substitution codes or a word pattern.

No Cheating +200cp

You may not use your powers or skills to bypass any puzzles, obstacles or riddles in this land - such as by teleporting through a door, sneaking past a riddling sphinx, divining the answer to a puzzle or flying out one window and in another.

Too Easy…? +200cp

The sophistication of the Quizard's puzzles and the difficulty of navigating the Castle rises to match your intellect. If you have dozens of intellect-enhancing perks, you'll need every one of them to make any progress through the castle. The puzzles are still 'fair', just 'fair' for someone of your intellect. A Jumper with many intelligence-enhancement perks should expect puzzle solutions to lie in encryption algorithms, analysing Very Large Primes, determining the key of a pseudorandom number generator from the movements of ants on a tabletop or by navigating hyper-geometric moving mazes.

Siege +300cp

No longer will the Castle's 'open invitation' stand – the Quizard has retracted his challenge, and forbidden entry to all – but especially you, no matter who you are. All intruders will be attacked on sight; hobgoblins and orcs beyond number will guard the battlements with their swords and their lives, chained dragons will pour their poisonous breath into killing fields, and sorcerers will strike without warning. Beware, for the Quizard himself will deal with any serious intrusion, and will remain a grave threat until the Blue Diamond is found.

Yet Darker +300cp
At its heart, this is a world that would not be out of place as the setting of fairy tales or children's stories…but no longer. Selecting this option makes the world grimmer and darker, fouler and more unfair. No longer are the Forest Elves simply imprisoned, but tortured and eventually executed. Orcs don't only eat normal food, but man-flesh or elf-flesh when they can get away with it. There is no longer any guarantee that the puzzles are 'fair', that riddlers won't lie to you even if you get the puzzle right, or that the Quizard really will be vanquished if a hero recovers the Blue Diamond.

End

Your time is up, and so one further conundrum: Which door do you choose?

The Door of Humans:
Retire from your jumping career and return home with all you have gained so far.

The Door of Houses:
Stay in this world, to rule or wander, again with all you have.

The Door of Horizons:
Continue you journey onwards, to the next jump.

Notes

v1.0, Jump by Myrmidont. *Castle of Puzzles* by Linda Straker & Ian Waugh.

The setting is a puzzle book that takes a lot of its cues from other fantasy books, games and movies. It seems to draw heavily from The Labyrinth, Discworld, The Hobbit, D&D and other works of the fantasy genre. So when in doubt, take cues from those.

What Is The Blue Diamond?

It's a magical gem that will bring harmony throughout the land and turn the Quizard to dust. It's a powerful relic of good, but which seems bound to this world and its people. Pocketing this treasure would doubtless doom the lands to the same fate as it had under the Quizard.

Default Difficulty

Most of the Quizard's puzzles are easily solvable by your average educated middle-schooler with a dictionary or encyclopaedia on hand, but a few are lateral thinking puzzles that very few people might get, or are vaguely-worded and could have a couple of solutions, but only one 'right' answer.

Races

The appearance of the various races are like the natives of Labyrinth or The Dark Crystal, Warhammer Fantasy, Advanced Dungeons and Dragons, and classic fantasy art. Example races:

Humans	Trolls	Talking orang-utans
Forest Elves (+variants)	Gnomes	Golems
Orcs (+variants)	Pixies	Harpies
Goblins (+hobgoblins	Dragons	Dragons
etc.)	Talking frogs	Beast-headed men
Dwarves	Giant snails	Giants

Unusual Characteristics

Power levels for this is something like a low-level D&D spell at will, or a couple of racial levels. Nothing particularly impressive.

Physiological features might be wings, a tail, poison bite (not especially fast acting or lethal), 2 extra arms, stony hide, big claws, a dozen eyes, etc.

Perks

Scribble Pad

Cannot be used to record moving images, and could in theory be altered or wiped by memory or mind-affecting effects.

Mortal Reply

- The warning pops up to indicate you're giving a wrong answer when possible harm is on the line. You can ignore it and give the answer anyway.
- The warning will pop up even if you could tank the punishment.
- It doesn't give you any assistance in working out the correct answer (though it is naturally easy to work out the right answer if it's a multiple choice question).
- Likewise, it does nothing to prevent your demise if you can't think of the right answer in a 'timed' challenge.

Clued In
Makes you aware that a puzzle exists, what the relevant components are, and probably gives you an idea of the reward in general terms like 'the way out', 'safe passage', 'something hidden', etc.
Eg: On entering a room with a classic 'secret door hidden behind the bookshelf', you'd become aware that the books on the shelf constitute a puzzle and that the aim is 'there's something hidden here: find the book that doesn't match the rest'.

Labyrinther
Produces the theoretical shortest route for your access level, and ensures that moving location features cooperate when you're using this power to travel through them.

Examples of Magics:
Runes
- Trivial Effects: Read event in near future either generally (thing will go good/bad) or specific (thing will happen). Easier to do general readings further into future.
- Medium Effects: Enchant items with magical power by engraving runes, scry, protect someone from a weak curse.
- Major Effects: Place a powerful curse, foresee distant or difficult futures, protect someone or something from powerful effects.

Astrology
- Trivial Effects: Determine compatibility of two people, determine auspicious/inauspicious factors for a person or people – materials, dates, times, numbers etc. - like ideal material for a magic charm, best wedding dates for a happy marriage.
- Medium Effects: Divine events in near future, major events over a person's lifetime. Determine critical times or junctions of events.
- Major Effects: Divine major events hundreds of years in advance, or highly specific information for events in the near future.

Charms
- Trivial Effects: Minor form of protection or boost to attributes, lucky charms, store minor pre-cast spells in objects for single use.
- Medium Effects: Create a charm to turn aside certain type of harm like arrows or daggers in the back, or a single-use charm to resist a more general danger like fire or iron blades. Charms to enhance object's use – swords to never dull, arrows to fly true. Store useful pre-cast spells in objects for single use.
- Major Effects: "Lifesaving" contingency effect – teleport out of harm's way, turn a lethal blow improbably. Mortal effects on foes – cause lethal strikes, penetrate a form of resistance or immunity. Store powerful pre-cast spells for single use, or lesser spells for multi-use. Charms providing broad protections - against all magic below a certain threshold.

Illusions
- Trivial Effects: Alter someone's reflection or shadow. Make small items disappear, disguise small features, paintings that move.
- Medium Effects: Become invisible, communication effect over any distance, create static realistic illusion of environment, hypnotic patterns, disguise as monstrous form. Imbue objects with an illusion effect.
- Major Effects: Hide a castle or small town from sight, permanent illusion on someone, lotus-eater type false world around someone.

Alchemy

- Trivial Effects: Sleeping potions, cure common illnesses, healing potions, brew beer.
- Medium Effects: Dispel a curse, temporarily transform a being, erase memories.
- Major Effects: Cure a major curse, create a magical poison that slays with one drop, create magical materials, create a classical philosopher's stone to turn lead into gold or a potion that keeps one alive as long as they drink it regularly.

Elementalism

- Trivial Effects: shape existing elements; summon a very small elemental being to act as a familiar or servant. Conjure a tiny amount of element (a match flame, a pebble, a shot glass of water, a gasp of air).
- Medium Effects: Shape/control larger amounts of elements in combat applications, conjure handfuls/litres of element to throw at foes or block attacks, multiply element from a small source (jar of water becomes a pond, a candle becomes a jet of flame). Summon human-sized elemental being.
- Major Effects: Conjure massive amounts of element from nothing. Virtual immunity to element. Shape/control elements in bulk quantities in a large radius around you, summon an elemental being house-sized or larger. Delicate control of large quantities of element.

Puzzlemaster

The second effect makes identification and understanding your magic on the fly much more difficult (such as if another wizard is trying to work out a counterspell when you're casting/throwing a fireball at their face, or trying to study your magic), but it would be no more resistant to a blanket "spell resistance" or "anti-magic field" type effect, since that sort of thing doesn't usually require the opposing mage to understand what they're resisting/suppressing.

Items

Reward Chest – turns wealth stored in it into an 'arbitrary reward' rather than a specific sum of gold. As in, people will tend to do stuff more for the idea of being rewarded with stuff from the chest than actually assessing the value of what's in it against setting off on some probably dangerous quest, or whether the handful of coins is worth their master's wrath, or whatever.

There has to be at least a perception that the items in the chest are valuable – no good throwing a handful of dirt or a dirty rag inside.

People placed in the Oubliette stay behind in a copy of the Oubliette when you leave a given jump. It has (very) minimal plumbing. Hope you left someone behind who remembers to feed them or whatever.

The Oubliette itself is a cylindrical room about ten meters high and five meters in diameter. There's no unusual features except its geometry that makes escape difficult, so you might want to enhance that.

It's possible that other people will notice the blurs or unreadable text and know that something has been erased, and possibly work out the generalities of what it was, if the item/person was sufficiently important.

Chamber of Eyes is roughly 5m x 5m in area.

The Castle's Keys provides physical lock keys, not electronic keys or encryption keys.

Quizard Castle - You can choose to alter the layout of the castle when you buy it or when it inserts into the world. There's no proper map of the castle so feel free to fanwank it.
The 343 "rooms" have no uniform dimensions, ranging from small storerooms up to grand ballrooms or even swaths of open forest growing within the area enclosed by the castle's walls. The architecture is by default somewhat chaotic.
Connecting areas like hallways or stairwells aren't included in this count unless there's something special about them.

Drawbacks

Yet Darker – Finding the Blue Diamond is not the instant win it would otherwise be, but would still be a good first step. Maybe it needs purifying in a distant spring to render him mortal, or to be plunged into the Quizard's shrivelled heart while he's outside the castle walls. Whatever the case, it won't be simple.

Location Word Find Answers

Courtyard, Garden, Guardroom, Keep, Maze, Kitchen, Library, Study, Tower, Dungeons, Lab, Moat, Wall.