

# Sorcery

## Knowledge and Power

*Wits and swords are as straw's against the wisdom of the 'Darkness,' growled the Stygian, his dark eyes flickering with menacing lights and shadows.*

### SORCERY: AN OVERVIEW

**THERE ARE ONLY** two possible reasons to study sorcery in the Hyborian Age – knowledge and power. Of the two, power is by far the most common motivation. True seekers after knowledge are scarce indeed, though often a scholar will convince himself he desires knowledge rather than power – and it may even be true, until he falls prey to the dreadful, corrupting influences of the dark forces with which he traffics.

What might be termed 'true' sorcery can be gained by one or more of the following methods: delving into the half-forgotten grimoires of a bygone age; contact with gods, demons, or other spirits; and learning directly from another sorcerer. All three methods are risky. The first often puts the body at direct risk, for the grimoires that are not already in the possession of some adept or other are usually hidden away in ghost-haunted tombs or lotus-poisoned jungles. The latter two almost always require the sorcerer to put his mind, body and soul alike in thrall to the greater power from whom he learns. This true knowledge grants such power, though, that it is almost always worth the price.

Along with true sorcery, which is spectacularly effective but usually quite exhausting to carry out, every sorcerer supplements his magic with trickery of one kind or another. Hypnotism and mesmerism are most common in Eastern regions, and a strong-willed sorcerer can often use them to control others as though by magic. A more powerful sorcerer can supplement his mesmeric tricks with raw magical energy, or use spells to hypnotise at a distance. Herbal potions and alchemical

tricks, often infused with true sorcerous power in advance, can be found throughout the world, though most can be used only by the sorcerer who made them or another given careful instruction by him.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR SPELLCASTING

A spellcaster must have both hands free, that is, he must not be carrying any weapon, shields, or other objects in his hands. The only exceptions to this are as follows:

- † When a spell requires a material component or focus of some kind, in which case the appropriate object must be held in one hand when the spell is cast.
- † When a spell affects an object or objects, in which case the spell may allow or require said objects to be touched or picked up.

### PREPARING SORCERY

Most sorcery requires lengthy preparations and is tiring in the extreme to the sorcerer. Generally only prestidigitation, counterspells, hypnotism and other relatively minor sorcery can be used more or less as required, and even they benefit from advance preparation. Often sorcerers find it best to use their magic to create arcane powders or similar objects that can be wielded at need, since that way they have something that is useful in combat.

This necessary preparation time is reflected in the long casting times for the more serious magic.

### POWER POINTS

All creatures have a certain amount of magical power flowing through them simply by being alive. Sorcerers, who are usually but not always members of the scholar class, have learnt to activate this magical power both in themselves and by draining the life force out of or sacrificing others. This power can be used



*I go to my tent,* answered Xaltotun, rising. *Necromancy is not accomplished by the waving of a wand. Send a rider to Tarascus. And let none approach my tent.*

*That last command was unnecessary. No man in that host could have been bribed to approach that mysterious black silken pavilion, the door-flaps of which were always closely drawn. None but Xaltotun ever entered it, yet voices were often heard issuing from it, its walls billowed sometimes without a wind, and weird music came from it. Sometimes, deep in midnight, its silken walls were lit red by flames flickering within, limning misshapen silhouettes that passed to and fro.*

*Lying in his own tent that night, Amalric heard the steady rumble of a drum in Xaltotun's tent: through the darkness it boomed steadily, and occasionally the Nemedian could have sworn that a deep, croaking voice mingled with the pulse of the drum. And he shuddered, for he knew that voice was not the voice of Xaltotun. The drum rustled and muttered on like deep thunder, heard afar off, and before dawn Amalric, glancing from his tent, caught the red flicker of lightning afar on the northern horizon. In all other parts of the sky the great stars blazed whitely. But the distant lightning flickered incessantly, like the crimson glint of firelight on a tiny, turning blade.*

to create a variety of magical effects by those who are sufficiently knowledgeable.

### What is a Sorcerer?

In game terms, a sorcerer is any character who has learned at least one sorcery style as a class feature of the scholar class, or who has gained partial access to at least one sorcery style as a result of taking the Dabbler feat. This is the definition used throughout this chapter.

Note that a scholar who always elects to choose a bonus feat instead of a sorcery style is not regarded as a sorcerer, unless of course he selects the Dabbler feat.

Of course, public perception of who is and is not a sorcerer may be very different. A worthy priest of Ibis (scholar class) who has spent years learning the Counterspells sorcery style may technically be a sorcerer according to these rules (and a powerful one at that), but the members of his congregation will certainly not consider him to be so. Doubtless, after all, he has been granted divine powers to help fight Ibis's old enemy Set, and that, of course, is not sorcery – not in the popular perception. On the other hand, a dilettante noble who dabbles even so slightly in the Summoning sorcery style may find himself hounded out of town for his foul magic, though his actual knowledge of sorcery may be far more limited than the priest's.

Each scholar starts out with 4 Base Power Points (4 PP), altered up or down by his Wisdom modifier, if any, and by any bonuses due to class level. Other characters who learn a small amount of sorcery tend to do so by the Dabbler feat (see p. 113), which grants them a mere 2 + Wisdom modifier PP for use.

This is the standard amount of PP a sorcerer has available, assuming there are no special circumstances. It may go up or down, usually depending on magic he casts, losing or winning magical contests with other sorcerers, imbibing certain drugs, and sacrificing other creatures. The absolute maximum PP a character may have is equal to double their Base PP, unless otherwise specified.

## GAINING AND LOSING POWER POINTS

When your PP is higher than your Base PP for any reason, it gradually begins to revert back to your Base PP. Each hour that passes will cause your PP to fall by 1 PP until it is back to your Base PP again.

Your Power Points are reduced whenever you cast a spell, or sometimes if you are the victim of certain magical attacks. In addition, if you are ever reduced below 1 hp by any means, your Power Points are also immediately reduced to zero. You cannot regain PP until you have been brought back to 1 hp or above by some means.

You can gain Power Points directly from the body of other living creatures, by sacrificing them or draining the life force out of their still-living bodies – see Sacrifices and Energy Drains, below.

If you rest, can regain Power Points that have been lost for any reason, up to your Base PP as usual. 1 PP is regained per full two hours of rest.

A group of followers can help you gain Power Points by assisting you with a ritual – see Power Rituals, below.

## SACRIFICES AND ENERGY DRAINS

If you sacrifice a creature by coup de grace, you may gain one power point for each full 8 hit points the creature had before being dealt damage by the coup de grace. This amount may be increased by selecting Ritual Sacrifice and other feats (see Chapter 5: Tricks of Sword and Sorcery). It is always possible to sacrifice a creature purely to a specific entity such as your god or a demon with which you have some kind of pact, in which case it gains the power points rather than you gaining them.

If you have a creature helpless and under your power, you may place your hand against his skin and drain 1d4 Power Points from him as a full-round action. If he is a sorcerer, this is removed from his usual Power Points. If he is not a sorcerer, this drain causes him 2d6 damage to Wisdom,



Table 8-1: Power Rituals (Power Points Gained per Hour)

Number of Celebrants	Average Check Result				
	Less than 10	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25+
10 to 19	0	1	2	3	4
20 to 49	0	2	4	6	8
50 to 99	0	3	6	9	12
100 or more	0	4	8	12	16

and he may not be drained again in this way until his Wisdom has returned to normal.

## POWER RITUALS

You may also gain Power Points by being at the centre of a large group ritual dedicated to granting you magical energy.

At least ten celebrants must be involved with this. Each must have at least 1 rank in any Perform skill. At least 20% of the celebrants must have 1 rank in Perform (ritual) specifically.

A power ritual takes at least 1 hour, during which time the celebrants and sorcerer can perform no other actions including spellcasting. Each of the celebrants makes a Perform check (which once more must be Perform – Ritual for at least 20% of the celebrants). It is usual for the celebrants to Take 10 on this check. The Games Master cross-references the average check result for the celebrants with the number of celebrants on Table 8-1: Power Rituals (Power Points Gained per Hour) to determine how many Power Points the sorcerer gains from the power ritual.

A power ritual that continues for more than one hour allows the sorcerer to gain additional Power Points each additional hour.

If desired, two or more sorcerers can split the Power Points gained from a Power Ritual in any manner on which they can mutually agree.

## PUSHING IT

It is possible, though not always advisable, for a sorcerer to reduce his Power Points below zero due to the performance of an especially powerful piece of magic.

A sorcerer's Power Points can be reduced to a negative number equal to his Base PP. For example, a sorcerer with a Base PP of 7 could reduce his Power Points as low as -7. It is simply not possible to go below this number.

A sorcerer whose Power Points are below 0 may regain them by rest, but only at the rate of 1 PP per full day of rest, until he is back at 0 once again at which point the usual rapid restoration of Power Points begins. He may also regain them more quickly by the usual means of sacrifice, use of black lotus and so forth.

While his Power Points are below 0, the sorcerer may not cast any further spells (even if he could theoretically reduce his PP still further) and is considered to be fatigued (cannot run or charge, -2 to Strength and Dexterity) until his Power Points are somehow restored to 0 or above once more.

## THE RULES OF SORCERY

Though sorcery often seems mysterious to those who do not practice it, certain patterns can be gleaned from the descriptions given by Conan and his allies.

### THE RULE OF SUCCESS

As Conan puts it, 'Sorcery thrives on success, not on failure.' Whenever a sorcerer is, broadly speaking, succeeding at what he is doing when in a high-stress situation (particularly combat), he becomes still more effective at what he is doing. At its most powerful, this can lead to a dreadful chain reaction that can make sorcerers almost unstoppable.

Every round in which a sorcerer successfully slays at least one opponent, either by sorcerous means or by combat, he gains a morale bonus to all attack rolls and magic attack rolls made for one round after he killed them. This bonus is as follows:

Enemies Killed	Morale Bonus
1	+1
2-4	+2
5-9	+3
10-19	+4
20-49	+5
50-99	+6
100-199	+7
200-499	+8
500-999	+9
1000+	+10

The bonus is immediately cancelled if the sorcerer loses any hit points during the round following the actions that gave him the bonus.

Note that these benefits are in addition to any bonus power points the sorcerer may gain for having sacrificed one or more of those he kills.



Furthermore, the rule of success makes it far easier for a sorcerer to repeat a spell which was successful. If he ever casts a spell which succeeds in all that it was intended to do, he may cast the same spell the following round at half the usual Power Point cost (rounded down) for the spell. This even affects spells with a casting time of greater than one round, so long as the spell is re-cast within one round of the previous casting being finished.

For example, an *awful rite of the were-beast* only ever affects a single victim. Thus, any time a target fails his saving throw, it can be assumed that the spell is successful, and the next casting expends only 4 Power Points if cast immediately after the first use of the spell.

The Games Master always has the final say as to whether a particular spell succeed sufficiently well to grant this special bonus.

Both the magic attack bonus and the reduced PP cost from the Rule of Success can apply simultaneously, if applicable.

*He felt an urge to hasten, not mere blind panic, but an instinct of peril growing behind his back. He said nothing to Yasmina, and she seemed content to nestle her dark head against his arching breast and find security in the clasp of his iron arms. He paused an instant on the brink of the chasm, frowning down. The haze which danced in the gorge was no longer rose-hued and sparkling. It was smoky, dim, ghostly, like the life-tide that flickered thinly in a wounded man. The thought came vaguely to Conan that the spells of magicians were more closely tied to their personal beings than were the actions of common men to the actors.*

## THE RULE OF IMPERMANENCE

Almost every spell or magic item has only a limited duration. If nothing else, all such sorcerous creations will cease functioning the moment the sorcerer who created them is killed, unless noted otherwise.

Any time a sorcerer is reduced below 0 hit points, he must make a separate Will save (DC 25) for each of his sorcerous creations, of whatever kind. If this is failed, the creation ceases functioning. In the case of a spell, this means it simply stops working. For a magic item of some kind, it crumbles into dust or shatters into tiny fragments, becoming not only non-magical but non-existent.

Furthermore, if a sorcerer is reduced to killed or left for dead (see p. 172), all his sorcerous creations immediately cease functioning, as above, with no chance to be saved.

*Conan gazed over the billowing waves of spears and wondered what new horror the sorcerer would invoke. Somehow he felt that Natohk, like all his kind, was more terrible in defense than attack: to take the offensive against him invited disaster.*

## THE RULE OF DEFENCE

Sorcerers generally have plenty of close-range magic ideal for counter-attacks, so that any who attempt to bring death to them will risk destruction themselves.

Any character with at least one sorcery style is also able to unleash a defensive blast, as follows, as a last-resort counter-attack:

- † A defensive blast is a free action. It may be taken either on the sorcerer's own turn, or any other time he is eligible to act or attack, such as when he takes an attack of opportunity or unleashes a readied action.
- † All the sorcerer's current power points are expended.
- † Any creature within a 10-foot radius of the sorcerer will be dealt 1d6 fire damage per power point expended. They may attempt Fortitude saves (DC = sorcerer's magic attack roll) for half damage.

## THE RULE OF OBSESSION

For most sorcerers, their magic is an obsession that drives them on, constantly forcing them to seek out new sources of knowledge and new forms of power. Diluting that obsession by any means, whether falling in love, pursuing a new career, or demonstrating overmuch loyalty to a cause other than their own sorcerous masters – tends to weaken their magic considerably. However, if they can somehow draw the source of the distraction into themselves – for example, by sacrificing their loved one, succeeding at a major test in the new profession, or rising to the top of a non-sorcerous organisation only to entice all its members to their own destruction as a mass sacrifice – their power is significantly boosted.

In effect, the rule of obsession is played out somewhat like a minor quest or sub-plot alongside the main campaign. A sorcerer can always declare himself obsessed with something other than sorcery. If he does so, his Base Power Points are reduced by -1 to -3, depending on the strength of the obsession. These may be regained – with interest – only by somehow drawing the object of the obsession into himself. Until that point, his BPP will remain penalised, though of course the character's current Power Points can still go up and down as usual. Maximum Power Points are calculated from his new Base PP.

The Games Master may also rule a sorcerer to be so obsessed, though he







*Lust for a woman weakened my sorcery,  
Now the woman is mine, and feasting on her  
soul, I shall be unconquerable! 'Back, fool! You  
have not conquered Thugra 'Khotan!*

should do so with care. Usually the only two possible reasons for doing so are as follows:

- † The sorcerer acquires an Allegiance (see p. 74) to someone or some group other than his own sorcerous master or masters, or some demon or other.
- † The sorcerer acquires more levels of some other class than he has levels of scholar.

On the other hand, it is said that observers can tell when someone is obsessed with something and that the obsessed cannot usually tell. This being the case, the Games

Master is certainly permitted to make statements along the lines of 'you are clearly obsessed with hunting this particular individual down – if this continues, I will certainly rule you to be Obsessed.'

The Games Master is also always at liberty to veto any obsession that the player chooses for his character, to avoid abusive or just plain implausible obsessions.

A sorcerer with an obsession can regain his lost 1 to 3 BPP, and gain a permanent increase equal to the same amount he originally lost, by somehow incorporating the essence of the obsession into himself and his sorcery – a form of symbolic (or in some cases literal) cannibalism. The precise nature of this incorporation depends on the obsession, but some guidelines are given above.

The key to understanding the Rule of Obsession is that in essence the sorcerer is 'gambling' between one and three permanent points of BPP.

Generally speaking, a sorcerer should not be permitted more than one obsession per year.

The rule of obsession never applies to a sorcerer who does not have any levels in the scholar class. A mere Dabbler (see Chapter 5: Tricks of Sword and Sorcery) is unaffected by the rule of obsession, as he is by definition not obsessed with sorcery, but simply toying with its dark powers.

*Example: Ankh-af-na-Khonsu is a Stygian sorcerer of some considerable repute, but has found himself drawn to the service of the highly charismatic King of Koth. He is a 12<sup>th</sup> level scholar with a Wisdom of 14, so his Base Power Points are 9 and his Maximum Power Points are 27. He has an*

*Allegiance (Koth) which has developed over some years living in that land and working directly for the King. The Games Master decides this to be an obsession worth 2 points of BPP, so Ankh-af-na-Khonsu's BPP is reduced to 7 and his MPP to 21. The sorcerer realises he must somehow draw the obsession back into himself, and proposes a plan to the Games Master. He intends to hypnotise the King of Koth on a long-term and complete basis, forcing the unfortunate monarch to tear apart the kingdom of Koth in a series of futile wars, punitive taxes, and bizarre laws. Eventual, when the kingdom is on the brink of revolt, he intends to slay and ritually devour the King and seize power himself. If he succeeds, he will have drawn both king and country into himself, one way or the other, and he will be in harmony once more. The Games Master agrees that if he succeeds, his lost 2 BPP will be returned, and he will be further rewarded with a +2 bonus to BPP for the increase in power gained by incorporating his obsession into himself, for a total of 11 BPP and 33 MPP. As it turns out, Ankh takes some years to achieve his aim, and by the time he does so he is 14<sup>th</sup> level. This would usually give him a BPP of 10 and an MPP of 40, but while reduced he is on a BPP of 8 and an MPP of 32. Once he has succeeded in his aims, he will be at a BPP of 12 and an MPP of 48.*



## THE RULE OF THE MASTER

Two of the backgrounds for the scholar class involve the character being at least partially in thrall to a superior: Acolyte and Pact. Any character with one of these backgrounds, or any character who later joins a sorcerous society or learns the *demonic pact* spell, or who takes on apprentices of his own, is subject to the Rule of the Master.

The Rule of the Master concerns any character who has learnt sorcery from a more powerful sorcerer or demon, who is known as the master. His apprentices, coven novices, or other students are known as thralls.

The Rule of the Master has the following effects.

**Manipulation:** The master of any coven, sorcerous society, or even just an apprentice or two, always gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks targeting any of his thralls, and a +1 circumstance bonus to magic attack rolls against them.

**Power Transfer:** The master may at any time attempt to remove or grant a number of Power Points to any or all of his thralls. This requires either physical touch with the apprentice, or the master to have on his person some form of magical link to the apprentice (see p. 198 for full details of magical links). Once per round as a free action, the master may take up to 5 Power Points from any one thrall for his own use, or grant said thrall up to 5 Power Points for the thrall's use. If desired, the thrall may attempt to resist this by making a Will save, with the DC set by the master's magic attack roll.

**Note:** Most masters will ensure they gain some kind of magical link to the thrall before teaching them a single spell – perhaps a contract signed in blood, or a lock of hair.

**Ritual Spell:** The master can perform ritual spells with his various thralls. Any spell he knows can be cast in a ritualistic manner.

The spell's casting time is equal to (1 hour + 10 minutes per participating thrall) or the spell's usual casting time, whichever is greater. Additional incenses, oils, smoke-powders and other accoutrements must be expended, to a cost of 50 sp per participating thrall. The Power Point cost of the spell is raised by +2 per participating thrall, though this may be provided by power transfer (see above) as usual.

Each thrall who succeeds at a Perform (ritual) check (DC = 10 + total PP cost of casting the spell, including the +2 increase per participating thrall) grants the master a +1 bonus to the magic attack roll or skill roll he makes as part of the spell. For spells with a greater range than touch, each +1 bonus granted in this way also increases the range of the spell by +10%.

## THE RULE OF THE SORCERER'S SOUL

The very process of becoming a sorcerer wrecks permanent changes to the very soul of the sorcerer, changes that other sorcerers and supernatural entities can detect just by looking at them.

Any sorcerer, magical beast, or outsider who can meet the eyes of a sorcerer (if he could cast an Evil Eye range spell, he can meet the target's eyes) can immediately sense the latter's sorcerous nature. Furthermore, if he spends a standard action examining the sorcerer further, he may make a magic attack roll (opposed by the target's Will save) to determine approximately how corrupt and powerful the sorcerer is, based on the following scales:

### Corruption Points

0  
1-3  
4-6  
9-9  
10+

### Description

Uncorrupted  
Mildly Corrupted  
Corrupted  
Totally Corrupted  
Diabolical

### Current Power Points

Less than 1  
1-4  
5-8  
9-12  
13-16  
17+

### Description

Drained  
Very Weak  
Weak  
Strong  
Very Strong  
Master

A successful magic attack roll made in this manner will also reveal the sorcerer's type and subtype. For example, a character with the feat Spawn of Dagoth Hill will be revealed to another sorcerer as an Outsider (native) if he fails his Will save, and a character who has become a mummy or vampire will be revealed as Undead (augmented humanoid).

## SPELL FAILURE

If you ever try to cast a spell in conditions where the characteristics of the spell cannot be made to conform, the casting fails and the spell is wasted.

## THE SPELL'S RESULT

Once you know which creatures (or objects or areas) are affected, and whether those creatures have made successful saving throws (if any were allowed), you can apply whatever results a spell entails.

## CONCENTRATION

To cast a spell, you must concentrate. If something interrupts your concentration while you are casting, you must make a Concentration check or lose the Power Points casting the spell would have cost. Furthermore, if the spell is one which could cause Runaway



**Magic** (see below) you must make a Will save (DC 15) failure results in Runaway Magic as described on page 194. The more distracting the interruption and the higher the PP Cost of the spell you are trying to cast, the higher the DC is. If you fail the check, you lose the spell just as if you had cast it to no effect.

**Injury:** If while trying to cast a spell you take damage, you must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + points of damage taken + PP Cost). If you fail the check, you lose the Power Points that would have been spent to cast the spell. The interrupting event strikes during spellcasting if it comes between when you start and when you complete a spell (for a spell with a casting time of 1 full round or more) or if it comes in response to your casting the spell (such as an attack of opportunity provoked by the spell or a contingent attack, such as a readied action).

If you are taking continuous damage (such as from fire or spell) half the damage is considered to take place while you are casting a spell. You must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + 1/2 the damage that the continuous source last dealt + PP cost of the spell). If the last damage dealt was the last damage that the effect could deal then the damage is over, and it does not distract you.

Repeated damage does not count as continuous damage.

**Spell:** If you are affected by a spell while attempting to cast a spell of your own, you must make a Concentration check or lose the spell you are casting. If the spell affecting you deals damage, the DC is 10 + points of damage + PP cost of the spell.

If the spell interferes with you or distracts you in some other way, the DC is the spell's saving throw DC + PP cost of the spell. For a spell with no saving throw, it's the DC that the spell's saving throw would have if a save were allowed.

**Grappling or Pinned:** The only spells you can cast while grappling or pinned are those without somatic components and whose material components (if any) you have in hand. Even so, you must make a Concentration check (DC 20 + PP cost of the spell) or lose the spell.

**Vigorous Motion:** If you are riding on a moving mount, taking a bouncy ride in a wagon, on a small boat in rough water, below-decks in a storm-tossed ship, or simply being jostled in a similar fashion, you must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + PP cost of the spell) or lose the spell.

**Violent Motion:** If you are on a galloping horse, taking a very rough ride in a wagon, on a small boat in rapids or in a storm, on deck in a storm-tossed ship, or being tossed roughly about in a similar fashion, you must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + PP cost of the spell) or lose the PP cost.

**Violent Weather:** You must make a Concentration check if you try to cast a spell in violent weather. If you are in a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet, the DC is 5 + PP cost of the spell. If you are in wind-driven hail, dust, or debris, the DC is 10 +

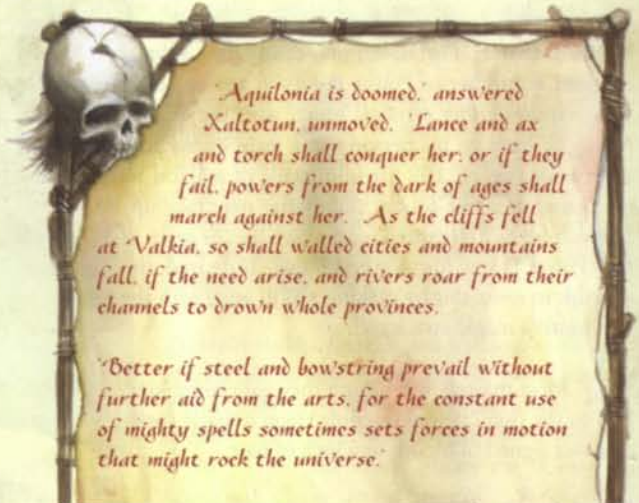
PP cost of the spell. In either case, you lose the PP cost if you fail the Concentration check. If the weather is caused by a spell, use the rules in the Spell subsection above.

**Casting Defensively:** If you want to cast a spell without provoking any attacks of opportunity, you must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + PP cost of the spell) to succeed. You lose the PP cost if you fail.

**Entangled:** If you want to cast a spell while entangled in a net or some similar effect, you must make a DC 15 Concentration check to cast the spell. You lose the PP cost if you fail.

## CONSEQUENCES OF MAGIC

Any force so powerful as sorcery can have consequences, some of them quite unintended by its practitioners. This section covers the two main risks: a series of spells leading to a magical chain reaction, and the danger of corruption or madness through contact with demonic entities.



## MIGHTY SPELLS AND RUNAWAY MAGIC

Any time a particularly powerful spell is used, there is a risk that serious, world-wrenching consequences will result. This is particularly the case with the Summonings style, which has a real tendency to upset some kind of magical balance and set powerful, uncontrollable forces into motion.

All the spells which could potentially cause a runaway magic result are marked with an asterisk (\*) in Table 8-3: Spells (see p. 199). These are known as mighty spells.

A sorcerer can cast up to one mighty spell per week without fear of dangerous consequences. Each time he casts a further mighty spell within 7 days of the first one, he must make a Will



**Table 8-2: Runaway Magic**

Die Roll	Result
1-10	Minor Burnout! The sorcerer's magical energies are drained off to place or person unknown. He loses 1d4 Power Points. If this would reduce him below 0 PP, he is instead reduced to 0 PP and dealt 1d6 damage to Wisdom.
11-18	Major Burnout! The sorcerer's magical energies are drained off to place or person unknown. He loses 2d6 Power Points. If this would reduce him below 0 PP, he is instead reduced to 0 PP and dealt 1d8 damage to Wisdom and 1d8 damage to Charisma.
19-24	Minor Sorcerous Implosion! Magical energies tear the sorcerer apart. His Power Points are reduced to 0 and he is dealt 10d6 damage.
25-28	Major Sorcerous Implosion! Magical energies tear the sorcerer apart. His Power Points are reduced to 0 and he is dealt 15d6 damage.
29-30	Rock the Universe! The sorcerer is killed outright by the forces which he has released. An area around him, 1d6 miles in radius, is devastated by earthquakes, storms, floods, lightning and meteorites, dealing 20d6 damage to all within the area and reshaping the landscape as the very Earth itself is rent and pounded.
31+	Fate Worse Than Death! As for Rock the Universe (29-30), plus as follows. A sorcerous rift into the Outer Dark is opened, and a demon from that dread realm pulls the sorcerer's soul through the rift, severing the magical silver cord that bound his soul to his body. He is eternally damned, and his body is either a lifeless husk or (at the Games Master's discretion) is inhabited by a minion of the demon.

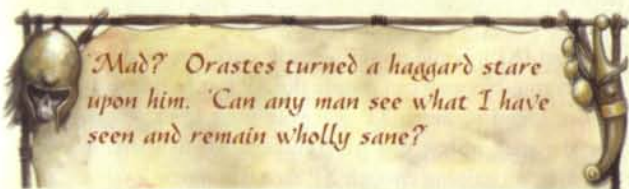
**Modifiers to Table 8-2: Runaway Magic**

- +1 for each point by which the Will save was failed
- + sorcerer's Corruption score

save. This Will save starts out at DC 10, but the DC rises by +5 for each additional mighty spell cast within 7 days of the first mighty spell.

If the Will save is failed, roll 1d20 and consult the Runaway Magic table.

## CORRUPTION AND INSANITY



For the amoral sorcerer, with some insight into just how powerful and dangerous are the forces aligned against humanity, there is a stark choice between simply giving in to those forces, and giving in to despair or madness at the recognition that those forces will someday win. Almost every high-level sorcerer is likely to be either corrupt or mad, at least to some degree.

Insanity only has a chance to affect sorcerers who already have at least one point of Corruption. Those who have managed to avoid being corrupted do not yet have the evil insights that can lead them to insanity if they later reject attempts to further corrupt them.

Each time an already corrupt sorcerer successfully saves against Corruption, he must make a second saving throw at the same DC as the first. Failure causes him to become shaken (-2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) for 1d6 rounds and gain a permanent, minor insanity as agreed by the player and Games Master from the list below (or from elsewhere if desired).

A sorcerer who already has a minor insanity and fails a second insanity save becomes shaken once more, this time for 3d6 rounds, and gains a permanent major insanity, as agreed by the player and Games Master from the list below.

It is always possible to opt to fail the save against Corruption, if one would prefer to become corrupted rather than mad.

### MINOR INSANITIES

**Delusion:** This is any belief which is not true, for example that the resurrected giant-kings of Old Stygia are plotting to overthrow the kingdom of Ophir, or that the Baracha pirates are a bunch of lovable rogues rather than black-hearted murderers. The delusion could be a mild form of paranoia, or simply a complete misunderstanding of one minor aspect of the way the world works.

**Phobia:** Choose one suitable phobia, such as snakes, apes, insects, spiders, or plant creatures. Whenever the character is in the presence of a creature that could trigger the phobia, he must make a Will save (DC 20) or be panicked (-2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws,



skill checks, and ability checks, must flee the cause of the panic until he can no longer see it.

*Sleeplessness:* The character lies awake for several hours every night, unable to sleep or find rest. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) every morning or wake up fatigued (-2 to Strength and Dexterity, cannot run).

## MAJOR INSANITIES

*Paranoia:* This is similar to *delusions*, but far more severe; the sorcerer believes in a number of highly personalised delusions, all of them relating to persecution and treachery towards himself.

*Voices:* The character constantly hears voices, often insistently demanding that he performs particular actions. Any time he is in a stressful situation (at the Games Master's discretion) he must make a Will saving throw (DC 20) or be controlled by the Games Master for 1d6 rounds, as he carries out an act to the order of the voices.

*Hallucinations:* The character sees objects which are not there, and objects which are there are distorted. He suffers a constant penalty of -2 to all attack rolls, whether melee or ranged.

## RECOVERING FROM INSANITY

A character who does not practice any sorcery or have contact with Corrupting influences for three months may make a Will saving throw (DC 15 for minor insanity, DC 20 for major insanity) at the end of that time to completely recover from his insanity.

# SPELLS AND SPELLCASTING

Sorcerers in Hyboria are limited by their strength of will and command of magic. In Conan the RPG, this translates into their Power Points. Most spells have several prerequisites, much in the same way that Feats do – a sorcerer must meet the prerequisites before learning the spell.

Many spells require either a magic attack roll or a skill check as part of the casting process. This is detailed as part of the entry for each spell.

## SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

The description of each spell is presented in a standard format. Each category of information is explained and defined below.

### NAME

The first line of every spell description gives the name by which the spell is generally known.

## POWER POINT COST

As described above, each spell in Conan The Roleplaying game has a PP cost that must be paid by the sorcerer wishing to cast it.

## COMPONENTS

A spell's components are what you must do or possess to cast it. The Components entry in a spell description includes abbreviations that tell you what type of components it has. Specifics for material, focus, and XP components are given at the end of the descriptive text. Usually you don't worry about components, but when you cannot use a component for some reason or when a material or focus component is expensive, then the components are important.

**Verbal (V):** A verbal component is a spoken incantation. To provide a verbal component, you must be able to speak in a strong voice. A gag or some other obstruction to speaking spoils the incantation (and thus the spell). A spellcaster who has been deafened has a 20% chance to spoil any spell with a verbal component that he or she tries to cast.

**Somatic (S):** A somatic component is a measured and precise movement of the hand. You must have at least one hand free to provide a somatic component.

**Material (M):** A material component is one or more physical substances or objects that are annihilated by the spell energies in the casting process. Unless a cost is given for a material component, the cost is negligible. Don't bother to keep track of material components with negligible cost. Assume you have all you need as long as you have your spell component pouch.

**Focus (F):** A focus component is a prop of some sort. Unlike a material component, a focus is not consumed when the spell is cast and can be reused. As with material components, the cost for a focus is negligible unless a price is given. Assume that focus components of negligible cost are in your spell component pouch.

**XP Cost (XP):** Some powerful spells entail an experience point cost to you. No spell can restore the XP lost in this manner. You cannot spend so much XP that you lose a level, so you cannot cast the spell unless you have enough XP to spare. However, you may, on gaining enough XP to attain a new level, use those XP for casting a spell rather than keeping them and advancing a level. The XP are treated just like a material component—expended when you cast the spell, whether or not the casting succeeds.

## CASTING TIME

Most spells have a casting time of 1 standard action. Others take 1 round or more, while a rare few require only a free action.

A spell that takes 1 round to cast is a full-round action. It comes into effect just before the beginning of your turn in the round



when you began casting the spell. You then act normally after the spell is completed.

A spell that takes 1 minute to cast comes into effect just before your turn 1 minute later (and for each of those 10 rounds, you are casting a spell as a full-round action, just as noted above for 1-round casting times). These actions must be consecutive and uninterrupted, or the spell automatically fails.

When you begin a spell that takes 1 round or longer to cast, you must continue the concentration from the current round to just before your turn in the next round (at least). If you lose concentration before the casting is complete, you lose the spell.

A spell with a casting time of 1 free action doesn't count against your normal limit of one spell per round. However, you may cast such a spell only once per round. Casting a spell with a casting time of 1 free action doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

You make all pertinent decisions about a spell (range, target, area, effect, version, and so forth) when the spell comes into effect.

## SPELL RANGES

A spell's range indicates how far from you it can reach, as defined in the Range entry of the spell description. A spell's range is the maximum distance from you that the spell's effect can occur, as well as the maximum distance at which you can designate the spell's point of origin. If any portion of the spell's area would extend beyond this range, that area is wasted. Standard ranges include the following.

**Personal:** The spell affects only you.

**Touch:** You must touch a creature or object to affect it. A touch spell that deals damage can score a critical hit just as a weapon can. A touch spell threatens a critical hit on a natural roll of 20 and deals double damage on a successful critical hit. Some touch spells allow you to touch multiple targets. You can touch as many willing targets as you can reach as part of the casting, but all targets of the spell must be touched in the same round that you finish casting the spell.

**Close:** The spell reaches as far as 25 feet away from you. The maximum range increases by 5 feet for every two full caster levels.

**Medium:** The spell reaches as far as 100 feet + 10 feet per caster level.

**Long:** The spell reaches as far as 400 feet + 40 feet per caster level.

*"Point of contact?" inquired the other. "Do you mean that lock of 'Bhunda Chand's hair?"*

*"Yes. All discarded portions of the human body still remain part of it, attached by intangible connections. The priests of Asura have a dim inkling of this truth, and so all nail trimmings, hair and other waste products of the persons of the royal family are carefully reduced to ashes and the ashes hidden. But at the urgent entreaty of the princess of 'Khosala, who loved 'Bhunda Chand vainly, he gave her a lock of his long black hair as a token of remembrance. When my masters decided upon his doom, the lock in its golden, jewel-encrusted case, was stolen from under her pillow as she slept, and another substituted, so like the first that she never knew the difference. Then the genuine lock travelled by camel-caravan up the long, long road to 'Peshkhauri, thence up the Zhaibar Pass, until it reached the hands of those for whom it was intended."*

*"Only a lock of hair," murmured the nobleman.*

*"By which a soul is drawn from its body and across gulfs of echoing space," returned the man on the mat.*

**The Evil Eye:** Some spells require the caster to meet the target's eye. This can affect a target within 30 ft. The caster simply chooses a target within range, and that opponent must attempt a saving throw.

If the target has already specified he is averting his eyes from the caster's face by some means, he target has a 50% chance of not having to make a saving throw. In this case the caster gains one-half concealment against the target (so any attack the target makes against the creature has a 20% miss chance).

A target, who has specified that he has shut his eyes or turned his back on the caster, or is wearing a blindfold, does not need to make a saving throw. The caster gains total concealment against the target as if the caster were invisible. Thus, any attack the target makes against the caster has a 50% miss chance, and the opponent cannot use sight to target attacks.

If visibility is limited (by dim lighting, a fog, etc.) so that it results in concealment, there is a percentage chance equal to the normal miss chance for that amount of concealment that the target will not need to make a saving throw. This chance is not cumulative with chances to avoid the evil eye, but instead is rolled separately.

Characters using darkvision in complete darkness are affected by an evil eye spell normally.

If the target is able to avoid meeting the caster's gaze during the round the spell is cast, the evil eye spell has no effect.



**Unlimited:** The spell reaches anywhere on Hyboria.

**Magical Link:** Anyone with even a vague, half-mythical understanding of sorcery – and that includes almost everyone in the Hyborian Age – knows of several highly sinister methods of sending out a spell from the sorcerer to his victim. The sorcerer uses an item that has an intimate connection with the victim, such as a fragment of his clothing, a discarded sandal, a nail-clipping or lock of hair, or some bodily fluid or other. Whichever method is used, this is known as the Magical Link.

If a Magical Link is available, the sorcerer may use certain spells (those with a range listed as 'magical link') against the victim from any range, even if he is unable to see the victim. The sorcerer must hold the Magical Link in his hand when casting the spell to gain these benefits, and retain it about his person for the duration of the spell, or else the spell instantly ends.

**Range Expressed in Feet:** Some spells have no standard range category, just a range expressed in feet.

## SPELL DURATIONS

A spell's Duration entry tells you how long the magical energy of the spell lasts.

**Timed Durations:** Many durations are measured in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other increment. When the time is up, the magic goes away and the spell ends. If a spell's duration is variable the duration is rolled secretly (the caster doesn't know how long the spell will last).

**Instantaneous:** The spell energy comes and goes the instant the spell is cast, though the consequences might be long-lasting.

**Permanent:** The energy remains as long as the effect does. This means the spell is vulnerable to *dispel magic*.

**Mortal:** Due to the Law of Impermanence, permanent effects are almost impossible for most sorcerers to create. Long-lasting spells instead work for a duration of Mortal. This lasts for as long as the sorcerer himself is still alive, though it may be affected by the Law of Impermanence as usual if he is badly injured.

**Concentration:** The spell lasts as long as you concentrate on it. Concentrating to maintain a spell is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can also break your concentration while you are maintaining one, causing the spell to end.

You cannot cast a spell while concentrating on another one. Sometimes a spell lasts for a short time after you cease concentrating.

**Power Points:** A spell with a duration of Power Points will last as long as the caster continues to pay the Power Point cost whenever required to do so.

**Subjects, Effects, and Areas:** If the spell affects creatures directly the result travels with the subjects for the spell's duration. If the spell creates an effect, the effect lasts for the duration. The effect might move or remain still. Such an effect can be destroyed prior to when its duration ends. If the spell affects an area then the spell stays with that area for its duration.

Creatures become subject to the spell when they enter the area and are no longer subject to it when they leave.

**Touch Spells and Holding the Charge:** In most cases, if you don't discharge a touch spell on the round you cast it, you can hold the charge (postpone the discharge of the spell) indefinitely. You can make touch attacks round after round. If you cast another spell, the touch spell dissipates.

Some touch spells allow you to touch multiple targets as part of the spell. You cannot hold the charge of such a spell; you must touch all targets of the spell in the same round that you finish casting the spell.

**Discharge:** Occasionally a spell lasts for a set duration or until triggered or discharged.

**(D) Dismissible:** If the Duration line ends with '(D),' you can dismiss the spell at will. You must be within range of the spell's effect and must speak words of dismissal, which are usually a modified form of the spell's verbal component. If the spell has no verbal component, you can dismiss the effect with a gesture. Dismissing a spell is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

A spell that depends on concentration is dismissible by its very nature, and dismissing it does not take an action, since all you have to do to end the spell is to stop concentrating on your turn.

## THE MAGIC ATTACK ROLL

A magic attack roll is made whenever you attempt to injure another with your magic and in most cases when you attempt to compel another. It is made as follows:

**Magic Attack Roll:** 1d20 + Magic Attack Bonus + Charisma modifier

In most cases it is opposed by the victim's relevant saving throw.

## SORCERY STYLES

The following styles of sorcery are available to scholar characters in *Conan The RPG*. Some of them may also be gained in a limited form by non-scholar characters, by selecting the Dabbler feat (see p. 113).



Table 8-3: Sorcery Styles

Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
<i>Counterspells</i>	Warding (Basic Counterspell)	—
	Greater Warding	10 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), <i>warding</i>
	Incantation of Amalric's Witchman	4 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), <i>warding</i>
	Rune of Jhebbal Sag	4 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), 6 ranks of Knowledge (religion), Wis 13, <i>warding</i>
<i>Curses</i>	Lesser Ill-Fortune (Basic Curse)	—
	Awful Rite of the Were-Beast	Magic attack bonus +6 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i>
	Curse of Yizil	Magic attack bonus +4 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , <i>warding</i>
	Dance of the Changing Serpent	Magic attack bonus +4 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , must be a Pict
	Draw Forth the Soul	Magic attack bonus +7 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , Ritual Sacrifice, Tormented Sacrifice
	Gelid Bones	Magic attack bonus +2 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , <i>calm of the adept</i>
	Greater Ill-Fortune	Magic attack bonus +3 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i>
	Ill-Fortune	Magic attack bonus +1 or higher, <i>lesser ill-fortune</i>
<i>Divination</i>	Astrological Prediction (Basic Divination)	Knowledge (arcana) 4
	Dream of Wisdom	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , <i>visions</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Knowledge Is Power class feature
	Mind-Reading	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 8
	Psychometry	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 5
	Sorcerous News	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 12
	Greater Sorcerous News	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , <i>sorcerous news</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 16
	Visions	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks
	Visions of Torment and Enlightenment	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , <i>visions</i> , <i>entrance</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 12 ranks, magic attack bonus +5
<i>Hypnotism</i>	Entrance (Basic Hypnotism)	—
	Dance of the Cobras	<i>Entrance</i> , <i>telekinesis</i> , Ritual Sacrifice, Perform (any musical instrument) 8 ranks, must be a worshipper of Hanuman
	Domination	<i>Entrance</i> , magic attack bonus +3
	Dread Serpent	<i>Entrance</i> , magic attack bonus +4
	Hypnotic Suggestion	<i>Entrance</i> , magic attack bonus +2
	Mass Hypnotic Suggestion	<i>Entrance</i> , <i>hypnotic suggestion</i> , magic attack bonus +5



	Ranged Hypnotism	<i>Entrance, hypnotic suggestion</i> , magic attack bonus +5
	Savage Beast	<i>Entrance, hypnotic suggestion</i> , magic attack bonus +3
<i>Nature Magic</i>	Summon Beast (Basic Nature Magic)	Knowledge (nature) 4 ranks
	Animal Ally	Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, <i>summon beast</i>
	Children of the Night	Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, <i>summon beast</i>
	Greater Summon Beast	Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, <i>summon beast</i>
	Sorcerous Garden	Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 12 ranks, <i>summon beast</i>
<i>Necromancy</i>	Raise Corpse (Basic Necromancy)	Scholar level 4+
	Agonising Doom	<i>Raise corpse, death touch</i> , magic attack bonus +6
	Black Plague*	Magic attack bonus +7, <i>raise corpse</i>
	Greater Black Plague*	Magic attack bonus +8, <i>black plague, raise corpse</i>
	Death Touch	<i>Raise corpse</i> , magic attack bonus +5
	Draw Forth the Heart	Magic attack bonus +7, Ritual Sacrifice, Opportunistic Sacrifice, Tormented Sacrifice, <i>raise corpse, death touch, agonising doom, conjuration, telekinesis</i>
<i>Oriental Magic</i>	Calm of the Adept (Basic Oriental Magic)	Wis 13
	Darting Serpent	<i>Calm of the adept</i> , scholar level 3
	Shape-Shifter	<i>Calm of the adept</i> , scholar level 12
	Warrior Trance	<i>Calm of the adept</i> , scholar level 3
	Yimsha's Carpet	<i>Calm of the adept, summon elemental</i> , scholar level 14
<i>Prestidigitation</i>	Conjuring (Basic Prestidigitation)	Scholar level 1, Sleight-of-Hand 4 ranks
	Burst Barrier	<i>Prestidigitation</i> , scholar level 3
	Telekinesis	<i>Prestidigitation</i> , scholar level 3, Sleight-of-Hand 5 ranks
	Telekinesis, Greater	<i>Prestidigitation, telekinesis</i> , scholar level 3, Sleight-of-Hand 6 ranks, Bluff 6 ranks
<i>Summonings</i>	Master-Words and Signs (Basic Summoning)	Magic attack bonus +6, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, must know at least four sorcery styles, must never have cast the <i>demonic pact</i> spell
	Demonic Pact (Basic Summoning)	Scholar level 1, Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks
	Demonic Pact, Greater *	Magic attack bonus +6, <i>demonic pact</i> , Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, must know at least four sorcery styles, must have cast the <i>demonic pact</i> spell
	Summon Demon*	<i>Master-words and signs</i> or <i>demonic pact</i> , magic attack bonus +4
	Summon Elemental*	<i>Master-words and signs</i> or <i>greater demonic pact</i> , magic attack bonus +7, Perform (song or any musical instrument) 15 ranks.

#### Notes to Table 8-3: Sorcery Styles

Sorcery styles in *italic* are suitable choices for 1<sup>st</sup>-level scholars.

\* Spells marked with an asterisk are potentially world-changing ones that are especially likely to have runaway magic effects (see p. 194).



*Zamorian thieves, partly protected by spells I learned from sources better left unmentioned, stole your mummy-case from under the very talons of those which guarded it in the dark and by camel-caravan and galley and ox-wagon it came at last to this city.*

*Those same thieves - or rather those of them who still lived after their frightful quest - stole the Heart of Ahriman from its haunted cavern below the temple of Mitra, and all the skill of men and the spells of sorcerers nearly failed. One man of them lived long enough to reach me and give the jewel into my hands, before he died slaving and gibbering of what he had seen in that accursed crypt. The thieves of Zamora are the most faithful of men to their trust. Even with my conjurements, none but they could have stolen the Heart from where it has lain in demon-guarded darkness since the fall of Acheron, three thousand years ago.*

## COUNTERSPELLS

Counterspells are very much sought-after by almost all sorcerers, since a rival wizard can be even deadlier than a sword-wielding Cimmerian to the typical sorcerer. Many scholars who do not otherwise practice sorcery learn counterspells, just so as to have a weapon of sufficient power to allow them to bring the fight to their enemy sorcerers.

## WARDING (BASIC COUNTERSPELL)

**PP Cost:** 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Effect:** One or more spells already affecting you, or one spell about to affect you.

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Magic Attack Roll:** Opposes opponent's Magic Attack Roll.

For each spell already affecting the sorcerer when it is cast, the caster of *warding* may make a magic attack roll opposed by a magic attack roll from the original caster to cancel the spell completely. Furthermore, a *warding* can be prepared with a ready action, conditional on another sorcerer casting a spell, allowing for an opponent's spell to be cancelled before it even begins.

Other counterspells may not be affected by a *warding*.

*Then before him the form began to grow dim in outline - to waver. With a terrible effort, the Aquilonian burst the bonds of silence and spoke a cryptic and awful incantation. And as the frightful words cut the silence, the white giant halted - froze - again his outlines stood out clear and bold against the golden background.*

*'Now fall on, damn you!' cried Amalric hysterically. 'I have bound you into your human shape! The black wizard spoke truly! It was the master word he gave me! Fall on, Ollan-onga - till you break the spell by feasting on my heart, you are no more than a man like me!'*

## GREATER WARDING

**PP Cost:** 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 full round

**Range:** Touch

**Subject:** Creature touched.

**Duration:** Instantaneous, or up to one hour, plus one hour/scholar level or until used, depending on version chosen.

**Prerequisites:** 10 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), *warding*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Opposes opponent's Magic Attack Roll.

*Greater warding* has two modes of use.

The first acts like a *warding* spell that can be cast on another creature, immediately countering any spell or spells affecting it if the sorcerer can succeed at a magic attack roll opposing the magic attack roll of the sorcerer who originally cast the spell.

The second use acts like a one-use *warding* spell that can be transferred to another creature. Unlike *warding*, and the first use of *greater warding*, it may be cast in advance, in which case it comes into effect as soon as another sorcerer attempts to cast a spell on the subject. After one use, it stops working.

**Material Component:** Paints and oils worth 50 sp, with which to inscribe protective runes on the subject.

## INCANTATION OF AMALRIC'S WITCHMAN

**PP Cost:** 2

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Targets:** One creature

**Duration:** Mortal

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** 4 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), *warding*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will saving throw.

This spell renders any god or demon who has taken on humanoid form to walk the earth partially human, with all the vulnerabilities of any other human. That is, a n y





innate Damage Reduction it may have had is lost, as is any immunity to critical hits, sneak attacks, and other attack forms. If it had any particular vulnerabilities, however, these are unaffected.

## RUNE OF JHEBBAL SAG

**PP Cost:** 3

**Components:** S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Touch

**Effect:** Any worshippers of Jhebbal Sag who come within 25 feet + 5 feet/scholar level of the rune.

**Duration:** Mortal

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** 4 ranks of Knowledge (arcana), 6 ranks of Knowledge (religion), Wis 13, *warding*

The *rune of Jhebbal Sag*, when inscribed or painted onto any surface, lets any worshippers of Jhebbal Sag (see Chapter 11: Religion) know that the sorcerer is friendly. Its most notable effect is to release the subject or subjects of a *summon beast* spell from the spell as soon as they come within range.

However, all animals remember their god Jhebbal Sag, and will become calm and non-aggressive if they come within range. Likewise, if any human or other intelligent worshippers of the god come within range, the sorcerer gains a +2 circumstance bonus

to all Charisma-based skill checks regarding them. In effect, he is demonstrating an allegiance to Jhebbal Sag, though this allegiance need not be true.

## CURSES

Sorcerers are feared most of all not for the dark powers with whom they traffic or the strange artefacts they create, but for what they can do to ordinary folk, cursing them in a variety of cruel and horrid ways.

Any character who is under the effects of a curse that does not have immediately obvious physical effects may attempt a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10 + scholar level of the sorcerer who cast the spell) to determine that he is affected by a curse. If he succeeds by at least 20, he can also determine the precise nature of the curse and the name of the sorcerer who cast it.

## LESSER ILL-FORTUNE (BASIC CURSE)

**PP Cost:** 2

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Evil Eye, Touch or Magical Link

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** One day

**Saving Throw:** Will negates



*'Exhausted they lay down among the ruins where red blossoms that bloom but once in a century waved in the full moon, and sleep fell upon them. And as they slept, a hideous shape crept red-eyed from the shadows and performed weird and awful rites about and above each sleeper. The moon hung in the shadowy sky, painting the jungle red and black; above the sleepers glimmered the crimson blossoms, like splashes of blood. Then the moon went down and the eyes of the necromancer were red jewels set in the ebony of night.*

*'When dawn spread its white veil over the river, there were no men to be seen: only a hairy winged horror that squatted in the center of a ring of fifty great spotted hyenas that pointed quivering muzzles to the ghastly sky and howled like souls in hell.*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

The character places a curse on the victim. The victim suffers a -1 enhancement penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks. This is not cumulative with the effects of *greater ill-fortune* or *ill-fortune* – only the most severe penalty applies.

## AWFUL RITE OF THE WERE-BEAST

**PP Cost:** 8

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 5 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates, and see below

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +6 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

This dire ritual permanently changes a human into a were-creature of a variety chosen by the sorcerer (see p. 328). The target may attempt a Will saving throw to completely negate the effects.

*'Swift! he gasped, and his weakening voice was rational. I know now what brings me to the pyre. I have been on a far journey and I understand. I have been ensorcelled by the wizards of the Hmelians. They threw my soul out of my body and far away, into a stone room. There they strove to break the silver cord of life, and thrust my soul into the body of a foul night-weird their sorcery summoned up from hell. Ah! I feel their pull upon me now! Your cry and the grip of your fingers brought me back, but I am going fast. My soul clings to my body, but its hold weakens. Quick - kill me, before they can trap my soul forever!*

If the sorcerer has the *Ritual Sacrifice* feat, he gains Power Points as though he had sacrificed the target of the spell, assuming the target fails his save and becomes a were-creature. The magical energy released by this horrific transformation is at least as great as that released by killing the target outright.

The creature altered in this way is at least partially under the thrall of the sorcerer, and will attempt to remain within 500 feet of the sorcerer at all times. However, any time the sorcerer gives the target a direct order he must make a magic attack roll against the target's Will save to compel him to obey. If the target succeeds in saving, he is temporarily released from the sorcerer's command for 1d6 rounds, after which time he may attempt another Will

save. Success on this save means he is permanently released, though he is still a were-creature; failure means he is once more under the sorcerer's thrall. At any time, the sorcerer can elect to permanently release the creature from his thrall, though again he cannot reverse the spell without some form of countermagic.

Most sorcerers thus use this spell to create guards or just cause mischief, rather than in the hope of creating a legion of permanent servants; the risk of losing control is just too great, and few were-creatures created by this spell will hold back if they get a chance to attack their erstwhile master. However, for the sorcerer who rarely calls on his creations to carry out a direct order, they can make a useful escort or guard complement, perhaps for many years.

**Material Component:** Various rare essences and herbs to a value of 100 sp.

## CURSE OF YIZIL

**PP Cost:** 2+ (see below)

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** Free action

**Range:** Evil Eye, Touch or Magical Link

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** One day

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +4 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*, *warding*

This spell is a dying curse, used by a sorcerer to weaken a rival. It may only be cast by a character who is on between -1 and -9 hit points (inclusive), but it may be cast even if that character would usually be unconscious and unable to act – he manages, somehow, to use the last of his fading willpower



to cast the spell. Immediately upon casting the spell, he dies, Fate Points notwithstanding.

The target of the spell suffers an enhancement penalty to his magic attack rolls equal to one-half the number of Power Points the sorcerer had left on casting the spell (rounded down). However, the *curse of Yizil* is so subtle that in most cases the sorcerer will have no idea it is affecting him.

*Special Note:* Any sorcerer who meets the prerequisites for this spell automatically knows it, without needing to select it with either the New Spell class feature or the Sorcerer's Boon feat.

## DANCE OF THE CHANGING SERPENT

**PP Cost:** 5

**Components:** V, S, M, F

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous, but see below

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +4 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*, must be a Pict

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

This spell places a man's soul in a ghost snake's body, and vice versa. However, unlike such spells as *awful rite of the were-beast*, the transposed souls are highly disorientated and have no insight into the correct way to control their new bodies. Both are regarded as helpless in all respects, and if left alone will eventually die of starvation as they cannot even feed themselves. Both creatures get Will saves, and if at least one of them succeeds, the spell fails.

If the sorcerer has the Ritual Sacrifice feat, he gains Power Points as though he had sacrificed the target of the spell, assuming the target fails his save and changes souls with the great serpent. The magical energy released by this horrific swapping of essences is at least as great as that released by killing the target outright.

It is common among the Picts to immediately sacrifice both snake and man, once it is clear the spell has worked. If this is done using the Ritual Sacrifice feat, the sorcerer gains Power Points as usual for the sacrifice. He also gains an enhancement bonus of +4 on all Intimidate checks against anyone who witnessed the whole ceremony. Furthermore, he gains a +1 enhancement bonus to all magic attack rolls, due to the favour of his gods. These bonuses last for one day per scholar level.



**Material Components:** Smoke-powders worth at least 50 sp, plus one ghost snake (see p. 310). If desired, this can have been summoned by means of a *summon beast* spell.

**Focus:** A bonfire at least 5 feet by 5 feet in size.

## DRAW FORTH THE SOUL

**PP Cost:** 20 for the first hour, 10 per hour thereafter

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 day

**Range:** Magical Link

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Up to one hour/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +7 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*, Ritual Sacrifice, *summon demon*, Tormented Sacrifice

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

*Draw forth the soul* pulls forth the very soul from a single target, an agonising and maddening process which can take several hours.

The victim makes a Will saving throw. If he succeeds, he is able to partially resist the effects of the spell – he is helpless for the next hour, though he is still able to speak in a somewhat rambling and pained manner. If he succeeds by 10 or more, he completely throws off the spell, and the sorcerer may not attempt to cast it on him again for at least one day. If he fails, his body dies after 10 + 5d6 minutes (during which he rambles and is helpless, as above) and his soul is forced into a demonic entity, to spend eternity in torment.

A character who partially resisted the spell must make another save after the hour is up, if the sorcerer elects to spend a further 10 PP on continuing the spell after the first hour. The second save is at a circumstance penalty of -1, but otherwise has the same effects as the first one. This process continues until either the sorcerer chooses not to spend any more PP on the spell, the target succeeds by 10 or more, or the target fails his save.

A target who is killed by this spell counts as having been sacrificed by the Tormented Sacrifice feat, with his hit points and the time it took him to die determining the amount of Power Points gained by the sorcerer as usual.



## GELIO BONES

**PP Cost:** 1 point  
**Components:** S  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** 1 hour/scholar level  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +2 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*, *calm of the adept*  
**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

The target must make an immediate Will save or be paralysed for the duration of the spell, his bones unable to support his body.

## ILL-FORTUNE

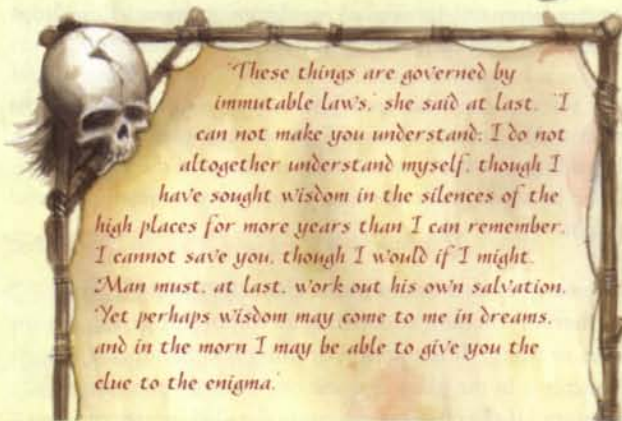
**PP Cost:** 4  
**Components:** V  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Evil Eye, Touch or Magical Link  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** One month  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +1 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*  
**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

As *lesser ill-fortune*, but the enhancement penalty is increased to -2. This is not cumulative with the effects of *greater ill-fortune* or *lesser ill-fortune* – only the most severe penalty applies.

## ILL-FORTUNE, GREATER

**PP Cost:** 8  
**Components:** V  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Evil Eye, Touch or Magical Link  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** One year  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +3 or higher, *lesser ill-fortune*  
**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

As *greater ill-fortune*, but the enhancement penalty is increased to -4. This is not cumulative with the effects of *ill-fortune* or *lesser ill-fortune* – only the most severe penalty applies.



## DIVINATION

Almost every sorcerer can find a use for divination. Information and knowledge are crucial, whether as an end in their own right or to show a path to greater power.

## ASTROLOGICAL PREDICTION (BASIC DIVINATION)

**PP Cost:** 1 point  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 3 hours  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** No (harmless)  
**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (arcana) 4  
**Skill Check:** Knowledge (arcana) (DC 11)

In the Hyborian Age, little distinction is made between astrology and astronomy. If you know another character's date and hour of birth, you can use this spell to make a somewhat cryptic prediction about their immediate future. The subject of the spell gains a special insight bonus of +1 to one die roll. An *astrological prediction* will apply to some situation within the next week – the Games Master will inform the subject of the spell which situation when the situation arises. This situation will typically be one encounter. Any one time the character must make a skill check, ability check, attack roll or saving throw during that encounter, he may apply the insight bonus to the roll. A character can only ever be the subject of one *astrological prediction* at a time. If the spellcaster's Knowledge (arcana) check is 20 or more greater than the DC (that is, if the roll is 31 or higher) the insight bonus is doubled to +2.

## DREAM OF WISDOM

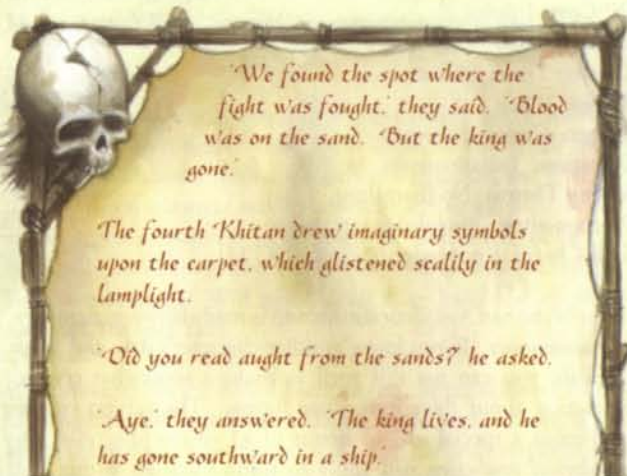
**PP Cost:** 6  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 hour  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** Self  
**Duration:** Eight hours



**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction, visions, Knowledge (arcana)* 10 ranks, Knowledge Is Power class feature

The sorcerer casts this spell just before going to sleep in the night. He dreams of significant events, places, or people, depending on what he has decided to dream of the night before. When he wakes in the morning, he may have some sort of useful insight.

A *dream of wisdom* brings to the character's mind legends or other information concerning an important person, place, or thing. If the person or thing is at hand, or if the character is in the place in question, the only one casting is necessary. If the character has only detailed information on the person, place, or thing, 2d6 castings will be necessary over the course of successive nights, and the resulting lore is less complete and specific (though it often provides enough information to help the character find the person, place, or thing, thus allowing a better *dream of wisdom* next time). If the character knows only rumours, at least 2d6 x 10 castings will be necessary over successive nights, and the resulting lore is vague and incomplete (though it often directs the character to more detailed information, thus allowing a better *dream of wisdom*).



When completed, the divination brings legends (if any) about the person, place, or things to the character's mind. These may be legends that are still current, legends that have been forgotten or even information that has never been generally known. If the person, place, or thing is not of legendary importance, the character gains no information. As a rule of thumb, characters 11th level and higher are 'legendary', as are the sorts of creatures they contend with, the major magic items they wield, and the places where they perform their key deeds.

**Material Component:** A feather, placed under the sorcerer's pillow when he goes to sleep.

## MIND-READING

**PP Cost:** 2 points

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Concentration, up to one round plus one round/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction, Knowledge (arcana)* 8

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

Unless the target succeeds at a Will save, you are able to detect its emotional state and current surface thoughts, including its immediate intentions. This can only affect creatures that have an Intelligence score. Creatures of animal intelligence (Intelligence 1 or 2) will only have the simplest thoughts and most basic of emotions.

## PSYCHOMETRY

**PP Cost:** 1 point

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One object

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level

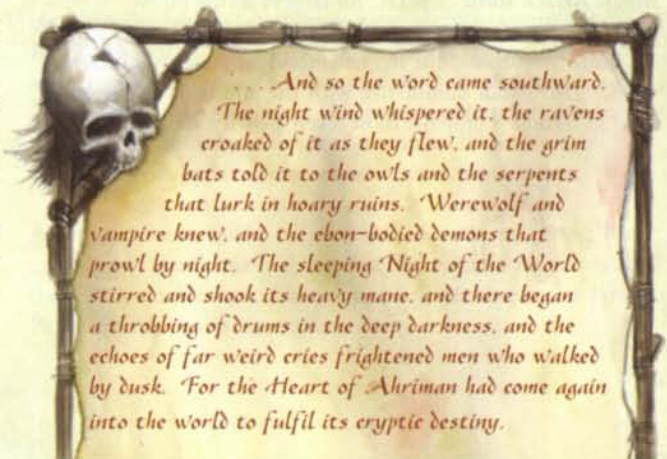
**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction, Knowledge (arcana)* 5

**Skill Check:** Knowledge (arcana) (DC 11)

*Psychometry* allows the sorcerer to determine information about the previous owner of an object touched. The object may be a completely lifeless inanimate object, or a body part or fluid previous 'owned' by a still-living creature. Examples of the latter include the hair of a wolf, found caught in thorn-bush; or the blood of a king, spilled forth on the sand during a desperate fight to the death.

Each round the sorcerer concentrates on the object, he may make a Knowledge (arcana) check to find out one piece of information, as shown on Table 8-4: Psychometry. If he fails, he may make another attempt to determine the same information





in the following round, instead of moving directly on to the next piece of information.

**Table 8-4: Psychometry**

Round	Information Learned
1	Last owner's species (human, man-ape, jaguar etc)
2	Last owner's gender
3	Last owner's land of origin (Cimmeria, Hyrkania, the Vilayet Sea etc)
4	Last owner's age
5	Last owner's current state of health
6	Last owner's current location and heading, if moving
7	Last owner's name, if any
8	How the last owner came by the object
9	How the last owner lost the object
10	Whether the last owner had any Corruption
11	Previous-to-last owner's species (human, man-ape, jaguar etc)
12	Previous-to-last owner's gender
Etc.	Etc.

## SORCEROUS NEWS

**PP Cost:** 2 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** 2,000 miles plus 1,000 miles/scholar level

**Effect:** See below

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction*, Knowledge (arcana) 12

**Skill Check:** Knowledge (arcana) (see below)

Certain animals, supernatural creatures and high-level sorcerers alike are connected by a sorcerous 'news network' allowing them to be kept informed of major developments around the world. *Sorcerous news* allows the sorcerer to listen in on this network and send out messages on it. It may only be cast during the hours of darkness.

A Knowledge (arcana) check is made. The check result indicates the type of news gained:

Check Result	News
15	Movements of major artefacts such as the Heart of Ahriman
20	The sudden appearance or re-appearance of a sorcerer of great power (scholar level 15+)
25	The death of a king
30	The plundering of an ancient tomb

The precise form and extent of the news given is always up to the Games Master, but it should usually include the location and time-scale of any events covered.

Sending out a message with *sorcerous news* does not require a check, but the news will not carry far unless it is regarded as highly interesting by the various messengers who pass it on.

**Material Component:** Assorted incenses and powders worth 20 sp.

## SORCEROUS NEWS, GREATER

**PP Cost:** 4+ points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** 10,000 miles plus 2,000 miles/scholar level

**Effect:** See below

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction*, *sorcerous news*, Knowledge (arcana) 16

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

**Skill Check:** Knowledge (arcana), Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy (see below)

This works much like *sorcerous news*, except as follows.

† The sorcerer gains a +2 bonus to the relevant Knowledge (arcana) check.

† By making a Magic Attack Roll, the sorcerer can attempt to prevent a specific other sorcerer who has the *sorcerous news* spell from hearing a particular piece of news that night, or insert a piece of false news for that sorcerer's ears only. The target may make a Will saving throw to avoid this effect, in which case he also has a chance of discovering the attempted meddling when he uses *sorcerous news* himself and makes his Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 30).

† The sorcerer can extend the *sorcerous news* network to carry rumours or news to ordinary people, as well as the usual sorcerers and similar beings. For each city to which the news is to be carried, this process takes around one hour and costs an additional Power Point. The sorcerer can select specific pieces of news to deliver. This effect can be used to stir up trouble or calm it, depending on the news spread. In this case he makes a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check (as agreed by the player and Games Master, depending on the type of news to be spread). The DC is set by the Games Master and is usually between 15 and 35, depending on the size and nature of the city, the attitude the people may already have, any especial susceptibility or resistance they may have to sorcerous communications, and any other factor determined by the Games Master as relevant.



*Conan did not see what she cast into the fire, but the wolf whimpered in his dreams, and a green smoke gathered and billowed up into the hut. And as he watched, the walls and ceiling of the hut seemed to widen, to grow remote and vanish, merging with infinite immensities: the smoke rolled about him, blotting out everything. And in it forms moved and faded, and stood out in startling clarity.*

*He stared at the familiar towers and streets of Tarantia, where a mob seethed and screamed, and at the same time was somehow able to see the banners of Nemedra moving inexorably westward through the smoke and flame of a pillaged land.*

**Material Component:** Assorted incenses and powders worth 50 sp.

## VISIONS

**PP Cost:** 2/minute

**Components:** S, M or F

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** 1,000 miles plus 100 miles/scholar level

**Effect:** Magical sensor (see below).

**Duration:** Power Points

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction*, Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks

**Skill Check:** Knowledge (arcana), DC 10 + 1 per 100 miles distant the target is beyond the first 100 miles.

You can see and hear events at any distance. This spell produces an invisible magical 'sensor' that sends a moving image back to your focus or material component, providing you with a view of the site or person upon which you wish to spy. This view can be very close up, as though it were a human eye, or very far away and high up so as to see the whole of a battlefield or other wide scene, such as a hawk's eye might observe.

If desired, you may instantaneously move your magical sensor to any other point within range, up to once per minute.

**Focus/Material Component:** This spell requires either a focus, or alternatively a material component. One or the other will do; if you have a focus available, you have no need for a material component.

The focus can take the form of a crystal ball (see p. 227) or silvery mirror (see p. 228).

The material component can be either a handful of special herbs thrown onto an ordinary fire to produce green smoke in which the visions can be seen, or else a dose or two of a suitably hallucinogenic drug such

as black lotus wine (see p. 230), in either case costing around 100 sp.

## VISIONS OF TORMENT AND ENLIGHTENMENT

**PP Cost:** 4 for the first minute, then 1/minute thereafter

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Touch or Evil Eye

**Target:** One sentient creature (Int 3+)

**Duration:** Power Points, up to a maximum of one minute per scholar level.

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Astrological prediction*, *visions*, *entrance*, Knowledge (arcana) 12 ranks, magic attack bonus +5

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

This spell enables the sorcerer to force a number of bizarre visions upon an unsuspecting victim, propelling him through past lives and ancestral memory in a wild mental voyage of self-discovery. This can be a highly disturbing experience, and is often used in an attempt to either break prisoners or test out potential recruits for sorcerous societies. Those who are overwhelmed by the spell are permanently impaired by what they have learned, while those who can steel themselves to learn something from their tormented visions may achieve some form of enlightenment.

The target is highly disoriented for the duration of the spell, with a penalty of -4 to all attack rolls, skill checks, and Defence Value. At the end of the spell, he attempts a Will saving throw. If he fails, he is dealt damage to Wisdom depending on how long his visions lasted:

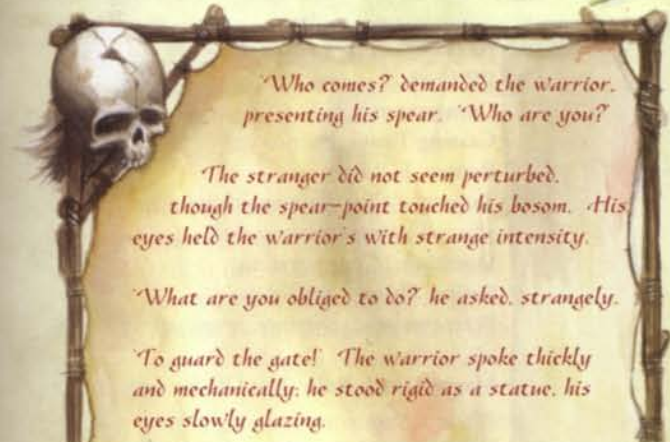
Duration of Spell	Wisdom Damage
1-6 minutes	1d4
7-11 minutes	1d6
12-15 minutes	1d8
16-18	1d10
19	2d6
20	2d8

If he succeeds, he instead gains a permanent +1 enhancement bonus to Wisdom, so long as the spell lasted at least ten minutes.

No character can be affected by Wisdom gains or losses from this spell more than once, though he will still be affected by the penalties to attack rolls etc. if targeted a second time.

**Material Component:** A dose of a suitable hallucinogenic drug such as lotus-juice (see p. 230), costing around 100 sp. This must be somehow administered to the target before the spell can be cast.





*'Who comes?' demanded the warrior, presenting his spear. 'Who are you?'*

*'The stranger did not seem perturbed, though the spear-point touched his bosom. His eyes held the warrior's with strange intensity.'*

*'What are you obliged to do?' he asked, strangely.'*

*'To guard the gate! The warrior spoke thickly and mechanically; he stood rigid as a statue, his eyes slowly glazing.'*

## HYPNOTISM

Hypnotism is extremely useful both as a direct means of attack and for far more subtle purposes. Though it may not be so quick as a hurled globe of demon-fire, still it can provide fairly rapid effects, and those significantly more versatile than mere flaming destruction.

Hypnotism is not inherently sorcerous. Much hypnotism is simply mesmerism, an ability to take advantage of another's superstitious fears and unconscious willingness to be dominated. This type of hypnotism requires no expenditure of Power Points, but simply takes time. It is for this reason that some scholars regard hypnotism as beneath themselves, considering it to be no true sorcery. However, many of the more advanced hypnotic spells do require sorcery, when it comes to forcing a victim to do as you say, or affecting him at distances where mere mesmerism would be quite unfeasible.

## ENTRANCE (BASIC HYPNOTISM)

**PP Cost:** 0

**Components:** S, M or F

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

When you cast this spell, the target creature must make a Will save or be unable to take any actions for as long as you concentrate. Creatures with 5 or more HD are unaffected. If the creature is attacked or sustains damage while entranced, it may attempt a saving throw again to throw off the effects of the spell.

This spell can only affect a creature of 16 or less hit dice.

It is possible to boost the power of this spell by preparation. For each full round in which you do nothing but stare at the target creature before attempting to entrance it (whether or not you have eye-to-eye contact over that time), you can affect a creature

of +2 HD and you gain a circumstance bonus of +1 on your magic attack roll.

Note that an entranced creature is not stunned, so attackers gain no special advantage against it.

## DANCE OF THE COBRAS

**PP Cost:** 5 points

**Components:** S, M, F

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One humanoid creature

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Entrance, telekinesis*, Ritual Sacrifice, Perform (any musical instrument) 8 ranks, must be a worshipper of Hanuman

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Reflex saves or Perform checks.

The *dance of the cobras* is an extensive and elaborate but powerful ritual sacrifice, revolving around four pre-prepared, hypnotised snakes.

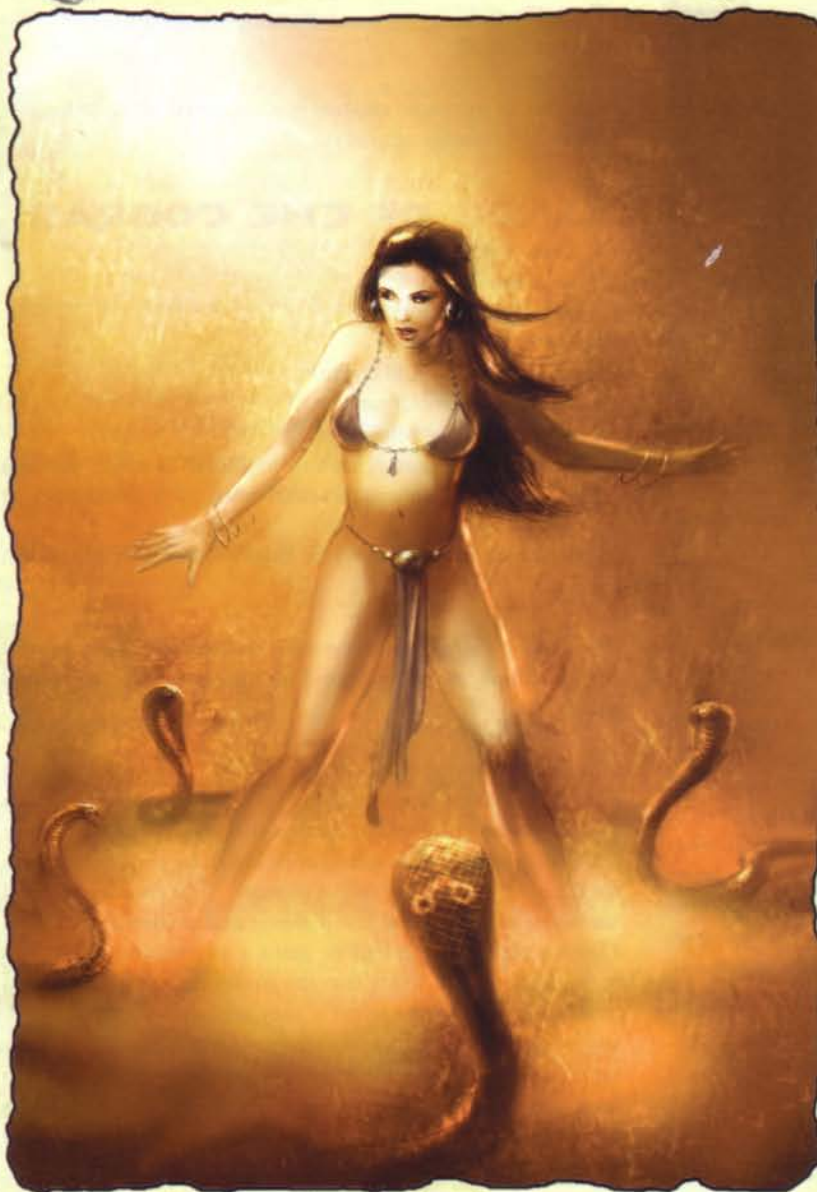
Four jars containing the snakes are smashed about the target. In effect, the snakes are inside the target's five-foot square, though at the very corners of it. For the first 1d6 rounds, the target must make a Reflex save each round or be bitten by one of the snakes for the usual damage for such a creature. If he chooses to spend the whole of each round just dodging snakes (similar to a Total Defence action in combat) he gains a +4 circumstance bonus to his Reflex saves. Note that the snakes do not make normal attack rolls against the target – they are, after all, hypnotised, and even at this stage there is a strange, rhythmic quality to their rapid, darting movements. However, if the target attempts to leave the square, all four snakes immediately make attacks as normal – they are assumed to have attacks readied for just such an eventuality.

After the initial 1d6 rounds, the spell creates unearthly music sacred to the god Hanuman, and the hypnotised snakes begin to dance. The target may either continue to make Reflex saves to avoid them, with a +2 synergy bonus if he has at least five ranks of Perform (dance), or he may instead simply make Perform (dance) checks at the same DC to avoid the snakes.

If the victim dies from being bitten by the snakes, whether from direct damage or from poison, the sorcerer who cast the spell gains a number of benefits as follows:

- † Power Points as though the target had been slain by the Ritual Sacrifice feat, except that 1 PP for ever 3 hp of the target is gained, or 1 PP for ever 2 hp if the target was a female human. The usual limit for Maximum Power Points applies.





† +2 morale bonus to all attack rolls and magic attack rolls for the next 24 hours.

If the victim somehow escapes or is rescued, the sorcerer instead suffers a -1 morale penalty to Defence Value and all saving throws for the next day.

**Material Component:** Four jade jars, worth at least 100 sp each. With the snakes inside (see below), these must be balanced among the rafters of the room in which the spell is to be used, or, if the caster has *greater telekinesis* available, concealed somewhere in the room or about the person of the sorcerer.

**Focus:** Four cobras, of at least Small size (see *Chapter 12: A Hyborian Bestiary*). These must be somehow placed in the jars before the spell is cast.

## DOMINATION

**PP Cost:** 2 points

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One humanoid who is already affected by your *entrance* spell.

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Entrance*, magic attack bonus +3

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will saves.

The sorcerer can control the actions of any humanoid whom he has already *entranced* (see p. 209). They must share a common language, so that the sorcerer can give instructions. Casting this spell ends the effects of the *entrance* spell, as *domination* immediately supersedes said spell. The target does not gain a saving throw to resist the *domination* except as follows.

This spell can only affect a creature of 8 or less hit dice.

Targets resist this control if forced to take actions against their nature. In this case, they receive a new Will saving throw with a bonus of +1 to +2, depending on the type of action required. Obviously self-destructive orders would be worth a +2 bonus.

Among other uses of this spell, the sorcerer can cause the target to fall asleep, as well as removing short-term memories from the target (such as the memory of having seen the sorcerer in the first place).

Once control is established, the range at which it can be exercised is unlimited, but new orders can only be granted if the sorcerer is within shouting distance of the target (60 feet).

## DREAD SERPENT

**PP Cost:** 3 points

**Components:** V, S, (F)

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One humanoid usually one who is already affected by your *entrance* spell (but see below).

**Duration:** One round

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** *Entrance*, magic attack bonus +4

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will saves.



This spell creates an illusionary snake or similarly dread, poisonous creature from another object. The illusion affects only the target, with any other observers seeing clearly that the object remains itself. *Dread serpent* can be used in one of two modes:

- † Turning part of the target's clothing into a serpent. In this case, the target must be *entranced* by you before the spell is cast. Casting this spell ends the effects of the *entrance* spell, as *dread serpent* immediately supersedes said spell – this means that if the *dread serpent* fails, the target is no longer *entranced* either.
- † Turning your own sorcerer's staff into a serpent, and hurl it at the target's feet. In this case the target must be within 20 feet of you, though you need not make an attack roll against him. The main advantage of this mode of the spell is that you need not have *entranced* the target before casting it.

The target receives a Will saving throw. If he fails, he perceives the serpent biting him, and dies at once. If he makes his saving throw, he perceives himself slaying it in turn, and it reverts to the original object. In either case, making the saving throw (and, in the target's perception, fighting the snake) takes one round, during which time the target may not take any other actions and is at -2 to Defence Value due to distraction.

**Focus:** For the second mode of operation, this spell requires you to be carrying a staff worth at least 50 sp, though it can functionally be a quite mundane quarterstaff if nothing else is available. It could be simply an ornate or decorated quarterstaff, or some kind of magical staff.

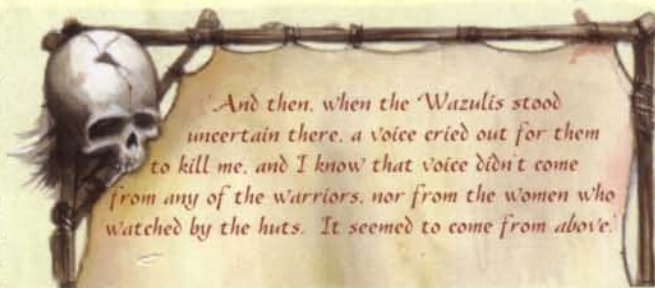
## HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

**PP Cost:** 1 point  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Evil Eye  
**Target:** One living creature  
**Duration:** 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level, or until completed  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Prerequisites:** *Entrance*, magic attack bonus +2  
**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will saves.

The character influences the actions of the enchanted creature by suggesting a course of activity (limited to a sentence or two). The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable to the person. In effect, it can remove the influence of either the conscious will or the unconscious desires, so that they will perform the suggested course of action that otherwise reason or instinct might have prevented.

This spell can only affect a creature of 12 or less hit dice.

The suggested course of activity can continue for the entire duration of the spell. If the suggested activity can be completed in a shorter time, the spell ends when the subject finishes what



*And then, when the Wazulis stood uncertain there, a voice cried out for them to kill me, and I know that voice didn't come from any of the warriors, nor from the women who watched by the huts. It seemed to come from above.*

he was asked to do. The character can instead specify conditions that will trigger a special activity during the duration. For example, the character might suggest that a noble knight give his warhorse to the first beggar he meets. If the condition is not met before the spell expires, the activity is not performed.

A very reasonable suggestion causes the save to be made with a penalty (such as -1, -2, etc.) at the discretion of the DM.

## HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION, MASS

**PP Cost:** 8 points  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./scholar level)  
**Area:** All creatures in a radius of 30 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level  
**Duration:** 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level, or until completed  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Prerequisites:** *Entrance*, *hypnotic suggestion*, magic attack bonus +5  
**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will saves.

As *hypnotic suggestion*, except that all creatures of 8 HD or below who can hear the sorcerer's voice are affected.

Furthermore, the caster is able to magically project his voice as though it were emanating from any point in the spell's range. Any creature within the area is affected, unless they are deaf or have stopped their ears in advance. Stopping their ears ahead of time allows opponents to avoid having to make saving throws against Sound spells. Stopping one's ears is a full-round action and requires wax or other soundproof material to stuff into the ears.

## RANGED HYPNOTISM

**PP Cost:** +4 points  
**Components:** As per original spell, plus M  
**Casting Time:** As per original spell, plus one full round  
**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft. per scholar level) or Magical Link  
**Target:** As per original spell  
**Duration:** As per original spell  
**Saving Throw:** As per original spell  
**Prerequisites:** *Entrance*, *hypnotic suggestion*, magic attack bonus +5





**Magic Attack Roll:** As per original spell

A hypnotist of sufficient power can expend a vast amount of energy to hypnotise someone at a distance. The victim must either be within line of sight, or a magical link (see p. 198) must be used. Any of the standard hypnotism spells can be made ranged with this spell.

The components are as for the original spell, except as follows.

**Material Component:** In addition to any material components required by the original spell, ranged hypnotism requires various herbal powders to a total cost of 100 sp.

## SAVAGE BEAST

**PP Cost:** 4 points

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One living creature, plus see below

**Duration:** 1 round/scholar level, plus see below

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** *Entrance, hypnotic suggestion,*  
magic attack bonus +3

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for  
target's Will saves.

This spell turns an ordinary animal into a ravaging & berserk monster, very difficult to kill and very dangerous to fight. The creature resembles a rabid animal when so affected. This spell can only affect a creature of 16 or less hit dice.

The target is affected as though it was in a state of fighting-madness, as for the Fighting-Madness feat (see p. 115). The sorcerer can specify an enemy or group of enemies within the target's line of sight, and it will move as rapidly as possible towards them and attack them ferociously. If no enemy or enemies are specified, it will simply attack the closest living creature to it.

The target also gains the benefits of the Diehard feat.

In addition, the target's bite attack, if any, has the side-effect of 'transmitting' the spell to any creature damaged by the bite. This acts in every way as though the creature damaged has been had the spell cast on it by the same sorcerer that cast it on the original target, but this creature is not affected until 2d10 rounds after being bitten.



**Table 8-5: Animal Allies**

Class Level	Bonus HD	Natural DR Adj.	Str/Dex Adj.	Bonus Tricks	Special
3 <sup>rd</sup> –5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+1	1	Link
6 <sup>th</sup> –8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+2	2	Evasion
9 <sup>th</sup> –11 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+3	+3	3	Devotion
12 <sup>th</sup> –14 <sup>th</sup>	+8	+4	+4	4	Multiattack
15 <sup>th</sup> –17 <sup>th</sup>	+10	+5	+5	5	
18 <sup>th</sup> –20 <sup>th</sup>	+12	+6	+6	6	Improved evasion

## NATURE MAGIC

Nature magic affects or summons plants and animals. It is commonly found among witches, wisewomen, and shamans, since it is relatively simple to learn and highly effective in the wilderness or rural environments favoured by such scholars.

### SUMMON BEAST (BASIC NATURE MAGIC)

**PP Cost:** 1+ points

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 1 mile/scholar level

**Target:** One animal that can be found in the local environment

**Duration:** 1 minute/scholar level, plus see below

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (nature) 4 ranks

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

This spell summons a creature of the animal subtype, up to Medium-size, to serve the sorcerer. The PP cost is 1 for an animal of Small size or smaller, and 2 for an animal of Medium-size.

The sorcerer may specify the animal he wishes to summon. If that animal is not found within one mile, he may specify an alternate animal, but this will take another action and require a different focus (see below). He may keep specifying alternate animals until he finds one that is within a mile. The PP cost is always paid for the animal that is actually summoned, not necessarily the first choice of animal.

The animal will serve the sorcerer without question, including attacking his enemies. However, summoned creatures may become uncontrolled if they sustain damage.

At the end of any round during which a summoned creature is dealt damage, it must make a Will save (DC = 10 + damage sustained that round). Failure indicates that the creature's pain overcomes its desire to serve the sorcerer, and it flees away from the damage-dealing source as rapidly as possible.

For some reason, any animal summoned by a Pictish scholar has a pale, almost ghostly appearance. This has no particular game

effect, but simply appears to be a peculiarity of the Pictish style of sorcery.

**Focus:** A small image or carving of the animal to be summoned. This can be re-used on a later occasion.

**Experience point cost:** 25 xp (50 xp for a Medium-size creature).

### ANIMAL ALLY

**PP Cost:** 6 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 day

**Range:** 1 mile/scholar level

**Target:** One animal that can be found in the local environment

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, *summon beast*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

The sorcerer gains an animal ally selected from the following list: badger, camel, dog, war dog, eagle, hawk, horse (any), owl, pony, scorpion (black), snake (any of Medium-size or smaller), or wolf. This animal is a loyal companion that accompanies the sorcerer on his adventures as appropriate for its kind.

A 1<sup>st</sup>-level scholar's ally is completely typical for its kind except as noted below. As a scholar advances in level, the animal's power increases as shown on the table.

If this spell is cast while the sorcerer already has an animal ally acquired by use of *animal ally*, the previous ally, if still alive, is released from service.

A scholar of 6<sup>th</sup> level or higher may select from alternative lists of animals (see below). Should she select an animal ally from one of these alternative lists, the creature gains abilities as if the character's scholar level were lower than it actually is. Subtract the value indicated in the appropriate list header from the character's scholar level and compare the result with the scholar level entry on the table to determine the animal ally's powers. (If this adjustment would reduce the scholar's effective level to 0 or lower, he cannot have that animal as a companion.)



An animal ally is different from a normal animal of its kind in many ways. The ally is treated as a magical beast, not an animal, for the purpose of all effects that depend on its type (though it retains an animal's HD, base attack bonus, saves, skill points, and feats). It is superior to a normal animal of its kind and has special powers, as described below.

**Animal Ally Basics:** Use the base statistics for a creature of the companion's kind, but make the following changes.

**Class Level:** The character's scholar level.

**Bonus HD:** Extra eight-sided (d8) Hit Dice, each of which gains a Constitution modifier, as normal. Remember that extra Hit Dice improve the animal ally's base attack, dodge and base save bonuses. An animal ally has good Fortitude, Will and Reflex saves (treat it as a character whose level equals the animal's HD). An animal ally gains additional skill points and feats for bonus HD as normal for advancing a monster's Hit Dice.

**Natural DR Adj.:** The number noted here is an improvement to the animal ally's existing natural Damage Reduction.

**Str/Dex Adj.:** Add this value to the animal ally's Strength and Dexterity scores.

**Bonus Tricks:** The value given in this column is the total number of 'bonus' tricks that the animal knows in addition to any that the sorcerer might choose to teach it (see page 95). These bonus tricks don't require any training time or Handle Animal checks, and they don't count against the normal limit of tricks known by the animal. The sorcerer selects these bonus tricks, and once selected, they cannot be changed.

**Link (Ex):** A sorcerer can handle her animal ally as a free action, or push it as a move action, even if she doesn't have any ranks in the Handle Animal skill. The sorcerer gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all Ride and Handle Animal checks made regarding an animal ally.

**Evasion (Ex):** If an animal ally is subjected to an attack that normally allows a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage if it makes a successful saving throw.

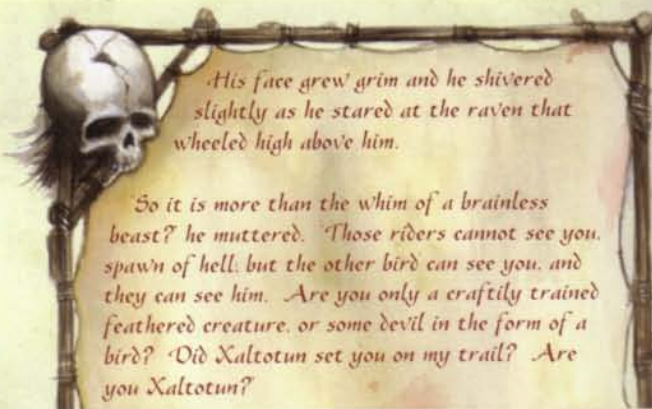
**Devotion (Ex):** An animal ally gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves against enchantment spells and effects.

**Multiattack:** An animal ally gains Multiattack as a bonus feat if it has three or more natural attacks and does not already have that feat. If it does not have the requisite three or more natural attacks, the animal ally instead gains a second attack with its primary natural weapon, albeit at a -5 penalty.

**Improved Evasion (Ex):** When subjected to an attack that normally allows a Reflex saving throw for half damage, an animal ally takes no damage if it makes a successful saving throw and only half damage if the saving throw fails.

#### Alternative Animal Allies

A scholar of sufficiently high level can select his animal ally from one of the following lists, applying the indicated adjustment to his level (in parentheses) for purposes of determining the ally's characteristics and special abilities.



#### 6th Level or Higher (Level -3)

Aurochs (animal)  
Ape (animal)  
Bear, black (animal)  
Boar (animal)  
Cheetah (animal)  
Leopard (animal)  
Lizard, monitor (animal)  
Snake, constrictor (animal)  
Snake, Large viper (animal)  
Wildcat (animal)

#### 9th Level or Higher (Level -6)

Bear, brown (animal)  
Lion (animal)  
Rhinoceros (animal)  
Sabre-Tooth (animal)  
Snake, Huge viper (animal)  
Tiger (animal)

#### 12th Level or Higher (Level -9)

Snake, giant constrictor (animal)

#### 15th Level or Higher (Level -12)

Elephant (animal)

**Material Component:** A small image or carving of the animal to be allied with, plus 100 sp worth of incenses and herbs.

**Experience point cost:** 150 xp.

## CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT

**PP Cost:** 1 point/raven

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** 1 mile/scholar level

**Target:** One creature whose name or description is known to you, or to whom you have a Magical Link

**Duration:** 1 hour/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, *summon beast*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

*Children of the night* is designed as a tracking spell. It conjures up a semi-corporeal, supernatural raven to hover directly above



the target's location, loudly squawking and drawing attention to him.

If the target is more than a mile away from the sorcerer, further raven-things appear hovering in the air directly between the sorcerer and the first raven at intervals of one mile. Each raven beyond the first costs an additional 1 PP, but appears automatically without the sorcerer needing to recast the spell or take any other action. The sorcerer can end the spell at any time rather than expending the extra 1 PP needed to produce another raven.

The ravens always hover some 500 feet up, so as to be highly visible to the sorcerer but difficult to shoot down with ranged weapons (assume range increments for all weapons are halved when shooting directly upwards). The ravens are DV 14 and have 1 hp each, but any raven that is slain is immediately replaced (at a cost of 1 PP as usual). It is possible, then, for a target to end this spell by shooting down ravens – but only by causing the sorcerer to run out of PP, or shooting down so many ravens that he chooses to end the spell anyway.

The target must be known to the sorcerer either by name or description, so there is some way for the magic of the spell to find him among the surrounding terrain. Alternatively, if the sorcerer has a Magical Link to the target (see p. 198) this will do just as well.

**Focus:** A small image or carving of a raven. This can be re-used on a later occasion.

**Experience point cost:** 25 xp/raven

## SORCEROUS GARDEN

**PP Cost:** 2 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** See below

**Area:** See below

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (nature) 10 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 12 ranks, *summon beast*

**Skill:** Herbalism

This spell enables the sorcerer to cultivate magical plant creatures, or to rapidly grow a number of more ordinary plants, with different effects depending on the version chosen.

**Enrichment:** This effect causes normal vegetation (grasses, plants, bushes, creepers, thistles, trees, vines) within long range (100 feet + 50 feet per scholar level) to become thick and overgrown. The plants entwine to form a thicket or jungle that creatures must hack or force a way through. Speed drops to 5 feet, or 10 feet for Large or larger creatures. The area must have brush and trees in it for this spell to take effect.

At your option, the area can be a 100-foot-radius circle, a 150-foot-radius semicircle, or a 200-foot-radius quarter circle.

You may designate places within the area that are not affected.

**Enrichment:** This effect targets plants within a range of one-half mile, raising their potential productivity over the course of the next year to one-third above normal.

**Magical Plant:** This effect allows you to rapidly grow one or more plant creatures from seed or seedlings to full adult growth. You can cause them to grow to a total size of up to 1 HD/scholar level. For example, a 15<sup>th</sup> level scholar could grow a single 15 HD Yothgra, or fifteen 1 HD black lotus blossoms. Each plant grows at a speed of 1 HD per round. Thus, in the above example the Yothgra would take fifteen rounds to reach its full 15 HD size, but the black lotus blossoms could all grow to full 1 HD size within one round. Full game statistics for magical plants can be found in the forthcoming *Book of Skelos*.

**Material Component:** Various special fertilisers and plant foods costing at least 40 sp.

## SUMMON BEAST, GREATER

**PP Cost:** 4+ points

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 1 mile/scholar level

**Target:** One animal that can be found in the local environment

**Duration:** 1 minute/scholar level, plus see below

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, *summon beast*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's Will save.

As for *summon beast*, except that an animal of up to Huge size can be summoned. The PP cost is 4 points for a Large creature, or 8 points for a Huge creature.

**Experience point cost:** 100 xp (200 xp for a Huge creature)

## NECROMANCY

The scholar who learns necromancy achieves limited mastery over the mysterious forces of life and death. This is especially popular for those who wish to slay their enemies outright, rather than merely harming or inconveniencing them.

### RAISE CORPSE (BASIC NECROMANCY)

**PP Cost:** 1 point/corpse.

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Effect:** Up to one corpse/scholar level

**Duration:** Concentration + 1d6 rounds

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** Scholar level 4





*'Dead or alive,' laughed 'Pelias,' he shall open the door for us.'*

*He clapped his hands sharply and cried. 'Rise, Shukeli! 'Rise from hell and rise from the bloody floor and open the door for your masters! 'Rise, I say!'*

This spell turns the bodies of dead creatures into undead zombies that follow the sorcerer's spoken commands. The zombies can follow the sorcerer, or can remain in an area and attack any creature (or just a specific type of creature) entering the place, or can perform simple actions according to the sorcerer's commands. The zombies remain animated until they are destroyed. (A destroyed zombie may not be animated again.)

The zombies the sorcerer creates remain under his control for the duration of the spell. At the expiry of the spell, they become simple corpses once more, falling in lifeless heaps wherever they stand.

A zombie can be created only from the mostly intact corpse of a humanoid or animal. The statistics for a zombie depend on its size, not on what abilities the creature may have had while alive.

## AGONISING DOOM

**PP Cost:** 4 points/target.

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 full round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Targets:** One or more creatures, up to a maximum of one creature/two scholar levels

**Duration:** 1d6 rounds

**Saving Throw:** Fort negates, and see below

**Prerequisites:** *Raise corpse, death touch*, magic attack bonus +6

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for targets' saving throws.

Black tendrils of power shoot out from the sorcerer's hands, slaying his enemies agonisingly and rapidly. This spell only affects creatures of less than 8<sup>th</sup> level/8HD.

The targets must all make Fortitude saving throws, with success completely negating the effects of the spell. A character who fails his save begins to lose 4d6 hit points per round until dead. Furthermore, he is in such extreme pain that he must make a Will save on any round in which he wishes to act. Success means he may take either a move or standard action but not both; failure means he may not do anything that round other than lie prone in agony.



## BLACK PLAGUE

**PP Cost:** 20

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 day

**Range:** 1 mile per scholar level

**Area:** 1 mile radius per scholar level, or 10 foot radius per scholar level; see below

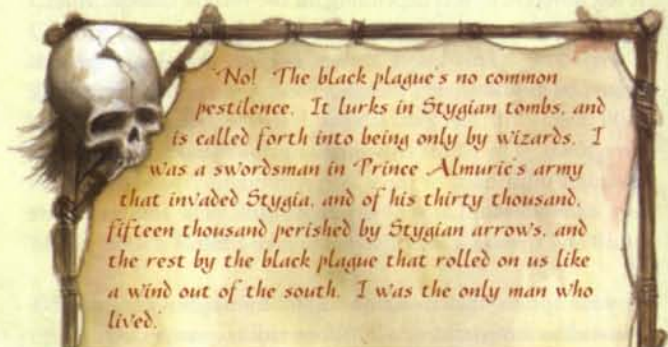
**Duration:** One week/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +7, *raise corpse*

This is a dreadful spell capable of driving hundreds or even thousands of victims to an agonising doom. It creates a great wind propelling a foul, stinking miasma which can strike down all within its path. The effects of this closely resemble a disease, though in fact sorcery is responsible for the victims' demise.

The black plague has two different forms, one designed to strike terror into a population, the other to wipe out your enemies wholesale.



*'No! The black plague's no common pestilence. It lurks in Stygian tombs, and is called forth into being only by wizards. I was a swordsman in Prince Almuric's army that invaded Stygia, and of his thirty thousand, fifteen thousand perished by Stygian arrows, and the rest by the black plague that rolled on us like a wind out of the south. I was the only man who lived.'*



In either case, the plague itself, once it strikes, is rapid and lethal from its onset to the victim's death a few minutes later. A Fortitude saving throw (DC 17) must be made. Failure causes the target 1d4 Constitution damage, and his body turns purple. After 3d6 minutes he takes another 1d4 Con damage and his body turns black. From that point onwards, he is dealt a further 1d4 Con damage per minute until he is dead.

The first form affects a random scattering of individual humans throughout the area of its effect (which is 1 mile radius per scholar level), at a rate of one per scholar level of the caster per day. The sorcerer may not specify which individuals are affected in this way. This tends to significantly demoralise the population through which it is sweeping, for they can see no rhyme nor reason for its spread. This is likely to have a number of effects at the Games Master's discretion, including disruption to the area's economy, widespread looting or other lawlessness, and an unwillingness among the population to become involved with other issues (such as fighting a war) until the problem of the plague is resolved.

A further side-effect of this form is that it gives the sorcerer a +4 bonus on any Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate checks he makes to deliver news by the *greater sorcerous news* spell (see p. 207), so long as he can plausibly tie in the effects of the plague with the message he is attempting to communicate. This will usually



*The year of the dragon had birth in war and pestilence and unrest. The black plague stalked through the streets of Belverus, striking down the merchant in his stall, the serf in his kennel, the knight at his banquet board. Before it the arts of the leeches were helpless. Men said it had been sent from hell as punishment for the sins of pride and lust. It was swift and deadly as the stroke of an adder. The victim's body turned purple and then black, and within a few minutes he sank down dying, and the stench of his own putrefaction was in his nostrils even before death wrenched his soul from his rotting body. A hot, roaring wind blew incessantly from the south, and the crops withered in the fields, the cattle sank and died in their tracks.*

be most effective if he is able to present the plague as a divine punishment or warning of some kind.

The devastation inflicted on the community by this form of the spell is further heightened by the scorching, blasting effects of the wind that drives the disease-ridden miasma. This wind blasts corn in the fields and fruit in the trees alike, withering plants and slaying animals. The precise effects of this on crop plants are up to the Games Master, but if nothing else all creatures of the animal subtype within the area of effect must make Fortitude saves just as the small number of humans did, or die themselves. In the already often shaky economies of many Hyborian nations, such loss of food crops and animals can weaken or destroy entire communities at least as much as do the direct effects of the plague.

The second form of the spell is very much more extreme in its devastation of humans, but affects only a small area and has no effect on animals or plants. All humans within the specified area (10 foot radius per scholar level) must make Fortitude saves (DC 17) or die as above. New saves must be made each week they spend within the spell's area.

Furthermore, with this version of the spell, the sorcerer may move the area of effect by concentrating on so doing, at a speed of up to four miles per hour. Note that such this requires almost all the sorcerer's attention, as is usual for a concentration type effect; also, Concentration checks may need to be made if he is attacked or otherwise distracted while moving the area of effect.

Note that the plague is not actually contagious in either version.

The plague will last for the entire duration of the spell. The only way for the sorcerer or anyone else to end it prematurely is by somehow taking control of the weather in the area, sweeping away the miasma with a great storm. Unlike true diseases, the plague cannot be alleviated by conventional physicians using



the Heal skill, though certain spells and magical objects may be useful for this.

**Material Component:** Essences collected from certain tombs in Stygia, to a value of 1,500 sp.

## BLACK PLAGUE, GREATER

**PP Cost:** 15

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** Magical link

**Targets:** Up to one creature per three scholar levels

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +8, *black plague, raise corpse*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for specific target's saving throw

This enhancement to *black plague* allows the sorcerer to target specific individuals, making it an ideal tool for magical assassination. It can only be cast while a standard *black plague* cast by the sorcerer is already in operation, and can only affect targets within that spell's area of effect. Those targets must immediately make Fortitude saving throws as usual for black plague, except that the DC is set by the sorcerer's magic attack roll rather than being a standard 17. These saves are in addition to any saves they may have already had to make for the *black plague* spell.

## DEATH TOUCH

**PP Cost:** 2 points/touch.

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Targets:** One or more creatures touched, up to a maximum of one creature/scholar level

**Duration:** One round/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

**Prerequisites:** *Raise corpse*, magic attack bonus +5

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for targets' saving throws.

Any creatures touched during the spell's duration die instantly. He is entitled to attempt a Fortitude saving throw to resist the effect. If successful, he is instead stunned for one round (may not act and loses any Dodge or Parry bonus to Defence Value; attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent).

Each sorcerer or sect has its own variant of this spell, differing only in the details. For example, the version used by the Priests of Set causes the sorcerer's hand to turn completely black, and is known as the Black Hand of



Set. Anyone slain with it has a black handprint burned onto their body with a cold, deathly fire. On the other hand, Khitan sorcerers (who often wield a Staff of Death to deliver their death touches) turn the whole of their enemies' corpses completely black when using this spell. The Games Master and players are encouraged to devise their own 'signature' effects when casting *death touch*.

## DRAW FORTH THE HEART

**PP Cost:** 7

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Evil Eye

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +7, *Ritual Sacrifice, Opportunistic Sacrifice, Tormented Sacrifice, raise corpse, death touch, agonising doom, conjuration, telekinesis*

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw

He held out his hand as if to receive something, and the Turanian cried out sharply like a man in mortal agony. He reeled drunkenly, and then, with a splintering of bones, a rending of flesh and muscle and a snapping of mail-links, his breast burst outward with a shower of blood, and through the ghastly aperture something red and dripping shot through the air into the Master's outstretched hand, as a bit of steel leaps to the magnet. The Turanian slumped to the floor and lay motionless, and the master laughed and hurled the object to fall before Conan's feet - a still-quivering human heart.



This powerful spell can both dispose of an enemy and allow the sorcerer to recoup some or all of the Power Points used to cast it, and perhaps a few more besides if he was sufficiently tough.

If the target fails to save, he dies, his heart pulled out of his body and into your own hands by a magical force. The process is so painful to him that although he dies within moments, you immediately gain Power Points as though you had sacrificed him with the Tormented Sacrifice feat after torturing him for fifteen minutes.

A target who saves suffers an effect similar to a mild heart attack, being dealt 4d6 damage. He may only perform either a move or standard action on his next action.

## ORIENTAL MAGIC

Oriental magic is most commonly found in Khitai, Vendhya, and the Himelias, though oriental sorcerers do travel the world like all their kind.

Generally, the Games Master should not overly restrict characters from non-oriental cultures from selecting Oriental Magic as a sorcery style, though in most cases they will need to learn it from another adept or demon, or be a member of one of the oriental religions such as Asura, rather than researching it independently. A character who does research it independently will likely need to travel to Khitai or similarly far afield to do so.

## CALM OF THE ADEPT (BASIC ORIENTAL MAGIC)

**PP Cost:** 3 points  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 3 hours  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** Self  
**Duration:** One hour/scholar level  
**Prerequisites:** Wis 13

By spending much of each morning in meditation, you are able to significantly enhance your mind, body and spirit for the remainder of the day. You gain a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity, Wisdom and Charisma for the duration of the spell. Furthermore, you are completely immune to all spells and spell-like effects of the Hypnotism sorcery style for the duration of the spell.

## DARTING SERPENT

**PP Cost:** 2+ points  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 round  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** Self  
**Duration:** One round/scholar level  
**Prerequisites:** *Calm of the adept*, scholar level 3

For every 2 PP expended, you gain a +2 bonus to your Dexterity and an additional +1 enhancement bonus to all Initiative checks. You may expend up to 1 PP per scholar level.

## SHAPE-SHIFTER

**PP Cost:** 10 points  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 full round  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** Self  
**Duration:** 10 minutes/scholar level  
**Prerequisites:** *Calm of the adept*, scholar level 12

This spell enables you to assume the form of any single nonunique animal (any creature of the animal type) from Fine to Colossal size. The assumed form cannot have more than twice your scholar level in Hit Dice (to a maximum of 50 HD).

Your creature type and subtype (if any) change to match the new form. You gain the Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores of the new form but retain your own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores.

You gain all extraordinary abilities (both attacks and qualities) of the assumed form, but you lose your own supernatural abilities. The new form does not disorient you. Parts of your body or pieces of equipment that are separated from you do not revert to their original forms.

While you are in your new form, you can heal up to one hit point of damage per scholar level by spending one minute resting.

You can become just about anything you are familiar with. You can change form a number of times equal to your scholar level during the spell's duration, with each change of form being a full-round action.

If slain, you revert to your original form, though you remain dead.

*Material Component:* Assorted gems worth at least 500 sp.

## WARRIOR TRANCE

**PP Cost:** 6 points  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 round  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** Self  
**Duration:** One round/scholar level  
**Prerequisites:** *Calm of the adept*, scholar level 3

*Warrior trance* gives one natural weapon of the caster a +1 enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls, and gives the caster a +1 dodge bonus to Defence Value. The spell can affect a slam attack, fist, bite, or other natural weapon. (The spell does not change an unarmed strike's damage from nonlethal damage to normal damage.) The dodge bonus



and enhancement bonus are increased to +2 if the caster is 6<sup>th</sup> level or higher, and by another +1 each three levels thereafter.

## YIMSHA'S CARPET

**PP Cost:** 20 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 full round

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** Up to 1 foot radius per scholar level

**Duration:** 1 minute/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

**Prerequisites:** *Calm of the adept*, *summon elemental*, scholar level 14

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for targets' saving throws



*Yimsha's carpet* is a supernatural cloud of gold-veined crimson that can transport, conceal and protect its occupants, as well as being used as an offensive weapon against the sorcerer's enemies. Powered by elemental energies, it extends outwards from the sorcerer like a vast crimson aura.

Those within the cloud have total cover (see page 176). Furthermore, solid objects such as weapons have difficulty penetrating the cloud from without, giving the occupants an effective protection of +4 DR. Any living thing attempting to penetrate will come up against the effects mentioned below.

If the cloud comes into contact with any creature, that creature must make a Fortitude saving throw or be dealt 1d6 nonlethal damage per two scholar levels of the sorcerer, and be stunned (character may not act and loses any Dodge or Parry bonus to Defence Value; attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent) for 1d6 rounds. A success on the saving throw halves the damage and means the creature is stunned for only one round.

The sorcerer can 'switch on' and 'switch off' the cloud as a free action up to once per round during its duration. If it is 'switched on' while other creatures are within its area of effect, the sorcerer may freely choose among those creatures which if any are aboard the cloud and thus protected, concealed and transported by it as appropriate, and which are attacked by it.

**Material Component:** Gold dust and herbal smoke-powders to a total value of 850 sp.

## PRESTIDIGITATION

Prestidigation is often one of the first sorcerous paths a scholar learns, since it allows the production of more or less immediate magical effects with which to impress or terrify ordinary folk.

## CONJURING (BASIC PRESTIDIGITATION)

**PP Cost:** 1 point.

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Effect:** See below

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** Scholar level 1, Sleight-of-Hand 4 ranks

This spell allows the sorcerer to do minor acts of prestidigation or illusion at a cost of 1 Power Point for each effect. Examples include suspending objects in mid-air or causing his eyes to glow red. The following effects are all possible uses of this sorcery style:

- † Telekinetically move a small, unattended object (weighing up to 5 lb.), so long as it remains within the spell's range. The object can be moved at up to 20 feet per round.
- † Place a small object (weighing up to 10 lb.) from your hands into midair, and have it remain there suspended, so long as you remain within the spell's range. Note that in this case you cannot move the object. If you deliberately end the spell, you may spend one round concentrating on lowering the object gently to the ground. If your concentration is broken, the object simply falls to the ground with a crash.
- † Telekinetically guide a cloud of smoke or gas up to 5 feet by 5 feet by 5 feet in size. This could include a venomous gas cloud or similar herbal or alchemical product. The smoke can be moved at up to 10 feet per round.
- † Control a normal shadow, up to 5 feet by 5 feet in size, as though it were a puppet, potentially altering its shape and size as well as causing it to perform certain actions.
- † Alter your appearance in one minor way. This is not sufficient to provide an effective disguise, but if desired you could use it to gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks. Examples include growing horns, causing your eyes to appear reptilian, and similar effects. This cannot grant you any bonuses to combat – horns or claws, for example, do not allow you to make any special attacks.



*Conan spat savagely at the word, and Xaltotun, ignoring his fury, took a crystal globe from a near-by table and placed it before him. He did not support it in any way, nor place it on anything, but it hung motionless in midair, as solidly as if it rested on an iron pedestal. Conan snorted at this bit of necromancy, but he was nevertheless impressed.*

Open or close a container or door at a distance. The object to be opened or closed must not be locked, barred, jammed, or any larger or heavier than a standard, human-built door or chest.

Colour, clean, or soil objects (but not creatures) in a 1-foot cube each round. For example, the sorcerer could turn a rose from white to red, or make a little whirlwind to sweep dust under a rug.

Chill, warm, or flavour 1 pound of nonliving material. This could be used to make a cheap meal more palatable, or chill an expensive wine before serving.

## BURST BARRIER

**PP Cost:** 2 points.

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Target:** One door, portcullis, wall, chest or other barrier

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** *Prestidigitation*, scholar level 3

The sorcerer creates a surge of magical force, as though a giant had shoulder-charged some barrier or other object that for some reason merits the sorcerer's displeasure. He makes a Strength check as though the object had been hit by a Huge creature (+8 size bonus to Strength checks) with a Strength equal to (scholar level) x5.

*A few long strides brought him to the door, and as his hand fell on the lock he stifled an involuntary grunt. His practised fingers, skilled among the thieves of Zamora long ago, told him that the lock had been forced, apparently by some terrific pressure from the outside that had twisted and bent the iron bolts, tearing the very sockets loose from the jambs. How such damage could have been wrought so violently without awakening everyone in the neighbourhood Conan could not imagine, but he felt sure that it had been done that night. A broken lock, if discovered, would not go unmentioned in the house of Servio, in this neighbourhood of thieves and cutthroats.*

Note that unlike a more physical attempt to break or burst an object, the magical force created by this spell is entirely silent. As a useful side-effect, the spell also silences any noises that would usually be caused by its action. Even if the door falls to the ground, completely torn asunder from its hinges, no noise will be created.

## TELEKINESIS

**PP Cost:** 1 point.

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Effect:** One object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Prestidigitation*, scholar level 3, Sleight-of-Hand 5 ranks

**Ranged Attack Roll:** Against target's DV.

The sorcerer can hurl an object from his hand at an opponent, expending personal sorcerous power to do so. Objects which can be thrown in this manner include all the herbal and alchemical items marked by an asterisk (\*) later in this chapter, as well as such items as rocks, weapons and so on.

Most objects will do either their standard weapon damage or improvised weapon damage appropriate to their size and composition. Herbal or alchemical items thrown will have their standard effects, and may or may not require saving throws depending on the item. The main advantage of advanced prestidigitation over simply throwing the object by hand is its increased accuracy, particularly at range. The object can be hurled up to 120 feet, and is never affected by range penalties.

## GREATER TELEKINESIS

**PP Cost:** 1 point/object affected.

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

**Effect:** Up to one object/scholar level

**Duration:** One round

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Prestidigitation*, *telekinesis*, scholar level 3, Sleight-of-Hand 6 ranks, Bluff 6 ranks

**Ranged Attack Roll:** Against target's DV.

This works much like Advanced Prestidigitation I, except as follows:

It can affect more than one object – either multiple objects if used in Found Objects mode, or up to two objects if used in Hidden Death mode (see below).

**Found Objects:** The objects to be hurled may be anywhere within range, and are picked up and hurled without the sorcerer having to touch them.



**Hidden Death:** Up to a maximum of two objects may be affected, both of which must be about the sorcerer's person. He may draw and throw them both as part of the standard action taken to cast the spell, hurling one with each hand at no penalty. If he does this before combat has broken out and succeeds at a Bluff check opposed to his target's Sense Motive check, the target loses all dodge bonuses against the attack, the objects seeming to appear out of nowhere into his hand and shooting forth all in the same movement.

## SUMMONINGS

*'Under the caverned pyramids great Set coils asleep.  
Among the shadows of the tombs his dusky people creep.  
I speak the Word from the hidden gulfs that never knew the  
sin -  
Send me a servant for my hate, oh scaled and shining One!*

Perhaps the gateway to the greatest magical power is through summoning otherworldly entities to do one's bidding. Demonic pacts in particular can offer the sorcerer almost unlimited power, but only at the most dreadful price in the corruption of the sorcerer's very soul.

The Summoning sorcery style is unusual in that it offers a choice of two basic spells: *master-words and signs* and *demonic pact*. Put simply, the essential difference between these two is that if you learn *master-words and signs*, you compel a demon to work for you; if you learn *demonic pact*, you make a deal with a demon whereby you will work for it in return for certain assistance.

### MASTER-WORDS AND SIGNS (BASIC SUMMONING)

**PP Cost:** 12 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 week

**Range:** See below

**Target:** One demon lord

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +6, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, must know at least four sorcery styles, must never have cast the *demonic pact* spell

**Magic Attack Roll:** Sets DC for target's saving throw.

*Master-words and signs* summons up a demon lord and forces it to instruct the sorcerer in the Master-Words and Signs by which almost any entity ranked below it can be compelled. The sorcerer is able to

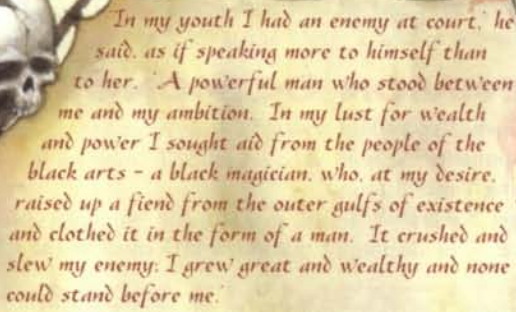
compel the demon lord by demonstrating his superior magical prowess over it.

This spell can only be learnt by fairly high-powered sorcerers, and so most prefer the quick and easy path of a *demonic pact* (see p. 223). Though the demon lord will not serve the sorcerer directly, the knowledge of the Master-Words and Signs can be used to force other demons and similar entities to work for the sorcerer, which is often more useful in any case. He gains a permanent +2 circumstance bonus to any magic attack rolls made in connection with *summon demon*, *summon elemental*, or any other Summoning spells, or when targeting summoned creatures with other spells.

Furthermore, he may up to once per round use his knowledge of *master-words and signs* to formulate a simple spell, based on either a single Verbal or a single Somatic component (his choice). This is cast as a free action, costs 2 Power Points, and affects a single summoned creature within Evil Eye range. The summoned creature must immediately make a Will saving







*In my youth I had an enemy at court, he said, as if speaking more to himself than to her. A powerful man who stood between me and my ambition. In my lust for wealth and power I sought aid from the people of the black arts - a black magician, who, at my desire, raised up a fiend from the outer gulfs of existence and clothed it in the form of a man. It crushed and slew my enemy. I grew great and wealthy and none could stand before me.*

throw (DC set by the sorcerer's magic attack roll) or be instantly dismissed back to its home.

Effectively this spell opens the door to and enhances other summoning spells, and assists with dismissing creatures summoned by other scholars, but has no especial effects other than that.

The demon lord gains a Will saving throw to resist the sorcerer's summoning and remain in its hellish home. For this purpose, its total Will save is assumed to be +12. If it succeeds, he may not cast this spell again until his magic attack bonus has increased, which may be by a simple level increase or some other means such as a Charisma bonus increase.

Once you have successfully cast this spell once, you no longer have any particular need to cast it again.

**Material Component:** Powders, potions, incenses and other trappings to a total cost of 2,000 sp.

## DEMONIC PACT (BASIC SUMMONING)

**PP Cost:** 2 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** See below

**Target:** One demon

**Duration:** 1 hour/scholar level or until task is fulfilled, but see below.

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** Scholar level 1, Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks

The first time a sorcerer cast this spell, he voluntarily enters into a long-term pact with a demonic entity of medium power. The precise nature of the demon is determined by the Games Master, possibly in consultation with the player of the sorcerer character if the Games Master wishes, and is usually one of the types listed in Chapter 12: A Hyborean Bestiary.

Usually it will know all the spells from 1d4+1 sorcery styles (not including Summoning), in addition to *greater demonic pact*, *summon elemental* and *summon demon* from the Summoning style, though the precise number of styles known will be dependent on the type of demon with whom the pact is made. It will teach the sorcerer any of these spells whenever he would

normally be eligible to learn a new spell or sorcery style, but he will need to call it up by casting this spell once more. If he waits till he is eligible for a new spell before casting *demonic pact* for the first time, he can learn the new spell then, rather than having to re-cast *demonic pact*. The duration of *demonic pact* will always be sufficient for the sorcerer to learn the new spell from the demon.

Instead of learning a new spell, the sorcerer can call up the demon by casting *demonic pact* and make a deal that it will perform a specific task for him, such as attacking an enemy or scaring a rival. Such a task is always at the demon's discretion; it will not necessarily agree, or it may suggest an alternate task. Furthermore, it will always demand a price of some kind, usually a human sacrifice, for performing the task. Finally, because it is a demon, it may well attempt to twist the sorcerer's words, so that it performs to the letter but not the spirit of the task.

The demon will also help the sorcerer in a more direct manner, by granting him a small talisman, tattoo, or brand which he can touch up to once per week as a free action to gain a +4 luck bonus on any skill check, ability check, attack roll, or magic attack roll; or to gain a +4 insight bonus to his Defence Value for one round. This talisman, tattoo or brand retains its power even when the demon is not present, but it only works for the sorcerer himself. If ever a month goes by when the sorcerer does not do one or the other of either calling up the demon by re-casting this spell, or sacrificing a creature to it, the power of the talisman, tattoo or brand is lost until the next time he performs one of those actions, and the demon will consider this a breach of contract - sooner or later, he will come unbidden for the sorcerer, to carry him off to hell. . .

Each time a sorcerer casts this spell, he must make a Corruption save (see p. 75) or gain 1 point of Corruption. The first time he casts it, he automatically fails this save.

A character who has already cast this spell on his own behalf can also cast it for the benefit of another willing character. In that case, the other character gains all the benefits and drawbacks of the spell, including the Corruption.

As well as the usual effects of Corruption, the sorcerer applies his Corruption as a circumstance penalty to any Will saving throws he makes against the sorcery or spell-like and supernatural abilities of the demonic entity with whom he has the pact. In addition, he applies his Corruption as a circumstance penalty to all magic attack rolls he makes against the demon with whom he has the pact.

Furthermore, if a sorcerer ever casts this spell for the benefit of another willing character, both the sorcerer and the character who makes the pact apply their Corruption as a circumstance penalty to Will saving throws and magic attack rolls concerning the newly called-up entity. Thus many sorcerers are reluctant to cast this spell on another's behalf, since the more people a sorcerer assists to make their



own *demonic pacts*, the more demons there will be against whom his powers are weak.

No character can have a pact with more than one demon at any one time. If ever a sorcerer with a *demonic pact* should cast a *greater demonic pact* spell, the more powerful spell replaces the effects of the less.

*Material Component:* Powders, potions, incenses and other trappings to a total cost of 50 sp.

## DEMONIC PACT, GREATER

**PP Cost:** 8 points

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 3 hours

**Range:** See below

**Target:** One demon lord

**Duration:** 1 hour/scholar level, or until task is fulfilled, but see below

**Saving Throw:** None

**Prerequisites:** Magic attack bonus +6, *demonic pact*, Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Knowledge (arcana) 15 ranks, must know at least four sorcery styles, must have cast the *demonic pact* spell

This spell works as for *demonic pact*, except as noted above and below.

The demon summoned is any demon lord, rather than a demon of medium power as for *demonic pact*. No game statistics are provided for demon lords in Chapter 12: A Hyborian Bestiary; in effect, they are more like minor demonic gods than mere monsters.

It knows all spells and all sorcery styles.

Rather than intervening personally on behalf of the sorcerer, the demon lord summoned with *greater demonic pact* will send one or more minions, which can be any of the entities that could normally be summoned with the *summon demon* spell, up to a total maximum HD equal to twice the sorcerer's scholar level.

The insight or luck bonus granted by its brand, tattoo or talisman is doubled to +8.

Each time a sorcerer casts this spell, he must make a Corruption save or gain 1 point of Corruption, as for *demonic pact*.

However, he does not he automatically fails this save the first time he casts *greater demonic pact*.

It is impossible for one sorcerer to have a pact with more than one demon or demon lord at a time.

*Material Component:* Powders, potions, incenses and other trappings to a total cost of 500 sp, plus a virgin

human female who is sacrificed to the demon lord during the casting of the spell.

## SUMMON DEMON

**PP Cost:** 1 point/HD of demon

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** See below

**Effect:** One demon, of maximum HD equal to the scholar's level

**Duration:** One task, lasting up to one hour/scholar level.

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Master-words and signs* or *demonic pact*, magic attack bonus +4

This spell calls up a single demon to perform a specific task for the sorcerer. This could be as simple as 'defend me for the duration of the spell' or a good deal more complex. However, if the wording of the sorcerer's instructions allows for misunderstanding or wilful misinterpretation, it is likely that the demon will follow the letter of the agreement rather than the spirit.

As the sorcerer who casts this spell is instructing and ordering the demon in question, he need not make a Corruption save. In effect, this does not count as 'making peaceful contact' with the demon – the sorcerer is using his own authority, or that of the demon with whom he has the pact, to force the summoned demon to co-operate, which is hardly either peaceful or in the demon's best interests.





The demon you are attempting to summon gains a Will saving throw (DC = your magic attack roll) to resist the spell and remain in its own hell, or in the Outer Dark, or wherever it abides.

**Material Component:** A pinch of powdered sulphur, cast into the air or onto the floor. The demon arises from the sulphur.

**Experience point cost:** 50 xp/HD of demon.

## SUMMON ELEMENTAL

**PP Cost:** 2 points/HD of elemental

**Components:** F or V, and M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** See below

**Effect:** One elemental, of maximum HD equal to twice the scholar's level

**Duration:** One task, lasting up to one hour/scholar level

**Saving Throw:** See below

**Prerequisites:** *Master-words and signs* or *greater demonic pact*, magic attack bonus +7, Perform (song or an appropriate musical instrument) 10 ranks.

This spell calls up a single elemental to perform a specific task for the sorcerer. This could be as simple as 'defend me for the duration of the spell' or a good deal more complex. In most cases, though, the elemental will perform the task to the best of its ability and understanding, rather than deliberately misunderstanding as a summoned demon usually would. The elemental is summoned up anywhere within line of sight of the sorcerer.

The task must never be more than literally one single mission. For example, an air elemental could carry the sorcerer's servant from Vendhya to Zembabwe, but not wait around till he finishes his business there and bring him back. A water elemental could be summoned up to cause a river to flood, or to destroy a specific ship or even a whole fleet of ships, or to guard a port town and attack any black-sailed ships that come near it for the duration of the spell. However, it could not destroy a ship in the Western Ocean, nip over to the Baracha Isles to destroy another ship in the harbour at Tortage, then head to Argos to cause a storm. The elemental, as played by the Games Master, will never agree to any task that sounds like it is really two missions disguised as one. An elemental will regard any single use of one of its special attacks as a task in and of itself.

One option that always exists with elementals is to call them up on a contingency basis. In this case, the sorcerer casts the spell

in advance, explains the task the elemental is to be called up for and the event that will trigger it, then dismisses the elemental again. If the triggering event occurs within the duration of the spell, the elemental will manifest automatically, perform the task, and leave once more. If the triggering event does not occur within the duration of the spell, the spell will be wasted and nothing will happen. When summoned up on a contingency basis in this way, the elemental will be unable to manifest unless the material component is present as usual, though the focus or verbal component is only necessary when initially casting the spell.

The elemental you are attempting to summon gains a Will saving throw (DC = your magic attack roll) to resist the spell and remain in its own strange home. If summoned up on a contingency basis, it may only make one Will saving throw, when you call it up to begin the initial negotiations – if the contingency later occurs, it manifests without getting a saving throw to stay home.

**Focus:** A musical instrument, played by the sorcerer during the casting time. This must be appropriate to the elemental called – a drum for water elementals, song or pipes for air elementals, stringed instrument for fire elementals, or horn for earth elementals. A sorcerer with 10 ranks of Perform (song) does not need to use a separate instrument when calling up an air elemental (only), as his voice is acts as a verbal component to replace the focus.

**Material Component:** A small quantity of the element to be summoned up. This need only be a token amount – a breath of air for an air elemental (which is usually provided by the air that forms the sound of the song or pipe music), a cupful of water for a water elemental, a small fire (such as is caused by a handful of flame-powder) for a fire elemental, and at least four cubic inches of bare earth for an earth elemental.

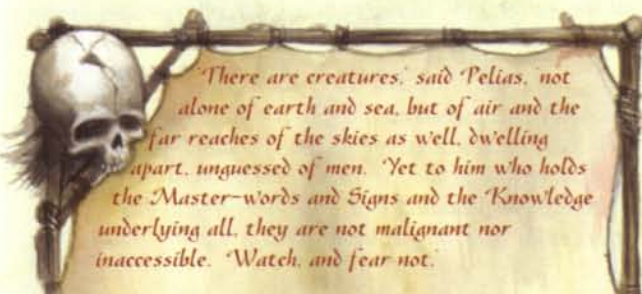
**Experience point cost:** 50 xp/HD of elemental.

## THE WAR OF SOULS

### WAR OF SOULS CHECK

Repeatedly in a war of souls, you need to make opposed war of souls checks against an opponent. A war of souls check is like a magic attack roll. Your attack bonus on a war of souls check is: total magic attack bonus + special hypnotism modifier.

**Special Hypnotism Modifier:** The special hypnotism modifier for a war of souls check is as follows: +2 for knowing the *entrance* spell, and an additional +2 if at least one advanced hypnotism spell is known. These bonuses are added up and then added to your total magic attack bonus. Although sorcerers find it very difficult to use the Hypnotism spells per se against other sorcerers, many of the techniques taught under that sorcery style can assist in modified form when fighting a war of souls.





## STARTING A WAR OF SOULS

To start a war of souls, you need mentally restrain your target. Any sorcerer may declare a war of souls by challenging any other sorcerer who is within Evil Eye range (see p. 197). This is a full-round action. Starting a war of souls requires a successful magic attack roll. Only sorcerers, outsiders and magical beasts may be targeted by a magic attack roll.

You make a magic attack roll to lock your target in mental combat. If the target succeeds at his Will saving throw, the war of souls fails and is cancelled. If he fails his Will saving throw, the two of you are now engaged in a war of souls.

## WAR OF SOULS CONSEQUENCES

While you are engaged in a war of souls, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited.

**No Threatened Squares:** You do not threaten any squares while engaged in a war of souls.

**No Dodge or Parry Bonus:** You lose your dodge or parry bonus to DV (if you have one).

**No Movement:** You may not move normally while engaged in a war of souls.

**No Spells:** You may not cast any spells while engaged in a war of souls.

## IF YOU ARE ENGAGED IN A WAR OF SOULS

When you are engaged in a war of souls (regardless of who started the war of souls), you can perform either of the following full-round actions.

**Drain Your Opponent:** While engaged in a war of souls, you can drain Power Points from your opponent. Make an opposed war of souls check in place of an attack. If you win, you drain 1d6 Power Points from your opponent. You gain any Power Points he loses in this way. If this reduces his Power Points to 0 or below, any further drain instead causes him 1d6 damage to Wisdom. You gain no particular benefit from damaging his Wisdom in this way, though of course if you can reduce his Wisdom to 0 he is helpless.

**Corruption:** Staring into the eyes of a demon is a risky activity, for if you gaze into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you. Any character engaging a demon of any kind in a War of Souls must make a Corruption check (standard DC for the demon) every time the demon successfully drains him.

**Break Off from War of Souls:** You can break off a war of souls by

*Conan had witnessed hundreds of battles in his wild life, but never one like this, wherein four diabolical wills sought to beat down one lesser but equally devilish will that opposed them. But he only faintly sensed the monstrous quality of that hideous struggle. With his back to the wall, driven to bay by his former masters, Khemsa was fighting for his life with all the dark power, all the frightful knowledge they had taught him through long, grim years of neophytism and vassalage.*

*He was stronger than even he had guessed, and the free exercise of powers in his own behalf had tapped unsuspected reservoirs of forces. And he was nerved to super-energy by frantic fear and desperation. He reeled before the merciless impact of those hypnotic eyes, but he held his ground. His features were twisted in a bestial grin of agony, and his limbs were twisted as on a rack. It was a war of souls, of frightful brains steeped in lore forbidden to men for a million years, of mentalities which had plumbed the abysses and explored the dark stars where spawn the shadows.*

winning an opposed war of souls check in place of making an attack. If more than one opponent is engaged in a war of souls with you, your war of souls check result has to beat all their individual check results to break off. (Opponents do not have to try to keep you engaged in the war of souls if they do not want to.) If you break off, you are no longer engaged in the war of souls.

## JOINING A WAR OF SOULS

If your target is already engaged in a war of souls with someone else, you can use a full-round action to join the war of souls as usual, as above. You still have to make a successful opposed war of souls check to become part of the war of souls.

If there are multiple opponents involved in the war of souls, you pick one to make the opposed war of souls check against.

## MULTIPLE COMBATANTS IN A WAR OF SOULS

Several combatants can be in a single war of souls.

When you are engaged in a war of souls with multiple opponents, you choose one opponent to make an opposed war of souls check against. The exception is an attempt to break off the war of souls; to successfully break off, your war of souls check must beat the check results of each opponent.



## Buying and Selling Magical, Herbal and Alchemical Items

It is very nearly impossible to buy any of the items in this chapter in the normal sense, including the herbal preparations, poisons, and alchemical items. Though some of the latter items are indeed bought and sold, the trade is almost always an exclusive one. Lotus plants and preparations, for example, are sent by caravan from Khitai to Stygia – but they are all for the use of the priests and sorcerers who form the theocratic government of Stygia, and are not for sale to adventurers.

The price listed, then, is no more than a guideline. In most cases it is the approximate price of the item if you were able to buy it legitimately somehow. For the majority of items, there is no way to buy them legitimately for the average character, so the price instead is used to determine the cost and time of manufacture for those who gain the skills to make the item themselves (see p. 89). A particular rich adventurer might be able to afford to have special items stolen to order, at a cost of two or three times the listed amount – half up-front – with no guarantee that the thieves will ever make it back with the goods, or even alive for that matter.

It will usually be possible to sell items from this chapter at between 50% and 150% (30% + 2d6 x 10%) of the nominal value, if the seller is in a large city or has contacts with powerful sorcerers. Astute scholars will realise that it is possible to make a fair living travelling to exotic lands and gathering strange herbs for preparation in person, then selling them on once back in civilisation. This is true, though it is not necessarily any less risky than any other adventurous undertaking!

Magical items proper, such as crystal balls, are never for sale. These artefacts will always either have found their way into the hands of a sorcerer already, or be so remote from civilisation and so well-guarded that no sorcerers in living memory have been able to get their hands on them.

## MAGICAL, HERBAL AND ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

These items are not all magical in the usual sense of the word. Some are simply mysterious, but are based on knowledge that only sorcerers tend to have, such as alchemy and certain similar crafts. However, to the ignorant, anything found here will be regarded as sorcery, and little distinction will be made between the person of the sorcerer, the items he carries, and the magical effects he can produce.

### MAGICAL ITEMS

The items in this section cannot be made by characters under these rules; the knowledge has been lost for centuries, and so the items must be found in person, or the secrets of their manufacture searched out in such ancient arcane sources as the forthcoming *Book of Skelos* supplement. For the present, the items presented here are likely to be used against the player characters by powerful non-player character sorcerers, or found in long-lost tombs and forbidden cities at the culmination of a long and difficult quest.

### BANE KNIFE OF KHOSATRAL KHEL

This heavy, curved knife was forged from meteoric iron with the specific intent of binding and then slaying Khosatral Khel, who was one of the most powerful sorcerer-gods of a bygone age, a little over a thousand years ago. It is fashioned to resemble a Yuetshi knife, though it is far more elegant than those crude

fishermens' blades, lacking their utilitarian saw-edge. The pommel is jewelled and the hilt wrapped in shagreen leather.

The bane knife of Khosatral Khel can be used in three possible ways:

- † A character holding this knife can cancel any spell cast by Khosatral Khel as a free action, at the cost of 1 PP or 1 hp damage (character's choice).
- † If the knife is touched to Khosatral Khel, he is immediately paralysed (no saving throw) for 2d6 rounds, or until the knife is removed from contact with him, whichever happens later.
- † If the knife is used to attack Khosatral Khel directly, it does full damage for a Yuetshi knife, with an additional damage bonus of +1d6. Khosatral Khel's Damage Resistance has no effect against the Bane Knife.

The bane knife of Khosatral Khel can be taken as an example of the bane weapon, a weapon designed to slay a specific, named supernatural entity. Other bane weapons may be found with similar game statistics, but each will be dedicated to fighting one individual creature, never a whole class of creatures such as 'all demons.'

### CRYSTAL BALL

This shimmering crystal sphere is around six to eighteen inches in diameter. There is no particular advantage to crystal balls of varying sizes, other than the obvious practical ones: increased detail for larger crystal balls, but increased portability for smaller ones. Often a powerful sorcerer will try to have at



least two crystal balls, a small one to carry and a larger one to use in his home.

In any case, a crystal ball grants a +4 enhancement bonus to the magic attack roll when using the *visions* spell.

## CRYSTAL BALL OF SPEECH AND VISION

Certain crystal balls come as a set, with one or more smaller crystal balls a mere three inches or so in diameter. The main crystal ball functions exactly like a standard crystal ball (see above), as well as having the following properties.

A sorcerer who has a *visions* spell in operation may use the larger crystal ball to speak with the possessor of one of the smaller crystal balls, if that character is also the subject of the *visions*. A two-way conversation is possible. Speaking in this way expends an additional +1 PP per minute. Note that other sounds are not transmitted, only speech between the sorcerer and one subject.

The smaller crystal balls do not function other than to act as means of communication with the main one. The only image they will ever show is the face of the sorcerer who is currently using the main crystal ball (if any).

## SILVERY MIRROR

A silvery mirror is in effect something like a lower-quality version of the crystal ball, with the advantage that its magical properties will not be immediately obvious to the ignorant. Most silvery mirrors are quite large, suitable for mounting on a wall, though smaller pocket-sized versions may also be found occasionally (with concomitant gains in portability and losses in clarity of vision).

It grants a +2 enhancement bonus to the magic attack roll when using the *visions* spell.

## SPELLBOOKS

Spellbooks are usually written on human skin that has been flayed from the flesh of living victims.

Sorcerers do not need spellbooks to cast their spells, but may find useful arcane lore in the spellbooks of another (often written to make teaching acolytes less burdensome). Any one spellbook will contain full information on 2d4 spells from one or more sorcery styles, and adds a +4 bonus to the Knowledge (arcana) check made to research any of the spells detailed within it.

*'Pelias lifted a great shimmering globe from an ebony table.*

*'Tsotha's crystal. A childish toy, but useful when there is lack of time for higher science. Look in, your majesty.*

*'He laid it on the table before Conan's eyes. The king looked into cloudy depths which deepened and expanded. Slowly images crystalized out of the mist and shadows. He was looking on a familiar landscape. Broad plains ran to a wide winding river, beyond which the level lands ran up quickly into a maze of low hills. On the northern bank of the river stood a walled town, guarded by a moat connected at each end with the river.*

*'By Crom!' ejaculated Conan. 'It's Shamar! The dogs besiege it!'*

## STAFF OF DEATH

This Khitan magical item resembles a quarterstaff. It can be used as a weapon, in which case it is treated as a quarterstaff but with a +1 enhancement bonus on all attack rolls made with it. In addition, it can be used to deliver spells that have a range of 'touch'. Used in this way, it activates the spell whenever it strikes an enemy, whether or not its regular melee damage penetrates his armour. The staff itself is said to be cut from 'the living Tree of Death,' and must be crafted individually for the wielder – if stolen or otherwise acquired from the original wielder, it has no effect.

## DRUGS, POISONS AND HERBAL PREPARATIONS

The raw materials for herbal items are generally very tricky to obtain, and the final substances are also often difficult and time-consuming to manufacture. Rather than buying the raw ingredients, a herbalist will usually need to search for them himself. It is rare to find unprepared herbs for sale, since anyone who knows which herbs to pick also knows there is far more

*Gingerly he drew the sword, and from it dripped a greenish liquid exactly like that which slavered from the scimitar-fangs of the reptile. The blade was steeped in the poison of the snake's own kind, and the obtaining of that venom from the fiend-haunted swamps of Zingara would have made a saga in itself.*



## An Introduction to the Lotus

Various lotus plants can be found everywhere from Khitai to Kush. They seem to grow predominantly in jungle or swamp environments, though none grow in the Pictish Wilderness. Even among scholars, there is some confusion as to the nomenclature of the various types of lotus plant, and the various preparations that can be made from them. The following system of classification is intended to be simple and comprehensive, and includes all the various lotus plants and preparations mentioned in the Conan stories.

**Black Lotus:** The most versatile and infamous of all the lotus plants is the black lotus. It grows extensively in the jungles around the Zarkheba River and is used by the denizens of the lost city of Xuthal, among other places, to make a variety of preparations. It seems likely that it also grows elsewhere in the Black Kingdoms, though probably nowhere so lushly as around that black-watered river. The plant itself is actively malevolent and is treated as a plant creature (see the forthcoming *Book of Skelos*). Those who can get close enough to harvest it without being overcome by its dread fumes can find a variety of uses for it, including the deadly poison Black Lotus Juice (see p. 230), the incense-like drug Black Lotus Powder (see p. 230), and the potent wine known as Black Lotus Wine (see p. 230). The fresh-cut flowers are known as Black Lotus Blossom (see p. 230) and are particularly potent in their hallucinogenic and narcotic effects.

**Golden Lotus:** This lotus plant is something of a mystery. Its extract, Golden Lotus Juice (see p. 230), is found in Zamboula and is perhaps the most beneficial of the various lotus preparations. However, if the plant itself is related to the other lotus plants it must grow in a swamp or jungle, of which there are few near the steppes and deserts around Zamboula. It seems likely that this is another Khitan export, since Zamboula is on the main caravan route that extends from Khitai to Stygia. That would account for its relative rarity, as otherwise it would seem odd that such useful plant would not be found more commonly in the Hyborian kingdoms. Alternatively, it is certainly possible that it is related to the white and black lotuses and so grows in Kush and the other Black Kingdoms. It could even be a swamp plant from southern Stygia, like the purple lotus. If it does indeed grow in Kush or Stygia, it must be scarce indeed, for it is highly prized.

**Green Lotus:** One of the two varieties of lotus found as far east as Khitai, the green lotus in its natural form is almost black in colour and so is sometimes called black lotus by the ignorant. Green lotus blossoms are cut from the lost jungles of Khitai by the priests of Yun, who dry the great flowers out and powder them into a fine dust for export by caravan to Stygia. This dust is known as Green Lotus Blossom (see p. 231) and is one of the deadliest poisons known to man.

**Grey Lotus:** Perhaps related to the green lotus, the grey lotus is also found close to Khitai, but in the Swamps of the Dead beyond that mystical land. Its blossoms are cut, dried and powdered, then exported as far as Corinthia and perhaps elsewhere. Grey Lotus Blossom (see p. 231) sends any who breath its dust immediately and murderously insane.

**Purple Lotus:** Found only in the ghost-haunted swamps of southern Stygia, the purple lotus has only one known use. The juice extracted from all parts of the plant forms a powerful paralytic poison, known as Purple Lotus Juice (see p. 231).

**White Lotus:** The white lotus tree is larger than the other lotus plants, and is surprisingly benign or at least harmless. It grows in Keshan and elsewhere in the northern Black Kingdoms, but nowhere else. There are no particularly powerful uses known for the plant, though it is possible that it may have properties only brought out by combining it in another herbal preparation. If so, experiment is the only way to find out for sure.

**Yellow Lotus:** Closely resembling the black lotus in its effects, but a far less potent plant, the yellow lotus secretes Yellow Lotus Resin (see p. 231) but has no other particularly useful properties. It seems likely that it, like the black lotus, grows somewhere in the northern Black Kingdoms, but it is used by sorcerers from around the world.

profit to be had in selling the various extracts and drugs that can be made from them than selling the herb by itself.

The most notorious of all herbs are the feared lotus plants. Lotuses come in a number of varieties, and some of these varieties have several different uses. See the sidebar, An Introduction to the Lotus, for more information about lotus plants and the preparations that can be derived from them.

When gathering a venom or other product that derives from a particular creature rather than a mere plant, the Games Master will require you to play out at least one combat with it as well as simply finding it. These poisons are usually gathered with the Poison Use feat, rather than the Craft (herbalism) skill, since the latter only covers plant based products. Plant-based poisons such as the Apples of Derketa can be gathered either with the feat or the skill.

Full rules for crafting herbal items can be found in the Skills section (see p. 89).

## APPLES OF DERKETA

These large apple-like globes are dark crimson in colour and grow on a tree whose broad leaves are a rich and peculiarly vivid green. The trees grow in the lush jungles of Kush.

The apples are a deadly poison if eaten, or if the fresh juice is smeared on weaponry. The juice even inflicts some damage if spilt onto skin. The apples need no particular preparation to be poisonous, so the Craft (herbalism) skill is not needed to make use of the poison (though it could be useful in finding a place where they grow – see Chapter 3: Heroes of the Hyborian Age).



*'That's what the black people of Kush call the Apples of Verketa. Verketa is the Queen of the Dead. Drink a little of the juice, or spill it on your flesh, and you'd be dead before you could tumble to the foot of this crag.'*

*'Oh!'*

The juice's potency lasts only for an hour or so, though an apple could conceivably be carried for a week before losing its potency.

## BLACK LOTUS BLOSSOM

The flowers of the black lotus give off a heady scent that causes dream-haunted slumber. Any who inhale them must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 25) or fall fast asleep for 1d3 hours. However, this sleep can also be useful, for the dreams that result are often prophetic or otherwise highly informative in nature. Anyone undergoing the sleep of the southern lotus may attempt a Knowledge (arcana) skill check once per hour to gain some useful insight into his current situation, at the Games Master's discretion. If this information tells of an immediate threat to his sleeping body, he may attempt to rouse himself through sheer willpower alone with a Will saving throw (DC 25).

*'He recoiled, recognising the black lotus, whose juice was death, and whose scent brought dream-haunted slumber. But already he felt a subtle lethargy stealing over him. He sought to lift his sword, to hew down the serpentine stalks, but his arm hung lifeless at his side. He opened his mouth to shout to his warriors, but only a faint rattle issued. The next instant, with appalling suddenness, the jungle waved and dimmed before his eyes; he did not hear the screams that burst out awfully not far away, as his knees collapsed, letting him pitch limply to the earth. Above his prostrate form the great black blossoms nodded in the windless air.'*

## BLACK LOTUS JUICE

This is a deadly poison, plain and simple. It immediately brings a man to his knees, weak as a kitten, and finishes him off soon after.

## BLACK LOTUS POWDER

This incense-like stuff is burnt to provide dreamy, opium-like effects which can either boost a sorcerer's power or allow rapid recovery from major sorcerous efforts, at the cost of a distinct lack of function for a day or so.

A sorcerer who has been reduced below 0 PP by the Pushing It rules (see p. 190) or some other means may return to full Base PP by burning one dose of the powder and then spending 4d6 hours completely helpless as he alternates between an unconscious stupor and wild waking dreams.

A sorcerer who is at 0 PP or above when he burns the black lotus gains 1 PP per hour for 4d6 hours, up to a maximum of his Maximum PP. His PP will not begin to reduce back to his Base PP until the black lotus powder wears off. He is not completely helpless during this time, but will suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to all Listen and Spot checks.

*Cost:* 300 sp/dose

## BLACK LOTUS WINE

Also known as lotus-juice, this is a wine-like drink, drunk for pleasure. It is a mixture of various extracts from the black lotus, steeped in a sizable quantity of strong wine. The quantities used in the recipe are a closely guarded secret, for if the balance is wrong the drinker may be made permanently insane or even killed by the lotus juices. Made correctly, lotus wine will render the drinker unconscious through alcohol poisoning before it kill him from the quantity of lotus used. The general effects are similar to those of burning black lotus powder, except that the wine offers no particular benefit to sorcerers – only hallucinations and drunkenness to dull the senses of the jaded. Black lotus wine is particularly common in the mad city of Xuthal (see p. 275).

*Cost:* 50 sp/pint

## BLACK STYGIAN SCORPION VENOM

A single drop of this deadly venom is enough to slay a strong man, if it gets into his bloodstream.

## GOLDEN LOTUS JUICE

This golden liquid is extremely scarce and valuable, for it provides instantaneous relief from all herbal and alchemical effects, including the slumber, paralysis or madness that may be caused by some of the other lotus varieties. Drinking a single dose of it will also cure 1d6 points of ability damage, if the drinker has any.

*Cost:* 1,200 sp/dose

## GREAT SERPENT VENOM

This powerful poison is carefully 'milked' from the great serpents that infest the swamps of Zingara.





## GREEN LOTUS BLOSSOM

This is often called black lotus, though it is not the same plant as the true black lotus of Xuthal and the Zarkheba River. The green lotus blossom is a greenish-yellow powder that kills when inhaled. It grows only in the jungles of Khitai, but is exported in small quantities to Stygia by caravan.

## GREY LOTUS BLOSSOM

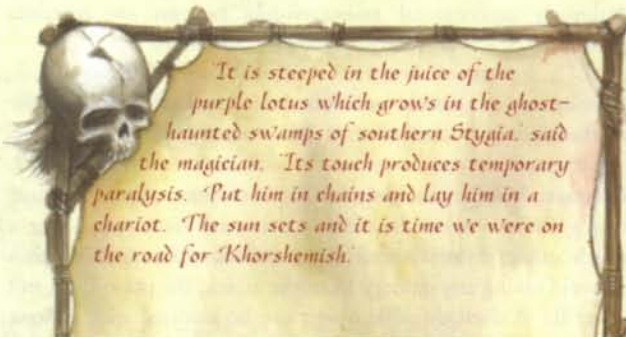
Any who breathe in this dust and fail their Fortitude saves are not only dealt ability damage, but also enter berserk furies identical to those described under the Fighting-Madness feat (see p. 115). While infuriated, they will attack the nearest living creature.

## PURPLE LOTUS JUICE

This is by far the most powerful paralytic poison known, capable of felling even the mighty Conan.

## YELLOW LOTUS RESIN

This is something like a poor man's black lotus powder, a dark yellowish-brown resin scraped from the leaves and flowers of the yellow lotus. Yellow lotus resin is used by sorcerers to provide visions and trances, with a strong hallucinogenic effect. Its effects last for 2d4 hours. It grants a +2 circumstance bonus to



*'It is steeped in the juice of the purple lotus which grows in the ghost-haunted swamps of southern Stygia,' said the magician. 'Its touch produces temporary paralysis. 'Put him in chains and lay him in a chariot. 'The sun sets and it is time we were on the road for 'Khorshemish.'*

all Knowledge (arcana) checks made with relation to Divination checks. Furthermore, during its duration the sorcerer is considered to be resting for purposes of regaining power points, whatever he is actually doing. However, he has a -2 penalty to Listen and Spot checks while affected by the resin and for 1d6 hours thereafter.

Cost: 125 sp/dose.

## THE EFFECTS OF POISON

When a character takes damage from an attack with a poisoned weapon, touches an item smeared with contact poison, consumes poisoned food or drink, or is otherwise poisoned, he must make a Fortitude





**Table 8-6: Poisons**

Poison	Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Price
Apple of Derketa Juice	Contact DC 20	1d6 Con	1d6 Con	500 sp
Apple of Derketa Juice	Injury DC 22	2d8 Con	2d8 Con	500 sp
Apple of Derketa	Ingested DC 21	2d6 Con	2d6 Con	500 sp
Black Lotus Blossom	Inhaled DC 25	1d3 Str + Hallucinations	Unconsciousness	1,250 sp
Black Lotus Juice	Ingested DC 22	1d10 Str + 1d6 Con	2d6 Con	750 sp
Black Stygian Scorpion Venom	Injury DC 23	2d4 Con + 2d6 Dex	2d4 Con + 1d6 Dex	1,000 sp
Great Serpent Venom	Injury DC 21	2d6 Con	1d6 Con	850 sp
Green Lotus Blossom	Inhaled DC 24	1d6 Con	2d6 Con	1,500 sp
Grey Lotus Blossom	Inhaled DC 22	2d6 Wis + Madness (see description)	1d6 Wis	800 sp
Purple Lotus Juice	Injury DC 28	3d6 Dex + Paralysis	1d6 Dex	2,500 sp

saving throw. If he fails, he takes the poison's initial damage (usually ability damage). Even if he succeeds, he typically faces more damage 1 minute later, which he can also avoid with a successful Fortitude saving throw.

One dose of poison smeared on a weapon or some other object affects just a single target. A poisoned weapon or object retains its venom until the weapon scores a hit or the object is touched (unless the poison is wiped off before a target comes in contact with it). Any poison smeared on an object or exposed to the elements in any way remains potent until it is touched or used.

Although supernatural and spell-like poisons are possible, poisonous effects are almost always extraordinary.

Poisons can be divided into four basic types according to the method by which their effect is delivered, as follows.

**Contact:** Merely touching this type of poison necessitates a saving throw. It can be actively delivered via a weapon or a touch attack. Even if a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the poison can still affect it. A chest or other object can be smeared with contact poison as part of a trap.

**Ingested:** Ingested poisons are virtually impossible to utilize in a combat situation. A poisoner could administer a potion to an unconscious creature or attempt to dupe someone into drinking or eating something poisoned. Assassins and other characters tend to use ingested poisons outside of combat.

**Inhaled:** Inhaled poisons are usually contained in fragile vials or eggshells. They can be thrown as a ranged attack with a range increment of 10 feet. When it strikes a hard surface (or is struck hard), the container releases its poison. One dose spreads to fill the volume of a 10-foot cube. Alternatively, four doses may be placed in a specially designed one-use blowpipe (cost

20 sp) to fill the volume of a 20-foot by 20-foot by 10-foot high cuboid; the blowpipe used in this way has a range increment of 5 feet. Each creature within the area must make a saving throw. (Holding one's breath is ineffective against inhaled poisons; they affect the nasal membranes, tear ducts, and other parts of the body.) The cloud typically persists for 3d6 rounds, so it is possible for it to affect several creatures if they wander into it after the initial targets; furthermore, at the Games Master's discretion, it is subject to being blown by the wind during this time and could potentially be blown back towards its users.

**Injury:** This poison must be delivered through a wound. If a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the poison does not affect it. Traps that cause damage from weapons, needles, and the like sometimes contain injury poisons.

The characteristics of poisons are summarized on Table 8-6: Poisons. Terms on the table are defined below.

*Type:* The poison's method of delivery (contact, ingested, inhaled, or via an injury) and the Fortitude save DC to avoid the poison's damage.

*Initial Damage:* The damage the character takes immediately upon failing his saving throw against this poison. Ability damage is temporary unless marked with an asterisk (\*), in which case the loss is a permanent drain. Paralysis lasts for 2d6 minutes.

*Secondary Damage:* The amount of damage the character takes 1 minute after exposure as a result of the poisoning, if he fails a second saving throw. Unconsciousness lasts for 1d3 hours. Ability damage marked with an asterisk is permanent drain instead of temporary damage.

*Price:* The cost of one dose (one vial) of the poison. It is not possible to use or apply poison in any quantity smaller than one dose. The purchase and possession of poison is always illegal,



and even in big cities it can be obtained only from specialized, less than reputable sources.

## PERILS OF USING POISON

A character has a 5% chance of exposing himself to a poison whenever he applies it to a weapon or otherwise readies it for use. Additionally, a character who rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon must make a DC 15 Reflex save or accidentally poison himself with the weapon. These penalties can be obviated by selecting the Poison Use feat (see p. 123).

## POISON IMMUNITIES

Creatures with natural poison attacks are immune to their own poison. Nonliving creatures (constructs and undead) and creatures without metabolisms (such as elementals) are always immune to poison. Oozes, plants, and certain kinds of outsiders are also immune to poison, although conceivably special poisons could be concocted specifically to harm them.

## ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

Alchemical items are quite similar in nature to herbal preparations, except that they require more extensive tools, usually a fully functional alchemist's laboratory. Full rules for crafting alchemical items can be found in the Skills chapter (see p. 89).

Note that alchemical items marked with an asterisk (\*) can be used in conjunction with the *greater telekinesis* spell.

### Outfitting an Alchemist's Laboratory

Unlike the usual crafts, whose practitioners can often get by with portable toolkits, alchemy requires a great deal of equipment if one is to practice it at all, let alone successfully. At a bare minimum, a room around 10 feet by 10 feet will need to be set up to serve as a laboratory. Alchemical work can only be done if the alchemist is undisturbed, so a stout lock, a certain amount of isolation, and guards of some kind are all recommended for the laboratory.

A basic laboratory can be set up for some 500 sp, so long as the above requirements are also met. This has only the bare minimum of equipment, such that in effect the alchemist is working with improvised tools (-2 to all Craft - alchemy checks), though without even this minimal lab no work at all can be done.

For a more advanced laboratory, a 20-foot by 20-foot room will be required, along with 1,500 sp in equipment. This gives neither bonuses nor penalties to alchemy.

A masterwork laboratory requires a 30-foot by 30-foot room and equipment costing 5,000 sp. This grants a +2 bonus to all Craft (alchemy) checks.

## ACHERONIAN DEMON-FIRE



*"Watch me and learn wisdom," advised Xaltotun*

*His hand dipped into his robe and came out with something shining - a glistening sphere. This he threw suddenly at Conan. The Cimmerian contemptuously struck it aside with his sword - at the instant of contact there was a sharp explosion, a flare of white, blinding flame, and Conan pitched senseless to the ground.*

This powerful demon-fire recipe, older and subtler than Kothic Demon-Fire (see p. 234), is loaded into a glass orb which can be flung at an opponent. It can either be hurled directly at a character, or onto the ground. In either case it has a range increment of 10 feet.

If thrown at a character, a ranged touch attack roll is made against his Defence Value. As usual for missile fire, parry bonuses cannot be applied - a character who attempts to parry a demon-fire orb will simply set it off as soon as it contacts the parrying weapon. Against a character, it inflicts 1d6 fire damage and incapacitates him for 1d6 hours. He may make a Fortitude save (DC 25) to avoid the incapacitation effect, but not the damage.

If thrown at the ground, the Acheronian demon-fire affects a 10-foot by 10-foot area. Any character within the area affected must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or sustain 1 point of fire damage and be stunned (lose all dodge and parry bonuses to DV and can take no actions) for 1d4 rounds.

Cost: 1,500 sp. Requirements: Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks.

## FLAME-POWDER

Flame-powder is something of a poor-man's demon fire, magically treated sulphur which will burst into flame as soon as it is struck hard or crushed. It can be hurled to the ground with some force, but only immediately adjacent to the sorcerer throwing it. In this case it affects a 5-foot by 5-foot area within 5 feet of the sorcerer, bursting into small flames that last for one round and deal 1d4 fire damage to any creature within its square, as well as potentially starting fires. Alternatively, it can be simply poured out over a surface, and the next creature weighing at least 200 pounds who steps on it while running (or who weighs 400 pounds or more but steps on it while walking) immediately triggers the effect.



*She bent and placed the jar to his lips. He drank, mechanically at first, then with a suddenly roused interest. To her amazement he sat up and took the vessel from her hands. When he lifted his face, his eyes were clear and normal. Much of the drawn haggard look had gone from his features, and his voice was not the mumble of delirium.*

*'Crom! Where did you get this?'*

*She pointed. 'From that alcove, where a yellow hussy is sleeping.'*

*He thrust his muzzle again into the golden liquid.*

*'By Crom,' he said with a deep sigh. 'I feel new life and power rush like wildfire through my veins. Surely this is the very elixir of Life!'*

Used in this latter way, the flame-powder will lose its potency after one hour if no-one steps on it.

Cost: 50 sp. Requirements: Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks.

## GOLDEN WINE OF XUTHAL

This nectar-like liquid heals wounds almost instantaneously, and if drunk regularly prolongs life too. It is found only in the lost city of Xuthal, deep in the Southern Desert. It is possible that the golden wine is derived from the golden lotus (see p. 230), but this is no more than speculation – the secret of its manufacture is known only to the half-dreaming citizens of Xuthal.

A single dose of this wine is sufficient to instantly heal 2d8 + (2 x Character

Level) hit points on any wounded character. It also instantly restores up to 1d6 + Character Level ability score loss in each damaged ability, if any (see page 173).

Cost: 1,750 sp/dose. Requirements: Craft (alchemy) 12 ranks, must discover the recipe from the Xuthallans or by other researches.

## KOTHIC DEMON-FIRE

This small glass orb is filled with a deadly combination of substances which ignite into heat and flame on contact with air. It can either be hurled directly at a character, or onto the ground. In either case it has a range increment of 10 feet.

If thrown at a character, a ranged touch attack roll is made against his Defence Value. As usual for missile fire, parry bonuses cannot be applied – a character who attempts to parry a demon-fire orb will simply set it off as soon as it contacts the parrying weapon. Against a character, it inflicts 5d6 fire damage and stuns him (loses all dodge and parry bonuses to DV and can take no actions) for one round. He may make a Fortitude save (DC 20) to avoid the stun effect, but not the damage.

*'Khensa stood silent for a space, gazing into the shadow from which those glimmering eyes gave back his stare with burning intensity. Then his hand went into his robe and came out again, and from his opening fingers a shimmering feather of sparkling dust sifted to the flags. Instantly a flare of green fire lighted the enclosure. In the brief glare the forms of seven men, standing motionless behind the bars, were limned in vivid detail: tall, hairy men in ragged hillmen's garments. They did not speak, but in their eyes blazed the fear of death, and their hairy fingers gripped the bars.*

*The fire died out but the glow remained, a quivering ball of lambent green that pulsed and shimmered on the flags before Khensa's feet. The wide gaze of the tribesmen was fixed on it. It wavered, elongated, it turned into a luminous greensmoke spiralling upwards. It twisted and writhed like a great shadowy serpent, then broadened and billowed out in shining folds and whirls. It grew to a cloud moving swiftly over the flags – straight towards the grille. The men watched its coming with dilated eyes: the bars quivered with the grip of their desperate fingers. 'Bearded lips parted but no sound came forth. The green cloud rolled on the bars and blotted them from sight, like a fog it oozed through the grille and hid the men within. From the enveloping folds came a strangled gasp, as of a man plunged suddenly under the surface of water. That was all.*

*'By Crom,' he said with a deep sigh. 'I feel new life and power rush like wildfire through my veins. Surely this is the very elixir of Life!'*



If thrown at the ground, the Kothic demon-fire affects a 10-foot by 10-foot area. Any character within the area affected must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or be dealt 2d8 fire damage.

*Cost:* 500 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks.

## LOTUS SMOKE

Lotus smoke is a preparation derived from any lotus blossom (green, grey, or black). When cast on the ground (treat as a thrown weapon with a range increment of 5 feet), it sheds light in a 15 feet radius. One round later, it turns into a glowing ball that affects all who look on it (treat as an Evil Eye range spell) as though targeted by an *entrance* spell cast by the sorcerer who created the lotus smoke. The ball moves 10 feet in the same direction as it was initially thrown. One round later still, it turns into a cloud of smoke 15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet in size, which moves in the same direction again, this time at 20 feet per round for 2d6 rounds. In smoke form, it has exactly the same effect as the lotus blossom it was originally derived from.

*Cost:* Lotus greensmoke, 3,750 sp; lotus greensmoke, 4,500 sp; lotus greysmoke, 2,400 sp. *Raw Materials:* 1 dose of either green, grey, or black lotus blossom (which is considered to replace the usual 1/3 cost for raw materials). *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 8 ranks, *entrance*.

## STYGIAN TOMB-DUST

This dust causes temporary blindness when flung into the eyes. The target gets a Reflex saving throw (DC set by your magic attack roll) to avoid it completely.

If he fails, he is blinded for 2d6 rounds (cannot see; no parry or dodge bonuses to DV; moves at half speed; -4 penalty on Search checks and on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks; all checks and activities that rely on vision (such as reading and Spot checks) automatically fail; all opponents are considered to have total concealment (50% miss chance) to the blinded character).

*Cost:* 400 sp. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 5 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks.



*'Wait, your majesty, this man is my prisoner.'*

*'Aside, wizard!' shrieked Amalrus, maddened by the glare in the Cimmerian's blue eyes.*

*'Back, I say!' roared Tsotha, roused to awesome wrath. His lean hand came from his sleeve and cast a shower of dust into the Ophirean's contorted face. Amalrus cried out and staggered back, clutching at his eyes, the sword falling from his hand.*

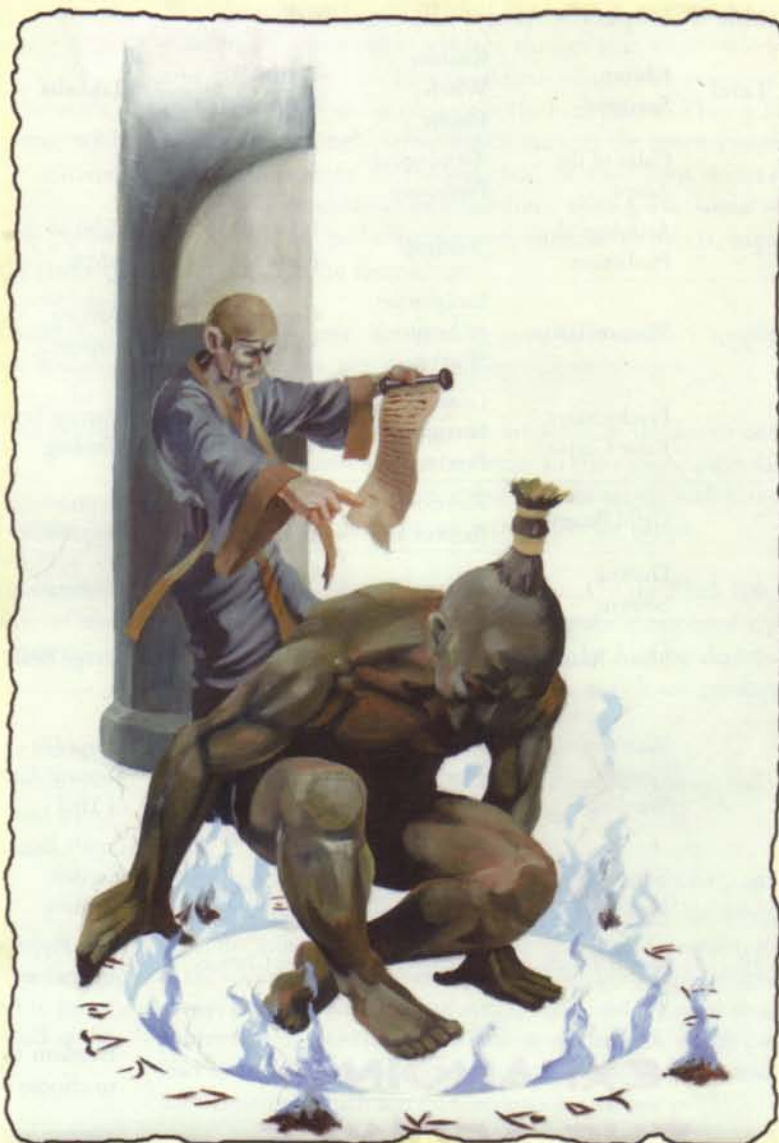




Table 8-7: Specific Acolyte Backgrounds

Level	Khitan Sorcerer	Kushite Witch-Finder	Pictish Shaman	Rakhsha	Wise-Woman or Cunning-Man	Sorcerer of the Black Ring
1	Calm of the Adept	Astrological Prediction	Summon Beast	Entrance	Summon Beast	Conjuring
2	Astrological Prediction	Warding	Lesser Ill-Fortune	Calm of the Adept	Astrological Prediction	Lesser Ill-Fortune
3	Warrior Trance	Incantation of Amalric's Witchman	Greater Summon Beast	Darting Serpent	Animal Ally	Telekinesis
4	Psychometry, Raise Corpse	Lesser Ill-Fortune, Psychometry	Ill-Fortune, Warding	Warrior Trance, Warding	Greater Summon Beast, Warding	Warding, Greater Telekinesis
5	Gelid Bones	Rune of Jhebbal Sag	Rune of Jhebbal Sag	Hypnotic Suggestion	Visions	Ill-Fortune
6	Darting Serpent	Visions	Greater Ill-Fortune	Domination	Sorcerous Garden	Greater Ill-Fortune
7	Mind-Reading	Greater Warding	Greater Warding	Savage Beast	Dream of Wisdom	Greater Warding
8	Warding, Greater Warding	Free Choice	Dance of the Changing Serpent, Astrological Prediction	Lesser Ill-Fortune, Curse of Yizil	Free Choice	Raise Corpse, Burst Barrier
9	Sorcerous News	Free Choice	Free Choice	Greater Warding	Free Choice	Free Choice
10	Death Touch	Free Choice	Free Choice	Mass Hypnotic Suggestion	Free Choice	Free Choice

## EXPANDING THE ACOLYTE BACKGROUND

The following are examples of typical scholars who have the Acolyte background. These represent the standard methods of teaching of the sorcerous societies listed; it is not usually possible for a character to deviate from these teaching methods once he has commenced them, though sometimes an individual master will alter the curriculum somewhat. A character who breaks away from his sorcerous society, or who studies elsewhere in secret, may certainly learn different spells with the agreement of the Games Master (usually as though Independent or by making a Pact with a demon), though this often has its own risks, such as covens wanting revenge if they discover their acolyte has rejected their teaching.

Scholars with the Pact or Independent background are usually unique in their level progression, while Priests tend to have more

freedom to choose spells, but a more limited range of spells to choose from – see Chapter 11: Religion.

## ACOLYTES

**Khitan Sorcerer:** Most Khitan sorcerers value information above all else, and though they will not hesitate to slay those who deserve it or are their allotted targets, they prefer to avoid unnecessary deaths. They also learn Oriental magic and curses, making them highly effective combatants.

These sorcerers usually wear hooded, wide-sleeved robes of a very dark grey or black material, and sandals beneath their robes. They favour staffs as a weapon, and, if they can get them, Staffs of Death (see p. 228) as a means of delivering their spells.

Khitan sorcerers almost always travel and train in small groups. One member of the group will be the senior sorcerer, responsible for teaching the others, and will usually be scrupulously fair but by no means a pushover.

**Kushite Witch-Finder:** The Kushite witch-doctors, witchmen, or witch-finders are particularly famed for their counter-magic abilities. Their duties are to protect the



tribe from rival witches, predict the future, and curse tribal enemies, in approximately that order of importance.

Most favour feathers, bones, and animal skins as their outfit, in classical shamanic style. Often they also sport long, wild dreadlocks.

The Kushite tradition of scholarship is in many respects far more open-minded than that of the more supposedly civilised nations. They are happy enough to share their knowledge with others, even those from distant lands. Likewise their sorcerers rarely exert undue influence over their acolytes – though a senior witchman can be a harsh taskmaster, he is genuinely concerned for the welfare of his acolyte and desires to train him to be an asset to their tribe.

**Pictish Shaman:** The shamans of the Pictish Wilderness are a dangerous bunch, though fortunately they spend most of their time fighting each other rather than banding together and raiding the Hyborian kingdoms. Thus some of the earliest spells they learn are curses, and they love practising such magics.

Like the witchmen of Kush, Pictish shamans favour feathers, bones and simple loin-cloths as their garb, though the relatively light-skinned Picts also use war paint and other ceremonial colouring to show off their intent and call their spirits' attention.

Pictish shamans are wary of sharing their magic, and this even extends to teaching it to their own tribe or even family. Acolyte shamans had best be constantly on the alert to prove their loyalty, or they are likely to find themselves used as the next sacrifice to the weird Pictish gods.

**Rakhsha:** These Vendhyan and Himelian scholars are experts with Oriental Magic, and usually combine this expertise with at least some knowledge of martial arts to complement such spells as *warrior trance*. They are also skilled hypnotists, capable of defeating most foes without so much as lifting a finger or raising a sweat. Finally, most learn at least a measure of countermagic, recognising that another sorcerer is a far greater threat than most ordinary humans could ever be.

Most wear plain robes and appear unarmed, though they often have concealed weaponry or sorcerous objects under their robes.

Rakhshas are usually acolytes of far more powerful groups. Those from the Himelian mountains are usually apprenticed to the Seers of Yimsha, and are regarded as completely expendable by their wicked masters.

**Wise-Woman or Cunning-Man:** These respected but elusive scholars are often called witches, though this is not strictly true. They tend to live an almost hermit-like existence, seeking wisdom in the silences of the high places. They gain knowledge through herbal means such as the green smoke method of casting the *visions* spell, or their own dreams. They gain oracular knowledge from their gods, some of which they are permitted to communicate to others, some they must keep to themselves.

Most wise-women or cunning-men dress and act simply, favouring warm, practical clothing in neutral wools.

Wise-women and cunning-men are some of the fairest and kindest taskmasters when it comes to their apprentices (as they call acolytes). Their genuine concern for the well-being of their charges is on a par with their love for nature.

**Sorcerer of the Black Ring:** The sorcerers of the Black Ring are some of the most accomplished prestidigitators of the Hyborian Age, and seem to constantly be hurling demon-fire or tomb-dust at their foes. They also learn cursing, countermagic, and necromancy.

Sorcerers of the Black Ring do not have a uniform dress code, though many wear dark-coloured robes.

The Black Ring is Stygia's foremost sorcerous society, and those acolytes who apprentice themselves into its lower echelons must dedicate their lives to obeying their superiors in the society. Higher level sorcerers of the Black Ring almost always learn the Summoning sorcery style, and often use their apprentices as assistants when calling up demons, which can lead to even newcomers to the society coming into contact with creatures which force a Corruption save (see p. 75).

