DUNGEON WORLD

planarch codex

DARK HEART OF THE DREAMER

walton
AND FRIENDS

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dark heart of the dreamer

This is a planar supplement for ***Dungeon World***, ***World of Dungeons***, and other games of dungeon adventure. It is modular, so use the parts you like.

FERAL ANTHROPOLOGIES provides new GM guidelines for playing in settings where culture matters.

CORSAIRS AND LOW BRIGANDS describes the pervasive scourge of planar banditry and how to take part in it.

THE RAVENOUS CITY introduces the monstrous planar metropolis of Dis and its inhabitants.

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feral anthro-pologies

Exile places one at an oblique angle to one's new world and makes every emigrant, willy-nilly, into an anthropologist and relativist; for to have a deep experience of two cultures is to know that no culture is absolute—it is to discover that even the most interstitial and seemingly natural aspects of our identities and social reality are constructed rather than given and that they could be arranged, shaped, articulated in quite another way.

— Eva Hoffman, "The New Nomads" (1998)

The Planarch Codex is inspired by fantasy games that attempt to reflect the richness of human societies: *Planescape, Eberron, Everway, Exalted, Shadowrun, Freeport, Dark Sun, Wormwood, Tribe 8, Earthdawn, Warhammer Fantasy, Elfquest, Pirates of Dark Water, Agone, Engel, The Shadow of Yesterday, Talislanta, Artesia, Empire of the Petal Throne,* and so forth.

WORLDLY FANTASY

Sword, sorcery, and globalization

The authors of the classic fantasy tales of the early-to-mid twentieth century—such as Burroughs, Howard, Lovecraft, and Tolkien—were fascinated by culture, ethnicity, and social life. While this interest can seem simplistic or racist to modern readers, wrapped up in the social Darwinism of that era, there's no question that the diversity of an increasingly globalized world strongly influenced their writings, as well as those of later authors—Butler, Leiber, Le Guin, Moorcock, and many more—who pushed even further.

The Planarch Codex specifically tries to address themes of globalization, colonialism, urbanization, cultural transformation, migration, and other aspects of real human societies. To do this, it places diversity at the center of play, instead of treating foreign people and their homelands as exotic wonders for the PCs to encounter or visit. It also thrives on the juxtaposition of people from different ethic and class backgrounds that is so essential to modern urban life.

If you have played mythic or urban fantasy games before, the guidelines here should remind you of what you already know, consciously or instinctively, and perhaps offer a fresh perspective.

AGENDAS

Broad objectives for play

The agendas described in *Dungeon World* are all applicable to the Planarch Codex. In addition, the GM has a new agenda, shared with the players:

Reflect the variety of real life: The countless planes of existence are filled with an infinite catalog of people, places, and things, as well as experiences, sensations, emotions, happenings, controversies, vistas, and rituals. When GMing or playing this game, or preparing to do so, try to be a student of the world in all its diversity and details, giving yourself a deeper well to draw from—not just in the "OMG that's weird!" sense, but recognizing that the range of human experiences is broad and heterogeneous.

The inhabitants and features of the planet earth are inexhaustible and amazing teachers. Read about, explore, and reflect on the beauty and horror of the natural world, human societies both historical and modern, distant lands and their inhabitants, and the issues facing your own community. Also, attempt to listen to and learn from people of different backgrounds, remaining humble about your own knowledge and grateful for the chance to learn more. Then, try to channel what you've learned at the table.

PRINCIPLES

How you make decisions

The principles described in Dungeon World are mostly applicable to the Planarch Codex. However, rather than *giving every monster life* and *naming every person*, draw on the following principles to create a rich social world:

Give everyone personhood: Rat folk, giant spiders, demons, etc. are all just people trying to get their needs and desires met, like everyone else. Nobody is a faceless monster that can be murdered without consequence. This does not mean that everyone is friendly; life is hard and those who are desperate or malicious may stab you as soon as look at you, but they have their reasons—noble, ignoble, or both.

Reveal greater diversity: First, whenever it's time to say something about the setting, don't always say the first thing that pops into your head; try to say something slightly stranger instead, ideally something that invokes the diversity of the planes. *Your political contact isn't just a royal emissary, but a member of an asexual third gender entrusted with diplomatic duties because they can't be carnally seduced and compromised by their kingdom's enemies.*

Additionally, whenever the players ask about or examine something in a more than cursory way, show that it was more complicated than it seemed. People (along with artifacts, ruins, locations, situations, etc.) don't simply reflect cultural norms and stereotypes, but embody and defy them in complex ways. If you're stuck, pick one or more of these options:

- it upholds a cultural principle, at great cost
- it twists a principle in a new direction
- it breaks, defies, or rebels against a principle
- it is deeply affected or marked by a principle

This allows you to dig deeper and complicate ideas you might have just thrown out there, and encourages everyone to cooperate in breaking down stereotypes and making relatively straightforward concepts more complex over time. All you have to do is look more closely at things and they become more interesting. *Perhaps the asexual diplomat is pregnant.*

While doing this, avoid tokenism and "all but one" stuff, where all members of a group share the same traits, except for one or more special individuals. No one is unique in defying or embodying cultural norms. People do that all the time, in both big and small ways. That's part of how culture works.

Juxtapose the incompatible: Combine elements that seem divergent; the world is far more strange and contradictory than we expect it to be.

Cultivate anthropologies: Assemble the social and cultural knowledge generated by play into a larger, constantly changing picture of life; ensure that these behaviors and ideas are backed by institutions of power and the possibility of violence.

This follows from *revealing greater diversity*. You will begin with just a few sketchy ideas about what a group, place, treasure, or dungeon is like, but over time, by adhering to the principle of diversity, you will gradually assemble a continually expanding body of knowledge about a more complex and varied world. You shouldn't attempt to track and reincorporate everything, just the ideas that stand out, but these details will give teeth to your anthropologies.

What are the consequences of things being the way they are? What forces are behind these traditions or deviations? How will they react? Ask yourself these questions and show the answers to the players, giving them opportunities to become involved. Above all, don't be afraid to change the status quo, even in the case of culture norms. But established interests will react to change, and they have significant power.

Everything is a dungeon: The PCs' residences, the streets they walk, the plane of fire, the thieves guild headquarters, the sewers beneath the city, any given wizard's tower, the astral sea, the path that leads from one plane to another, the lesser hell of slicing, even the wild places... these can all be dungeons. This is *Dungeon World*. The entire setting is basically one giant dungeon and the players merely travel from one portion of it to another, including all the planes that make up existence. Thinking of it in these terms will help you avoid wandering or unfocused play. The world is a dangerous and exciting place, no matter where you are. While everyone has adapted to living in this world of dungeons, threats remain constant.

Follow the action: The characters in your game are tools and perspectives, not prisons. If a PC leaves the group indefinitely—whether to study a lost magic, be one with the darkness, or because they become impossible to work with—have their player grab a fresh playbook and stat up a character who can still be part of things, either someone based on an existing NPC or someone new. Then, maybe a few sessions later, consider having the other players make new characters and follow the original PC's story. Encourage the players to be true to their characters, but sometimes a PC stops being a core protagonist.

NEW MOVES

Additions to your arsenal

Soft power gets hard: Sometimes seemingly flexible guidelines are backed by the threat or reality of violence. Then they become non-negotiable and edge cases get suppressed, ostracized, or eliminated. When you make this move, a line has been crossed and someone attempts to put things back in order or redraw the line to exclude or contain the problem.

Overturn the status quo: Societies are flexible and so are their arrangement of interests and authority; however, sometimes that breaks down, on a small or large scale, and everyone scrambles to determine or respond to the new status quo. Make them squirm.

Reach into the madness beyond: While everyone has personhood, there are some unknowable horrors and things beyond mortal understanding—at least until someone uncovers their true nature. Invoke the bizarre, but support players in coming to know it.

Countdown: Name the danger—a corruption, a desire, etc.—and tell the player to draw six boxes, filling in the first. Next time, tell them to fill in more or offer incentives to do so. When all the boxes are full, *boom*, it happens. If they ask, tell them a way out.

10 DUNGEONS AS MONSTERS

A shorthand method for generating dungeons

There are so many small and large dungeons in an urban adventure (every alley, sewer, or tower!) that **it can be useful to stat up each dungeon more like a monster**, with its own instincts, moves, and damage.

To create a new dungeon, name it and mark its location on the map of Dis and the planes (p. 16-17). Then, choose 2-5 dangers it poses to the PCs, with two dangers for a small cave and five for a castle.

For example, maybe it's Frost, Treachery, and Razors in the Dark, for the hideout of the ice-goblin assassins.

Then, for each danger that seems vague, write an instinct that describes what it wants (personifying the danger) and how this threatens the PCs.

Razors in the Dark is concrete enough, but Treachery gains the instinct "convince the PCs that this is all a misunderstanding" and Frost gets "immobilize them and drain all their warmth."

Create a countdown (p. 9) **for each danger**, with three to six boxes each. When the PCs enter a new room or area, roll or choose results for each danger using this method: on a 6-, that danger is not present

here; on a 7-9, that danger has a strength of +1 in this area; on a 10-11, its strength is +2; and on a 12, its strength is +3, which typically means this is the source or nexus of the danger. Whatever the result, fill in the same number of boxes in the countdown for each danger and note it on the dungeon map.

When you have filled all the boxes of a countdown, you've placed all of that type of peril in this dungeon. **When you've filled all the dangers**, you've reached the limits of the dungeon, though the exit may be elsewhere and all perils may not necessarily have been destroyed or fully dealt with.

If a die falls on the floor or is otherwise disturbed or unreadable, congratulations: you have just rolled an interloper. In the next room, in addition to the usual dangers, create a new one that doesn't "belong."

When the PCs are in a room or area of the dungeon, describe it and make moves based on the strength of the dangers that are present. When they take damage, roll a number of dice equal to the strength of the appropriate danger, but choose the die size that fits.

A chamber has Frost+2 and an interloper (a demonic artifact) at +1. When a PC attempts to pull the artifact out of a wall of magic ice, they take 2d4+1d10 damage.

corsairs and low brigands

They lived by thievery, robbery, bodyguarding, brief commissions as couriers and agents—commissions they always, or almost always, fulfilled punctiliously—and by showmanship... They acquired new scars and skills, comprehensions and compassions, cynicisms and secrecies—a laughter that lightly mocked and a cool poise that tightly crusted all inner miseries... They became outwardly merry, uncaring, and cool, but their grief and guilt stayed with them... Their comradeship became firmer than a rock, stronger than steel, but all other human relations were fleeting. Melancholy was their commonest mood, though mostly hid even from each other...

— Fritz Leiber, "The Circle Curse" (1970)

The life of a freebooter is one of desperation and hardship. Those who choose this life often do so because they have few options other than banditry.

FINDING WORK

The art of barely getting by

Planar freelancing involves getting work however you can find it, generally from patrons who need things done, or from tracking down leads about riches or valuable goods that are ripe for the taking. Worthwhile leads are also frequently traded on the information markets through brokers and patrons.

To start, roll up 2-4 jobs on the tables that follow (*patron, type of job, target, location*) plugging in existing NPCs and factions into the roles of patrons and targets or inventing new ones on the spot. Fill in the details yourself or in conversation with the players ("How might you be contacted by refugees from another plane?"). Later, roll new jobs as needed.

When they characters have assembled their crew and are ready to go to work, have them choose from the available jobs. Depending on how the characters come across various offers, they may or may not be able to do research on their patron or their target before accepting or declining the assignment.

Jobs come in all shapes and sizes, from dirt simple to insane; some patrons will stiff you while others are fair. Those are just the hazards of doing business.

14 Who is the patron or target?

First roll to determine a general category of person or organization, and then roll again for a more specific result, fleshing out the answer as needed. Roll for both the patron(s) and target(s) of the job, which can be singular or plural. Patrons can also be information sources, and don't always offer additional payment beyond "whatever you can carry out."

[1-3] Urban Denizens

1 – criminal
2 – cult
3 – guild
4 – library
5 – temple
6 – wizard

[4-5] Strangers

1 – diplomat
2 – freebooter
3 – merchant
4 – militarist
5 – pilgrim
6 – refugee

[6] Weirdos

1 – alien god
2 – diabolist
3 – immortal
4 – outlaw
5 – philosopher
6 – spirit

JOB LIST

Somewhere on the internet is a record of active jobs available in the city of Dis. Come find it.

What type of job is it?

1 – acquisition
2 – delivery
3 – exploration
4 – killing
5 – protection
6 – raiding

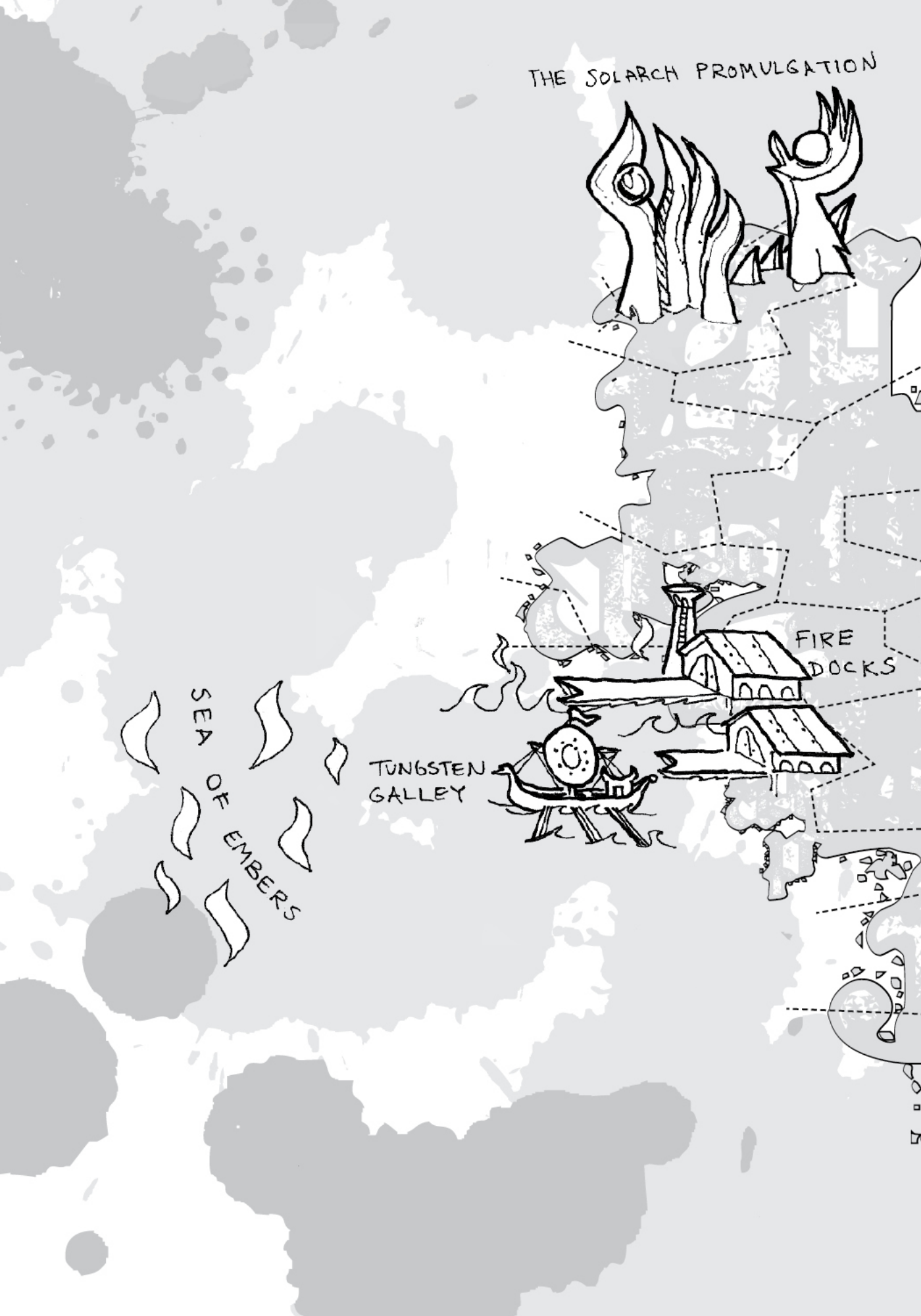
Where is the target?

1 – nearby parish
2 – distant parish
3 – nearby plane
4 – distant plane
5 – don't know
6 – no one knows

At the beginning of a new session or when the characters have returned from attempting a job, roll on the table below to see what action the other available jobs have seen in the meantime. This isn't a video game; quests don't just wait around for you!

Is that old job still available now?

1 – It was withdrawn or disavowed by the patron, but you could still give it a shot.
2 – Sure, nobody was foolish enough to try it.
3 – Sure, the other crew failed (and died?).
4 – Sure, but it's changed or escalated into a somewhat different job now.
5 – Another crew did it, but a new patron wants knowledge, treasure, or revenge from them.
6 – Another crew botched and ruined it, but there's new work related to the fallout.


THE SOLARCH PROMULGATION
FIRE DOCKS
TUNGSTEN GALLEY
SEA OF EMBERS

ROGUE MOON
CALYPSE TOWER
DITCHWATER SLUMS
THE PALACE
FRAGMENT OF ALLUMIVAR

The Cavernous City

While, at a sign from you, sire,
the unique and final city raises its
stainless walls, I am collecting the
ashes of the other possible cities
that vanish to make room for it,
cities that can never be rebuilt or remembered.

— Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972)

Now, my son, we approach the city whose name is Dis...

— Dante Alighieri, *Inferno* (1314)

The city of Dis is a dungeon that connects all other dungeons. Its sewers and cisterns sink their roots into the underworld. Its pinnacles and spires grasp at the celestial spheres and have begun to spread across the face of the moon. To the west are the docks that gnaw at the elemental reaches, where ships come and go on the seas of fire, air, and water. And in every direction are the planes, tiny as a small fiefdom or large enough to seem infinite, but all in great peril.

THE CITY OF DIS

An urban leviathan of the planes

The city of Dis is a living thing, hungrily devouring all the planes it touches. In the lost or forgotten parts of any decadent civilization—its deserted ruins or squalid sewers—Dis has already begun its conquest, absorbing and remaking things, but also taking on the traits of the worlds it digests. Adventurers aware of this invasion use the city's beachheads to travel between the planes, simply by journeying through Dis. The city has already consumed dozens of planes, and refugees from countless worlds fill its streets. Where else is there to go? Plus, grotesque as it is, Dis now contains the last remnants of their homelands.

At the beginning of each session, without fail, have the city make one of these moves:

- absorb a place utterly and completely
- absorb a place but preserve its essence
- alter its own geography
- open a path to a dangerous new plane

When the city expands to consume a place, draw its new boundaries on the map (p. 16-17). **When a plane is completely consumed by Dis**, label it as a new district of the city.

THE PARISHES

The wards and barrios of Dis

Dis is subdivided into a series of districts known as parishes, some of which are the remnants of a single plane while others transcend any historical boundaries. An elected parish council purportedly administers each parish, though councilors typically act as toothless puppets in service to the guild houses that manage trade and thievery in Dis.

The GM gradually develops the geography of Dis over time by mapping and detailing the parishes as they come up in play. This typically involves sketching out a new parish or custom move between sessions or, sometimes, improvising one on the spot.

Here is an example parish, with a custom move:

The Noble Parish of the Iron Bourse *was formerly the gladiatorial plane of Samnis, where combatants fought to the death in marble arenas. Now it is known for the auctions and commodity exchanges that fill its former stadiums.* ***When you bring goods to the Bourse,*** *a guildsman will give you chits for the items, which registered brokers can then trade for other chits. Be careful; naïve visitors can end up with 50-weight of cursed relics, stored somewhere on a distant plane.*

The parishes of Dis are not usually themselves dungeons, although planes that the city finds hard to digest remain only partially tamed. They do, however, contain many dungeons, both large and small: guild houses, alleys, catacombs, temples, towers, aqueducts, menageries, theatres, markets, etc. Plus, **the borderlands** where the city feeds on other planes **should always be treated as a dungeon.**

The first time you travel to or through a dungeon, you have to face its dangers. Map like crazy and travel room-to-room or area-to-area, dealing with all manner of perils and situations.

When your group braves the same dungeon again, the PC leading the way rolls+Wis. No matter the result, the GM make changes or additions to the dungeon by making *dungeon moves*. On a 10+, they make 1 move. On a 7-9, they make 2. On a miss, they make 4. Maybe Dis has shifted, an infestation of undead has moved in, or the place is now flooded. Maybe a faction or NPC shows up with an agenda.

On a hit, the GM and players should briefly narrate your way to the parts that are now different, though dealing with those could be a few scenes or the entire session. On a miss, things may be different enough that you need to face the dungeon afresh.

URBANIZATION

Generating planes and parishes

There are many ways to generate random planes and parishes for your game.

Dis always invades planes through urban areas, due to its attachment to both inhabited and long-since abandoned cities and other buildings. Consequently, it's possible to create the parishes of Dis (the planes it's already consumed) and the beachheads through which it invades other planes using the same system: generating urban locales.

One method involves using a copy of Italo Calvino's classic book, *Invisible Cities*. **When the PCs visit a new plane or parish**, select one of the themes on the chart that follows (p. 24), following your impulses. Start with the first city with that theme, looking up the matching entry in *Invisible Cities*. Use Calvino's description to inspire your own vision, then fill in the numbered circle to the left of the city's name to mark that it's been used. When you pick the same theme again, use the next entry on that row.

For an alternate method, try adapting the planet-generation rules in Kevin Crawford's brilliant game *Stars Without Number*, available for free online.

If the previous methods don't provide enough dynamism or NPCs, consult the four "oracles" from D. Vincent Baker's *In a Wicked Age*, available online at http://www.lumpley.com/oracle/4oracles.php. The oracles named *The Unquiet Past* and *A Nest of Vipers* are the most appropriate for this game, but also check out *Blood & Sex* and *God-Kings of War*.

Then, **if they are visiting a parish**, imagine how the place has been overrun and remade into a borough of Dis. What has persisted but in an altered form? What is now unrecognizable? What remains of the inhabitants and how have they adapted? Who has moved in from other parts of the city?

Alternately, **if they are visiting a plane**, pick one of the following options or roll+0 to see how it has resisted the advance of Dis. On a 12, the invasion has only just begun, in secret. On a 10+, Dis has established a solid outpost and some inhabitants are concerned. On a 7-9, the invasion has spread and the population faces dire choices about whether to resist at great cost or preserve as much as they can. On a miss, the plane is all but consumed and everyone is struggling with the fallout.

Planes and parishes can both be recorded on the map of Dis and the surrounding planes (p. 16-17).

INVISIBLE CITIES

Calvino describes the beachheads and parishes of Dis

CITIES & MEMORY	① Diomira	② Isidora	③ Zaira	④ Zora	⑤ Maurilia
CITIES & DESIRE	① Dorothea	② Anastasia	③ Despina	④ Fedora	⑤ Zobeide
CITIES & SIGNS	① Tamara	② Zirma	③ Zoe	④ Hypatia	⑤ Olivia
THIN CITIES	① Isaura	② Zenobia	③ Armilla	④ Sophronia	⑤ Octavia
TRADING CITIES	① Euphemia	② Chloe	③ Eutropia	④ Ersilia	⑤ Esmeralda
CITIES & EYES	① Valdrada	② Zemrude	③ Baucis	④ Phyllis	⑤ Moriana
CITIES & NAMES	① Aglaura	② Leandra	③ Pyrrha	④ Clarice	⑤ Irene
CITIES & THE DEAD	① Melania	② Adelma	③ Eusapia	④ Argia	⑤ Laudomia
CITIES & THE SKY	① Eudoxia	② Beersheba	③ Thekla	④ Perinthia	⑤ Andria
CONTINUOUS CITIES	① Leonia	② Trude	③ Procopia	④ Cecilia	⑤ Penthesilea
HIDDEN CITIES	① Olinda	② Raissa	③ Marozia	④ Theodora	⑤ Berenice

Rules for the intermingling of species

When consenting creatures want to have sex, they can, period. With creativity and effort, any beings can figure out how to enjoy each other's company.

Procreation is only slightly more complicated. Any midwife or moon priestess worth her salt can cook up some magical means for two (or more?) beings to create new life, even if one is a mammal and the other lays eggs, is made of shadows, was never truly born, or is no longer fully alive.

When you attempt unnatural procreation, your midwife will need:

- the full cooperation of the prospective parents
- time to conduct a bit of research
- the proper tools and supplies, some of which may be rare and difficult to acquire
- the proper conditions

Given that, no problem! And, in particularly dire or extenuating circumstances, she may be able to forego one of these four requirements, for a price.

Some folks, like gods and demons, can procreate at will. Use protection! (i.e. *protection from magic*).

HERITAGE MOVES

Replacing the options & moves for races

When you create a new adventurer, decide on your species, ethnicity, and cultural heritage, choosing anything or any combination of things that sounds interesting to you and the other players.

For example, I might play a marsh-dwarf witch who has some spiderlord ancestry.

Then, pick 2-3 **heritage moves** to start with, selecting from the "monster moves" that best match your heritage. No matter where or whom you come from, in someone's eyes, you and your family are monsters.

I pick the Dwarven Warrior move "Drive them back," the Spiderlord move "Enmesh in webbing," and invent a move based on the character's training in wilderness survival, "Scavenge for food and medicinal plants."

At the beginning of a session or **when you invoke your rights of blood and tradition** (however you do that), roll+Wis. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. On a miss, you still hold 1. Spend this hold 1-for-1 during play to make a heritage move, just like that.

When you gain new appreciation for your heritage, add a new heritage move or change an existing one.

THE BRAVE SULTANA

Queen, mother, and planarch of Dis

Long ago, the Sultana mated with something hungry and infinite, and gave birth to her first child, the city of Dis. She could not deny her child anything, and so it began to consume everything that is.

While the Sultana cannot halt the city's expansion, she attempts to ease the pain it causes, welcoming all refugees to their new home and maintaining Dis as a free port and entrepôt.

The Sultana is a monster with these moves:

- assert patronage over some person or project
- summon or command her thralls
- create a new thrall
- demand her due respect
- call for a city-wide festival, with rites

If you decide to play the Sultana as an adventurer, give her some or all of the above moves as *heritage moves*, even if you are not otherwise using heritage moves in your campaign. In addition, **in the event of her demise,** whether temporary or permanent, **all thralls are immediately freed from her service**. The Sultana is otherwise created as normal.

THE ROAD WARDENS

One version of the Sultana's thralls

When someone who's caught the Sultana's interest dies, she offers them the chance to return to life as one of her road wardens, bearing the mask of her authority and wrapped in copper wire to hold their soul firmly in place.

The Sultana rechristens her road wardens—*Janus, Nix, Erebus, Acheron, Eris, Moira, Hemera, Hypnos, Aethera, Thanatos, Ker, Momus, Nemesis, Moros,* or *Charon*—and tasks them with keeping the streets of Dis clear and open to the free traffic of citizens and travelers. The wardens also ensure the paths into and out of Dis remain unblocked.

A road warden is a monster with these moves:

- remove an obstacle from the road
- suddenly appear out of (or disappear into) the hustle & bustle of urban life
- speak or act with the Sultana's authority

If your adventurer becomes a road warden, work with the GM to determine which stats and moves stay the same and which ones change forever. In addition, set your Con to +3 and take at least one road warden move as a *heritage move*.

When a road warden adventurer reports to the Sultana and the Sultana is an NPC, roll+ your levels spent as a thrall. On a hit, she gives you a mission. On a 12+, she asks for a special favor. On a 10+, the mission aligns fairly closely to your own interests; on a 7-9, not so much; and on a miss, the Sultana suffers an attack, right then and there. **When you complete a mission for the Sultana or foil an attack against her**, mark XP.

If a road warden dies a subsequent death, they do not roll *Death's Door*. Instead, the Sultana may once again return them to life, but with difficulty. Roll+3 but subtract -1 for each additional death. On a hit, the resurrection will succeed, but choose options as follows. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2.

- other components are needed for the ritual
- there will be some unanticipated side-effects
- the Sultana cannot revive this warden again

On a miss, the warden cannot be resurrected, at least by the Sultana. Like all moves, a warden's resurrection can potentially be rolled again if the situation changes significantly.

Note that wardens who ask to be relieved from duty, or those that have earned the Sultana's displeasure, are typically allowed to pass on.

ILL-MET IN DITCHWATER

A letter to kick off a campaign

Dear shameless freebooter scum,

You and your misfit comrades are hanging on the edge of just getting by, living hand-to-mouth and blade-to-face in the interplanar city of Dis.

While you begin at first level, this is far from your first rodeo. In fact, you and your comrades have recently returned from a mercenary endeavor. Roll on the "Finding Work" tables (p. 13-15) to see what you were up to; the GM will ask you additional questions to fill in the mission background, such as *How did you hear about this job?* and *When did things first start to go horribly wrong?* With the help of the other players, answer them as best you can.

Then, have the mission leader Roll+Int to see how things went. On a 10+, you performed well enough to turn a nice profit, even after paying for booze, food, and medical attention; each player begins play with an additional 1d6x10 silver in loot or payment. On a 7-9, you did more than break even (gain 3d6 silver each). On a 6-, you're still in the thick of the fiasco right now. [If you're playing *World of Dungeons,* the skill Leadership applies to this roll.]

Once you make it back to Dis in some form, here's a few things to consider before blowing all your newfound money on critical necessities:

By default, you're sharing a rented hovel in the infamous parish of Ditchwater, paying 3 silver a day for a damp, bloodstained room with not enough space for everyone to stretch out comfortably. In an alcove in the wall is a small shrine to the demon-goddess Lamashtu, left by the previous residents.

The building you're renting in, known locally as Ditchwater Manor, is owned by the Fleshtakers, a syndicate of immortal beings who maintain their artificial longevity by repairing their bodies with living flesh and organs harvested from others. They are always willing to offer you work, but be careful not to get too far behind on your payments.

If you want, you can pay 20 silver (or the equivalent in flesh) to cover "damages and inconveniences" on your room and quickly leave to find other accommodations. The Fleshtakers will understand and probably won't hold it against you.

Hugs & kisses,
your GM

P.S. **If you make a sacrifice to Lamashtu,** mark XP.

DARK HEART

An example job and dungeon

The cult of the slumbering death-god Abaddon has uncovered an ancient gateway that they believe leads through the darkness between the planes to their lord's immense space-sarcophagus. However, they want someone to verify the gate's destination by raiding Abaddon's tomb and returning with the urn containing his mummified heart.

Job results: *Cult, Raiding, Alien God, No one knows*.

Dangers include some or all of the following:

- *Dark Dreams* (corrupt them into his service)
- *Death Traps* (maim and entomb them)
- *The Outer Darkness* (unmake the sarcophagus)
- *A Rival Crew* (humiliate them, finish the job)
- *Tomb Guardians* (dissuade or repel intruders)

THE ASTRAL REPOSITORY

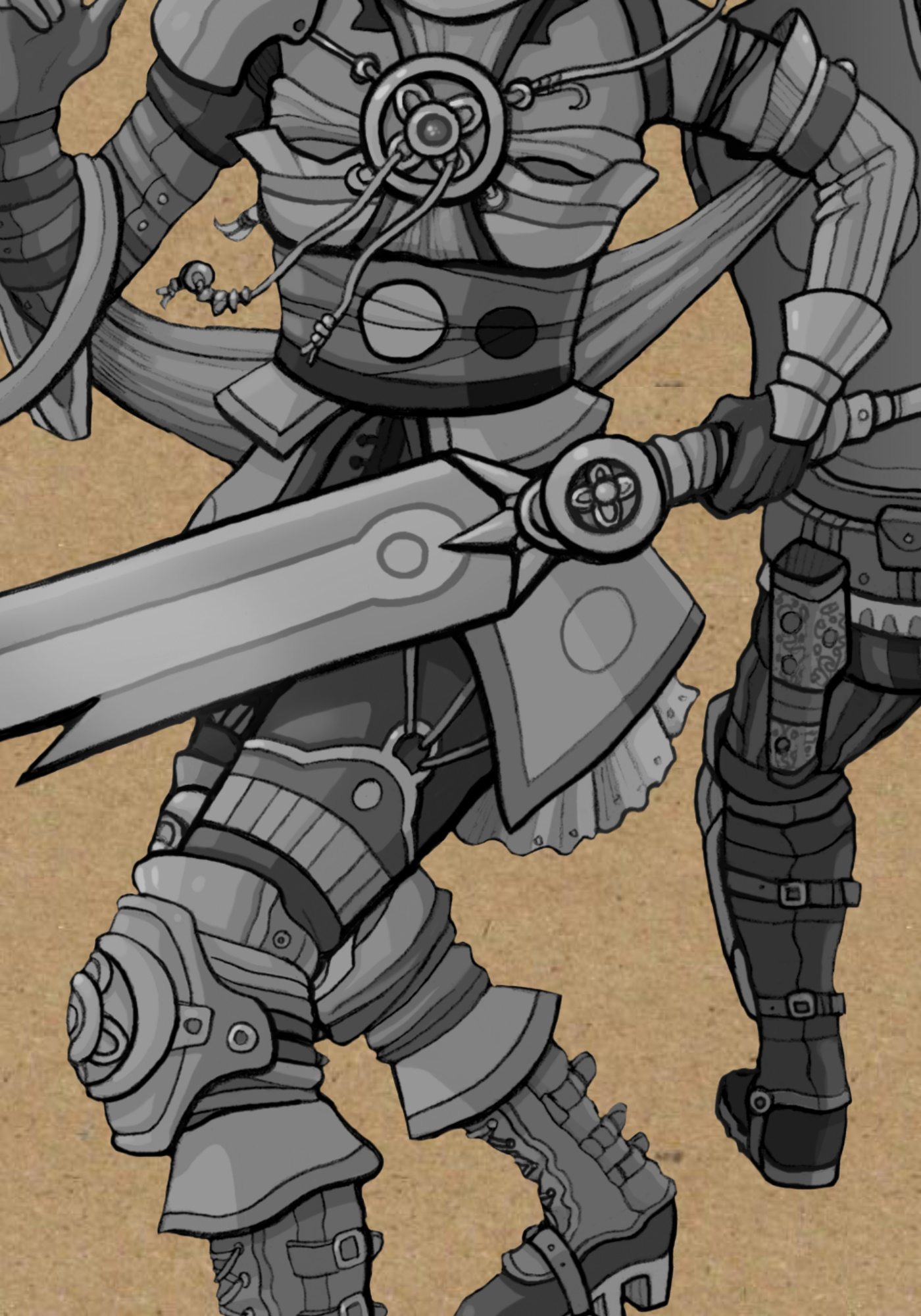
Visit *Dungeon-World.com* or *CorvidSun.com* for additional downloads, including printable versions of the map and custom character sheets for using this supplement with *World of Dungeons*.

SPECIAL BONUS!

A custom move for learning foreign ways

Within the borders of Dis, most people (aside from recent immigrants) have developed fluency in the shared language and cultural practices that denizens commonly use. Sometimes, however, the PCs may encounter groups or individuals on distant planes who do not share these mores.

When you interact with someone and don't share a common way of speaking or doing business, roll+Cha. On a hit, choose options. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2. On a miss, choose 1 but they're clearly not happy with you.

- you make yourself understood
- you grasp more-or-less what they want
- you don't look like a fool, child, or asshole
- you catch something they didn't intend you to understand
- you make progress in learning how to interact with these people; start a new countdown or fill in a box of an existing one

Later, the GM should use the number of filled-in boxes in your countdowns as a measure of your fluency, helping determine when to roll this move.