



# SALT IN WOUNDS

CAMPAIGN SETTING

## PLAYER'S GUIDE



PANGOLIN



PRESS



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For the *5th Edition* of the World's Oldest RPG

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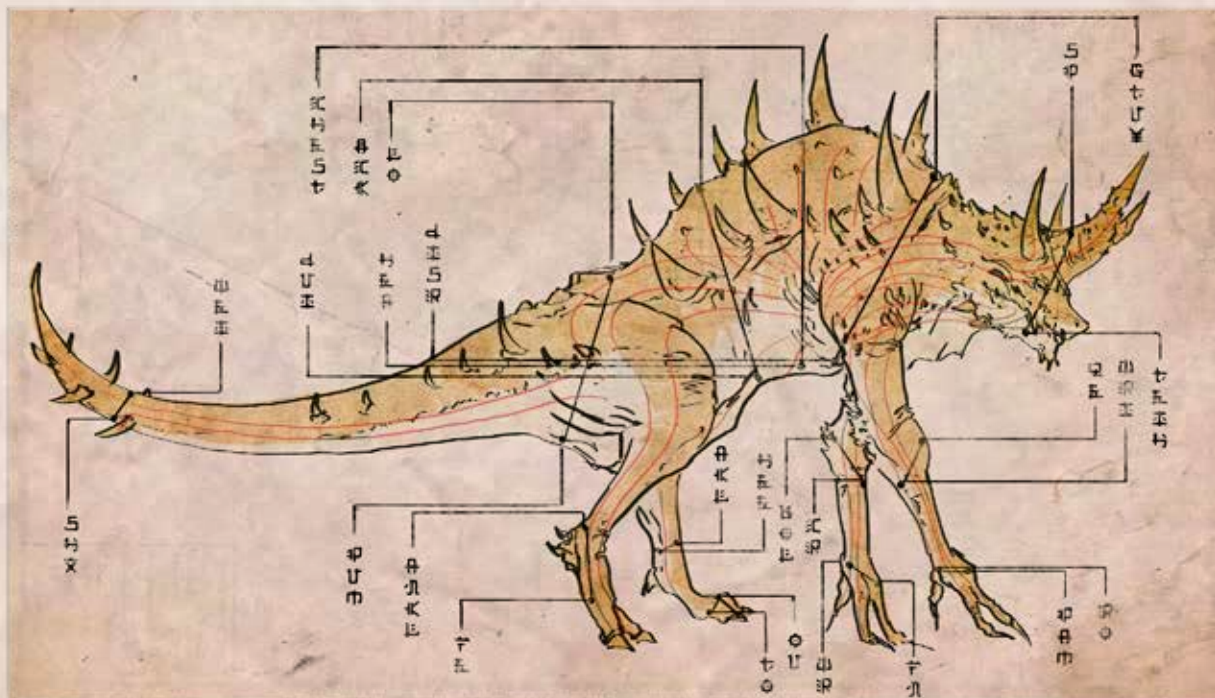


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# Salt in Wounds at a Glance

## HISTORY & BASICS

**Problem** Unkillable, regenerating kaiju Tarrasque rampaging through the countryside.

**Solution** Several kingdoms launch a combined army led by 13 heroes, each equipped with ballistas armed with immovable harpoons to bind and slay the beast.

Army successful, Tarrasque is bound in a high mountain valley but still cannot be killed.

Defenders start disbanding, low on food.

Newly built fortress turns to butchering/eating the Tarrasque for rations.

War with native stone giants end with enslaving the tribe & their labor is used to upgrade the fortress and build the city of Salt in Wounds.

13 Heroes dubbed 'Binder-Lords' found the aristocratic houses that control the city, symbol of power is knowledge of command words that can unleash the harpoons holding the beast.

Lots of immigrants fleeing famine makes the city one of the most populous in the world.

Alchemists begin experimenting with Tarrasque derived reagents, booming business.

12th Meridian crisis, the Tarrasque's tail briefly became unstuck and causes destruction of a section of the city (the Tail Stones).

217 AB (After Binding) Present - the City of Salt in Wounds is a weird, evil metropolis built around the perpetual butchery of the Tarrasque.

## PROMINENT FACTIONS

**Meridian Houses.** Decadent aristocrats who control the city and constantly vie for power.

**God-Butchers.** Ceremonial order of knight-butchers who carve up the Tarrasque

**Marrow Miners.** New organization that works on the Tarrasque, founded after 12th Meridian Crisis, rivalry with God-Butchers, and rumored ties with organized crime.

**Enders.** Extinct faction intended to kill the beast

**House Militias.** "Law Enforcement" broken up into 13 distinct groups each loyal to a different aristocratic house and frequently in conflict with one another.

**Circle of Release.** Druidic insurgency attempting to free the Tarrasque.

**Church of Macinfex.** Worships the God of Butchers.

**Church of the Monad.** Academics and alchemists who believe in the supreme unity of all things.

**Solidia Septermus.** Religion that believes wealth is God.

**Faith of Renesec.** Worship the God of Mutations.

## DISTRICTS & LOCATIONS

**Beast Crown.** Aristocratic District.

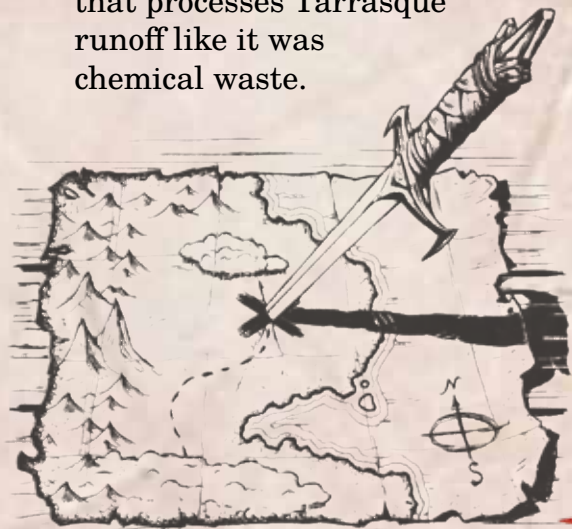
**Sage's Row.** Home to the world's finest alchemists.

**The Throat.** One of the biggest markets in the world, everything is for sale.

**Tail Stones.** Crime ridden slums still in ruins following the 12th Meridian Crisis.

**Salzinwuun.** Fortress core that holds the Tarrasque, inaccessible by the public.

**Heartsblood Marsh.** Mutant fungal swamp crafted from twisted druidic magic that processes Tarrasque runoff like it was chemical waste.





WOUNDS  
IN  
SALT





## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Food is cheap to free but (clean) water is expensive.
- Horrifying drugs, mutations, monsters, crime, and torture are all common; law enforcement is not.
- Weather is an idiosyncratic nearly tropical climate amongst snow covered mountains.
- Most “normal” water drinking animals are considered luxuries—axebeaks and other birds or lizards take their place.
- Ghoulfication is legal and ghouls are citizens (eating a prodigious amount of rotting Tarrasque flesh to stay sane).
- Paladins, rangers, and druids are generally unwelcome in the city, often operating covertly.

## ADVENTURERS OF SALT IN WOUNDS

Every region and city of the world produces adventurers; those exceptional individuals who hunt monsters, recover artifacts, thwart (or enact) magical plots, and/or otherwise deal with the issues beyond the ken of the ordinary mortal. The city of Salt in Wounds is no exception. Native born adventurers raised in the shadow the Tarrasque experienced a constant reminder of the wild magic that fills the world with the potential to reshape everything. Meanwhile the city, its dangers, riches, and mysteries inevitably draws adventurers from the world over. Built into the structure of the city is the notion that extraordinary individuals can save the world (and become fabulously wealthy & powerful in the process).

Is it any wonder that Salt in Wounds is near legendary for its preponderance of self-proclaimed adventurers?

These (often superhuman) mercenaries, mystics, and madmen work as guards for merchants, agents of the Binder-Lords, hunters of dangerous beasts and humanoids, and explorers of the city and its environs. The unique features of Salt in Wounds however ensure that certain qualities (favored tactics, abilities, and even psychological quirks) are often found in the adventurers who hail from or operate within the metropolis that exists in the shadows of the Tarrasque.

These commonalities include (but are not limited to):

- *Strongly Favoring Two Handed / high damage weapons* With so many monsters and threats of Salt in Wounds having some capacity for regeneration or to otherwise shrug off lesser blows via damage reduction, a common adaptive tactic is to simply do massive damage which is capable of severing limbs or cracking through the toughest armor.
- *Obsession with Recovering Organs, Teeth, and Other Viscera* Moreso than most of the world's adventurers, those of SiW see great value in the parts of monsters and will take great pains to collect glands, bones, and more... most especially those obtained from rare creatures. Even if they have no particular interest themselves, experience has taught them that there *will* be an interested alchemist who will pay well for any hitherto unknown or rare biological samples. This quirk (and the fact of ghoulish adventurers) often gives adventurers from Salt in Wounds a reputation for ghoulishness or the ‘salt stink’ – a foul aroma wafting from packs stuffed full of rotting, improperly preserved meat (see *Carving up the Tarrasque: Crafting & Alchemy Supplement 5th Edition* for more information, available at <https://bit.ly/2Ja2mvl>).
- *Solo Tactics* Given the moral outlook of much of the city, it can be difficult for the adventurers of Salt in Wounds to trust one another to the degree necessary to utilize advanced, team based tactics. Most adventuring groups are short term affairs driven by a ruthless mercenary calculus. As such, most adventurers favor developing themselves to be as self-sufficient as possible. The exceptions however are notable (see below).





- *Inhuman Loyalty* Paradoxically, when group membership is successfully initiated it *can* be the primary survival strategy in Salt in Wounds and as such the members of the various factions (God-Butchers, Meridian House, Circle of Release etc.) are nearly inhumanly loyal to whatever they view as their 'clan.' Those rare groups of adventurers who learn to view their party as the primary group support are legendarily devoted to their fellows, recognizing that the success of their group is the only thing that is keeping them alive in a hostile city & biome.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD PLAYERS IN SALT IN WOUNDS

Salt in Wounds is an evil place. While the binding of the Tarrasque is perhaps necessary, the city has been built upon its callous torture with no current legitimate efforts to minimize its suffering. More or less everyone in the city is party to this, and while that does not mean that every individual is evil it does tend to engender a general disregard to inflicting pain and suffering. As such, a significant minority (and most of the leadership of the city) can be considered evil. With the addition of ghouls operating as citizens with rights, good and nature aligned characters may have increased difficulty operating in Salt in Wounds.

Complicating matters further, due to a variety of 'incidents' in the past, the powers of the city harbor a great deal of suspicion towards any self proclaimed (or even suspected) paladins, druids, and rangers. Unless convinced of a compelling reason such an individual would be in the city and greatly assured they will not attempt to disrupt 'business as usual' the House Militias and God-Butchers will actively harass these individuals. That said, paladins, rangers, and druids are difficult to spot unless they identify themselves, most especially if they provide an alternate explanation for their powers and abilities (or simply don't let others see them utilizing these).

Here are some suggestions for how such characters may manage to operate:

- There are currently multiple paladins, druids, and more who operate in the city covertly; individuals who keep quiet both their mission and essential nature. Your character(s) can certainly be one of them.
- These characters can and do operate openly, but are often challenged in addition to being forced to regularly navigate and explain their purposes.
- For similar (or similarly motivated) characters operating in the city overtly, players should remember to focus their characters on the larger mission/winning hearts & minds rather than overt force (which will most likely be cut extremely short).
- If your character(s) has a deity or force that you worship; ask its advice about how to operate in the city.
- Your character's arc might be to transform from good to evil.
- Lastly, remember that good characters in an evil situation do not necessarily have to change their character type in order to function but they are probably going to be called upon to be more creative and inventive to operate effectively. Surprise the GM by being effectively, unexpectedly good as opposed to being 'lawful stupid.'



BRIDDO YITANO  
JOURNEYMAN, GOD-BUTCHER



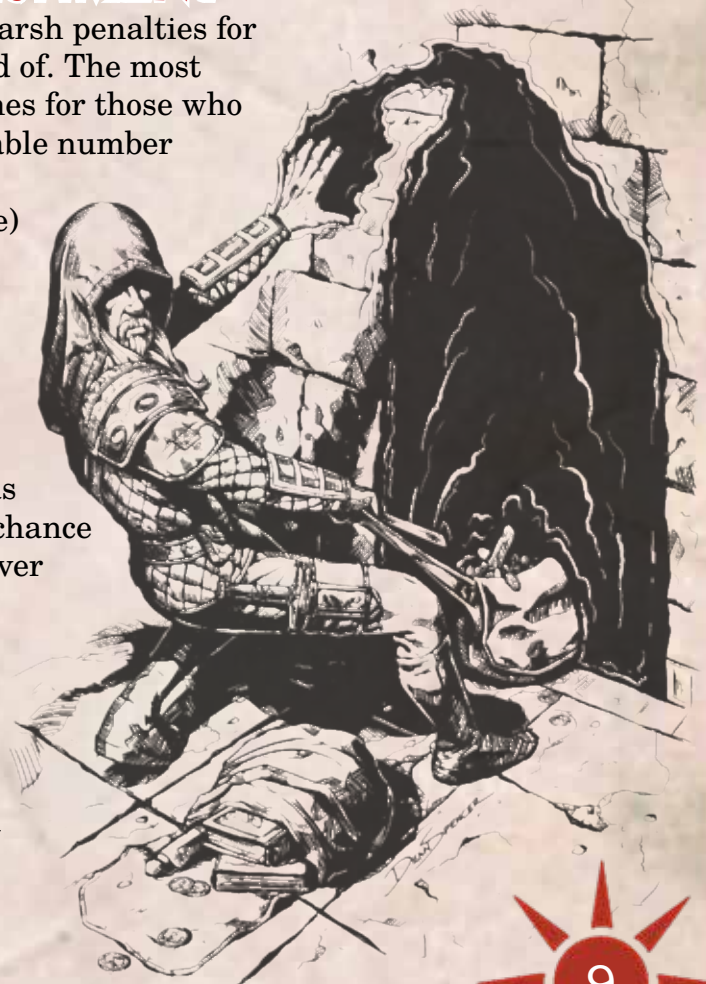
## EXAMPLE CRIMES & THEIR PUNISHMENTS

- **Conspiring to End the Tarrasque's Binding.** Truncation or Execution
- **Magical Creation or Unauthorized Import of Water.** Fines up to double the water's value and up to 3 Points Maiming
- **Maiming or Assault.** Branding and up to 2 Points Maiming
- **Murder.** Execution
- **Propagandizing.** Special Case - "propagandizing" is any speech deemed to "threaten the economic, social, or cultural well-being of the city" and is a charge which can only be brought by a Binder-Lord. After conviction, the accusing Binder-Lord determines punishment which can range from a single copper fine to truncation, depending on the Binder-Lord's recommendation.
- **Runaway Slave.** Branding, Flogging, and 1 Point Maiming
- **Smuggling.** Fines up to five times value, Branding and/or up to 3 Points Maiming
- **Theft.** 1 point Maiming
- **Unlicensed Ghoulification.** Destruction of ghoul and 1 Point Maiming for the practitioner (if applicable)
- **Use of a Command Word by any Non Binder-Lord.** Truncation
- **Use of Magic or Alchemy to Remedy Court Ordered Maiming.** Maiming equal to what was healed or proposed to be healed.

## CRIME PUNISHMENT

The city of Salt in Wounds tends to have extremely harsh penalties for infractions although imprisonment is almost unheard of. The most common punishments are fines (even for serious crimes for those who can afford it), forced labor, flogging, branding, a variable number of points maiming, execution, and finally truncation.

Points of maiming follow a regular (cumulative) order and thus the relative disfigurement of an individual often provides information about the severity of their crimes. This maiming is in the following order: the extraction of an eye, the loss of five toes (across both feet), the loss of five fingers (across both hands), the loss of a hand, the loss of an arm, the loss of a foot, the loss of a leg. This order was selected as it was deemed to give the guilty the best chance to continue contributing economically. If a criminal ever reaches eight points of maiming, they are given the choice between truncation (amputation of both legs, both arms, tongue, and gouging of both eyes) or execution (though the most serious offenders are truncated). Parts taken by these punishments are usually actioned to alchemist constructing flesh (or Tarrasque flesh) golems. As an unfortunate corollary of the city's legal practices, adventurers, veterans, and even laborers who have lost limbs are usually assumed to be former or current criminals.





## RACES OF SALT IN WOUNDS

Salt in Wounds is home to a dizzying array of peoples and it's commonly said within the city that it's home to every sentient race on the planet...even those that haven't been born yet. Representatives and sometimes entire communities of the various races come to the metropolis for a wide variety of reasons, from economic opportunity to food security, various plots and adventures, the spectacle of pain, alchemical wonders, or (most commonly) the markets. Of particular note are normally monstrous races which have a recognized legal status within Salt in Wounds. Countless thousands have eked out a place in the human-dominated society in roles that they would be completely unable to capitalize upon in any other civilized city, and these beings are usually found in the employ of the Marrow Miners.

What follows is a description of the social place and temperament of the most common races.

### DRAGONBORN

Dragonborn are somewhat uncommon in Salt in Wounds but the famous Teeth of Srithie mercenary company is wholly comprised of the scalykind. Their kind are so renowned (and otherwise rare) that citizens frequently assume that any dragonborn encountered is a member of the Teeth and available for immediate hire.

### DWARF

Dwarves are rare in Salt in Wounds in large part because of the significant presence of duergar. As a population they tend to be quite well-to-do, excelling as skilled hornsmiths and prosperous blood-merchants in addition to comprising 6th House.

### ELF

Currently, there are no known 'true' Elves living as long term residents in the city... most find the reality of Salt in Wounds to be extremely distasteful. Occasionally, adventuring Elves can be found within the city.

**Note:** For Synoma—the larger world of which Salt in Wounds is but one city—there are perhaps only 5,000 true elves remaining with the rate at which elves succumb to suicidal ennui has far outstripped their willingness to breed with other elves for the last dozen centuries. Your world might well handle Elves different, but suffice to say they're not a significant presence in Salt in Wounds beyond adventurers. However, as always, speak to the GM regarding how elves specifically work in the world.

### GNOME

Gnomes are well represented particularly amongst alchemists. This is largely a result of Tonagree Bumblezaz (an early, prominent gnomish alchemist and first teacher of the famed Bakal Filligreen) sending invitation letters and offering to help with the resettling of every one of his thousand and eight cousins in addition to their families. Not surprisingly; most Salt in Wounds gnomes are related to the long gone Bumblezaz. The gnomes of Salt in Wounds are known for a playfulness that runs into overt sadism—whether this is some effect of the city or a selection bias of the sorts of gnomes who choose to live in Salt in Wounds is a subject of much barroom speculation.

### HALFLING

Halflings served as servants, aides-de-campe, and slaves of the army that originally bound the Tarrasque; and most of their descendants fit in a similar caste to the present day. This is so often the case that most simply assume every halfling they meet is a slave. This is especially troubling for Halfling courtiers of 13th House (the so-called 'people's' house) which was founded by Rexaney Bramblethumb; a teenage halfling servant who stepped into place to accurately fire the final immovable harpoon when her master fled.

### HALF-ELF

Half-elves (that is, individuals with both human and elven ancestors retaining noticeable phenotypic features of each) are a significant ethnic minority. Many work as brokers and agents for their immortal elven



progenitors (who by and large refuse to live or even draw close to the metropolis) and 8th House was founded by a female half-elf named Virtan Berkuyin. The still living Binder-Lady has sired hundreds of offspring (technically “quarter” elves) in the centuries of her reign; she is almost always pregnant, with usually each pregnancy begun by a different male who caught her eye and resulting in the birth of twins, triplets, or even septuplets.

## HALF-ORC

‘Half-Orcs’ are a major demographic of the population of Salt in Wounds and the most common racial group after humans. Complicating matters however, the ‘race’ of half-orcs has a varied percentage of Orcine blood as this racial designation is commonly used to describe mixed ancestry individuals who bear both human and orc features. In the early days of the fortress, the human defenders of the Tarrasque hunted down and exterminated the male orcs of the nearby Seven-Talon clan, enslaving the juveniles and claiming the females as ‘spoils of victory’ (concubines and sex-slaves). From their rapine beginnings, the half-orc children of these unions have become a dominant force in Salt in Wounds (and the city’s acceptance of these individuals drives a lot of immigration by non-native Half-Orcs) though this population has come into increasing conflict with the ‘true’ Orcs immigrants being aggressively recruited by the Marrow Miners. This is especially ironic given that no ‘true’ division exists, with mixing of the bloodlines produces a gradient of individuals with various human to orc racial features, with different privileges afforded to ‘orc’ ‘mixed’ and ‘human (or passing)’ individuals.

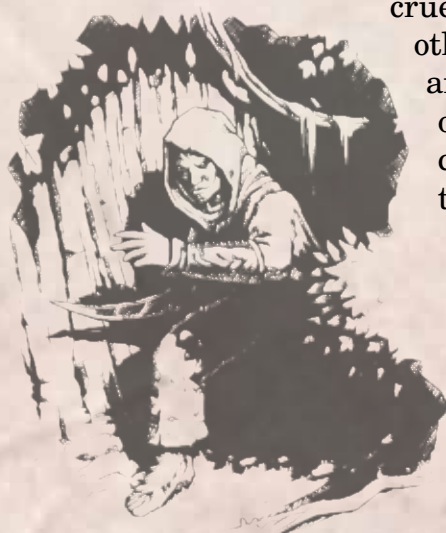
## HUMAN

Humans are the most common race of Salt in Wounds and dominate most power structures. Given the incredible diversity of the city however it is important to note that they are not the majority, merely the largest *minority*. Notably humans of dozens upon dozens of ethnicities live and work in the settlement.

Common wisdom holds that human (and demi-human) residents will lose most of their individual culture as they are integrated into Salt in Wounds in a process generally referred to as becoming properly salted. How salted an individual is (accent, manner of dress, indifference to Tarrasque noises and movements) is the most important discriminator for class status as most other human racial features (hair, skin, eye color, and so on) are usually ignored. The average human in the city is dark brown skinned, with slightly curly thick black hair, weighing an average of 200 pounds and standing 6 feet or taller. It should be noted that numerous ethnic enclaves exist within the city (largely populated by more recent waves of émigrés) that hold onto their own values and cultural identity in opposition to those held by Salt in Wounds at large.

## TIEFLING

Tieflings make up a significant portion of the city’s population yet almost none are born within the metropolis. They suffer (or enjoy) stereotypes which position them as ruthless and cunningly efficient, unburdened by squeamish morality. Many guilds and organizations try to enlist tieflings as faces or ambassadors of their institution due to these (often untrue) notions and competition in the settlement exists to hire fiend folk for their visage (and the prestige attached to it) alone. Regardless of their other qualities due to these cultural distortions a number of the most effective operatives looking to reform Salt in Wounds—trying to bring an end to cruelty and championing other causes of good—are tieflings that rely on the biases of the city to cloak their true intentions.





# New Racial Options for *Salt in Wounds*

## AGOGI

*“Self, unimportant.”*

*Common Agogi courtesy and acknowledgment ritual (similar to “you’re welcome”).*

Easily weighing over three hundred pounds and towering over humans; Agogi are veritable mountains of muscle, covered in leathery reptilian skin and often possessed of a seemingly gruff personality. Unfortunately, this means they are often dismissed as monstrous brutes by the ignorant, a perception that belies a race notable for an extremely altruistic society. Culturally, most Agogi believe helping others and being useful to their community strengthens themselves as much as their neighbors and will eventually raise them up as equals among other races. Even evil Agogi can see this communitarianism as a way to raise their social ranking among others that might look down on their monstrous self.

With a uniquely compelling biological urge to raise children, Agogi are notorious for taking in and raising orphans of any race. The altruistic drive of the Agogi sometimes works against them, as they can be exploited (when not being rejected outright based on their appearance) though their ability to supportively organize means that they are usually able to leverage what power they do have in a situation; ranging from worker strikes, to a community-wide exodus, to—in rare cases—concerted violence.

Even with considerable care, they can often disturb the surroundings they share with smaller races with little effort; leading to the *Salt in Wounds* cliché about the ‘Agogi in an apothecary.’ Unless specifically designed to accommodate them, most humanoid furnishings and building layouts force them to slouch, compress, or otherwise carry themselves as small as possible.

Hairless, the Agogi’s leathery skin is studded with tiny bumps comprised of two to three colors. The most common colors are various shades of green, rust, black and mustard. Some have been found with rarer tones that included gold, red and white. In old age, the skin becomes mottled and hangs loose. Their jaw line is extremely wide, with the corners of their mouths almost reaching their temples. Agogi are sometimes thought to be toothless, but in actuality their tiny serrated teeth are underneath a gum flap which is lacerated during feeding to produce their signature toxic red saliva. Besides aiding in swallowing food, their saliva poisons enemies. While Agogi do have claws present on their hands and feet as well as a nub-like vestigial tail, they are too stunted to be of any effective combat use.

With only a few taste buds in the back of their throat, the Agogi can eat almost anything, with some communities living almost entirely off carrion including (much to the horror of other races) their own dead. Agogi lead communities often have a monthly feasting festival, with an emphasis on fresh offerings.

### SACRED NAMES

Separate from their ‘common’ names (which are usually related to physical characteristics, professions, or even ideals which can change over time), the Agogi believe that knowledge of one’s true name is a very sacred trust.

When an Agogi shares their name with an individual, there is an exchange of gifts called namestones (typically a

textured gem or other mineral). Agogi keep someone’s namestone in their dual-chambered stomach, as the weight and texture remind them of their namefriend’s constant presence. An exchanged name will typically happen only a handful of times in an Agogi’s life. This is as close as traditional Agogi come to marriage, as their communal norms extend to erotic and romantic relationships.



The deeds of namefriends (whether Agogi or of another race) reflect on both parties. Perhaps even more pronounced than how a parent would feel the pride (and sometimes shame) of their children's actions is the bond between an Agogi and their namestone friend. The nefarious (or in the case of evil Agogi, embarrassing) deeds of a namefriend can be enough to warrant an end to their association, or the Agogi might kill their disgraced namefriend to reclaim their sacred name (in addition to potentially taking a quest/pilgrimage to make amends for the ill actions).

#### **Example common**

**names:** Mudmaw, Bluetongue, Deadhorse, Almslord, Heartguard, Clutchmother, K.C. (initialism for "King's Counsel"), Ironeye

**Example sacred names:** Rak'sa, Ke'kas, Pim'bur, Me'gua, Sat'ria, Pen'hir, Ul'ama, Ah'li

#### **AGOGI PERSONALITY**

Since the mouth is the most dangerous part of the Agogi, they have a societal impulse of being laconic, often speaking concisely (or even avoiding speaking) to the point of bordering on terse. Some Agogi hide their mouths with veils or mud muzzles, forcing them to speak softly and quietly to avoid breaking the covering. since it is the most dangerous part of their body. This care to avoid threatening facial and verbal cues is another reason why the namestone is so important. With it, Agogi can have full communication with their bonded without opening their mouths.

Agogi tend to lean towards neutral good, as adherence to laws that clash with their social norms and mores don't sit right with them. They typically have a greater devotion to helping others in their community over helping a leader or king. While evil Agogi are rare, if they are clever enough to hide their base motivations they can amass considerable power and/or do tremendous damage to an altruistic Agogi community before being found out.



#### **AGOGI ADVENTURERS**

Agogi adventurers are usually motivated by a desire to pursue the accumulation of wealth in order to reinvest a sizable portion in their chosen community, or based on a compelling need of their kin or kith. Good Agogi will sponsor apprenticeships or build communal buildings like feast halls and baths with their spoils, while more selfish Agogi might invest in monuments and great works to be worthy of remembrance once they've left for further adventure. Agogi adventurers are also often have their career launched based on the need to help a specific namefriend or—on the opposite end of the spectrum—to right wrongs committed by/recover a name stone from a former namefriend.

Their childrearing and communitarian instincts can cause Agogi to "adopt" adventuring parties as their own clutch, wishing to travel with them in order to ensure their safety, watch them grow as individuals worthy of their pride, or ensure the party continues to serve a path deemed by the Agogi as best for their community.



## AGOGI TRAITS

Your agogi character has an assortment of inborn abilities, gifted to you by your agogi nature.

**Ability Score Increase** Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Age** Agogi reach maturity around age 13 and rarely live longer than 75 years.

**Alignment** Most Agogi tend towards neutral good. Their altruistic society means that they are driven by helping others, serving their chosen community.

**Size** Agogi are powerfully built reptilian humanoids. With most around seven feet tall and weighing over 300lbs, they push the limits of most conventional housing. Your size is (barely) Medium.

**Speed** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Bite** Your massive mouth serves as a natural weapon, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with it, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

**Extreme Omnivore** You require more food than other Medium creatures to support your massive body, raising the daily requirements to avoid exhaustion to four pounds of food. However, you can consume nearly anything that can provide sustenance, gaining an advantage on saving throws against disease, ingested poisons, mutations, and becoming nauseated or sickened.

**Dual Chambered Stomach** An Agogi can swallow objects to spit out later, storing them in a thick, pouch-like chamber that protects against sharp objects, their own digestive juices, and blocks the *detect magic* spell from detecting magic items being stored internally. The capacity is equal to a pouch (as per *Adventuring Gear*), holding up to 1/5 cubic foot/6 pounds of gear. "Retrieving" a stored item is an action (albeit a disgusting one), while swallowing is a reaction in the case of stored water or potions.

**Languages** You can speak, read, and write Common and Draconic.



### VARAN SUBRACE

**Carrion Scent** You have a natural ability to sniff out carrion. You have advantage on Perception checks, but only for corpses (including undead) and badly wounded creatures (creatures with 25% or fewer hit points).

**Sprinter** You gain a +10 ft. racial bonus to your speed when using the dash or disengage actions.

**Toxic Saliva** You can envenom your bite or a weapon that you wield with toxic saliva. Applying venom in this way is a reaction. The venom uses the following stats: Agogi Saliva: Injury; save 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus; A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level. After you use your toxic saliva, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### AVANI SUBRACE

**Swimmer** You are able to swim at your normal movement speed instead of half speed, and you add double your proficiency bonus on all swim checks instead of your normal Athletics proficiency.

**Amphibious** You can breathe both air and water.

**Deep Sight** You are specially adapted to the lightless depths of the oceans, but not to air-filled environments. You have darkvision of 120ft while underwater, but do not gain this benefit out of water.



## AGOGI PERSONALITY OPTIONS

<i>d8</i>	<i>Personality Trait</i>
1	I love children, playing games, giving gifts, and aspire to raise a huge brood of my own.
2	Bathing in sunlight is one of the grandest joys, I do so whenever possible.
3	Pinching pennies means kin at home don't feel their stomach's pinch.
4	I find clothes unnecessary, and will get away with wearing as little as possible (and will complain proportionally to how much I need to wear).
5	Once I've shared a meal with someone, I trust them with my life.
6	Even for an Agogi, I'm into food... always looking to try a new dish (appreciating distinct textures if not tastes).
7	I'm fascinated by non-Agogi customs and will ask about any practice that interests me.
8	One thing I will talk -at length- about is my family Have you heard about my 8 <sup>th</sup> cousin 6 <sup>th</sup> removed?

<i>d6</i>	<i>Bonds</i>
1	I will direct a river of gold back home to my clutch.
2	My clutch owes debts to those who aided us, and I am bound to pay them.
3	By learning and growing in power, I can better serve my home.
4	Those who wronged me and mine will suffer for their transgression.
5	I make amends for the deeds, reclaim my namestone of my namefriend.
6	The world is full of knowledge, and I must travel and learn in order to best serve my people.

<i>d6</i>	<i>Ideals</i>
1	<b>Carry the Weight:</b> I do not pray for lighter burdens, but for broader shoulders. (Good)
2	<b>Obey the Law:</b> The law should be studied and obeyed, even when flawed it allows greater cooperation between all. (Lawful)
3	<b>Cleave to the Clutch:</b> Agogi should live with the Agogi, all other races are waiting to exploit us. (Evil)
4	<b>Adapt to the World:</b> As we spread, we must adapt & learn new ways of being. (Chaotic)
5	<b>Balance the Scales:</b> I support those who support me, in direct proportion. (Neutral)
6	<b>Live the Glory:</b> I want my clutch to raise monuments to me, tell the story of me for ten to the ten generations. (Any)

<i>d6</i>	<i>Flaws</i>
1	I trust those I should not.
2	I lose sight of my mission whenever I see suffering of any kind.
3	I seem to always say the wrong thing when I'm being honest.
4	I have trouble holding onto my coin, having grown up with no need for it.
5	I damage or destroy surroundings, sensitive equipment, and more without meaning to.
6	I wounded (or killed) one of my kin, and was exiled for it.





## DUERGAR

These so called 'Deep Dwarves' experience sensitivity to sunlight, inborn magic, and a culture that celebrates oppressive work and brutal hierarchies for their own sake. Years of life far under the surface ground away what little joy dwarves normally possess leaving the Duergar: gray to black skinned, bald, and notoriously without warmth, mirth or mercy. Since a few hundred emigrated to Salt in Wounds, they have massively gained in power and influence finding the city much to their liking. Most have adopted a nocturnal lifestyle.

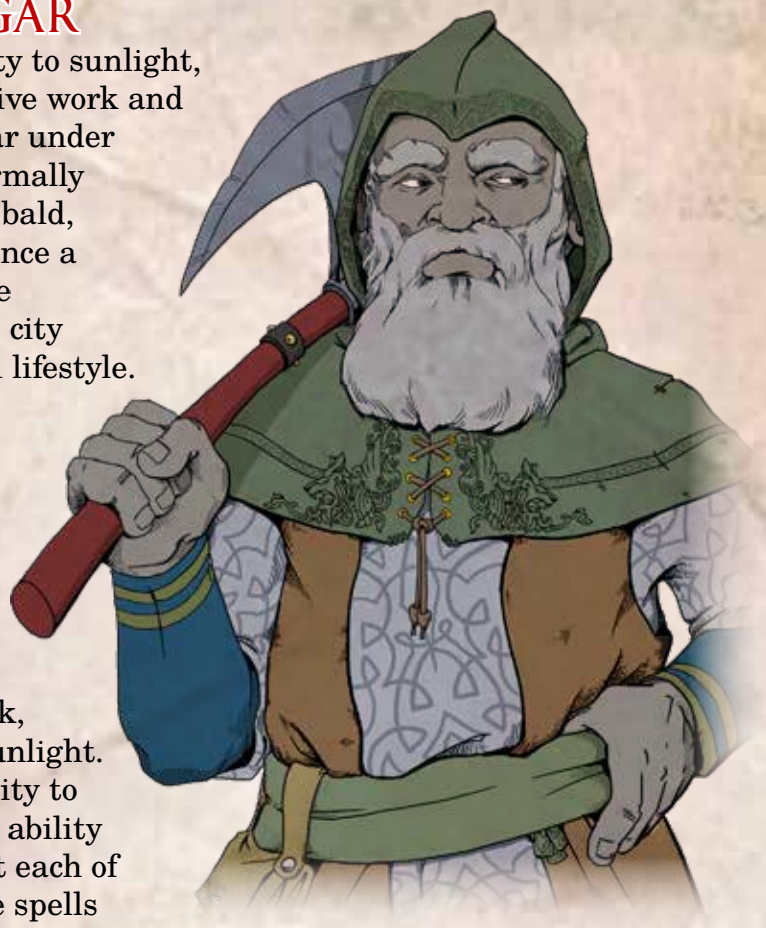
### DUERGAR SUBRACE

**Ability Score Increase** Your Strength score increases by 1

**Superior Darkvision** Your darkvision has a radius of 120 feet.

**Sunlight Sensitivity** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Druegar Magic** At third level, you gain the ability to cast *enlarge/reduce* on yourself. At 5th you gain the ability to cast the *invisibility* spell on yourself. You can cast each of these spells once, and regain the ability to cast these spells after a long rest. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is Wisdom.



## GHOUL

Despite the more poetically minded chroniclers claiming that the entire city is comprised of ghouls and parasites, literal ghouls comprise only a small percentage of the population of Salt in Wounds. While the statecraft of 5th House has gained them begrudging legal acceptance by the legislators (aka the other meridian houses) they are still largely despised and feared by the general population. The primary legal argument that 5th House presented to justify the legalized creation of ghouls was to argue that ghouls are driven by unsated hunger for flesh, which they claimed would never be a problem in the city of Salt in Wounds. While this isn't necessarily true, in general by eating twice their own body weight in meat each day (usually spoiling Tarrasque flesh) ghouls are able to function as any other demi-human (though many choose to supplement their diet with meats of all kind, including that of sentient creatures or other humanoids). Ghoul citizens employed by 5th House have now largely replaced Otyughs as the primary disposal mechanisms for the tons upon tons of rotting meat produced by Salt in Wounds weekly.

5th House offers ghouls contracts, legally binding arrangements wherein the alchemist-necromancers of 5th House guarantee that they will resurrect individuals as ghouls. To enter into the contract, the would-be undead must either pay a hefty fee or pledge to serve 5th house tirelessly for 100 years. This resurrection is usually handled by implantation of a small alchemical device filled with specially modified ghoulish fever which 'bursts' when its owner's life functions have ended. Implanters deny any rumor that the implant can burst upon non-deadly impact.

While open to individuals of all walks of life, this offer (unsurprisingly) has largely been taken up by the desperate and damned. The ghoulish contract is viewed as an insurance policy against a less desirable after-life destination or (perhaps



more worryingly) the equivalent of an ethical blank-check to live life however one wishes without supernatural consequence.

The process of ghoulfication—as well as the resulting ghouls—have some distinct (though not always predictable) differences with traditional ghouls due to the 5th House ghoulfication process being a marriage of traditional ghoulfication infection and Tarrasque derived alchemy.

### **GHOUL SUBRACE**

When a character becomes a ghoul, they replace their subrace bonuses with the bonuses and penalties associated with being a ghoul. For the following races *without* a standard subrace, they give up the following features upon becoming a ghoul.

*Tiefling* Lose 1 Intelligence, Lose Hellish Resistance. Lose Infernal Legacy

*Human* Lose 1 point in 4 different Ability scores OR Lose the Skills & Feat Trait

*Dragonborn* Lose 1 to Strength, Lose draconic ancestry trait

*Half-Elf* Lose Skill Versatility

*Half-Orc* Lose Relentless Endurance and Savage Attack Traits



You have been raised from the dead by Salt in Wound's alchemically modified version of ghoulfication. Most likely, you now owe a 5th House a tremendous debt for the licensing of your 'resurrection' or—if you are unlicensed—face summary destruction if you are found out. As a ghoul, you can continue to function much as you did before your death provided that you can gorge yourself on flesh...a more or less simple matter within the city limits but a significant concern if you venture beyond. Most ghouls have a chaotic and evil alignment, their hungers barely kept in check by threats (although exceptions do exist). You have the following traits:

**Whiff of the Dead** You decrease your Charisma score 3 points.

**Unemotional Intellect** Cut off from so many of the feelings that used to cloud your Intelligence, you can now think much more clearly. You gain 1 point of Intelligence though this increase can not take your Intelligence score above 20.

**Tireless Strength** Your body doesn't tire as it once did and you gain 1 point to your Strength score though this increase can not take your Strength score above 20.

**Ageless** You are undead and do not age.

**Undead Immunities** You are immune to poison damage, as well as immunity to being charmed, exhausted, or poisoned. You are resistant to necrotic damage.

**Unnatural Hunger** For every day you do not consume two times your own weight in flesh, you gain a disadvantage on all Charisma, Wisdom, and Intelligence based checks and your Intelligence score is reduced by 1. This disadvantage and half of the intelligence reduction (rounded down) is restored when you finally eat. If this drawback would ever reduce your Intelligence score to 3 or less, you are reduced to a mindless, bestial state that will attack the nearest source of flesh. Because of your undead nature, magic like *greater restoration* cannot restore this reduction.

**Gorge** If you take 2 rounds to eat your weight in flesh, you regain all lost hitpoints.





You can not utilize this ability again until you have completed a short or long rest.

**Claws** You may use your action to make an attack with your claws. This attack deals 1d6 slashing damage plus your Strength modifier and you have proficiency with the attack. The damage of this attack increases to 2d6 at 5th level, 3d6 at 11th, and 4d6 at 17th. Because of your unnatural physiology this attack is not considered an unarmed attack, and is not considered a monk weapon.

Because of the Ghoul's undead nature, they are unable to avail themselves of \*most\* healing magic (this will be stipulated in the description of the spell).

### SPECIAL: RULES VARIANT

To reiterate, for Rules as Written if you fail to eat double your weight in flesh you lose *at least* one point of Intelligence, permanently. Ghoulification (and being dead generally) should be seen as a severe disadvantage and not an option to be sought out by anyone save the desperate. If you feel this is unfair/too harsh, your GM has final say and may choose to remove all penalties when you eat.

As a suggestion, you can append the following language to the rules to make the penalty less harsh 'Each consecutive day in which you feed, after initially feeding and regaining the half of the Intelligence reduction (rounded down) you regain half of the remaining lost Intelligence rounded down to a minimum of regaining 1 point until all of your Intelligence is restored.'

## GHoul PERSONALITY TRAITS

d8	Personality Traits
1	You will live this new unlife to the fullest, denying yourself nothing.
2	You're absolutely obsessed with making right the circumstances of your death: gaining revenge, solving the mystery, or destroying the organization you blame for your death.
3	Having crawled from a literal or metaphoric grave, you fear nothing.
4	Cut off from your former life, you long for what you once had.
5	Memories of your death (and perhaps what awaits you beyond) haunt your dreams.
6	Unlike many of your kind, you have a refined palette and long to taste exotic foods (in huge quantities).
7	You have become a ghoul for what you consider a noble purpose and will achieve it any cost.
8	You have humor as black as midnight and will take every opportunity to remind others of their mortality.

d6	Ideals
1	<b>Change</b> All life is random, the good & evil all meet the same end. (Chaotic)
2	<b>Utilitarian</b> I will make the most of unlife. (Any neutral)
3	<b>Fittest</b> The strongest survive with whatever tools available while those without the will rot in the grave. (Evil)
4	<b>Purpose Driven</b> I have much good I still need to do, so I tame my hungers. (Good)
5	<b>Commerce</b> Ghoulification was a cost benefit decision, which always have and ways will drive my behavior. (Any)
6	<b>Service</b> I continue to serve my order & ideals, and I took this chance to continue service after death. (Lawful)



d6	Bonds
1	Everyone from before is (figuratively) dead to me, I will be loyal to any who accept and adventure with me now.
2	Everyone I knew was dead, and only through the greatest acts will I be worthy to join them.
3	My second life allows me to protect those who may not be as lucky as me.
4	I'm still loyal to my family and friends from back when I still drew breath.
5	I serve 5th House (or those who revived me) with absolute loyalty.
6	I will avenge my death no matter the cost.

d6	Flaws
1	I experience few emotions and so much social nuance is lost to me.
2	I'm obsessed with my past life, and blind to the present.
3	I'm convinced of the significance of my destiny and can't conceive that I could fail.
4	Having survived death I'm utterly reckless.
5	I believe I still exist because of my superiority and vastly overestimate my competence.
6	I can not control my hunger, even when eating sufficiently it drives me to make mistakes.

## GRIPPLI

(Almost) man-sized, bipedal 'frogs' in a huge range of color from bright red-yellow to mottled gray brown (though most are green) the race of Grippli are a regular sight within the Tail Stones district, almost universally associated with poverty. Most are emigrees from Heartsblood Marsh, either driven out for fear of violence or by wanting something better, greater than anything they could accomplish in the shadow of the fungal sieve. As a population, many of them are slaves and those that are free tend to find themselves in the most servile positions.

Grippli tend to be slippery (in every sense of the word) and guided by their intuition, with incredible adaptability. Unfortunately, Salt in Wounds (with its dearth of water) is an incredibly inhospitable environment for them and their need for clean liquid to keep their skin moist and reproduce sees few able to beat the cycle of poverty. Meanwhile, few that have fled the Heartsblood Marsh have braved the harrowing trek through the mountains for wetter climes.

Your Grippli has an assortment of abilities and skills learnt and inherited.

**Ability Score Increase** Your Dexterity and Wisdom score increase by 1.

**Age** Grippli mature faster than humans, but are considered adults at around 12 and rarely live past 50.

**Alignment** Much like humans, Grippli alignment leans towards the neutral but can be any.

**Size** Grippli stand between 4 and 5 feet tall and average about 80 to 120 pounds as their weight. Your size is Small.

**Speed** Your base walking speed is 30 feet and you have a climb speed of 20ft.

**Amphibious** You can breathe air and water

**Darkvision** Gripplis can see perfectly in the dark up to 60 feet.

**Hopping Gait** With your odd hopping gait, you can move through difficult terrain at normal speed.

**Languages** You can speak, read, and write Common and one extra language of your choice.

**Subraces** Two subraces of grippli are found in and around Salt in Wounds: City-Born and Swamp-Born. Choose one of these subraces.





## CITY-BORN

Born in the city, you've most likely known life amongst the hard streets & poverty not conducive to your needs as an amphibian. Considered 'trash' by most outside your race, you've learned how to make your way by being dexterous and going unnoticed.

**Ability Score Increase** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Tricky** You gain proficiency with the Stealth and Deception skills in addition to Thieves' tools.

## SWAMP-BORN

Born and raised in the swamp, you lived an early life in a setting conducive to your biology; most likely under the watchful eye of the Fungal Sieve. You gained wisdom under a more traditional family structure and skills navigating the swamp.

**Ability Score Increase** Your Wisdom score increased by 1.

**Aquatic Experience** You gain a swim speed of 30ft.

**Traditional Training** You gain proficiency in the Survival Skill and are proficient with nets.





## RUMORS

The following rumors are currently circulating as common knowledge around Salt in Wounds:

- The Tarrasque is still growing, and is likely to break free of its binding within the decade (though this has always been thought).
- One of the Binder-Lords is secretly plotting to release the Tarrasque (although no one can agree which one).
- The Heartsblood Marsh holds incredible treasure in its core.
- Whoever amasses the greatest fortune by next year will become to embodiment of Septus Solidums; wealth-eternal triumphant.
- Alchemists have been feuding with 5<sup>th</sup> House, and supposedly agents of those factions are willing to hire adventurers for fantastic rates.
- The Tarrasque is sentient, has repented of its past, and regularly tries to speak to its captors—that's why they're always cutting its tongue out.
- Only the 'unworthy' ever suffer mutations.
- Gothmork's Grub House in the Tail Stones district is one of the best places for the enterprising, unconnected adventurer to find a 'divet' (illegal or quasi-legal) job.

## ORCS

Often employed by Marrow Miners, these are large, green to grey skinned, tusked, powerfully built humanoids with 'poor impulse control' (compared to a human standard). As more tribes across the globe lose in their wars to humans and other settled races, Orcs increasingly choose to reside in Salt in Wounds. The distinction between 'Orc' and 'Half-Orc' is blurry, and often influenced by culture, language, manner and dress over 'objective' standards (although, generally, for Salt in Wounds and elsewhere the more 'human featured' the individual are deemed 'half-orcs' and are afforded greater the privileges).

## (TRUE) ORC

'True Orcs' are best thought of as a variant of Half-Orc though stats are presented below

**Ability Score Increase** Your Strength score increases by 3, and your Constitution score increases by 2.

**Ability Score** Your Intelligence decreases by 2, your Charisma and Wisdom scores each decrease by 1.

**Age** True Orcs mature a faster than humans or even Half-Orcs, reaching Adulthood around age 10. They age noticeably faster and rarely live longer than 50 years.

**Alignment:** Orcs tend towards evil but exceptions exist.

**Size** True Orcs are significantly bigger than humans, bulky and often 6-7 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

**Speed** 30 feet.

**Darkvision** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Menacing** You gain proficiency in Intimidation.

**Relentless Endurance** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

**Savage Attacks** When you score a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

**Aggressive** As a bonus action, you can move up to your speed toward an enemy of your choice that you can see or hear. You must end this move closer to the enemy than you started.

**Languages** You can speak Orc.





# RELIGIONS OF SALT IN WOUNDS

## THE CHURCH OF THE MONAD

The Church of the Monad is a religion favored by many of the intellectuals, alchemists, and monks of Salt in Wounds—while adherents can be found the world over, the city is the seat of its power. Adherents to the Monad believe in, worship, and seek to better understand and commune with *the one thing* central to their creed: the subtle Aether (also known as the Monad) from which all phenomena is but an aspect.

The church of Monad has never found the acceptance it preaches because of its fantastical, often unpopular views on the mortal and supernal realm. Monadists are dismissed by other religions for their claims that the Aether is responsible for all creation. Their teachings are scorned by much of the aristocracy, believing the message of a single unifying force are a challenge to their social status. In addition, most lower class individuals feel that the church's interests and teachings are too academic or effete to be of much use.

To those that embrace the church, the followers of Monad find a religion that isn't faith-based, but a collection of virtues, research, and ideals. Sermons are replaced by powerful polemics. Hymns to an immortal deity give way to familial pledges to mortal companions. Though church-wide organized events and celebrations are rare, periodic congregations are held to discuss newly discovered or refuted research—as well as partake in new recreational panaceas.

<b>Monad – The One, The Subtle Aether, The All-Including</b>	
<i>Symbol</i>	A single black dot
<i>Alignment</i>	True Neutral
<i>Portfolio</i>	Alchemy, Truth, Unity, The Unknown
<i>Domains</i>	Community, Knowledge, Protection, Void
<i>Favored Weapon</i>	Cestus (gauntlet)

**Worshippers and Clergy.** The Church of Monad has an eclectic member base divided into two main branches: hagiocratic (believing Monad is a physical entity) and geniocratic (believing Monad is a physical force). From visionary researchers to the proletariat, followers of Monad come from every walk of life with a common goal of improving self and community. Alchemists, clerics, and wizards of Monad have been known to offer secular guidance to communities as magisters of science and diplomacy. Followers with a martial lean often serve as magisters of the court but have been found in roles that range from midwife to shepherd.

Given the simplicity of Monad's symbol, devotees have many ways of brandishing a holy symbol. Clerics receive The Black Bead, a philtrum piercing with a black stud as a holy symbol. Aetherist monks often paint or tattoo a large black dot in the center of their forehead. Those not wishing to display

The One's symbol permanently wear a ring of Monad in lieu of a traditional necklace. Members tithe or barter with their trade skills to receive the benefits of the church from housing and healing to accessing the order's comprehensive library.

**Temples and Shrines.** The Temple of Reason in Sage's Row is the most famous formal temple of the Church of the Monad, although small shrines (typified by a single black dot or globe) are located throughout the world, most especially in libraries.

**Holy Texts.** Given the heavy academic lean of the church, the title of "holy text" is awarded to research and textbooks that are deemed worthy but the individual branches do not always recognize one side's certification of scripture. With new discoveries a thesis once deemed scripture can lose its status as research refutes its claims. This creates a competitive scholarly field the church deems



necessary for steady progression. Titles of current holy texts include *Continuity and Union Between The Cosmos and Man*, *Introduction to Absolute Space*, *Anamnesis Vitae*, and *Macrocosm and Microcosm*.

**Appearance.** As the Monad has no physical description, it is pictorially depicted as a single black dot.

**Dogma.** Beyond the furthest star, Monad resides. All interposing space, be it the distance between worlds or the soul and the

body, is filled with the presence of The One Thing. Therefore, any alteration to your physical constitution can lead to an alteration of morals. Purification and corruption are equally important to challenge and enact change in institutions of a depraved society. The Subtle Aether is the universal connecting medium, making all beings your brother and sisters with nature as your common mother. Education is a weapon used to attack the complications of classism, which disrupts the harmony of The All-Including.

## THE CULT OF RENESEC

To the world at large Renesec is the obscure, largely unknown God of Change said to have no fixed appearance, house, or location of worship. The enigmatic deity's few devotees meditate on their god's presence in the growth of crops, the aging of a face, the overthrow of a government—Renesec's most ecstatic worshipers adopt radically different mannerisms, behaviors, and even personalities at an irregular schedule and hence are despised as outcasts, individuals who are not able to function in society. However the Ever-Changing has a thriving cult in Salt in Wounds who seek to understand and grow close to their god, and the Lord of Mutation's power and majesty can best be experienced in the endlessly varied twisted forms of Tarrasque-fed mutations.

Every curl of flesh beyond its original form is deemed holy by the cult and the church of the Lord of Mutations preaches endlessly as to the need for the city to fully embrace these divine gifts Renesec pours out for the blessed.

While officially tolerated, the cult is large despised and mocked. Even so the church's numbers continue to swell as more and more individuals feel the "touch of Renesec", the scorn of the city only serving to deepen their bonds to one another and their faith.



<b>Renesec - Lord of Mutation, the Ever-Changing, the Twist of Flesh</b>	
<i>Symbol</i>	A curving forward arrow or (more commonly in Salt in Wounds) Mutated flesh/a pictograph of a mutated man.
<i>Alignment</i>	Chaotic Neutral
<i>Portfolio</i>	Mutation, Change
<i>Domains</i>	Chaos, Healing, Liberation, Madness
<i>Favored Weapon</i>	Sickle





**Worshippers and Clergy.** The cult provides food, housing, and even water for any so long as they bare the mark of Renesec (any manner of mutation) and if they do not, the organization's clerics can induce one upon request. Especially with the uptick in mutation rates, canny political observers believe the cult could become a major political force in years to come even though in modern day it is dismissed as a refuge for the poor, the desperate, and the mad. Rumors hold that the cult has plans to spread the mutation throughout the city via the application of divine magic or specially crafted alchemy, but nothing has ever been proven.

Clerics of Renesec have been known to confer mutations unto any who ask, to utilize magic to alleviate suffering related to a specific mutation (while not curing it), and other abjuration and or metamagic effects.

**Temples and Shrines.** The Shifting Place is the only true temple in the city—what began as a single apartment in the Tail Stones has accrued bizarre layers by the endless stream of followers adhering odd ornamentations cast from powdered Tarrasque scale gradually increasing the building's size.

**Holy Texts.** *The Neverending Stream of Change* is the official holy text of Renesec's church the world over.

## MACINFEX, GOD OF BUTCHERS

Macinfex is the (demi-) god patron of butchers. For the world at large he is a minor figure, often considered to be barely a divinity or dismissed as an upjumped saint and honored only occasionally in an odd window of butcher's row. Salt in Wounds is not like the rest of the world however and here he is *a* if not *the* primary deity—worshiped by many, respected by all. Only the church of Septum Soletirmus the Coin Everlasting boasts as much influence in the city and its ranks are almost exclusively comprised of the rich. In Salt in Wounds, worship of Macinfex extends to all classes and all peoples.

Macinfex – Lord of Butchers, Grand Cutter, He Who Feeds	
<i>Symbol</i>	A cleaver crossed with a paring knife
<i>Alignment</i>	Neutral Good
<i>Portfolio</i>	Butchery, Animal Husbandry, Blood Letting
<i>Domains</i>	Animal, Blood, Repose, Strength
<i>Favored Weapon</i>	Handaxe (cleaver)



**Worshippers and Clergy.** Macinfex's clergy are very much entwined with the economy of Salt in Wounds and carefully monitor the selling of meat. Cleric inspectors survey the merchants, insisting that butchers and sellers throw away (or feed to the ghouls) old, potentially dangerous cuts of Tarrasque, and ensuring that portions and quality are carefully labeled all as part of their religious observances.

Devout worshippers of Macinfex are known to be obsessed with taking things apart to better understand their workings, extending an interest in the anatomy of all living (and even some nonliving) things.

The Tarrasque's imprisonment is seen by Macinfex's cleric devotees as the butcher god's greatest gift to humanity: abundant, eternal food for all. It is no surprise that his worship is most fervent amidst the God-Butchers with devotion bordering on religious fundamentalism a practical requirement for aspirants reaching the rank of Master God-Butcher.



**Temples and Shrines.** Temples and shrines are found everywhere in Salt in Wounds with some doubling as the more prosperous Process Guild locations. The High Shrine to Macinfex is however located within the Fortress Salzinwuun proper and considered the church's most holy location.

Of late, thanks to a compromise, numerous ghouls have joined the Church—much to the consternation of a traditionalist faction who believe undead creatures to be an abomination and disruption of the natural order of death their god represents. Rumors swirl about these ghoulish converts (and other heretics) performing blasphemous rites that extend butchery to sentient creatures but nothing yet has been proven.

**Holy Texts.** *To Cut, to Eat, To Live* is a thousand page holy text of Macinfex's church detailing how death—properly prepared—allows for eating (including the Tarrasque). For most laypeople, a simple print showing the butchery diagram of a single animal rich in esoteric meaning serves as a distillation of the much larger corpus of learning.

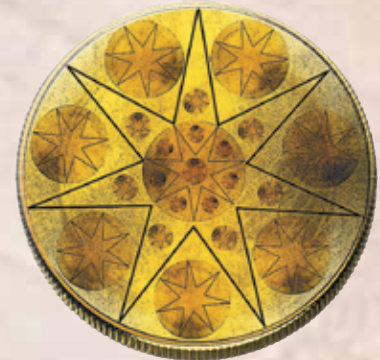
**Appearance.** Macinfex is usually depicted as a thin, smiling, good-natured bearded human figure wearing a leather apron splattered with blood.

**Dogma.** Flesh is for the eating, pain is for the lessening, and skill, knowledge, and craft pursued through hard work provide for all.

## SEPTUM SOLETIRMUS AND THE HOLY WRIT OF COIN EVERLASTING

One of the most popular religions in Salt in Wounds praises Septum Soletirmus, the Favor of Coins, worshiping wealth in all its forms (but most especially gold as the eternal, everlasting, perfect embodiment of wealth). Richness is next to godliness for the adherents to this sect, and many Binder-Lords and prosperous merchants count themselves as members. All adherents seek to court Gold-God believing that prosperity is a sentient being which flows towards its favored.

Septum Soletirmus - Coin Everlasting, Gold-God, Holy Riches	
<i>Symbol</i>	A single gold coin with a seven-pointed star containing the same imagery.
<i>Alignment</i>	Lawful Neutral
<i>Portfolio</i>	Gold, Trade, Transfers of Wealth
<i>Domain</i>	Greed, Nobility, Trade
<i>Favored Weapon</i>	Light Crossbow



**Worshippers and Clergy.** The church is decentralized with any who follow its practices being able to call themselves devotees. Many paladins and clerics wander the city and the world, preaching the gospel of coin and expecting to receive heavy tithes for their blessings. Some scant few clerics and paladins gain power by their devotion of the principles of Septum Soletirmus and typically use these blessings to increase their own wealth (divining the mind of money by watching what sorts of activities generate profit). They preach a message of personal responsibility and the need to “turn away from the wickedness of poverty” to the lower classes, as well as lavishly praise the wealthy

aristocrats and merchants which make them quite popular in the city. Most adherents tithe (via civic reinvestment) 15% or more to prove—by way of their generosity—that they are truly wealthy (and most holy books argue that any money spent this way will be returned ninefold to the faithful though other manuals argue that charity in all its form is a terrible sin and disrupts the true will of the coin.)

**Temples and Shrines.** Worship is conducted informally within banks and markets with the richest individual in attendance leading services as they see fit.





Most services usually culminate with all in attendance counting the coin on their person or balancing their ledgers.

**Holy Texts.** Several texts are considered holy by Septumists although different adherents favor some books over others (even discounting others as heretical). These vary widely in the types of activities they praise and their proscriptions about how one should properly acquire wealth or attract the favor of coins—some espouse blessings of inherited wealth while others argue that wealth acquired in one's own lifetime via entrepreneurial efforts are best.

There is one indecent tome, *The Walking Coin*, that argues for theft, fraud, and

even murder to acquire wealth (as gold should flow to the strong thus being able to keep it is proof of strength and the favor of coins). While very popular amongst criminals, the book is officially banned in Salt in Wounds and possession of a copy is a serious offense.

**Appearance.** The faithful usually depict Soletirmus on objects of worship such as a stack of coins, typically with vaguely humanoid features and a smile.

**Dogma.** Wealth is holy, acquiring gold in the right manner increases wealth for all and thus is pleasing to holy coin.

## OTHER RELIGIONS

In addition to the four mentioned above, Salt in Wounds serves as home or place of business for adherents to dozens (possibly hundreds) of other religions and faiths from across the world. It is likely that a small congregation worshipping just about every major (and most minor) divinity can be found within the city. Shrines to dozens of gods and goddesses are found in the Traveler's Temple within the Throat which—despite its name—serves countless local and native worshipers to other deities.





## SALT IN WOUNDS SLANG

- *Agogi in an Apothecary* Used similarly to “bull in a china shop” but with more of an implication that someone made an incredibly stupid mistake
- *Burke* A hard man or woman well suited to life in Salt in Wounds
- *Bone Sap* A term for success or ease
- *By the 13 (Meridians)* Curse akin to taking a god’s name in vain
- *Divet Job* Criminal (or at least dubiously legal) activity
- *Know the Pain of One’s Stack* Generally used to describe individuals with financial acumen or great wealth
- *Last Cuts* or *Last Wednesday’s Cuts* Term for trash, garbage, shit; exceptionally low quality and undesirable; often used to sexually demean a person
- *Salted* An individual normalized to Salt in Wounds peculiarities
- *Scraper / Skav* Slang for a low class person or scavenger, especially used for people who seem to have no regular employment and are most likely criminals
  - *Tip Job* Legitimate business
  - *Tenderloin* or *Tender* The opposite of a burke; a rube, out of town, or the target of crime or a con
  - *Twelfey* or *Twelfth man* Insult used to denote someone or something as idiotic
  - *Coins Denominations*
    - Copper = Spike,
    - Silver = Scale,
    - Gold = Bone,
    - Platinum = Horn





# FACTIONS

Basic details for a number of prominent factions are presented below, which characters adventuring in Salt in Wounds may well have to deal with or are actively aligned with or against. For more specific information, refer to the [Salt in Wounds Campaign Setting](#) and/or ask your GM.

## THIRTEEN MERIDIAN HOUSES

When the Tarrasque was first subdued thirteen immovable harpoons were shot deep into its body, each with a long, thick chain running to an iron anchor sunk into stones. As the founders built the fortress Salzinwuun they recognized 13 guardians, each a hero in the binding of the enormous monstrosity. All were personally responsible for ensuring that the harpoon in their charge held fast in addition to making arrangements to deal with unforeseen changes. In recent history (the past two odd centuries) the status of these guardians has changed. Their descendants (or in some cases, the original hero) are now referred to as Binder-Lords or Binder-Ladies, each still responsible for ensuring that their harpoon remains secure and keeping the beast chained with the caveat that they all claim the area around their harpoon as their charge to exploit and utilize as they deem fit. These sections of control and responsibility are generally referred to as meridians—hence the Binder-Lords and the houses they lead each owning one of the thirteen meridians (and each house has become incredibly wealthy due to being paid via the work of the God-Butchers and now Marrow Miners selling to the various Blood Merchants and Process Guild Shops). Legal authority is transferred via legal possession of one of the magical command words that can unlock their respective meridian harpoon.

As a group, the 13 Meridian Houses wield tremendous power, though their efficacy is held back by a (largely deserved) reputation for decadence and general lack of concern for the city, and by the circuitous schemes they use to thwart one another. A basic description of how the specific aristocratic house is understood by the city at large is presented below.



1<sup>st</sup> House *Conservative diplomats who believe they're holding the city together*



2<sup>nd</sup> House *Eclectic pragmatists inducting hypercompetitive members on merit*



3<sup>rd</sup> House *Shrewd lords of spice and water*

4<sup>th</sup> House *Indebted former adventuring house yearning for the glory days*



5<sup>th</sup> House *Powerful alchemist house with control of rare reagents and ghoulfication*

6<sup>th</sup> House *Militant warriors with expansionist dreams and internal schisms*



7<sup>th</sup> House *Religiously devout house invested in the church*

8<sup>th</sup> House *Bardic inheritors with interests in entertainment and story*

9<sup>th</sup> House *Hereditary sorcerers with an interest in ancient power*

10<sup>th</sup> House *Secretive house growing rich from brokering information and deals*



11<sup>th</sup> House *Eccentric wizards trying to change the world with magic*

12<sup>th</sup> House *Upstart house on the rise with ties to organized crime*

13<sup>th</sup> House *House of halflings focused on construction and city planning*



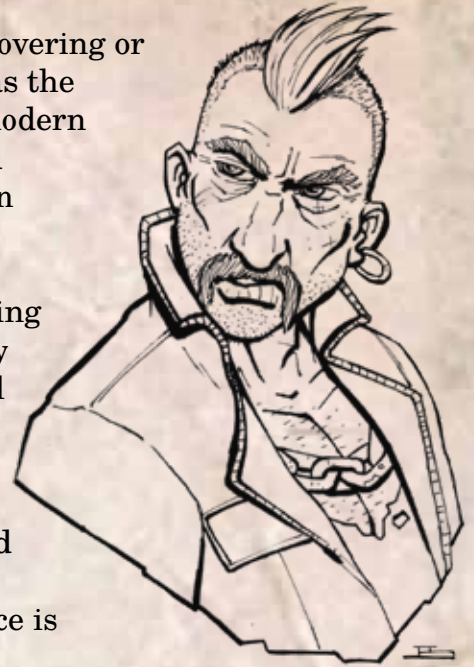


## ENDERS

The Enders are a rumored group of individuals interested in discovering or inventing a way to permanently kill the Tarrasque. While this was the stated goal of the original heroes that bound the monster, most modern citizens of Salt in Wounds have no interest in doing so as it would effectively destroy the economy (and likely existence) of the city. In addition, the majority of those rare few who would be interested believe that the lasting death of the Tarrasque is impossible.

Occasionally individuals are prosecuted for the crime of being Enders under the official charge of conspiring against the sanctity of the Tarrasque's bounty. This has usually been seen as political theater, a baseless charge used to dispose of persons who've angered the powers that be. Most sent to their deaths or truncation in this way claim their innocence right up until the end while some name co-conspirators (who are then also tried and inevitably found guilty).

The accepted wisdom of the cynical Salt in Wounds populace is that the Enders don't exist beyond a few isolated madmen.



## PROCESS GUILD

This is the institutional organization that handles licensing and represents the interests of the various regular butchers, sorters, refiners, and others who receive raw Tarrasque viscera wholesale (from the God-Butchers and Marrow Miners) and process it into components for later commercial resale to the other dominant professional associations (the Sage's Council and Blood Merchants).

The employees and owner-operators of the various factories and workshops comprising the Process Guild tend to be working class to lower-middle class. Barriers to licensing are relatively low encouraging competition and innovation amongst guild members while also generally preventing massive fortunes from being made, putting pressure on the Process Guild members to cut corners and potentially seek "extra-legal" options (in contrast to the registered Blood Merchants that operate in a more oligarchical fashion).

An extremely common crime is Process Guild shops selling directly to the public at large. Individuals who are employed under their aegis (often under terrible working conditions) have an exceedingly high rate of mutations and other health problems—much more so than God-Butchers though not to the same degree as Marrow Miners.

## MARROW MINERS

The Marrow Miners are the guild with the extraction contract for the 12th Meridian of the Tarrasque. Other than the God-Butchers they are the only group with the legal authority to work directly on the creature and there is plenty of mutual antipathy between the two groups (though in recent years God-Butchers have been subcontracting to Marrow Miners for particularly dangerous and difficult work at the other Meridian sites).

Founded after the 12th Meridian Crisis, the Marrow Miners have distinguished themselves by taking any sentient creature willing to work and paying fair wages. Their recruitment efforts include orcs, ghouls, and many other 'monsters' and in addition to many from the lower classes. The general goodwill this generates amongst most of the city is tempered somewhat by racial- and class-based antagonism towards many of the Marrow Miners.

Since their founding the price of much Tarrasque viscera has lowered precipitously—this includes reagents and rare cuts which the Marrow Miners hypothetically can't access. The Marrow Miners (in addition to their 12th House Sponsors) are widely suspected to be major players in the organized crime





of Salt in Wounds, particularly in relation to smuggling. The guild however dismisses such rumors as God-Butcher lies meant to discredit the organization.

Even so the Marrow Miners have thrived, winning the 12th Meridian Extraction contract, successfully subcontracting numerous duties from the God-Butchers (usually the most dangerous and dirty tasks), and rumor holds that they are close to winning the defection of other Meridian Houses.

## HOUSE MILITIAS

The House Militias are the primary source of law and order within the city around the Tarrasque. Each Meridian House is charged with “paying, provisioning, and organizing no less than 250 soldiers to enforce the laws of the township and contribute to the general welfare of Salt in Wounds.” Interpretation and implementation of this edict varies greatly depending on house however—on one end of the spectrum there are houses who outfit their militia with the bare minimum and then leave these individuals to their own devices, usually acting like traditional city watches one might find in any large settlement. In the extreme opposite, 6th House outfits a militia of 7,000 armed and trained more for war than policing. Complicating matters further, many Meridian Houses also run House *Guards* who are distinct from House *Militias*—with House Militias having a duty to enforce laws while House Guards do not

## THE ORDER OF GOD-BUTCHERS

Even amidst the city as bustling as Salt in Wounds, the God-Butchers are hard to miss. Hugely muscled men and women grown strong from a working life of toil and diet of some of the freshest, most choice cuts from the ever-providing body of the Tarrasque. Most carry their stylized greatswords nearly everywhere but contrary to popular belief these weapons turned tools are not exclusively adamantine—many nowadays are forged of Tarrasque horn that better cuts through its armored carapace. Still, those who dismiss the butchers as dumb brutes wholly underestimate

the order; these are hard-eyed resilient people who must be intelligent enough to understand the beast’s intricate and shifting anatomy, able to regularly deal with crafty merchants, domineering aristocrats, and suspicious laborers all to perform their duties.

## SAGE’S COUNCIL

The Sage’s Council is a relatively new faction that has skyrocketed in power and influence over the last three decades since being founded. Their stated purpose is to advocate for the interests of academics, ledger-men, wizards, and above all alchemists—anyone who makes their living with the aid of pen and paper. Contrary to how many alchemists and wizards have traditionally approached their trade—with knowledge being hoarded whenever possible, with information primarily transferred from teacher to apprentice—The Sage’s Council seeks to facilitate the free exchange of information and discoveries between researchers and their advocacy of these principles have contributed greatly to the explosion of alchemical discovery in Salt in Wounds.



## BLOOD MERCHANTS

The Blood Merchants are the licensed monopoly for any merchant selling directly to the public (as opposed to the exclusively wholesale purchases made through the Process Guild) with a few exceptions for outsiders and also by profession (alchemists, smiths, and the like have different licensing boards and different regulations regarding their commercial activity). Usually only the native borne can be official Blood Merchants and any foreign merchant has strong limitations on how they can conduct commerce in the city. Technically every trader from humble jerky vendors with a single stall up to lords like sellers of thousands of slaves is a Blood Merchant if they have paid their licensing fee and



submitted to the city's rules of commerce, but the term is typically used to denote the very wealthy or those that sell Tarrasque-derived goods (which includes most everyone). In addition to providing licenses for retail buyers and sellers within the city, the organization of Blood Merchants advocates for member interests and even provides legal or other help for members in good standing when trouble rears.

## GANGS & ORGANIZED CRIME

Several dozen gangs, mafias, and thieves' collectives operate in the city of Salt in Wounds, all with a variable level of impunity though none are powerful enough to enjoy any sort of preeminence beyond a few city blocks. By custom each organization develops a different specialty (extortion, theft, smuggling) and a specific area of control. Most of the major players are known, and the Militia Captains have no compunctions (other than the disruption to the flow of bribes) against hauling them in on real or imagined charges—especially if any criminal element seems to be

gaining too much power. As such an informal arrangement known as “the peace” holds where various criminal enterprises effectively if not literally pay taxes (via regularized bribes and official “civic reinvestment fees”), limit different types of activities to certain areas, and generally avoid open conflict with one another. Compliant groups are actually fairly competent (if brutal) at ensuring freebooting thieves, murderers, and other unaffiliated criminals do not operate in their areas of control (as part of their unspoken agreement holds them accountable for criminal behavior in their areas).

## CIRCLE OF RELEASE

The Circle of Release is (or was) a group of adventurers and others operating covertly in the City of Salt in Wounds with the stated goal of ending the Tarrasque's imprisonment. Their reasons for doing so vary depend on the telling but the most common belief involves restoring the natural balance upset by the current state of affairs.





# BACKGROUNDS

## BLOOD MERCHANT

Your background was working as one of the city's innumerable Blood Merchants, buying and selling. Your trade may well have taken you far beyond city walls and back again, always with an eye to making coin. Your line of work has put you in contact with all strata of society, and you feel at home in every social situation from haggling for better margins with laborers to attending fancy galas of the aristocracy.

**Skill Proficiencies** Insight, Persuasion

**Languages** Any one of your choice

**Tool Proficiencies** Vehicles (Land)

**Equipment** A fine set of clothes, an accurate scale, a letter of introduction from one of Salt in Wound's banks, and a pouch containing 25 gp

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Traits
1	I was fined and punished by the City Militia, and I loathe them.
2	I am a serious, hardworking merchant who has little time for play.
3	I assume everyone is as wealthy as I am.
4	I enjoy the fruits of my labor (alcohol and revelry) nightly.
5	I ask questions constantly; it's essential to know who I'm dealing with and one never knows what info will be valuable.
6	I admire and watch warriors in the arena whenever possible.
7	I've left a string of broken hearts all over the city.
8	I worship my god devoutly.

## MERCHANT CONTACT (FEATURE)

You have a series of trade contacts ranging from shopkeepers, artisans, God-Butchers and more around Salt in Wounds and anywhere the city regularly trades. Once per game session, when adventuring you can use a contact to get information about a local area or pass information along your contact network. In addition, you can use your merchant contacts to find work if any is available.

d6	Ideals
1	<b>Greed</b> I'll rip off and steal whenever possible. (Evil)
2	<b>Charity</b> I use my wealth to help those less fortunate. (Good)
3	<b>Thrift</b> I spend my money, time, and attention carefully. (Lawful)
4	<b>Revelry</b> I work in order to play (and spend) more extravagantly. (Chaotic)
5	<b>Shrewd</b> I'm always seeking advantage in all my interactions. (Any)
6	<b>Forthright</b> I deal honestly. (Any)

d6	Bonds
1	I guard my wealth for everything I'm worth.
2	My coworkers are my family.
3	I will uphold the good name of my family & guild.
4	I must prove myself in my new profession as adventurer.
5	I never go back on my word; I honor every deal.
6	I will support the city and its lowest with my wealth.

d6	Flaws
1	Anything not in the latest fashion, highest cost clothing & personal pampering is trash.
2	I only eat the finest foods and complain loudly about anything less than gourmet.
3	I am suspicious of everyone, I know they're always trying to rip me off.
4	I am a braggart; always selling the 'image' of me.
5	I'm always trying to figure out ways to get out of work.
6	The only thing moderation is good for is moderation; I eat and drink to excess.



## GOD-BUTCHER

You are part of the God-Butchers, a ceremonial order who oversees the binding and harvesting of the Tarrasque. Your work has encouraged you to learn a wide range of skills and rub shoulders with many of the city, and you are well established and greatly admired by society at large.

**Skill Proficiencies** Athletics, Medicine

**Languages** Two of your choice

**Equipment** A God-Butcher's uniform, viscera diagram of the Tarrasque, a carved drinking horn to commemorate you entering the guild, and a pouch containing 15 gp

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Traits
1	Lax standards can get people hurt or—gods forbid—the beast released; everything will be done perfectly.
2	I see all living things as complicated machines whose workings fascinate me.
3	I will talk at length about my work and the God-Butchers anytime.
4	Nothing can shake my optimistic attitude.
5	Decades of rarely leaving the beast's sight has leached much of my skills with dealing with non God-Butchers.
6	I'm well known for a significant deed and am shocked when someone hasn't heard of me.
7	I've enjoyed finery and can't stand living poor.
8	I look down on anyone who doesn't sweat for a living.
d6	Flaws
1	I'm forever incensed at others being promoted past me.
2	I put too much trust in those who wield power within my order's hierarchy.
3	I respond violently to any joke or remark made at the expense of the God-Butchers.
4	My negligence led to the death of another, and I'm desperate to keep the secret.
5	No one outside my order can ever really be trusted.
6	No one can learn about my criminal dealings.

## RESPECTED BY THE CITY (FEATURE)

As an established and respected member of the God-Butchers, you always have access to free food and lodging in the God-Butcher barracks. In addition, the God-Butchers hold tremendous sway in the city; if you are accused of a crime the order will support you (assuming a good case can be made for your innocence or the crime justifiable). God-Butcher contacts can also get you an audience with almost anyone in the city – though it may take some time.

d6	Ideals
1	<b>Safety</b> All I do is to keep the city, its people, and the world safe. (Lawful)
2	<b>Charity</b> I work and give freely so that all others may eat. (Good)
3	<b>Sadist</b> I enjoy inflicting pain and consider it my art; working on the Tarrasque gives me an opportunity to paint on a larger canvas. (Evil)
4	<b>Payment</b> I work to get paid; simple as that. (Any)
5	<b>Faith</b> It was the will of the Gods that the Tarrasque be bound and I continue to honor that will. (Lawful)
6	<b>Aspiration</b> I will be ranked amongst the God-Butcher masters. (Any)

d6	Bonds
1	The God-Butchers are my kin, I would do anything for them.
2	My mentor in the guild taught me everything I know and made me what I am today.
3	The Tarrasque must be contained at all cost.
4	I pursue wealth to be worthy of another's love.
5	I seek to understand what really happened in the 12 <sup>th</sup> Meridian crisis; so I can take revenge.
6	I love my family and work hard to support them.





## HOUSE MILITIA

You serve (or served) in what amounts to the forces of law and order in Salt in Wounds; one of the 13 House Militias. Your time was often spent balancing a need to 'keep the peace' while navigating Meridian House politics that saw your watch funded and directed. In your time you've had to bust your fair share of heads and suspect you've seen a little of everything the city is capable of: you've watched the guilty go free and the innocent be sentenced to truncation, you've dealt with gangsters and monsters and mutants and fanatics but you've learned the streets and how to make your way in the city.

How you've held onto your ideals (or if you had them all in the first place) is directly influenced by what you've seen and done.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Athletics, Perception

**Languages:** Two of your choice

**Equipment:** A uniform with your watch insignia & rank, a set of manacles, hooded lantern, and a pouch containing 10 gp

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Traits
1	I know (and regularly share) heroic stories of the house militia.
2	I am direct and plain spoken as an arrow to the throat.
3	I am unfailingly courteous, regardless of the social standing of who I'm speaking to.
4	One of the few survivors of a bust gone wrong, I'm haunted by people I've lost.
5	Little frightens me, at least that I'd show.
6	Once betrayed by a partner, I'm slow to make friends.
7	Busting down doors and cracking skulls seems to solve all my problems.
8	I enjoy bending rules whenever I can.

## MILITIA EASE (FEATURE)

Based on your personal relationships and the way you carry yourself, you have an easy manner with law enforcement both within the city and without. Any (reasonable) requests you make of House Militia or other law enforcement are likely to be granted (for instance, non sensitive information regarding an investigation) and at least once you can 'call in your chips' to get a significant rule bent.





d6	Ideals
1	<b>Protector</b> I joined the watch to protect those who can't protect themselves. (Good)
2	<b>Order</b> The city would descend into anarchy without the Militia, and I won't allow that. (Lawful)
3	<b>Right Side of the Law (Enforcement).</b> The House Militias are the biggest gangs in the city, and joining up has given me freedom to do what I want. (Chaotic)
4	<b>Might.</b> By kicking or kissing the right asses, I will amass power I intend to lord over others. (Evil)
5	<b>Financial Security.</b> The militia pays well and dependably. (Neutral)
6	<b>Aspiration.</b> I want to be part of stories bigger than processing Tarrasque viscera. (Any)

d6	Bonds
1	Death before dishonor.
2	I stand up for the little guy in the city.
3	Whoever is standing beside me, today, are worth my protection.
4	Old friends, my former compatriots, are the best friends.
5	I'll never forget the criminals that humbled and outmaneuvered my militia.
6	I owe a debt of gratitude for fellow militiamen who saved my life (or covered for my mistake).

d6	Flaws
1	I am inflexible in my thinking.
2	I took criminal actions in the past, and would do anything to keep these secret.
3	I obey the letter of the law, even when I know it's unjust.
4	I've little respect for anyone outside the militia.
5	I am suspicious of strangers and expect the worst of them.
6	My hatred of criminals is blind and unreasoning.

## MARROW MINERS

With hands roughened with some of the dirtiest, most dangerous work the city offers you know the value of hard work. As a Marrow Miner you've had been deep into the bloody tunnels of the Tarrasque, keeping your wits about you and being ready to lend a hand to your compatriots have kept you and them alive. Whatever your race, you've rubbed shoulders with just about every manner of creature all working together to gut the beast.

**Skill Proficiencies** Perception, Medicine

**Languages** Goblin and One of your choice

**Equipment** A serrated shovel, an empty flask, a bit of hardened Tarrasque fat whittled into a shape of a family member, a set of blood stained clothing, and a pouch containing 5 gp



### COMMUNION OF SWEAT (FEATURE)

Your intimate knowledge of hard labor eases understanding and communication with similar types. You can always crack open a bottle of grog and find a place to hide, rest, or recuperate amongst lower class peoples, including even the slaves and non-warriors of 'monstrous' races. Though they won't risk their lives for you, they'll protect, feed, and drink with you to the best of their abilities.





## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Traits
1	People who don't work with their hands are milksop jokes.
2	I'd rather be mining, deep in the monster's viscera the world makes sense.
3	Mining flesh has taught me patience, rushing gets people killed.
4	Nothing can shake my optimistic attitude for long.
5	I hate the Tarrasque & mining; it's taken too many of my friends.
6	Whether by mining or be adventuring, I'm sure I'll strike it rich.
7	I admire types with an education and career prospects, I'd like to get me some of that myself.
8	I can drink with—and hence get along with—anyone.

d6	Flaws
1	Good tools are better than most people; I would save a spade before a stranger.
2	I know other will betray me the first chance they get.
3	All the time in working has left me stilted and awkward in my interactions.
4	I'm uncomfortable under open sky, I need a tunnel or at least a roof to relax.
5	I am inflexible in my thinking.
6	Once I pick a goal, I become obsessed with it to the detriment of everything else in my life.

d6	Bonds
1	One of my fellows saved my life, and I will repay the debt.
2	I will someday get revenge on the corrupt militia that framed me, robbed me of my station and thus sentenced me to work as a miner.
3	I owe my life to the Marrow Miners, who have provided me a job and sustenance when none others would.
4	Everything I do is for the common people.
5	The people who mine the Tarrasque are my kin, I'd do anything for them.
6	I'm obsessed with the God-Butchers, would do anything to join their ranks.

d6	Ideals
1	<b>Mind my Own Business</b> I mind myself and my work, let others do the same. (Neutral)
2	<b>Generosity</b> The bounty of the Tarrasque can feed everyone. (Good)
3	<b>Ordered Society</b> Everyone has their place, their role, and their work—the world would be a better place if everyone acted accordingly. (Lawful)
4	<b>Avarice</b> I will discover secret wealth in the Tarrasque and keep it all for myself. (Evil)
5	<b>Rabble-Rouser</b> I'd like to throw off the yoke of overseers and aristocrats, free myself and my city. (Chaotic)
6	<b>Jobber</b> This is the best job I could get, until I can get one that pays better. (Any)

## MERIDIAN HOUSE SCION

You were raised around—and have enjoyed—your fair share of wealth, privilege, and all the things being at the top of society can afford. You have rank within one of the 13 Aristocratic Meridian Houses and as such have been close to the center of power for the city of Salt in Wounds.

Even more so than other nobles of the rest of the world, the Meridian Houses are engaged in baroque intrigue struggles that rival even the excesses of the drow. While you might be (or believe yourself to be) removed from these sorts of struggles, this legacy of schemes and subterfuge (with lies spilling as easily as breathe and the use of poison as mundane) has left an indelible mark upon you.

Refer to the summary of the various houses in the 'Factions' section to have an idea of which House you believe your character should belong.



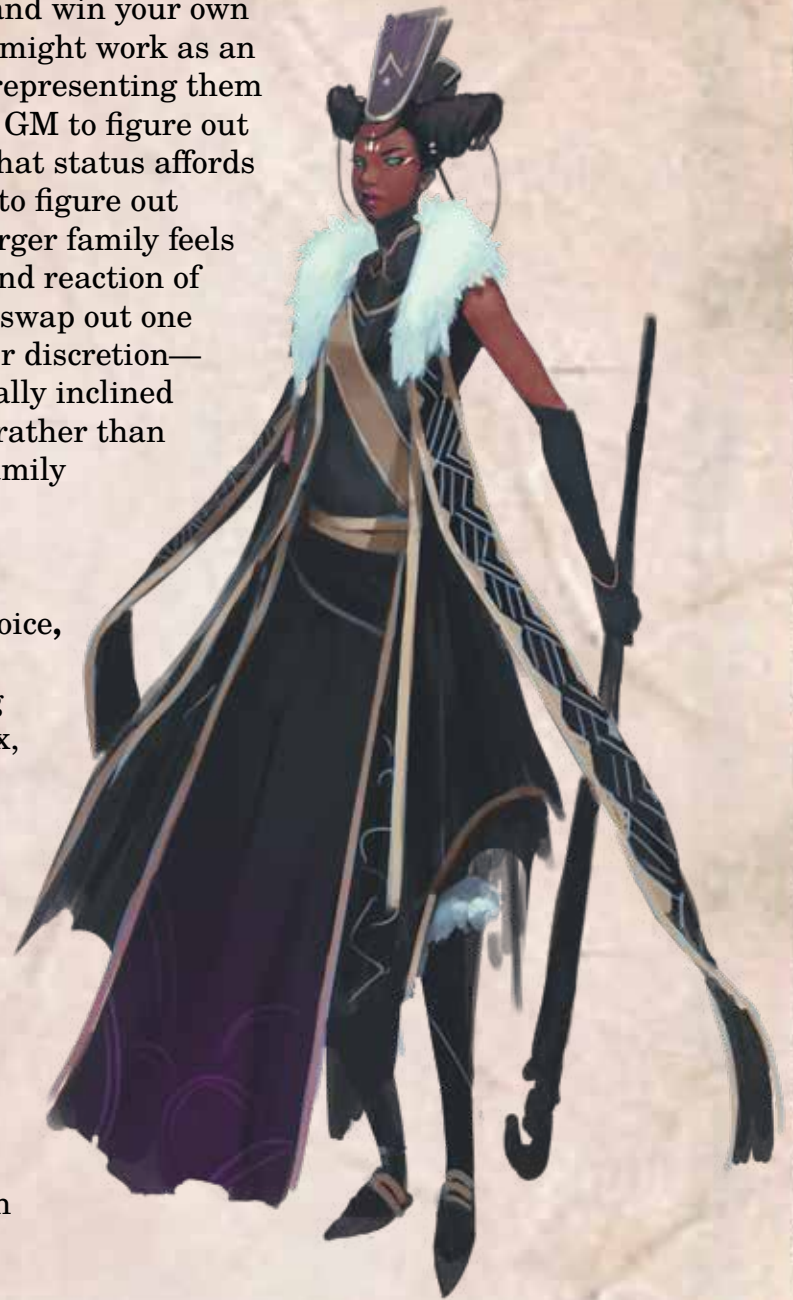
Your current station is up to you and your Game Master: you might be a disowned and shamed former member desperate to win back your family’s approval, you might be a young up and comer determined to make your own way (and win your own renown) outside the shadow of your family, you might work as an agent for your family on special assignment or representing them in some day to day functioning. Work with your GM to figure out your status and what privileges and influence that status affords in the city. Your GM should also work with you to figure out which House affiliation fits you best, how the larger family feels about and relates to you, and the stereotypes and reaction of the rest of the city. In addition, your GM might swap out one or both of your skills or tool proficiencies at their discretion—for instance, if you were aligned with the martially inclined 6<sup>th</sup> House, you might be proficient in ‘Athletics’ rather than ‘Persuasion’ to reflect your early drilling with family Sergeant O’Arms.

**Skill Proficiencies** History, Persuasion

**Languages** One of Your Choice

**Tool Proficiencies** One Gaming set of your choice, Poisoner’s Kit or Disguise Kit

**Equipment** A set of fine clothes, a ring bearing the seal of your Meridian House, sealing wax, a fine masquerade mask, a bottle of blood wine, and a purse containing 25 gp.



## HIGH SOCIETY (FEATURE)

You are deferred to regularly by merchants and common folk alike. Brandishing your signet ring can get you past many mundane bureaucratic obstacles, and you can gain audience with more or less any nobles by claiming you’re about on ‘family business.’

While in Salt in Wounds, at least once a month you will be invited to a fancy party which will feature a scattering of powerful people.

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Traits
1	I want to live up to my legendary forebears.
2	I despise the wealthy and valorize the poor as more ‘real.’
3	Anyone who has to do anything so crass as <i>work</i> for their money, regardless of the size of their fortune, is beneath me.
4	Cut off financially from my family, I’m desperate to earn.
5	I am a master of flattery if I don’t say so myself.
6	While they support me financially, my family doesn’t really care for me.
7	Despite being in a Meridian House, I’m strongly egalitarian – we’re all brothers & sisters.
8	I’m always impeccably—and fashionably—dressed and clean to a fault.





d6	<i>Ideals</i>
1	<b>Power</b> I adventure to amass more power to rule and lord over <i>all</i> others. (Evil)
2	<b>Fun</b> I was utterly bored in the manor-tower; the city & the world have much to offer. (Chaotic)
3	<b>Community</b> I intend to use my myriad privileges in service of others. (Good)
4	<b>Responsibility</b> I live up to the duties thrust upon me and my family by inheritance. (Lawful)
5	<b>Family</b> I serve my family's interests first and foremost, all else is secondary. (Any)
6	<b>Tradition</b> Adventuring made my family; I will live out this tradition in my life. (Any)

d6	<i>Bonds</i>
1	I love a particular family member and would do anything for them.
2	I know true loyalty from friends I've made over my scheming, backstabbing kin.
3	I'd stare down the Tarrasque to win the approval of my family.
4	I don't want to be known only by my family name.
5	My family's alliance with another Meridian house must be maintained.
6	I'm going to make my own fortune.

d6	<i>Flaws</i>
1	I enjoy drink whenever, it's always past noon somewhere aye?
2	I treat everyone like a servant, even needed allies and my non-noble betters.
3	Raised in the lap of luxury, I <i>literally</i> don't know the value of money.
4	I hear insolence everywhere and it infuriates me.
5	Those not of noble birth are useless and need to be told.
6	Sheltered from all consequence growing up, I believe myself untouchable.

## OPERATIVE

Unbeknownst to most, you secretly work for one of the outlaw or criminal factions in the city of Salt in Wounds such as the Circle of Release, the Enders, or another similar faction. (work with your GM to figure out which one and your role with the organization). You have a life and a career and a cover public identity but all along you seek to advance the goals of your organization.

As you adventure, you may well find yourself pulled in opposing directions, having to balance and decide which of your competing loyalties to honor.

**Skill Proficiencies** Deception, Insight,

**Tool Proficiencies** Disguise Kit, Forger's Kit

**Equipment** Disguise Kit, Forger's Kit, common clothes, a signet ring bearing the seal of your faction, and a pouch containing 15 gp

## CONTACTS (FEATURE)

You have a contact with your organization, to whom you speak regularly (passing along secrets, reports, and getting proposed assignments). This contact can help clear up minor trouble with the law (using their network of associates and leverage) in addition to getting you an audience with various powerful people sympathetic to your cause.

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	<i>Personality Traits</i>
1	I idolize a particular hero of my faction, try to live (secretly) up to their example.
2	I study my enemies, targets, and challenges extensively; I won't be caught unprepared especially since I usually operate on my own.
3	I do my utmost to be unremarkable and unmemorable.
4	Nothing can shake my optimistic attitude.
5	I'm prepared for anything.
6	I'm inspired by the thrill of dirty dealings and the cloak and dagger life I've chosen.
7	I'm well-spoken, well-mannered, and well-coifed; with these tools I avoid suspicion.
8	People can only be trusted if I know they value me; I'm valuable to everyone who matters.





d6	Ideals
1	<b>Selfless</b> My faction will change the world and serve the people for the better; that's why I'm willing to give my life in service. (Good)
2	<b>Devious</b> With my knowledge and skills, I'm always manipulating others for my benefit. <i>Always.</i> (Evil)
3	<b>Shadow-Monger</b> Secrets & information are currency; I plan to hoard all my wealth. (Any)
4	<b>Power</b> I hope to one day rise to the top of my faction's hierarchy. (Lawful)
5	<b>Pleasure</b> I know life is short (mine perhaps more than most) every day must be lived to the fullest. (Chaotic)
6	<b>Wary</b> Everyone's hiding something, and most of those things can hurt me & my cause. (Any)

d6	Bonds
1	I would die to further my cause.
2	I must free the city from the tyranny of the status quo.
3	I seek to prove myself worthy by working for my faction.
4	Everything I do is for the common people.
5	My family member was slain in the 12 <sup>th</sup> Meridian crisis; that tragedy motivates me even now.
6	I was framed for a crime; I'll get revenge (and my faction will help me).

d6	Flaws
1	Years of getting away with things has left me over-confident.
2	My desire for revenge makes me make stupid decisions.
3	Years of slow or no progress for my faction has left me pessimistic and depressed.
4	I drink away stress and I'm under a lot of stress.
5	I am suspicious of strangers, often paranoid that they're on to me or working for someone.
6	My 'life' suffers greatly as I struggle to balance my multiple conflicting roles.





## REFUGEE

You are an immigrant to Salt in Wounds. Perhaps you came as a child with your family long ago, or you arrived as an adult fleeing a great famine. Regardless of your origin, you did not enter the city prosperous and have to struggle to make a living since. The hard journey to the city and the harder life you've found in Salt in Wounds streets have marked you.

**Skill Proficiencies** Athletics, Survival

**Languages** One of your choice

**Tool Proficiencies** One type of Artisan tools

**Equipment** A set of artisan's tools (your choice), a set of traveler's clothes, a broken doll that reminds you of someone from former life, and a pouch containing 5 gp

## LOWEST OF THE LOW (FEATURE)

Being part of the lowest caste of Salt in Wounds society offers you camaraderie and support (meager though it may be) from others like yourself. You are able to find refuge with others who sympathize with you (mostly the city's refugee community) meaning a bed, a place to rest, and hiding from the watch or criminal elements.

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Trait
1	I protect the people around me, we're all we have.
2	I'm always prepared; it's the only reason I've survived.
3	I assume anyone with money got it dishonestly.
4	I follow etiquette very different from the city.
5	I lost everything; that means I have to move on because I have no time to waste.
6	I watch others, constantly trying to figure them out.
7	I idolize a particular hero of my people try to live my life by their example.
8	I have a saying and a quip for every occasion; usually black humor.

d6	Flaw
1	I'm never to blame when something around me goes horribly wrong (which is often).
2	My manners (or lack thereof) mean I'm constantly offending others.
3	I can't stand up for myself.
4	I believe myself cursed to never succeed.
5	I always seem to pick the wrong team as I side with the underdog.
6	I'm obsessed with trying to reclaim my life that was with limited ability to see my life as it is.

d6	Ideal
1	<b>Open.</b> I wish to be known and I'll share the tale of my life to anyone who will listen. (Any)
2	<b>Order.</b> My homeland suffered because of disorder, I will help build a better society. (Lawful)
3	<b>Change.</b> Nothing is stable, everything changes; who knows where I'll be living next week? (Chaotic)
4	<b>Strength.</b> Only the strong survive, the weak deserve what's coming to them. (Evil)
5	<b>Optimism.</b> Despite everything, I work everyday to craft a better life for me and others. (Good)
6	<b>Place.</b> I will prove myself to the city. (Any)

d6	Bond
1	There's someone I lost track of while immigrating, I need to know what happened to them.
2	I owe a tremendous debt to the group that transported me to the city.
3	I owe my life to the community that helped me when my parents died.
4	Everything I do is for other refugees like myself.
5	My family is everything to me.
6	I have a second chance at life; I'm going to do this right!



## CLASS CUSTOMIZATIONS

### FLAYED BEAST TOTEM (BARBARIAN)

You have seen the power that comes of ignoring pain, of letting flesh be scarred and changed by the cruelty of men and battles won. Your body is a tapestry of past wounds which you deliberately scar together to become tougher and communicate your history of violence. Raging makes your scars inhumanly resilient and pulse with crimson light.

#### Testament of Scars

At 3rd level, you are now proficient in the Intimidation skill and skill checks made using Intimidation use either your Strength or Constitution modifier (your choice) rather than your Charisma modifier. You have advantage on Intimidation checks while raging.

#### Wound Powered

At 3rd level, when you're below half hit points each of your weapon attacks deal extra damage equal to 1d4 + half your barbarian level (rounded down).

#### Scar Toughened Body

At 6th level, your scarred body protects you from blows that might otherwise wound you. From the beginning of your rage till the end of your next turn you are immune to all bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing damage from nonmagical weapons.

Once you have used this ability, it will not activate again until you've completed a long rest.

At 11<sup>th</sup> level, this ability grants immunity from all bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage from non-adamantine sources.

#### Scarred Soul

At 10th level your scar empowered toughness has developed to the point where you can even turn aside magic. When you rage you now have advantage in all Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma saving throws against spells and spell like effects.

#### Cry of Pain and Victory

At 14th level, you are capable of channeling past wounds and victories into a blood curdling war cry that weakens the resolve of your enemies. While raging, you can use a bonus action to force every enemy that can see or hear you within 120 feet to make Wisdom saving throw (DC 13). Upon a failure, they are frightened of you until the start of your next turn.

You can use this ability a number of times equal to your Constitution modifier per long rest.





## COLLEGE OF THE DIRGE (BARD)

When it comes to the magic of music, tales, and performance; you have been drawn to stories of the dead. Much of your craft is focused on the deceased and corpses: tending to graves, making art from their lives, and gaining power over them.

### Touch of the Grave

At 3rd level, you learn *chill touch* cantrip though this doesn't count against your number of cantrips known.

### Tales of the Grave

Also at 3rd level, you can utilize a bonus action to spend one of your bardic inspiration die to sense the presence and direction of any corpse or undead within 120 feet of you.

In addition, by spending a minute studying a corpse you can see, you can compose a rough story or song about them; how they died and possibly how they lived. You need at least a skull of the deceased creature to utilize this ability. Exact details of this story is up to your GM, but you will always be able to tell the deceased creature's name (if it had one) its basic cause of death (damage type, poison, disease, old age) and their emotional state when they died (scared, angry, resolute, surprised and so on).

### Grave Magical Secrets

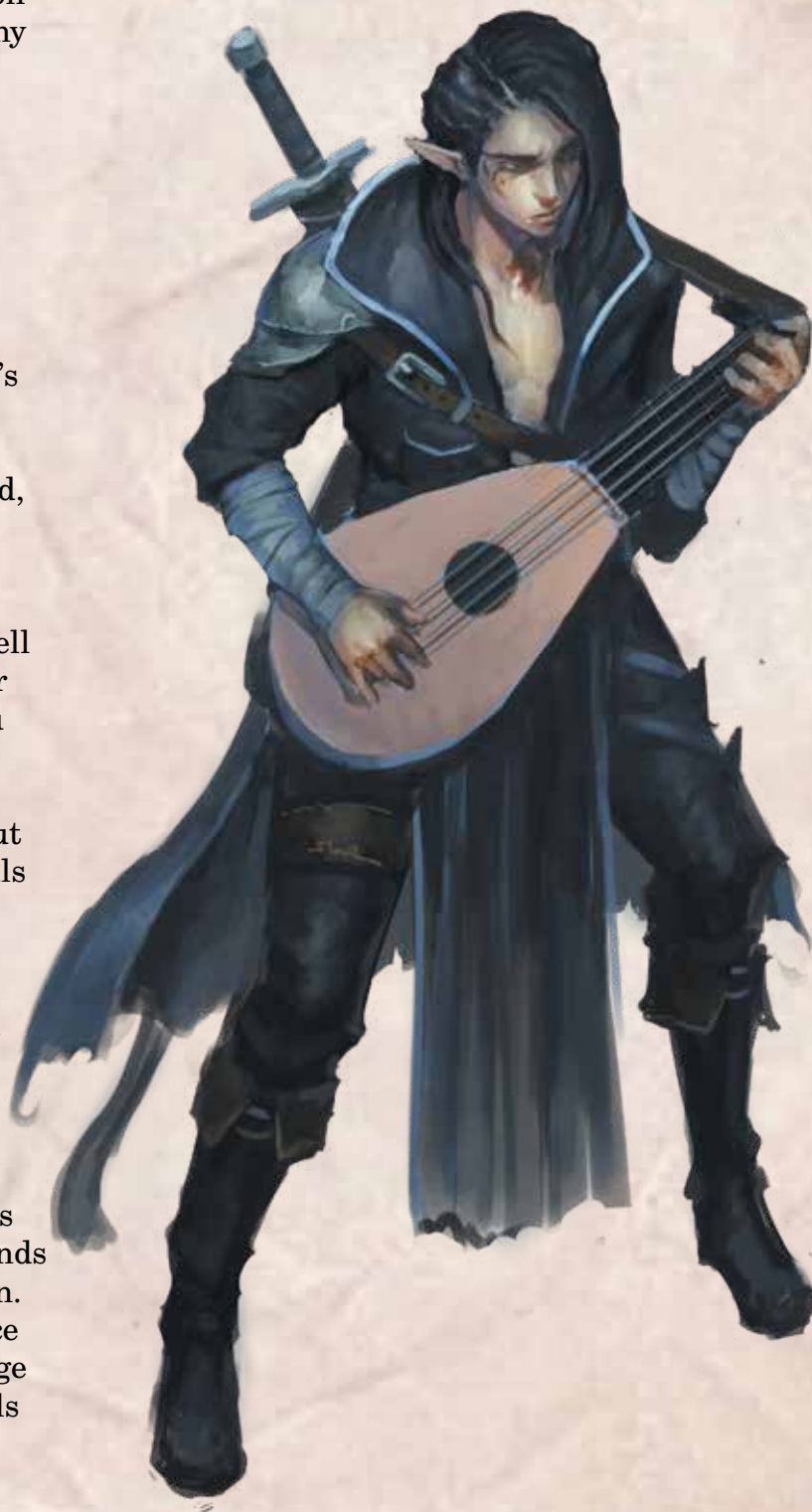
At 6th level, you learn the *animate dead* spell in addition to two necromancy spells of your choice from any class's spell list. A spell you choose must be of a level you can cast, as shown on the Bard table, or a cantrip. The chosen spells count as bard spells for you but don't count against the number of bard spells you know.

### Enthrall Undead

Starting at 14th level, as an action, you can choose one undead that you can see within 60 feet of you. That creature must make a Charisma saving throw against your bard spell save DC. If it succeeds, you can't use this feature on it again. If it fails, it becomes friendly to you and obeys your commands until you use this feature again. If the target has an Intelligence of 8 or higher, it has advantage on the saving throw. If it fails

the saving throw and has an Intelligence of 12 or higher, it can repeat the saving throw at the end of every hour until it succeeds and breaks free.

You may use this ability a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier per long rest.





## BLOOD DOMAIN (CLERIC)

Macinfex, god of butchers, holds spilling of blood and the cutting of flesh as the essence of holiness. As such, many of his clerics opt to channel their god through the use of the Blood Domain, especially those with a more militant bend. Some clerics of this domain actively spread violence wherever they go (butchery of all), while others use its power to assure that bloodshed is rare and swiftly ended.

Note: not all clerics who utilize the Blood Domain are followers of Macinfex.

### Blood for the Gods

At 1st level when you choose this domain, you gain proficiency in all simple and martial weapons that deal piercing or slashing damage, and you gain proficiency in heavy armor.

### The Blood is the Life

Also starting at 1st level, calling upon your mastery of your own vital force you can use a bonus action to gain temporary hit points equal to two times your cleric level if your current hit points are below half of your maximum hit points. Once this occurs, it cannot happen again until you complete a short rest.

### Channel Divinity: Bloodgift

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to invoke divine favor upon those who bleed and suffer in battle. As an action, you call your deity's name. Up to two allies within 60 feet with current hit points at or below half of their maximum hit points may spend their reactions to make an attack action. If these attacks hit, they add your Wisdom bonus to the damage dealt.

At 11th level, this power can affect up to three allies instead of two. At 17th level, this power can affect up to four allies instead of three.

### Mighty in Vengeance

Starting at 6th level, when your current hit points are at or below half of your maximum hit points, you may treat any result of 1 or 2 as a 3 on dice rolled to determine damage effects from weapons or spells (not attack rolls or saving throws, but effect values).

### Domain Spells

1st	<i>false life, inflict wounds</i>
2nd	<i>enhance ability, protection from poison</i>
3rd	<i>feign death, vampiric touch</i>
4th	<i>compulsion, divination</i>
5th	<i>contagion, greater restoration</i>

### Red Ruin

Starting at 8th level, once per turn when you make a weapon attack with a piercing or slashing weapon, you deal an additional 1d8 damage of the same type. When you reach 14th level, the damage increases to 2d8.

### Blood and Souls

Starting at 17th level, when you deal damage that reduces a creature to 0 hit points, you regain an expended use of Channel Divinity, or you regain an expended spell slot. The spell slot's level is equal to half the Challenge Rating of the creature you damaged, or 5, whichever is lower. After you have used this ability twice, you may not do so again until you complete a long rest.





## CIRCLE OF FUNGUS (DRUID)

You've learned to commune with the creeping power of fungus, the mycological substrate that exists below and within every ecosystem. You gain powers over rot, death and rebirth, in bestowing or removing afflictions, and your wildshape sees your flesh reborn into a fungal body with the aid of the mushroom intelligence living within you.

### Circle Spells

At 2nd level, you learn the *spare the dying* cantrip. At 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level you gain access to the spells listed for that level in the Circle of Fungus Spells table.

Once you gain access to one of these spells, you always have it prepared, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can prepare each day. If you gain access to a spell that doesn't appear on the druid spell list, the spell is nonetheless a druid spell for you.

As your connection with the fungal substrate intertwining all nature, you begin to experience profound changes. Your Wild Shape form now allows you to have a fungal body (rather than transforming into a different creature) which grows in power and abilities over time.

### Fungal Shape

At 2nd level, when you use your Wild Shape feature, your body is modified and empowered by the fungal tendrils that run throughout your flesh and tiny invisible philia reaching out from your skin. When you activate this feature, you gain the following abilities:

- You gain blindsight 10ft.
- Your reach goes up 5 feet
- Your movement speed goes down 5ft

Using your Wild Shape feature makes your body appeared to be comprised of strands of blooming fungus. As you become more comfortable with your altered form your abilities improve: your movement, blindsight, and reach increase an additional 5 feet at 9th level (thereby removing the former penalty to your movement speed), and an additional 5 feet at 17th level.

Druid Level	Circle Spells
3rd	<i>darkvision, ray of enfeeblement</i>
5th	<i>bestow curse, speak with dead</i>
7th	<i>black tentacles, death ward</i>
9th	<i>cloudkill, reincarnate</i>



### Chitinous Weapon

Starting at 2nd level, while using your Wild Shape feature you can use a bonus action to create any weapon that you are proficient with. This weapon is made of fungus & hardened chitin and must be in your hands or will wither and dissolve into uselessness by the end of your next turn, though you are capable of making (and firing) useable ammunition this way. This weapon has the same statistics as a normal weapon of its kind.

At 6th level, this weapon is considered magical for the purposes of overcoming resistance and immunity to nonmagical weapons.



### Fibrous Resistance

At 6th level, when you use your Wild Shape feature you have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.

### Digestive Restoration

At 10th level, while activating your Wild Shape feature or resuming your regular form, you can choose to remove one of your status afflictions or conditions as per the *lesser restoration* spell.

### Fungal Cloud

At 14th level, as a bonus action you summon a stinking cloud (as per the spell, save is your spell save DC) with the following modifications: the cloud lasts for 1 minute and for that duration it remains centered on you and moves with you, you can see through this cloud without difficulty, and you are otherwise immune to its effects (ie being within it doesn't require a Constitution save from you).

You can dismiss this cloud as a bonus action.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### d12 Possible Mutations

1	One of your limbs has grown huge and misshapen
2	Your skin is stretched and split by the places the flesh has grown too fast to be held.
3	Your eyes have become alien and strange.
4	You appear unnaturally gaunt and have permanently lost all body fat.
5	Your skin has changed color.
6	Your skin has changed texture: you are now covered in scales, hair, or even feathers.
7	Your fingers now end in clawed talons.
8	You have grown a tail.
9	You have grown an extra limb.
10	You have grown an extra eye or other sense organ.
11	Your limbs have changed so your joints fold the opposite way.
12	You have an elongated neck that allows you to telescope your head around.

## MUTANT WARRIOR (FIGHTER)

Your martial development was forever altered when your flesh began to change, whether by accidental exposure, deliberate induction of mutation, or unknown means. Whereas others train their prowess and utilize rigorous training in conventional ways, you've learned to focus much of your prowess on seeking control of your mutable flesh gaining strength and other abilities to aid your martial might.

### Touched by Mutation

You have begun to mutate and your inhuman form is terrifying to behold. You gain proficiency in Intimidation or—if you were already proficient in it—you double your proficiency bonus when making Intimidation checks. In addition, roll on the table below to select a random mutation (or choose one by working with your GM.)



### Changing Flesh

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain a set of abilities that are fueled by special dice called mutant dice. You have four mutant dice, which are d4s. A mutant die is expended when you use it. You regain all of your expended mutant dice when you finish a short or long rest. You gain an additional mutant die at 7th level and one more at 15th level. You can expend mutant dice to





gain a number of different benefits (note, once you have used a mutant die, you can not use another until the start of your next turn):

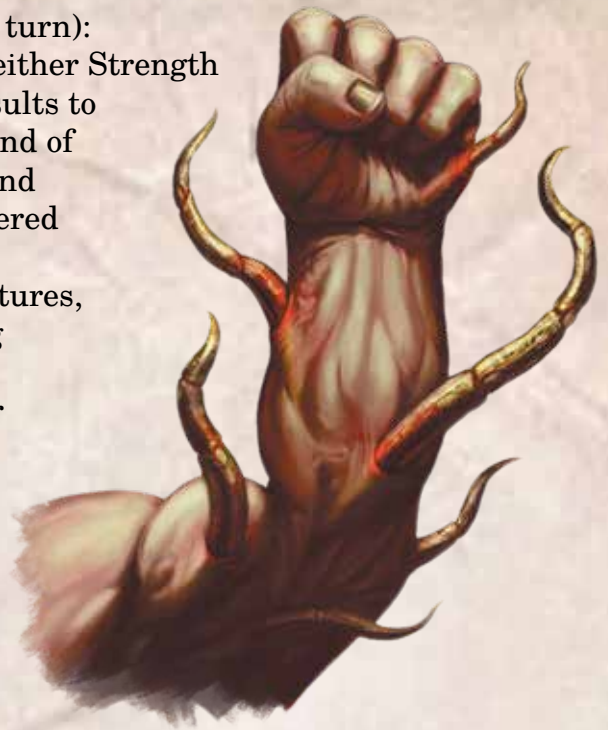
**Physical Power Surge:** As a bonus action, choose either Strength or Constitution and roll mutant dice and add the results to the appropriate modifier. This effect lasts until the end of your next turn (hp gained this way are temporary) and changes your appearance (bulging muscles, skin covered in scales, ect).

**Twisted Flesh:** By remapping your internal structures, you can use a reaction designate an alternate saving throw over the one called for by the GM. You are limited to substituting physical stats for one another or mental stats for one another: Strength-Dexterity-Constitution can be substituted for one another or Wisdom-Intelligence-Charisma may be substituted for one another. You must choose to use this ability before rolling your saving throw and this ability only works for a single saving throw you modified with your reaction and not additional ones.

**Regeneration:** As long as you have at least 1 hit point, you may use an action to roll a mutant die. You regain that many hit points + your Constitution modifier at the start of each of your turns for a number of rounds equal to your proficiency bonus.

**Armored Carapace:** Sprouting thick scales, you can use an action to roll a mutant die to gain that amount in AC until the start of your next round.

**Elemental Resistance:** Covering your flesh with hair or slime, you can utilize a bonus action to expend a mutant die to gain resistance to one type of elemental damage until the start of your next turn.



### **Altered Physiology**

At 7th level, you can cast *alter self* without the use verbal or somatic requirements. You regain the use of this feature after a short or long rest.

### **Empowered Mutations**

At 10th level, your mutant dice turn into d6s. At 18th level, they turn into d8s.

### **Constant Change**

Starting at 15th level, when you roll initiative and have no mutant dice remaining, you regain one mutant die.

## **AETHERIST (MONK)**

*“Transmute. Transcend. Transpire.” - The Aetherist Creed*

An aetherist is a contemplative dedicated to the quest of personal transformation. In their quest to better understand aether, the building blocks of existence, they subject themselves to intense physical regimens and alchemical distillation to improve existing, or develop entirely new, biological and energetic processes.

### **Body, Mind, and Spirit**

When you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in your choice of alchemist’s supplies, an herbalist kit, or a poisoner’s kit.

In addition, starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you can use your *ki* to duplicate the effects of certain spells. Choose one path from the following list. You gain access to the cantrip listed under your chosen path. In addition, you



may spend 2 *ki* points to cast the spells associated with that path. Any spell that has a range greater than touch, such as *blindness/deafness*, may only be cast as if it had a range of touch.

### Spellcasting Ability

Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for your aetherist spells. You use your Wisdom whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Wisdom modifier when setting the saving throw DC for an aetherist spell you cast or when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

### Irezumi

Through the study of alchemical processes, you have learned to merge art, body, and soul. The tattoos on your body act as alchemical foci for your *ki*, allowing you to manifest them to protect or harm those around you and to enhance the physical and mental abilities of yourself and your allies.

When casting spells on a target other than yourself, you might give your allies an elixir or tea to drink, or spend the casting time applying skin-staining ink that disappears once the duration of the spell has ended. Your tattoos can be totemic (a dragon turtle to represent *shield*), symbolic (ancient runes representing Strength or Wisdom for *enhance ability*), or literal (stylized images of yourself to manifest *mirror image*).

You gain training with tattoo artist supplies. Tattoo artist supplies allow you to apply your proficiency modifier to any check involving the creation or identification of tattoos, understanding their origin, their symbolism, their religious significance, etc.

Cantrip: *guidance*

Spells: *aid, mirror image, phantasmal force, shield*

### Bioalchemist

Through the study of internal and external alchemy, you have learned to temporarily alter your anatomy and physiology. By channeling

your *ki* you can think more clearly, exude pheromones to charm those around, excrete toxins to infect your opponents, toughen your skin, alter your appearance, or even modify your body to process the oxygen from both air and water.

When casting spells on your allies, you might apply an alchemical mixture to their skin, give them an elixir or tea to drink, or simply exude a chemical from your skin that temporarily alters their physiology.

Cantrip: *true strike*

Spells: *alter self, enhance ability, mage armor, spider climb*

### Ki Weaver

You have learned to see and manipulate the natural alchemy in your own body, the bodies of others, and the living world around you. Through the alchemy of *ki*, you can manipulate the flow of energy inside another's body to either heal or harm them.

When casting spells on others, you might apply an alchemical mixture to their skin, give them an elixir or tea to drink, or manipulate energy meridians in their bodies through touch.

Cantrip: *thaumaturgy*

Spells: *blindness/deafness, cure wounds, lesser restoration, protection from evil and good*

### Aetherist Body

At 6th level, you gain the ability to enhance the spells gained from your aetherist path. If a spell can be cast at a higher spell level, the spell's level increases by 1 for each additional *ki* point you spend. You may spend no more than 3 *ki* points on any individual spell cast using this feature, including the base cost to cast the spell. For example, an aetherist monk following the *ki weaver* path may cast *cure wounds* as a 2nd level spell (2 *ki* points for the initial cost + 1 *ki* point per additional level).

### Irezumi

At 6th level, choose two of the following spells. You may spend 3 *ki* points to activate your chosen spells. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.





Spells: *clairvoyance*, *hypnotic pattern*, *nondetection*, *protection from energy*, *spirit guardians*

### Bioalchemist

You may cast two or more spells available to you from your aetherist path as a single action. You must pay the *ki* points for each spell at the time they are cast. If you cast more than one spell as an action, all spells activated using this feature gain a range Self and a duration of “Concentration, 1 hour”. If you end or lose concentration, all spells activated using this feature end.

Spells cast using this feature gain the following additional benefits:

#### *Alter Self*

You may gain the benefits of up to two options at once. At 17th level you may gain the benefits of up to three options at once. You must pay 1 additional *ki* point at the time of casting for each additional option taken.

Unarmed strikes using the natural weapons option increase your unarmed strike damage die as indicated in the following chart.

Level	<i>Alter Self</i> Unarmed Strike Damage
6th	1d8
11th	1d10
17th	1d12

#### *Enhance Ability*

You may gain the benefits of one physical enhancement (*bear’s endurance*, *bull’s strength*, or *cat’s grace*) and one mental enhancement (*eagle’s splendor*, *fox’s cunning*, or *owl’s wisdom*). At 17th level you may gain the benefits of any two enhancements. You must pay 1 additional *ki* point at the time of casting for each additional option taken.

#### *Mage Armor*

You may spend an additional 1 *ki* points to add your Wisdom modifier to the AC granted by *mage armor*. At 11th level, you may instead spend an additional 2 *ki* points to increase the AC granted by *mage armor* to 14 + Dexterity modifier + Wisdom modifier.





### *Spider Climb*

While affected by *spider climb*, you may spend 2 *ki* points to cast *web*. The *web* lasts as long as you maintain concentration on *spider climb* up to a maximum of 1 hour. At 11th level, while affected by *spider climb* you may spend 3 *ki* points to cast *fear*. *Fear* lasts as long as you maintain concentration on *spider climb* up to a maximum of 1 minute.

### **Ki Weaver**

At 6th level, choose two of the following spells. You may spend 3 *ki* points to activate your chosen spells. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.

Spells: *beacon of hope*, *feign death*, *slow*, *remove curse*, *revivify*

### **Aetherist Mind**

At 11th level, the number of *ki* points you may spend to cast any individual spell you gain from your Aetherist path increases to 4.

### **Irezumi**

At 11th level, choose one of the following spells. You may spend 4 *ki* points to activate your chosen spell. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.

Spells: *arcane eye*, *black tentacles*, *conjure woodland beings*, *phantasmal killer*

### **Bioalchemist**

At 11th level you've become more comfortable in your altered states. If you cast two or more spells using the Aetherist Body path feature, the duration of those spells increases to "Concentration, 4 hours". As long as you are concentrating on these spells you may not recover the *ki* points spent on them at the end of a short rest.

In addition, you gain proficiency with Constitution saving throws.

### **Ki Weaver**

At 11th level, choose one of the following spells. You may spend 4 *ki* points to activate your

chosen spell. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.

Spells: *banishment*, *confusion*, *death ward*, *dominate beast*

### **Aetherist Spirit**

At 17th level, the number of *ki* points you may spend to cast any individual spell you gain from your aetherist path increases to 5.

### **Irezumi**

At 17th level, choose one of the following spells. You may spend 5 *ki* points to activate your chosen spell. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.

Spells: *creation*, *scrying*, *telekinesis*, *telepathic bond*

### **Bioalchemist**

At 17th level, when you cast two or more spells using the Aetherist Body path feature, the duration of those spells increases to "Concentration, 8 hours". As long as you are concentrating on these spells, you may not recover the *ki* points spent on them at the end of a short rest.

In addition, you gain advantage on Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration when you take damage.

### **Ki Weaver**

At 17th level, choose one of the following spells. You may spend 5 *ki* points to activate your chosen spell. When you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the spells you've chosen and replace it with another spell from this list.

Spells: *mass cure light wounds*, *modify memory*, *greater restoration*, *hold monster*





## OATH OF BINDING (PALADIN)

A paladin of any particular oath might be obligated by circumstance to guard something evil that has been imprisoned, or something good that must be kept safe. This oath, though, is for those who make guardianship the core of their duty, binding themselves to their armor. The oath sustains them without need for food or drink, so that they can take up posts in remote locations without access to supplies.

The Oath of Binding is regarded with a mixture of dread and wonder, for its knights are warrior ascetics like no other. It is a duty that is like unto a punishment: once they don their armor, they do not remove it except for the rarest of circumstances. They lose touch with many of the customs of society (and biology), but in return they are never unprepared for battle or distracted from their charge by mere physical matters.

### Tenets of Binding

**Preparation.** If at any moment you are not prepared for battle, take such actions as correct this immediately. (This tenet permits armor to be removed for the sake of putting on new armor.) Have a plan for when things go wrong.

**Tenacity.** You will be overwhelmed; you will falter. You fail only when you despair. When nothing else sustains you, you still have your oath.

**Understanding.** To struggle against great powers, study them and understand their strengths as well as weaknesses.

**Protection.** It is not given to us to judge guilt and innocence; guilty and innocent alike shall suffer and die if we fail in our charge.

**Celibacy (optional).** Emotional attachments and physical desires distract us from our charge.

### Oath Spells

3rd	<i>entangle, shield of faith</i>
5th	<i>hold person, see invisibility</i>
9th	<i>glyph of warding, magic circle</i>
13th	<i>locate creature, stone shape</i>
17th	<i>hold monster, wall of force</i>

### Channel Divinity

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

**Sacred Armor.** As a bonus action, you can imbue one suit of heavy armor that you are wearing with positive energy, using your Channel Divinity. For 1 minute, when you take damage from any

source, subtract your Charisma modifier + half your proficiency bonus (rounded down) from the total. For the duration of this effect, you cannot move or be moved from your current position against your will, except through teleportation. You can end this effect on your turn as part of any other action.

**Iron Grip.** When a creature within 10 feet of you that you can see moves farther away from you, including teleportation, you can use your Channel Divinity to restrict their movement. As a reaction, roll a melee spell attack against the creature (even if it is outside your natural reach). On a hit, the creature takes 2d8 force damage; its speed is reduced to 0 and it cannot leave its current space until the end of your next turn. Even if you miss, its speed is halved until the end of your next turn; if it teleported, you know its destination. This damage goes up to 3d8 at 5th level, 4d8 at 11th level, and 5d8 at 17th level.

### Bound in Armor

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you ceremonially don a suit of heavy armor. While you wear a suit of heavy armor and have not violated your oaths, you do not require food or drink to survive, you are cleaned as though you've bathed every night, and heavy armor does not interfere with your ability to sleep. In general, the only reasons a paladin of the Oath of Binding removes their armor is to repair it, or because they have acquired a better suit of heavy armor that they intend to don immediately.



### **Aura of Iron Doom**

Starting at 7th level, enemies within 10 feet of you who have their speed reduced by any means suffer disadvantage on saving throws against spells you cast.

### **The Forge Within**

Starting at 15th level, you can use your Lay on Hands and Cleansing Touch features even while incapacitated, as long as you are conscious.

If you are unconscious at the beginning of your turn, you can spend 20 points from your Lay on Hands healing pool to heal yourself for 1 hit point. This costs your action for the turn.

### **Iron Juggernaut**

At 20th level, you can assume the form of an implacable titan of iron. Using your action, you transform yourself into an iron juggernaut, and your armor completely

merges with your body. For 1 minute, gain the following benefits:

- Your size increases to Large. This increases your reach to 10 ft., and your weapon attacks deal an additional 1d6 damage.
- You gain advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws. Your weight increases by a factor of 8. If you are already Large or larger, this feature has no effect.
- You gain resistance to all damage types except psychic. When you would take fire damage, you instead regain hit points equal to your level or half the damage dealt, whichever is smaller.
- You are immune to any spell or effect that would alter your form. This does not end spells or effects already affecting you.
- Your speed cannot be reduced against your will.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.





## MANHUNTER (RANGER)

You specialize in hunting sentient humanoids, with a variety of tools and skills that allow you to infiltrate and catch your target or targets unaware.

### Manhunter Magic

You learn an additional spell when you reach certain levels in this class. The spell counts as a ranger spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

Level	Spell
3rd	<i>hunter's mark</i>
5th	<i>hold person</i>
9th	<i>counterspell</i>
13th	<i>locate creature</i>
17th	<i>mislead</i>

### Bonus Proficiencies

At 3rd level, you gain proficiency with any one of the following skills Deception, Insight, Investigate, Perception, Persuasion or Stealth as well as one of the following toolkits disguise kit, forgery kit, poisoner's kit, or thieves tools.

### Always on the Hunt

At third level, you can cast Hunter's Mark (at the lowest level) as a bonus action without expending a spell slot. You may use this ability a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier until you complete a short or long rest. At 7th level, you have mastered this essential spell to the degree that you can simultaneously concentrate on another spell in addition to concentrating on *hunter's mark*.

### Watch and Understand

At 7th level, by studying a humanoid creature for one minute, you can determine their movement speed, what weapons they are proficient with, their highest spell level, and a single spell they are capable of casting (GM's Choice). This ability works even if the target has used magical means to change their form or appearance.

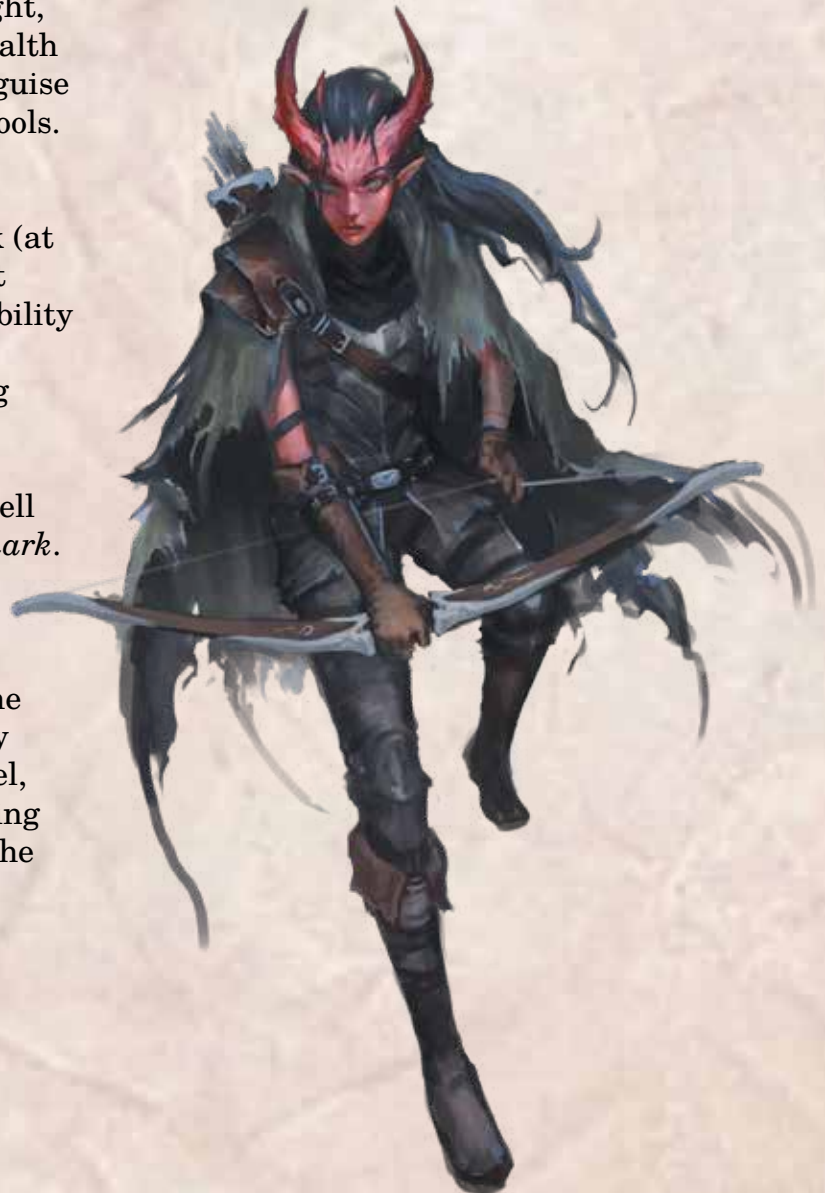
### Press Your Advantage

Beginning at 11st level, you've learned to press your advantages and strike more effectively when you have the opportunity. You can deal an extra 1d6 damage to a creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage on the attack roll.

This damage increases to 2d6 at 15th level, and 3d6 at 19th level.

### Superior Ambushing

At 15th Level, you can't be surprised in combat. In addition the first attack you make before your opponent has had a chance to act has advantage.





## THUG (ROGUE)

Not all rogues are either dexterous or smart. Some have learned the tough lessons of the street and turned to their strength and presence to stay alive. Commonly called a thug, this rogue archetype is the cornerstone of many a thieves' guild. Untrained in the fancy techniques of the fighter, the thug relies on brute force and cheap shots to get the job done.

### Street Fighter

You have spent your early training focusing on close combat techniques and mob combat. At 3rd level, when you choose this archetype, your unarmed strikes are considered light weapons and you may add your Strength modifier to unarmed strikes made as a bonus action. Your bonus Sneak Attack damage may be used with your unarmed strikes, as well as any one-handed melee weapon you are proficient with.

### With a Glance

At 9th level, you add your Strength modifier to your Charisma (Intimidation) checks. In addition, you may use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to make an Intimidate check. Succeeding in this check inflicts the frightened condition on your target for 1d4 rounds.

### Dirty Fighting

At 13th level, when you successfully hit a target no more than one size larger than you with an unarmed strike, you force the target to make a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency modifier + your Strength modifier). On a failed save, the target becomes stunned until the end of your next turn. Whether or not the save is successful, the target becomes aware of your trickery and is immune to this ability for 24 hours.

### Brutalize

At 17th level, you gain your Sneak Attack damage on the first attack you make against an frightened opponent. You may use this feature a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier.





## PRIMORDIAL BLOODLINE (SORCERER)

Your innate magic comes from exposure to the true essence of the primordials, antecedents of the gods of which the accursed Tarrasque is the last living example. Unlike those mutated by the Tarrasque's corruption you draw strength by harnessing the runaway surge of primordial life, artistry, and creativity that transformed the world and gave birth to all later forms of life and sentience. Most sorcerers (or their ancestors) with this origin were exposed to the essence of the primordials via traces of the Tarrasque or one of the other mammoth primordial corpses that litter the world. The potential of this bloodline can lay dormant in the family line for generations, often times as it seeks a (non-cursed) expression. Primordial bloodline sorcerers frequently push the reshaping of themselves and magic to amoral heights.

### **Boundless Creativity**

The primordials were artists on a planetary scale—some believe that every scrap of life and spirit came from their boundless, amoral drive to create. In you their touch translates to a ceaseless intellect always searching for learning and artistic expression. At 1st level, you gain proficiency with one additional skill and one additional tool. In addition, you know one additional cantrip from any spell list.

### **Boundless Vitality**

Sorcerous magic flows through you with a surge of vitality. Beginning at 6th level, as a bonus action or reaction you can spend sorcery points to restore health to any living creature you can see. Each sorcery point spent this way causes one target creature to regain 5 hit points.

### **Boundless Speech**

Starting at 14th level, your primordial powers have rearranged your relationship with the written and spoken word, granting you mastery of the deep structures present in all languages with a linguistic comprehension undreamed of by others. You understand the

literal meaning of any language you can read or hear. In addition, you can speak every language you have ever heard spoken for 10 minutes or more with a familiarity as though it were your native tongue.

### **Boundless Transformation**

Beginning at 18th level, you can channel the limitless ability of your primordial bloodline to transform living creatures. As an action, you can spend 5 sorcery points to alter the physiology, magic, and material properties of a living creature (and its equipment) that you can see within 60 feet. This feature transforms any resistance for a different resistance or any immunity for a different immunity. For example, you can change a creature's resistance to nonmagical bludgeoning damage into resistance to nonmagical poison damage (keeping a nonmagical modifier if present), or transform a creature's immunity to the charmed condition into immunity to fire damage. The effect lasts 1 hour or until the resistance or immunity would normally end. If the creature you target with this effect is unwilling, it must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC to resist this effect and your spell points are expended regardless of whether the transformation was successful.

## LORD OF AGONY PATRON (WARLOCK)

You, like many other warlocks of Salt in Wounds and the wider world, have made a pact with the mysterious 'Lord of Agony.' Your patron exists because of, and for, pain and suffering at their most extreme. This is what brought them into being, and this is what continues to feed them.

They count very few in their service, and it is only those that have shown their worth that the patron will choose.

The true machinations (and possibly even real identity) of your patron are unknown to you other than knowing that they are fed and delighted by the agony you suffer and cause. You were selected to carry the burden of suffering beyond that



of most mortals' understanding so that your patron may be strengthened and attain the height of power they deserve and desire.

As an option to add more flavor to your character, you can roll on the table below or choose an attribute tied to warlocks of the Lord of Agony.

### Expanded Spell List

The Lord of Agony lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

#### Lord of Agony Expanded Spells

Spell Level	Spells
1st	<i>ray of sickness, bane</i>
2nd	<i>blindness / deafness, detect thoughts</i>
3rd	<i>bestow curse, speak with dead</i>
4th	<i>black tentacles, phantasmal killer</i>
5th	<i>contagion, cloudkill</i>

### Similar Wounds

Starting at 1st level, your patron reveals to you the pain of others. Before making any Charisma Ability check, you may cause one creature you can see within 60 feet to make a Wisdom saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. If the creature fails you know of their most painful memory, and you have advantage on the check against that creature. If the creature succeeds, they are aware of your intrusion and you have disadvantage on the check against the creature.

### Suffering In Death

Starting at 6th level, your patron will help keep you standing even through agonizing wounds. When you are reduced to 0 hit points, and not killed outright, you can choose to spend an unused Hit Die, and are reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### Conduit of Pain

Starting at 10th level, when you or an ally within 30 feet are damaged by another creature you can use your reaction to redirect a portion of the damage back at the creature. You reduce the damage caused by half, and the attacking

## LORD OF AGONY ATTRIBUTES

d6	Attribute
1	You can hear screams of pain throughout your waking hours that no one else hears.
2	Your scars are too numerous to count, or hide.
3	You dream only of past instances where you suffered great harm.
4	Sometimes those around you can feel old wounds as if they were new again.
5	You sometimes awake to find new wounds that have already healed.
6	You often enquire too deeply about the suffering of others.

creature must make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save you are able to redirect half of the damage back to the creature. On a successful save, you redirect the damage but also suffer an equal amount of damage.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### Augmented Anguish

Starting at 14th level, you gain the ability to force your suffering into the mind of others. You may select a number of creatures equal to your Charisma modifier to implant with the gruesome details of your worst agony. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 7d10 psychic damage and becomes frightened for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. On a successful save, the target is not frightened and takes half as much damage.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.





## HEMIOTROPIC SCHOOL (WIZARD)

Every body is a book, and the flow of blood through its shape is the language much magic is written in. By studying blood, both your own and that of others, you have gained power, magic, and understanding that is beyond the ken of most.

### **Blood Sacrifice**

Starting at 2nd level, by utilizing the blood of a slain small or larger creature that has been killed within the past hour, you can halve the normal material cost of a spell (for amounts greater than 500 gp, a humanoid creature is required for this ability).

### **Read Blood**

Starting at 2nd level, you can spend 10 minutes studying the blood of creature slain within the last hour to record one spell the creature was capable of casting in your spellbook. This spell does not have to be from the wizard spell list though it will count as a wizard spell for you, but must be of a level you are capable of casting. This spell will always be considered prepared for you and does not count against the number of spells you can prepare, though it does utilize a spell slot and other costs to cast as usual.

Additionally, there is no cost to recording spells in this way but you can only have one instance of this feature active at a time, any additional use of this feature will replace your previous entry. GMs can make special allowances to let your learn non-spell magical abilities while determining what 'level of spell' they are to be considered (such as a mimic's shapechange ability being considered a 3rd level spell).







### **Blood Literacy**

At 6th level, you can now use Read Blood to learn to two spells. These can come from the same or different creatures and you choose which spell to replace when you exceed two.

### **Blood Fluency**

At 10th level, you can now use Read Blood to learn three spells. These can come from the same or different creatures and you choose which spell to replace when you exceed three.

### **Self-Sacrifice**

At level 14, by sacrificing a significant portion of your blood & vital essence you can cast more powerful spells easily.

When you cast a spell, you can choose to inflict 1d4 points of Constitution damage on yourself to lower the effective spell slot cost by 1 (casting a 5th level spell while only using a 4th level slot for instance). This effect does not stack, and this spell you cast otherwise retains its other costs, properties

and potency. Constitution damage inflicted this way can only be recovered by taking long or short rests, at a rate of 1 per rest.

If you are wearing a magical item that increases your Constitution score, it is destroyed (dissolving into ash) the first time you utilize this ability (though you do not suffer the Constitution damage for that use).





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The background of the entire page is a dark, atmospheric illustration of a massive, red, scaly creature with many sharp, black spikes protruding from its back and head. The creature is positioned in a dark, industrial or cavernous environment with some light sources in the distance, creating a moody and menacing atmosphere. The creature's head is turned slightly to the left, and its body extends across the frame.

# ***Salt in Wounds Player's Guide***

**Adventure in the dark fantasy city fed by the eternal butchery of the legendary Tarrasque! This Player's Guide is the essential resource for the *Salt in Wounds* setting and beyond.**

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