

# Priests of Misfortune

**G**ODS OF FATE AND FORTUNE EXIST IN every civilization. Many cultures recognize these gods as dual-aspect or triune beings, gods who bring luck—both good and bad—or who hold the fates and futures of mankind in their divine hands. Since people of all kinds seek prosperity and fortuitous circumstance, prayers to the gods of fortune are common. However, not every character has a backstory that lends itself to an affinity for the god or goddess of luck.

## THE MYTHOLOGY OF MISFORTUNE

Fate, fortune, and childbirth were often united in the minds of the ancients because the prospects for fortune and disaster were equally present during labor in ancient times. Less common was the concept that fortune could be either good or bad, that one had to be careful when invoking the gods of luck because such gods could be fickle with their favors, and they were as apt to deliver calamity as to bring prosperity.

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The following is a selection of gods and goddesses from ancient, real-world cultures that may inform a Game Master's concept of the god or goddess of misfortune.

### **Xolotl**

The Aztec god of fire and of bad luck and twin to Quetzalcoatl, the evening star. Xototl guarded the sun when it went to the underworld at night and helped his brother to bring fire to mankind before the dawn of history. The Aztecs depicted Xolotl with physical deformities and reckoned him the god of twins, whom they considered an abomination.

### **Ahti**

The Egyptian goddess of misfortune, Ahti was believed to possess the head of a wasp and the body of a hippopotamus.

### **Adrestia**

The Greek goddess of revolt, just revenge, and the karmic balance between good and evil. Adrestia was called "the inescapable" and was thought to accompany Ares into battle.

### **Dienw'r Anffodion**

In Welsh lore, the "Nameless One of Misfortune" wandered aimlessly for thirteen years until a sister goddess revived him with her mystic drink, whereupon he remembered that he was actually Manawyddan, the Welsh god of sea and storms.

### **Nemesis**

The Greek spirit of retribution against hubris.



## **Open Game Content**

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## **NEW GOD: JINX**

Fate, Fortuna, and Jinx are the triune goddesses of fortune and the future. While Fate holds dominion over destiny and the future, her daughters Fortuna and Jinx are the patrons of good and ill-fortune, respectively. Scholars believe that all three play important roles in human life, but only Fate and Fortuna have followers in the civilized world.

Jinx is less commonly revered. Most depictions show a beautiful woman whose features are marred by a hideous scar running all across one side of her face. Her shrines are marked in black and are usually located outside of town, placed to draw her gaze away from the lands of civilization. Jinx is a spiteful and capricious goddess, jealous of the praises heaped upon her sister and mother. Despite her fearful power—or perhaps because of it—few worship Jinx, and none become her favored by choice.

## **THE TENETS OF MISFORTUNE**

A life of hard luck and suffering can occasionally leave a person with a unique and uncommon spirituality, creating a relationship with Jinx that more fortunate folk cannot easily understand. If the sufferer's prayers move the Mistress of Misfortune, and they have truly suffered grave misfortune, Jinx may even look upon them with favor.

Jinx's favor manifests in unpredictable ways, usually as a series of unlikely calamities that befall those who have wronged her faithful. In effect, priests and priestesses of Jinx are those who have experienced so much ill luck that they can actually influence the misfortunes of others. Though few would choose such a path voluntarily, the Blessed of Jinx can become truly powerful clerics whom only the foolish would willingly cross.

Jinx instructs her followers to accept fate, avenge slights, and punish arrogance. She teaches that life is not fair, but that her faithful have a holy duty to balance the scales of karmic justice and to teach humility to those in need of the lesson.

Her symbol is a black cat upon a white field, its hackles raised.

## JINX'S FAITHFUL

Followers of Jinx are called Jinxians, and their priests are called Calamity Speakers. Having suffered so much misfortune, most Jinxians are fatalistic, even nihilistic, but they can also be open, accepting, and even friendly despite their pessimism.

Jinx's faithful take to the road in search of a life away from the one that was destroyed by misfortune. A Calamity Speaker in search of adventure may learn the minstrel's trade or take up with a merchant company or mercenary guild. Priests of Jinx are highly sought-after by thieves' guilds, though there is little evidence to suggest that Jinx herself sanctions theft, save as a means of retribution against the unjust or cruel.

## PERSECUTION AND INFLUENCE

Jinxians face persecution in most civilized areas. Superstitious, rural townsfolk tend to blame even the slightest misfortune on Jinx and her servants, especially when those servants make no secret of their beliefs. To city-dwellers, a local calamity such as a noblewoman's miscarriage will often trigger the arrest and prosecution of known Jinxians, who will have little choice but to fight, leave town, or go into hiding.

Conversely, many rulers seek to make use of a Calamity Speaker if they find one in their midst. Rare indeed are the monarchs who refuse to avail themselves of an ally who can make an enemy sick, weaken their rivals' walls, or spread fear and chaos amongst their adversaries. Jinx herself may answer such prayers, but she is known to balance the scales of karma in time, visiting even greater

catastrophes upon those who use her favors for cruel or nefarious ends.

## CLERICS OF MISFORTUNE

When you choose the misfortune domain, you gain the following powers and abilities.

### MISFORTUNE DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	<i>bane, dissonant whispers</i>
3rd	<i>blindness/deafness, shatter</i>
5th	<i>bestow curse, remove curse</i>
7th	<i>blight, confusion</i>
9th	<i>contagion, insect plague</i>

## Seer of Calamity

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with the Intimidation skill and learn the *prestidigitation* cantrip. You can use *prestidigitation* in noncombat situations as part of a Charisma (Intimidate) check to cause fragile nonmagical objects to break or shatter if they are unattended and within 30 feet of you. Doing so gives you advantage on Intimidate checks provided you reveal yourself as a priest or priestess of misfortune.

## Channel Divinity: Nicked an Artery

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity feature to influence the severity of wounds your enemies receive in combat. When you or an ally deal a slashing or piercing wound to an enemy within 30 feet, you can use your reaction to cause the wound to begin bleeding uncontrollably. The target takes 1d10 damage at the start of its next turn and on each subsequent turn. The bleeding creature may make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC, ending the effect on a success. If the target is reduced to 0 hp by this effect, it falls unconscious from blood loss.

This power has no effect on constructs, oozes, undead, or other creatures that do not rely upon blood to sustain life.



### **Channel Divinity: Calamity's Disciple**

Starting at 6th level, you can use your action to influence luck. For example, you can cause an enemy to lose at cards or dice or to fall down a small flight of stairs, or you can cause a tree to fall on an adversary's house, crushing one room. You can even cause an enemy's spouse or child to fall ill, though not fatally.

If you target another creature with this effect, that creature can make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. On a successful save, calamity is avoided, and your Channel Divinity power is not expended. In such a case, the goddess has refused your call for divine intervention.

Calamities caused by this power cannot be used to kill or critically injure an adversary directly, and they can always be explained away after the fact as "bad luck".

### **Unlucky Strike**

Starting at 8th level, your weapon attacks leave an echo of bad luck. Once per round when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, the next attack roll made against this target before the end of your next turn has advantage. When you reach 14th level, the target also makes its next attack roll with disadvantage.

### **Aura of Calamity**

Starting at 17th level, you can use your action to activate an aura of calamity that lasts for 1 minute or until you dismiss it with another action. Enemies within 60 feet are infected with a sense of impending doom, imposing disadvantage on saving throws against your Misfortune domain spells.

### **Adjudicating Calamity's Disciple**

GMs should use judgement when adjudicating Calamity's Disciple. For example, a priest of Jinx may cause an enemy to fall down a flight of stairs, taking falling damage and starting an encounter prone. A combat use of Calamity's Disciple should deal roughly 2d10 points of physical damage while imposing an adverse condition such as being knocked prone or becoming dazed. However, the power's effects should never be so overwhelming as to obviate the need for combat altogether.

Similarly, Calamity's Disciple should never put an NPC completely at another's mercy. Non-combat uses should create favorable but temporary situations. For example, this power may cost a target NPC a significant amount of gold via gambling loss or physical disaster, but the size of the loss is up to the GM, not the player. If Calamity's Disciple is used to make an NPC's relative ill or to create a riot, it must be clear that the condition is serious but transient. Permanent disasters are beyond this power's scope.

## NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The Mistress of Misfortune has a particular love of magic items, both cursed items and items that serve her faithful in a way that marks them publicly. A sampling of such items is listed below.

### No-Headed Coin

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

This small copper coin has no “heads” side. Instead, both sides are “tails”. When you give the coin to an unsuspecting victim, the victim must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or accept the coin as true currency. If the coin is accepted, you can use a reaction to cause the coin’s recipient to fail a single saving throw at some point in the next 24 hours. The coin magically returns to your possession at the end of this 24 hour period.

### Figurine of Wondrous Power: Agate Cat

*Wondrous item, rare*

This small gemstone statuette can become a black cat for up to 8 hours. Once the cat has been used, it cannot be used again until it has rested for 2 days. When active, the cat functions as your familiar as long as you are either a spellcaster or a follower of Jinx. In addition to the normal

properties associated with cat familiars, you can use a bonus action to allow it to make the following attack:

**Paw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target makes its next attack roll or saving throw with disadvantage.

### Calamity Blade

*Weapon (any sword), very rare (requires attunement)*

This black-bladed sword has a black cat carved into its hilt and crossbar. Jinxians are automatically proficient with the sword and can use it as a holy symbol.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this blade. While holding this blade, you may use a bonus action to impose disadvantage on saving throws against your Misfortune domain spells on all creatures within 10 feet. This effect lasts for 1 minute and cannot be used again until next moonrises.

**Curse.** A non-Jinxian can successfully attune to a *calamity blade* but suffers a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls made with any weapon while they are attuned to this weapon. When attuned to a non-Jinxian, this weapon’s attunement can only be broken by a *remove curse* spell. 🐾

