



SIX SPELLS: MYTHOS

By Derek Holland & the Skirmisher Game Development Group



Six Mythos Spells

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The word “Mythos” brings to mind a certain ilk of horror that emphasize humanity’s utter isolation and inconsequence in a monstrous, unforgiving universe, in which things *do* go bump in the night and humans are the food or playthings of terrible entities. Most of those initial stories came directly from author H.P. Lovecraft, but other writers of his era used the Mythos with his permission and put their own stamp on this subgenre of early 20th century horror. Accordingly, the spells that appear here were inspired not just by the tales Lovecraft, but also by the work of Clark Ashton Smith. They touch on the wrongness of reality, on the ability of cultists to bend and warp it, and on humanity’s blindness to these things. The spells are in *Labyrinth Lord* and “Basic” format, but can easily be used in most OSR games and those inspired by them.

Awaken Idol

Level: C6 **Duration:** 12 turns **Range:** 60'

With this spell a cultist can summon a tiny fragment of the god or demon she worships and infuse it into a large idol, thereby bringing it to life. Depending on its composition (and the whims of the Labyrinth Lord), the animated idol has the statistics of an iron, stone, or amber golem. Most often, such idols are larger than human-sized, but this does not have to be the case; for example, a Labyrinth Lord could allow the appropriate number of HD to be split between two or more smaller statues in close proximity.

This ritual requires sacrifice of a Human or other intelligent being, the soul of which is absorbed into the statue. Serving as both enticement and sustenance for the possessing entity, the soul is consumed with no hope of revival short of a *Wish* spell.

Once the idol wakes, it is controlled solely by the god or demon and not the caster of the spell, something that allows for some degree of risk (e.g., an irritated entity might turn on the cultist). The only safeguard is the spell’s duration and, when it ends, the idol walks back to its pedestal and resumes its stance to the extent that it is able to do so.

Create Unholy Food and Water

Level: C5 **Duration:** Permanent **Range:** 10'

With this ritual, the caster can summon food from the kitchens of Hell or an equivalent plane. Like *Create Food and Water*, the spell brings forth one cubic foot of food per caster level. Evil creatures that partake immediately heal 1d8 points of damage and get a +1 bonus to melee damage for the next 24 hours. Although the food lasts for about a week, it only bestows these benefits for 6 hours.

The provisions look unnatural or disturbing but are usually not actually disgusting or inedible. Good and Neutral creatures, however, can tell their vile nature just by looking at them, and those who stare at the food long

enough might develop some minor mental issue as a result (e.g., a nervous tick). If such characters actually consume the food or water, they must save versus poison or their alignment will be permanently changed to Evil, and only a *Wish* or *Dispel Evil* spell can reverse this effect. Those who make the save take 3d6 points of damage instead.

Darklight Prism

Level: M5 **Duration:** Instantaneous **Range:** 30'

There are colors in the multiverse humanity has never encountered, which may be found on other planes, among the stars, or solely in the imaginations of unholy gods. This spell is a more powerful, nightmarish ver-



sion of the 1st-level illusionist spell *Color Spray* and brings one or more such colors into existence.

Besides the listed effects of *Color Spray*, anyone subjected to *Darklight Prism* must also save versus spells. Those who fail go insane, as per the the magic-user spell *Confusion* (or any other mechanic the Labyrinth Lord wishes to employ). Such victims also have a 10% chance of mutating and losing 1d4 points of Constitution. The exact mutation is never be beneficial, usually something like enlarging a limb or organ, and Labyrinth Lords are encouraged to be evilly imaginative with these changes (post-apocalyptic games like *Mutant Future* can also provide ample ideas).

The spellcaster is not immune to viewing these colors and must save along with those in the area of effect.

Pass Flame

Level: C6/M6 **Duration:** 24 turns **Range:** 60'

Pass Flame relies on the harmonics inherent in all matter and which connect minerals and objects to celestial bodies and other planes by their shared resonances. With thorough study of this heavenly symphony, keen alchemical knowledge, and 100 to 1,000 gold pieces worth of the appropriate materials, a cultist can construct a fiery gateway between her realm of existence and another.

The ritual requires a bonfire or larger flame, formulated with specific elements to create alchemical songs powerful enough to bridge realities. As the ceremony proceeds, the fire gradually turns blue and begins to hum as the notes blend and balance and then open the portal. Those who leap into the flames are transported to another plane or world. The materials in the fire determine the exit point, so, unfortunately, even a tiny error can result in a very different destination.

The fire exists in both planes and may be used to move back and forth. If the origin flame is extinguished, however, those using the gate are drawn back to their starting point. If the flame dies on its own after 24 turns, or if the destination flame is put out, the travelers remain trapped on the far side of the gate.

Reverse Staircase

Level: C6/M7 **Duration:** 1 hour **Range:** 10'

This spell allows cultists to warp space, allowing them to hide things like their temples and castles in plain sight. When the casting ritual is complete, the stairwell base remains in its original position, but the rest of the staircase is reversed in an impossible manner and leads to a room that cannot otherwise be reached, even using spells like *Wish* or *Teleportation*.

While the spell is active, anyone can use the steps. Unfortunately, people in the stairwell when the spell is





cast will be shunted off into another universe (exactly where being up to the Labyrinth Lord). Because the sanctums are accessible for such a short period, *Reverse Staircase* is often used in conjunction with the *Summon Demonic Mason* spell, as the unholy construction crew can build the secret space within the limited time without trouble. Other cultists use their staircases as a way to speak to *things* that even demons and the other denizens of Hell avoid.

Summon Demonic Mason

Level: C7/M9 **Duration:** 8 to 12 hours **Range:** 30'

Cultists who want to send an unequivocal message that demonstrates their power and willingness to wield it use this spell to build a structure overnight. The ritual summons a demonic master mason, its slaves or underlings, and all the infernal building materials necessary for the job. The construction usually takes 8-12 hours, depending on how large the desired structure is, but a single room will take significantly less time.

Any limitations on the construction's size are up to the Labyrinth Lord, though it should be restricted to a small town at most. This means about 50 buildings and no more than 1 square mile (but this could comprise one single building). Although the area might seem immense, those familiar with demonic builders understand this is small potatoes for a fiendish crew.

The cultist must pay the demon in human souls, cash, and/or magic items worth at least five times what the structure would normally cost. As a rough guideline, a 0-level character's soul might be worth 1 gold piece. Souls of characters with classes fetch 100 gold pieces per level of experience. Souls of rulers or those of great importance could be bartered for up to 100,000 gold each. Demons, being demons, are not afraid to haggle for the very best price, but, surprisingly or not, the quality of their work is unimpeachable.

These prices are for "normal" constructions. There is a lot of potential in this spell for the unusual, even if only used to create something like a statue or small cottage. The cost of other features are left up to the Labyrinth Lord (e.g., larger on the inside than the outside, alive and sapient, able to open/close/lock doors at will, able to project illusions, able to heal/repair itself).

Although expensive, having a building constructed of hellish material and designed by infernal architects does provide benefits. Evil creatures feel at ease within the structure and gain a +2 to hit and damage bonus in melee combat. Neutral creatures are uncomfortable and suffer -2 to hit and damage in melee. Good creatures have a difficult time not retching and their Strength score and movement rate are reduced by half while within such places, unless they have some kind of supernatural protection.

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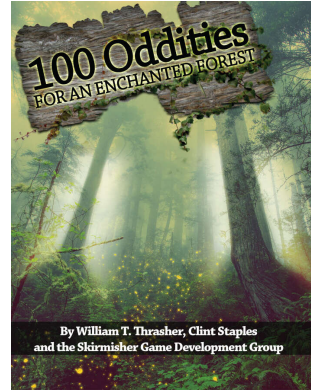
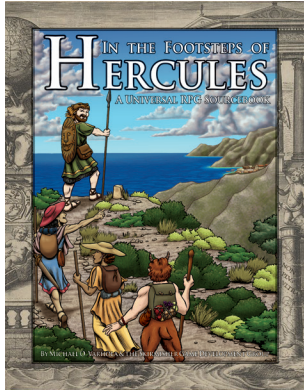
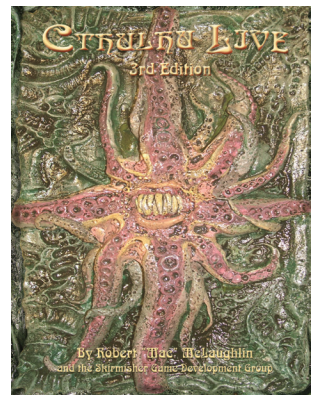
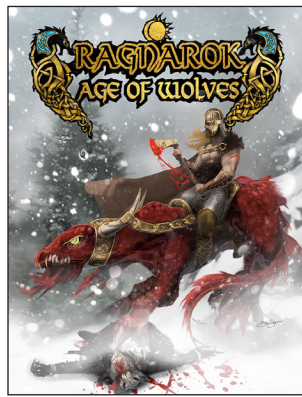
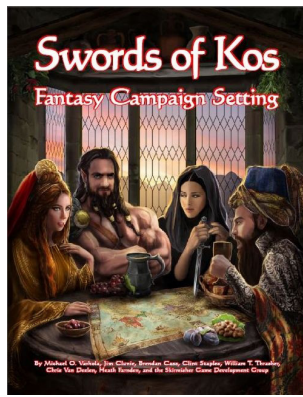
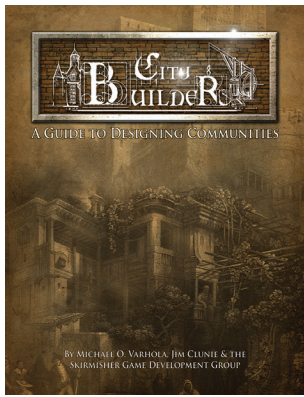
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