



# WOMB CULT

LAMENTATIONS  
of the  
FLAME PRINCESS  
WEIRD FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING  
COMPATIBLE PRODUCT

GRIMM ARAMIL  
PUBLISHING

“The fearful abounding at this time in this country, of these detestable slaves of the Devil, the Witches or enchanters, hath moved me... to resolve the doubting hearts of many; both that such assaults of Satan are most certainly practised, and that the instruments thereof, merits most severely to be punished.”

*Daemonologie* by King James VI and I

A race of alien-human hybrids hides in a rural area, disguising its activities as those of a witch cult. It offers the power of witchcraft to gullible countryfolk; all it asks in exchange is that they serve as the cult’s wombs, to keep their hybrid lines viable, as they have since Time Immemorial.

But a change has swept Europe. No longer are stories of witches dismissed as superstitious ravings of uneducated peasants, and now, the witch hunters have come to put an end to the Womb Cult...

*An adventure for low level characters for  
Lamentations of the Flame Princess*

*Set in any rural area of Early Modern Europe*

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# Womb Cult

Andrew Marrington



# CREDITS

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Dedicated to my *Lamentations* gaming group. Thank you for gaming with me!

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## BACKGROUND

Centuries ago, an alien civilization developed a way to cross-breed with practically any of the other lifeforms of the galaxy - a parasitic womb which, once embedded inside a living host, allows hybrid offspring to be born. A ship carrying thousands of such wombs came to Earth, but was damaged by the planetary defence system created by the Engineers who built this world in ancient times, and crash-landed on the planet below. The alien crew either abandoned ship or died in the crash.

Primitive humans found the wreck and became infested with womb parasites, and the first alien-human hybrids were born. With only the ancient paganism of their human parents to help understand their genetic programming, a cult sprang up around the hybrids, dedicated to perpetuating the hybrid species through the ages. For this purpose, a steady supply of hosts for womb-parasites was needed, to give birth to new generations of hybrids. The hybrid cult has survived by staying hidden in the shadows, conducting their unspeakable rites in hidden places out of sight of prying eyes.

Until recently, the cult's *modus operandi* for the last two centuries or so had been to identify women who sought out the forbidden power of witchcraft. Hybrids would appear to such women at night, posing as imps or devils, and offer to do their bidding if the women would agree to becoming hosts for womb parasites and breeding stock for new hybrids, couching such offers in terms commonly associated in the wild imaginations of poor countryfolk with witchcraft and diabolism. For their part, the hybrids honoured these pacts made with willing hosts by employing their psionic powers to gratify the host's petty ambitions as best they could. When the hosts gave birth to new hybrids, the young were spirited away to be raised among their own kind. Both sides benefitted, and the hosts had no idea that, rather than selling their souls to the devil, they were renting their wombs to human/alien hybrid creatures born of a fusion of terrestrial and alien materials.

For centuries the ruse worked, as few civil or religious authorities took witchcraft seriously. However, the sectarian conflict of the Reformation saw the appearance of mass witch hunts, trials, and executions across Europe. As a result, many of the hybrid cult's hosts have been apprehended as witches. Concerned that its supply of willing hosts will disappear and that the cult may be discovered, the hybrids have been forced to abduct potential hosts, infest them with womb parasites, and subsequently impregnate them with hybrid babies. Their abducted victims are never seen again...

## PLACING THE CULT IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

The hybrid cult should be placed in an area of your campaign setting where religious fanaticism is on the rise, and where the traditionally sceptical jurists of old are giving way to the shambolic courts associated with witch trials. You should decide when and why the cult changed from relying on voluntary hosts to help maintain its numbers to when it started abducting people for the purpose.

## REGION

The region of the cult's activity is defined by proximity to an underground prison / spawning grounds where they keep their abducted womb parasite hosts. You should identify a plausible location for such an underground location. This location should be within 6 miles of a town of 1000 or more people. Assuming typical 17th century Western European settlement densities, there will be a number of satellite villages surrounding this town. A region with one such town and five or more satellite villages is a good location for the cult's activity.

Some referees prefer to have maps not just of the region in which their campaign is set, but of the towns and villages the party may visit in the region. If you already have maps of the town/s and villages in the region of the cult's activity, then you may identify the hybrid households (see p.15) in the settlement by rolling for each household and inn:

- In *town*, roll 1d20. On the roll of a 1, the household is a hybrid household.
- In each *village*, roll 1d10. On the roll of a 1, the household is a hybrid household.

If you do not have maps of the settlements in the region of the cult's activities, then you might find the village maps starting on page 33 useful. Hybrid households are already noted on these maps. The villages on these maps are not named so that they can be assigned to the named places on your campaign map.

If your preparation time is limited, or if mapping towns and villages is not your style as a referee, there is no need to determine exactly which household is a hybrid household and which one is not ahead of time. You can either make these decisions on the fly based on what would best move the action along, or you can roll for each household as the party visits.

## WOMB PARASITES

The womb parasite resembles a slug. It is covered with hundreds of tiny spines which hook backwards. It has an extendable, sharp-toothed mouth which is generally retracted and concealed until ready to strike. Examples of the parasite range from four to eight inches in length, with most examples around five to six inches long.

Outside of a host body, the parasite has a limited ability to sense its surroundings and move. It can move slowly, like a slug or worm. It is drawn to heat. Once it makes contact with the skin of a potential host, it will slowly squirm about its body, until it finds some sort of orifice it can force its way into. Once it finds this orifice, it will deploy its spines to prevent the host (or somebody else) pulling it out - these spines hook into the host's flesh and are surprisingly strong, and will rip away flesh if the parasite is removed by force. Once it has embedded itself as deeply as it can inside the host, the parasite



puffs out to expand throughout the body cavity it has infested, and its exterior spines fully deploy, and the parasite begins to integrate itself into the host's circulatory and nervous systems through its spines.

Once integrated, the parasite draws genetic material from the host organism and begins to construct artificial gametes. Irrespective of the gender of the host, the parasite develops ova using a combination of the host's genetic material and the genetic material of the alien race which created the parasites. Once the parasite is able to produce ova, the end of the parasite opens up. Its interior functions as a hyper-fertile womb. If the parasite receives sperm, an ovum will be fertilized and a hybrid zygote will develop. It will grow at break-neck speed, its development fueled by the parasite aggressively draining the host's body for the necessary nutrients. In a fraction of the time normal for the host's species, a hybrid fetus will grow inside the womb parasite. Depending on the location of the parasite within the host's body, the process of giving birth to the hybrid baby may be fatal - it will certainly be extremely traumatic for the host.

Once the hybrid has been born, the womb parasite is ready to fall pregnant again. It will never leave the host's body, and will live as long as the host lives. Once the host dies, so does the womb parasite - once it has incorporated itself into the bodily systems of a host organism, it cannot live outside the host again.

### Womb Parasite

**Armour:** 10 **Hit Points:** 2 (1 HD) **Movement Rate:** 5' **Morale:** 12 **Alignment:** Neutral

**Attacks:** 1 infestation attack

**Save As:** Fighter 0

**Special:** On a successful hit, latches on to victim. Roll 1d10 on Table 1 each round unless removed.

If encountered by itself, a womb parasite is not particularly dangerous if the intended victim knows what it is and knows to stay well enough away from it or to kill it before it gets too close. It moves slowly and lacks natural protection. It is drawn towards warmth, and will move towards the warmest creature in its vicinity (within a range of 15'). Although it will move towards fire and other extremely high heat sources, its senses are sophisticated enough to make it realize that there is a difference between body warmth and flames, and it will stop just before such a heat source.

The womb parasite attacks as a 1 Hit Dice creature. A hit indicates that it has latched on to a fleshy area. Once it has latched on, each round it moves about the victim's body, squirming beneath clothing and armour, seeking out an orifice into which it can bury itself (roll 1d10 each round and consult Table 1). If the victim or anybody else attempts to pull the parasite off with their bare hand while it is squirming about the victim's body, its spines extend and cause 1 hit point of damage and give the character a -1 penalty to any attacks using the injured hand until the wound heals. If the victim is the one who attempts to pull the parasite off, they must make a save versus paralyzation in order to be successful. If a friend or ally attempts to remove the parasite from the victim's flesh, they must succeed at a Strength check to do so. If the

parasite is pulled off, no matter by whom, the parasite causes 1d4 hit points of damage to the victim as its spines shred and tear at their flesh.

Table 1: Womb Parasite Infestation Attack (Roll 1d10)

2 Natural Orifices		3 Natural Orifices	
1	Mouth (p.4)	1	Mouth (p.4)
2	Anus (p.6)	2	Vagina(p.5)
3-4	Wound (if applicable) (p.6)	3	Anus(p.6)
5-6	Does not find orifice this round	4-5	Wound (if applicable)(p.6)
		6-6	Does not find orifice this round

Rather than attacking someone passing by, it is far more normal for a parasite to be released into the vagina (or anus if no vagina is available) of a victim who has either volunteered or been captured by the cult and restrained for the very purpose of being infested.

No matter how the parasite finds its way to an orifice, once it finds one it burrows in and infests the victim, beginning its transformation. The effect of the burrowing depends on the orifice being infested:

## MOUTH

If the victim is able to, they may attempt to bite the parasite. A successful Strength check indicates that the victim has bitten down hard enough on the parasite to kill it. The parasite will resist by extending its spines, causing 1d6 hit points of damage immediately. If the bite attempt didn't kill the parasite, it will stop here and infest the victim's mouth, quickly expanding and dislocating the victim's jaw (preventing further bite attempts). The victim should make a save vs paralyzation to dislodge the parasite from their mouth immediately - failure means the parasite will become permanently lodged in their mouth, preventing the character from speaking, eating or drinking, and making breathing very difficult. They will surely die before too long. Assuming the parasite gets past the victim's teeth, it will squirm down their throat into their digestive tract, before reaching their stomach in 1d4 extremely distressing rounds. Once in the stomach, the victim will be able to breath properly and move about normally, although they will have some pain in their stomach as the parasite gradually expands to fill the stomach. It will take the parasite 1d4 hours to expand to the size of the stomach and latch itself into the victim's stomach walls, after which time it will be impossible to remove the parasite either surgically or through magical means without killing the victim, although at least the stomach ache will subside. After this time, it will also become impossible for the victim to properly absorb food (although they will still be able to drink water). They will never feel hungry again, thanks to the parasite numbing the nerves in their stomach, but they will slowly starve to death. It will take a further 1d6 hours before the parasite





becomes a functioning womb, awaiting fertilization. Giving birth through the mouth will undoubtedly be fatal for the host.

## VAGINA

The victim (or somebody else) may attempt to pull the parasite out in the first round of its attempted infestation - this will cause  $1d6$  hit points of damage to the intended host as the parasite extends its spines and shreds the victim's flesh. Within  $1d3$  rounds, the parasite moves into the victim's natural womb. It will take the parasite  $1d2$  hours to fully integrate itself into the victim's womb, during which time the victim will be extremely uncomfortable but not otherwise harmed, and a further  $1d6$  hours before it becomes fertile itself. The parasite can only be removed surgically or by magical means before it has fully integrated itself - after which time removal will also kill the host. Vaginal infestation is the most survivable form of infestation for the host - assuming they are not impregnated, the victim will not otherwise be impaired by the parasite. Their menstrual cycle will cease, but they will not be in any pain.

## ANUS

The parasite crawls up into the rectum of the host. The victim (or somebody else) may attempt to pull the parasite out in the first round of its infestation attempt - this will cause 1d6 hit points of damage to the intended host as the parasite extends its spines and shreds the victim's flesh. Within 1d3 rounds, the parasite moves up the anal canal and settles in the rectum. It will take the parasite 1d3 hours to integrate itself into the host's body, during which time it can be removed by surgery or magical means. After the parasite is integrated, removing it will kill the host. Once integrated, the parasite will become a fertile womb within 1d6 hours. Anal infestation is survivable for the host. After initial discomfort, the infested region will begin to feel reasonably normal again. The host will no longer be able to defecate, but so long as they stick to light and reasonably easy to digest food, the parasite will be able to absorb their waste products directly from their large intestine, and there will be little to no build up of solid waste matter inside the host.

## WOUND

If the victim has a wound caused by a piercing or slashing weapon, then the parasite may mistake it for a natural orifice and squirm its way in. Naturally this makes the wound considerably worse, and causes 1d4 hit points of damage each round for 1d4 rounds as the parasite squirms its way in as deep as possible. During this time, the victim (or anybody else) may pull the parasite free from the wound, causing a further 1d6 points of damage as its spines extend. Assuming the parasite burrows in and the victim survives, however, the parasite starts to infest the womb, which takes 1d4 hours. The wound stops hurting and stops bleeding as the parasite numbs the nerves around its location. During this time, the parasite can be removed surgically or by magical means. It is considerably easier to surgically remove a parasite from a wound than from any other part of the body. Once the wound has been infested, the parasite has become completely integral into the host's flesh, and the host regains any hit points they lost to the wound and to the parasite's burrowing. Unfortunately, the wound will never be back to normal again - the parasite's flesh seems to fill in the hole which was once there. Removing the parasite from this point onwards requires the amputation of the infested limb, or is impossible without killing the host if the infested wound was located on the torso, neck or head. In 1d6 hours the parasite will become fertile, and the alien flesh where the wound once was opens into a ghastly sort of alien vagina, awaiting fertilization. Depending on the location of the parasite, pregnancy may or may not be fatal.

## ONCE INFESTED

Once the parasite has become fertile, the host gains the ability to detect other infested individuals and hybrids in their immediate proximity. The host also gives off a scent which is undetectable except to hybrids, who are able to detect the presence of a nearby infested host by this smell. The scent also wards off other womb-parasites, which will not attack nor infest an already infested

Table 2: Gestation Time by Host Species

Host Species	Gestation Time
Human	27 days
Human/Alien Hybrid	18 days
Dwarf	129 days
Dwarf/Alien Hybrid	86 days
Elf	11 months
Elf/Alien Hybrid	220 days
Halfling	45 days
Halfling/Alien Hybrid	30 days

host. The host also becomes sexually attracted to males of their own species and to male hybrids even if they were not attracted to males before infestation. Unless pregnant, the host is almost always sexually aroused (although not to such an extent as to impair rational decision making any more than normal sexual arousal). Any contact with their infested orifice is intensely sexually pleasurable for the host - the parasite releases endorphins and oxytocin into the host's body to encourage the sort of sexual contact which will lead to pregnancy.

## PREGNANCY

The host becomes pregnant if living sperm of their species (or, in the case of a hybrid, sperm of any of the species from which the hybrid is descended, including other hybrids) enters the womb parasite. The parasite facilitates extremely rapid pregnancies (durations as per the table below) by aggressively draining nutrients from the host's body. The host needs to consume eleven times their usually required quantity of food in order to provide the parasite with the necessary energy to sustain the pregnancy and maintain their own health. If they do not eat at least eleven times their usually required amount of food, then they suffer the effects of starvation as if they hadn't eaten at all. If by following the starvation rules the host would starve to death before giving birth but after the half-way point of their pregnancy (as per the average gestation time in Table 2), then the host survives long enough to give birth before dying. If the starvation rules indicate that the host should starve to death even before the half-way point, then they do so at that time, without giving birth at all.

Giving birth is also a traumatic and dangerous experience. The host takes damage as per Table 3. They also making a saving throw against poison (with the modifier as per Table 3), or lose 1d4 points of Constitution, which they will recover if they go a full year without falling pregnant again (three years for elves). If the host is killed by the damage sustained or by Constitution drain, they still give birth before dying.

Hybrid hosts give birth to 1d12 parasites, whereas human (or elf, dwarf or halfling) hosts give birth to a hybrid child. As a result of the chemicals released into their bloodstream by the parasite, the host will develop the usual

Table 3: Pregnancy Risks

Infested Orifice	Modifier to Save	Damage
Vagina	-	-
Anus	-2	1d8
Wound	Depends on location	1d8
Mouth	-10	4d8

maternal feelings toward their hybrid offspring, and would lay down their life if necessary to defend them.

## HYBRIDS

Hybrids born from womb-parasites exhibit traits of both their alien and terrestrial parentage. Since womb-parasites can infest demi-humans as well as humans, if demi-humans exist in your campaign there may well be more varieties of hybrid types than the standard human/alien type assumed in this module. Hybrids of all types share some common traits, however:

- Insectoid features (although they maintain the basic body shape of the terrestrial organism);
- Enlarged craniums;
- Latent psionic potential

Human/alien hybrids have the basic body shape of their human ancestry. Their foreheads appear larger and their hairline starts further back, so as to make space for the emergence of insect-like antennae. They have large, compound eyes, which give them an expanded field of vision. Their feet also have insectoid qualities, although they retain human-like hands. They exhibit the same skin and hair colour varieties of their human ancestry. Hybrids dress in the usual fashions common in the countryside, although when outside they are sure to wear hooded cloaks to help conceal their true nature, irrespective of whether the weather calls for them or not.

Hybrids raised in the cult do not call themselves hybrids, but by a number of monickers, such as the Children of Ceridwen, the Mofranites, or the True Elect (this is a newer name borrowed from Calvinism). They think of themselves as being mixes of mortal (e.g. human) and divine creatures but would not use the word “alien”.

Despite their cult springing up from a crashed alien spaceship, (almost) no portable high-technology alien devices have survived the thousands of years from the crash to the present day. Even if such technology had survived, their genetic programming does not imbue the hybrids with innate understanding of how to use the technology of their creators. Hybrids therefore make do with the same equipment (including weapons) as is available to the general community. What makes the hybrids dangerous is not ancient alien technology, but their psionic powers. The ancient aliens who designed the

womb-parasites distant eons ago intended the hybrids to be intermediaries between themselves and the conquered humanoid populations of the worlds they invaded, giving them the ability to command and control the subjugated natives.

## REPRODUCTION

Without the use of womb-parasites, hybrids are capable of sexual reproduction only with other hybrids of the same mix of species (human/alien, elf/alien, dwarf/alien, halfling/alien). Their means of reproduction, gestation times, and so on, are similar to those of the terrestrial species from which they were born. However, sexual reproduction with other hybrids alone cannot sustain the hybrid population for more than a few generations due to the effects of homozygosity. Since the genetically engineered womb-parasites on the ship which crash landed on Earth all belong to the same batch, hybrids born from the womb-parasites all share identical “parentage” on the alien side. Consequently, mating between hybrids is incestuous - effectively inbreeding between half-siblings. This is compounded by the fact that there are generally few hybrids and thus hybrid family lines tend to be interrelated after a few generations even on the humanoid side of the family.

To simulate the effects of birth defects and deformities through the generations, generate the ability scores of a humanoid hybrid born to two hybrid parents by rolling 4d6 for each ability and picking the lowest three. For each successive generation of hybrid interbreeding, add an additional d6 to the dice rolled, but still pick the lowest three to generate each ability score. If one of the hybrid parents is “first generation” (that is, born directly from a humanoid host infested with a womb-parasite rather than from a hybrid mother), then reduce the number of dice rolled by one, to a minimum of 4d6. *For example: a third generation hybrid is generated by rolling 5d6 for each ability score and taking the lowest three. If that third generation hybrid mates with a first generation hybrid, their offspring’s ability scores will be generated with 5d6 as well (5d6 +1d6 for the next generation of inbreeding and -1d6 for one parent being a first generation hybrid).*

As a result of these problems, the Hybrid Cult abducts and infests new hosts with womb-parasites with each new generation of hybrid children, so that there will be new blood to reinvigorate their failing bloodlines.

## CREATING HYBRIDS

To create a hybrid non-player character, the referee should decide whether the hybrid will have a character class or not. The referee should also determine the hybrid’s generation (roll 1d6 to determine this randomly). If the hybrid will not have a character class, the referee can use one of the three basic stat-lines given below, with the number of daily *psionic power points* as determined by the hybrid’s generation given in Table 4. For hybrids with a character class, their ability scores should be rolled (keeping their generation in mind as discussed above (with psionic power points equal to the sum of their Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma scores - see p.12).



Table 4: Psionic Power Points by Generation

First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth+
31	27	23	20	18

### Common Hybrid

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 4 (1 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 1

**Special:** Psionic powers

### Experienced Hybrid

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 9 (2 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 2

**Special:** Psionic powers

### Elite Hybrid

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 13 (3 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 3

**Special:** Psionic powers

### Hybrid Child

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 2 (1 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Minor Weapon (1d4 damage), +0 BTH

**Save As:** Fighter 1

**Special:** Psionic powers, -3 STR and CON, -1 to other abilities

To create hybrids with character classes, roll their abilities as specified for the hybrid's generation on p.9, and select a character class as normal. Human/alien hybrids can be Fighters, Clerics, Magic-Users, or Specialists, and demihuman/alien hybrids use the rules of the appropriate demihuman class (Dwarf, Elf, or Halfling). In addition to the usual class abilities, such hybrids also have psionic powers, and are surprised only on a 1-in-6 chance because of their wider field of vision. For experience purposes, hybrids with levels in a character class count as an NPC of their level plus one (which is to say, their number of hit dice plus two).



# PSIONIC POWERS

Hybrids always have the ability to communicate telepathically with other hybrids who are both in their field of vision and within 100 yards of them. Each day, a hybrid gets a number of *psionic power points* equal to the sum of their Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma ability scores. Most psionic powers are employed in a similar fashion to the way a magic user casts spells, except there is no requirement for the hybrid to have their hands free when they use a psionic power. A hybrid regains power points while they sleep, at a rate of 1d8 power points per 1 hour of sleep.

## CHARM

*Range:* Touch

*Cost:* 35 power points

*Description:* This psionic power is equivalent in its effect to the *Charm* spell. Only the most strong-willed hybrids are capable of using this power. The Druid has used this power to ensure that the cult has a handful of ordinary human servants to facilitate interactions between the cult and the nearby communities.

## COMMAND

*Range:* 10 feet

*Cost:* 5 power points

*Description:* This psionic power is equivalent in its effect and duration to the *Command* spell. Other hybrids are immune to the effect.

## CONFUSION

*Range:* 15 feet

*Cost:* 30 power points

*Description:* This psionic power is equivalent in its effect to the *Confusion* spell, but only operates in a 15 foot radius around the hybrid - its effect cannot be projected. Other hybrids are immune to the effect.

## CRUSH EGO

*Range:* 30 feet

*Cost:* 20 power points

*Description:* The hybrid targets any one intelligent being within 30 feet (even another hybrid). The hybrid must be aware of the target's presence, although the hybrid does not need to be able to see them. The target is overwhelmed by feelings of depression and inadequacy for 1d4 turns multiplied by the hybrid's number of hit dice. During this time, the target can defend themselves and fight back if attacked, but they cannot take any new initiatives, cast spells, use psionic powers, use any skills (including Search), map any area they explore, etc. They automatically fail any Charisma-based roll they are forced to make.

## PROJECTED IMAGE

*Range:* 10 feet per HD

*Cost:* 30 power points

*Description:* This psionic power has a similar effect and duration to the *Projected Image* spell, with the addition that ranged psionic powers can be used from the projected image.

## READ THOUGHTS

*Range:* Touch

*Cost:* 15 power points

*Description:* As per the spell *ESP*, but the duration is replaced by the number of hit dice the hybrid has. Thus a HD 3 hybrid can read a character's thoughts for 3 turns.

## SICKEN

*Range:* 10 feet

*Cost:* 10 power points

*Description:* This psionic power can affect any living creature with a brain, including animals, but excluding hybrids or hosts infested with womb-parasites. The creature's brain is tricked into reacting as if the body had contracted a disease with an incubation period of 24 hours and an interval of 12 hours. The effect lowers Constitution. If the target passes three consecutive saves, they are free of the psychosomatic disease and regain all lost Constitution. The psychosomatic disease can also be removed by the spell *Cure Disease* or similar.

# THE CULT

The cult is dedicated to the survival of the hybrid species, and to the preservation of their ancient religion. The cult consists largely of hybrids, but also includes human allies, many of whom have been coerced into participation through the use of psionic powers. Its members live in hiding in small communities in close proximity to an underground prison/spawning ground where unwilling hosts for womb parasites are held in captivity and used as breeding stock by the cult.

## LEADERSHIP

The Druid is the high priest of the cult, and he generally has several apprentices, from whose number his successor will be selected. The Druid and his apprentices are the only hybrids who live in the prison/spawning ground complex - the rest live in households scattered about the local community. The present Druid is John-Morfran Wood (this name should be localized as appropriate for your campaign setting).

### The Druid

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 22 (6 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 10 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Dagger (1d4 damage)

**Save As:** Cleric 6

**Special:** 44 Psionic Power Points. Will use *Charm* if there is a single enemy who may prove to be a useful ally. If overwhelmed, will use *Projected Image* to create a double of himself which will use defensive powers to limit of power points.

### Apprentices (3)

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 13, 11, 9 (3 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 9 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Dagger (1d4 damage)

**Save As:** Cleric 3

**Special:** 36, 35, 40 Psionic Power Points. Will use defensive powers to limit of power points. Keep track of the apprentices encountered during the course of the adventure - they are not easily replaced.

## Hosts

One of the most important issues for the preservation and propagation of the hybrid species is how to find and maintain hosts for womb-parasites. For the preceding two centuries the cult has preyed on local beliefs in witchcraft and the ambitions of local would-be witches to come to mutually beneficial arrangements with local women. The cult observed women who loitered in places thought to be magical, or who otherwise exhibited signs of interest in the dark arts. Since womb-parasites can facilitate pregnancy even in the barren, the cult did not care whether such women were old or young - just so long as they were credulous and likely to be tempted by offers of dark magic. These women would then be approached at night by hybrids, whose appearance gave them a devil-like form. The hybrids, for their part, would play the part, affecting to play devils, demons, imps or even Satan himself in their interactions with the women. Sometimes several visits would be required to negotiate an arrangement, but the terms were always generally the same:

- The woman will be infested with a womb-parasite (the witch will be joined with a demon-serpent).
- The hybrids will strike at the enemies the woman names (the witch will send out her imps against her enemies).
- The hybrids will continue to strike at the woman's enemies so long as she consents to intercourse with such hybrids as are sent to her (the witch will lie with such imps as the Devil sends her).

- Any hybrid children the woman bears will be handed over to the hybrids (if the witch should bear an imp child, she will give that imp over to the Devil to be raised).

These arrangements have always posed some degree of risk to the cult, because these voluntary hosts still lived in their communities and may give away the cult's activities to local civil and church authorities. Nevertheless, most hybrids felt that the witchcraft cover story and other obfuscations of the truth from hosts sufficiently insulated the cult from risk. The "Pacters" (i.e. hybrids who supported the use of these supposed Devil's Pacts with would-be hosts) represented the majority opinion on the host question until the recent threat.

Recently, at some time the referee must decide makes sense for the campaign setting (see the discussion on placement on p.1), the cult's hosts started to be arrested as witches. Although at first these arrests generally ended in acquittal, the fact that the authorities were starting to take *maleficium* cases seriously started to put pressure on the Pacter consensus. For most of its pre-modern history, the cult abducted would-be hosts and held them prisoner while they were first infested with womb-parasites and then impregnated and forced to bear hybrid children. Hosts held prisoner under such circumstances were rarely afforded enough time to recover before being impregnated again, and thus tended to live short and miserable lives in the cult's custody. These "Old Ways" were abandoned as the ideas of the Renaissance first started to take hold, and most hybrids were content to never go back to them. Nevertheless, as the witchcraft arrests keep happening, more and more hybrids advocate for a return to the Old Ways as the only safe pathway through these turbulent times.

At some point, with some distaste, the cult returned to kidnapping potential hosts. Although women are still preferred because of higher survivability, the cult will kidnap men too. It is very difficult for the cult to maintain captive hosts both due to the expense of feeding them and for lack of living space - such captives cannot be held in the cult's community safe houses, they must be held underground in the prison/spawning ground complex. The cult still has a number of hosts at large in the community with whom it maintains contact, although if too many of these are captured by witchhunters and start talking, the cult will feel forced to tie up these "loose ends" by eliminating the surviving volunteer hosts. It is assumed that this module will be played between these dates, while the cult has returned to kidnapping hosts, but while there are still hosts who believe themselves to be witches loose in the community, as investigating the latter is by far the easiest way for a part of adventurers to uncover the cult.

## A HYBRID HOUSEHOLD

Within the region, 5% of households in towns and 10% of households in satellite villages are hybrid households. Hybrid households are generally established either in the cellars or upstairs in the home of human allies. As far as the outside world is concerned, the human allies are the only occupants of these



homes. The human allies have generally been psionically charmed by a powerful hybrid, and thereby convinced to conceal and assist the hybrid family. In exchange, these human allies receive some economic support, and sometimes even the same sort of dark favours as the cult performs for its volunteer hosts. Many of these allies are also hosts themselves. A typical hybrid household consists of a single hybrid family, with a 20% chance that two families co-habit at any given safehouse.

Each hybrid family consists of 1d6 adults (including grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, etc) and 1d4 children. Roll 1d4 to determine the “generation” (see p.9) of the oldest hybrid adult. If this oldest adult is a grandparent, then the younger generation of adults will be of the same generation +1, and the children +2. If this would make any children in the household more than 5th generation, they are 1st generation hybrids instead, born to hosts and given to the hybrid family to foster. There is a 10% chance of any adult in the household being an experienced hybrid (see p.11) and a 5% chance of any adult being elite. The rest are common hybrids.

There are 1d3 human allies. Wealthy tradesmen are preferred for the simple expediency that their homes are bigger, as are (comparatively) wealthy widows because their homes have more free space (and it is easier to charm one potential ally than two!). Treat these allies as being charmed by the hybrids (although they were likely charmed by the Druid or one of his apprentices rather than the hybrids who live with them). The hybrids are not idle house guests - since they take up most of the room they perform much of the housework, and may pay rent depending on their circumstances and those of their human allies. Sometimes arrangements between human allies and hybrid families have gone on for several generations. Even where such climates of trust prevail, hybrids routinely read the thoughts of their allies to ensure their ongoing safety and security.

Hybrid households are typically engaged in trades which do not require them to leave the house during daylight hours. Hybrids most commonly work as weavers, although other trades are popular too. Their human allies act as middlemen between the hybrid craftsmen and their customers.

The exigencies of living in secret have made most hybrids nocturnal, sleeping during the day and waking up at night when leaving the house is possible. The hours past-midnight are most popular for social calls and religious ceremonies among members of the hybrid cult.

## RELIGION

The hybrid cult’s faith synthesizes ancient paganism with their extra-terrestrial genetic programming and their own oral history of their origins. The deities worshipped by the cult include:

- *Ceridwen*, the first woman joined with a womb-parasite, and was thus the first mother of hybrids. Ceridwen is worshipped as the goddess of rebirth, and is particularly favoured by Pacters.
- *Creiddylad*, the daughter of Nudd Llaw Ereint, and is the goddess of spring and flowers. She is especially venerated as the perfect bride.

- *Dôn*, the first goddess, mother of the Earth and Moon.
- *Math*, the god of the stars and the night, the Ancient One, the Lord of Astronomy, and the Source of Wisdom. The hybrids believe it is Math who gifted them with psionic powers.
- *Morfran*, the first hybrid, who is worshipped as the god of shadows and hiding, since he was persecuted by humans and driven into the darkness.
- *Nudd Llaw Ereint*, the god of fire, sun, and sky.

It is common for cult members (and even human allies whose families have supported the cult for generations) to take the names of gods as middle names or to hyphenate these god-names with regular names from the mainstream human culture of the area.

## INVESTIGATION

It is assumed that the player characters won't know anything about the truth of the hybrid cult when they first enter the region of its activity. They should probably have heard rumours that the region has more reports of witchcraft than usual, but even this should not be to an alarming extent - and the propensity of commonfolk to explain everything they do not immediately understand as people the work of dark magic should be emphasized. Especially initially, therefore, the party may not initially be consciously investigating the hybrid cult at all. This section addresses how you can start the investigation, potential events, strategies the party may adopt, and what clues about the hybrid cult may be discovered.

Not every party will discover everything about the hybrid cult! They don't need to discover everything to discover enough. Not every party will necessarily discover enough to understand what is going on, either. That's OK too. This section does not attempt to provide a "script" to railroad the investigation.

## INTERROGATING HOSTS

There are two types of hosts infests with womb-parasites:

- Hosts living in the community. These are generally volunteers (or, worst case, believe they have been tricked into cooperation and that it is too late to back out) who have struck bargains with the hybrids. They are generally women who believe themselves to be witches and the hybrids to beimps or devils. See p.14 for more information on the pacts they have forged.
- Prisoners of the cult whom have been forcibly infested with a womb-parasite, whom the cult members impregnate without allowing sufficient recovery time because of the difficulty and expense associated with keeping an infested prisoner indefinitely.



Throughout the course of the investigation, the party will most likely interact primarily with hosts living in the community, since these are ideal candidates for interrogation. It is highly unlikely such hosts will give up information likely to be damaging to the cult willingly. However, if compelled through magical means or other *force majeure*, hosts can be forced to disclose what they know:

- The details of the pact they formed with “the Devil” (see p.14).
- Hosts know all the other hosts who live in the same settlement as them, plus 100% of other hosts in the region.
- Hosts have a 1 in 6 chance of knowing the location of each hybrid household in their village (1 in 10 in towns).
- Hosts have a 1 in 6 chance of having met the Druid when they were first infested. If they did not meet the Druid, then they would have met one of the Apprentices instead.
- Hosts know that the hybrids (imps/devils) can read minds, make people (and animals) ill, and compel them to do things. They know that some hybrids are more powerful than others.
- Hosts know that they are hyper-fertile and can explain any physiological changes they have experienced as a result of their infestation.
- Hosts can relate their experiences with past hybrid pregnancies, and that hybrids (imps/devils) come to remove the children. Sometimes the hybrid children they bear are taken almost immediately and sometimes they are allowed to breastfeed them for some time (weeks or even months) before they’re taken. Hosts have maternal feelings towards the hybrid children they have borne and sometimes regret that they have to give them up.

Note that hosts living in the community do not know about the location of the prison/spawning ground or anything about the true origin of the hybrids.

## INTERROGATING HYBRIDS

If the party raids a hybrid household or otherwise comes across hybrids during the course of their investigation (perhaps because of an event rolled on Table 5), it is likely that they will attempt to interrogate a hybrid. If only hybrid adults have been captured, they will generally prefer death to cooperation, even under physical duress, although they may still be compelled through magical means. If hybrid children have been captured alongside one or both of their parents, and the party is so base as to threaten the lives of those children, the parents might answer the party’s questions if they feel doing so will save the lives of their children. However they are compelled to answer questions, hybrids can be forced to give the following information:

- The location of other hybrid households in the same settlement, plus 40+320% of hybrid households in other settlements in the region.

- Everything about the womb-parasite/hybrid lifecycle and reproductive process.
- Information about the size and strength of the cult (exaggerated if possible).
- Information about the cult's religion and religious leadership (see p.17 and p.17).
- How the cult finds hosts and strikes pacts with them (see p.14).
- The location of the "spawning ground". They will only give this information if magically compelled to do so - even threatening their children will not compel them.

A hybrid parent can be convinced to arrange a meeting between senior members of the cult and the party if they are bargaining for the life of their child. Likewise, a hybrid who is *charmed* or otherwise magically compelled can arrange such a meeting. Irrespective of whatever agreement is made beforehand, the cult's delegation will be heavily armed and come in sufficient strength to the appointed place to fight the party if necessary. The cult's leadership will attempt to avenge a hybrid household on the party but will not unduly compromise the cult or the location of the spawning ground to save the lives of a single hybrid family - they have broader concerns.

## EVENTS

Any time the party's investigation seems stalled, or things are getting boring, roll on Table 5. The table can be used to determine what the cult is up to without the party's intervention. If an event is rolled which doesn't make sense given the party's composition or recent events, discard that event and roll again. Unless otherwise noted, these events occur in the village/town in the region the party is currently visiting.

## SHE'S A WITCH!

In every town and village in the region of the cult's activity, the party will encounter commonfolk convinced that there is witchcraft afoot. Not only that, but they will be convinced they know who the witches are too. Naturally, a good deal many of these accusations are total nonsense, but some will truly point to cult activity even if only indirectly. To generate a typical witchcraft accusation, roll on Table 6 to determine who has been accused, Table 7 to determine why they've been accused, Table 8 to determine what they've been accused of doing (or trying to do) through their pact with the devil, and Table 9 to determine how recently the witch did these terrible things.

Only a small proportion of such accusations should have any actual connection to the hybrid cult. Each time an accusation is made, you should roll  $1d_{100}$  against a percentage chance that the accusation is linked to the cult. Depending on how the investigation is progressing and how enjoyable you

Table 5: Cult Activity

rd8	Event	rd8	Event
1	One of the cult's hosts living in the community meets with her "imps" (i.e. 1d6 hybrids) in a known witch's haunt (e.g. a pagan site or dark forest) at midnight just outside the village. If the party has bothered her, she wants the hybrids to deal with the party. If not, she wants to spite a rival in the community. The hybrids will oblige over the next few days.	4	One of the cult's hosts living in the community is ready to be impregnated. She (or, more rarely, he) wants the male PC with the highest Charisma to be the father. The host will attempt to seduce the PC. She will be quite persistent, but if another male PC appears more eager, she may switch targets if her intended remains resistant.
2	One of the cult's hosts living in the community gives birth. There is a 90% chance that the hybrids will collect the hybrid child in 1d6 days, and a 10% chance that they will be collected in 1d12 weeks (during which time the host will breastfeed the child).	6	The hosts living in the town/village gather together at midnight for a Witches' Sabbath. Hosts who recently gave birth will not attend. During this ceremony they will be joined by 1d4 male hybrids. An orgy ensues.
3	Overnight, the cult abducts a traveller (roll 1d4, 1 = travelling merchant, 2 = runaway bride, 3 = runaway groom, 4 = travelling preacher) who was staying at the same inn as the party. If the party maintains a watch even in the tavern, they may hear the abduction take place. The abduction party consists of 1 elite hybrid, 1d3-1 experienced hybrids, and 2 common hybrids.	7	One of the cult's hosts living in the community overhears a conversation she shouldn't have heard, and suspects that the cult is abducting people to serve as unwilling hosts and imprisoning them somewhere. She will come to the party to report this, because she dares not go to the authorities. She will make the party pledge not to report her to the authorities before confiding anything.
4	The local witch hunter has become suspicious of the party, going around asking so many questions. The witch hunter starts an investigation into the party, interrogating witnesses who have already interacted with the party for the most part. This investigation takes 1d6 days, after which time, the witch hunter has a 5 in 6 chance of deciding to arrest the party with the assistance of the local authorities.	8	The cult becomes aware that the adventuring party is moving through the region and decides they would make excellent hosts. A hybrid posse is formed under the leadership of one of the Druid's apprentices, 1d6 experienced hybrids, 1d4 elite hybrids, and as many other common hybrids as required to bring the total number in the posse to the number of PCs plus 3. The posse attempts to ambush the party as it moves between villages or as it sleeps for the night.

find investigating these "leads", you might start with a relatively small percentage chance (e.g. 15%), and increase it as the investigation proceeds to help the party move along. Some players will quickly be discouraged after investigating one or two false complaints, and others will enjoy the process and

persist. Based on your assessment of your group’s enthusiasm for this style of play, you should increase or decrease the percentage chance of an accusation really pointing to cult activity.

As a twist, consider that there may be truth to some allegations of witchcraft without there being any connection to the hybrid cult. A very small proportion (1 to 5%) of accusations should be accurate but indicate the activities of an actual witch with *rd6* levels in magic-user rather than activities of the hybrid cult.

Table 6: Who is the Witch?

<i>rd6</i>	Accused
1	The midwife <i>rd6</i> doors down
2	The wetnurse <i>rd6</i> doors down
3	The old widow <i>rd6</i> doors down
4	Feuding family member in the next village
5	That bitch on the other side of town who is married to the man/woman of my dreams
6	That young strumpet/fake who has been leading my husband/wife astray (with witchcraft)

Table 7: How do you know?

<i>rd6</i>	Reason
1	They are always muttering curses at people and threatening them.
2	Everyone knows that they’re a witch. I am not the only one who has accused them!
3	They hardly ever go to church.
4	They’re a Catholic/Protestant (opposite sect to local majority) and you can’t trust Catholics/Protestants!
5	I have seen them sneak around at night, probably attending the Witch’s Sabbath!
6	They have been pregnant even though they’re too old/a man!

## ABDUCTION!

If the party are outsiders to the region, they are good potential candidates for the hybrid cult to abduct them to turn them into unwilling hosts for womb-parasites! Outsiders will be missed by the local population a good deal less than neighbours, after all. The cult is unlikely to actively target the party if they’re well-equipped and appear competent, because they’re not easy prey, however, that may change if the cult starts to perceive the party as a threat. If this happens, the cult may well decide to target party members for abduction as a way to both eliminate the threat and to gain another host.

Table 8: The Witch sent the Devil to...

rd8	Accusation
1	Kill my child.
2	Kill my horse/cow/pig/sheep/goose.
3	Make my crops fail.
4	Make my business fail.
5	Seduce my husband/wife.
6	Make my husband/wife/child ill.
7	Cause me/my wife/loved one to miscarry.
8	Cause my breast milk to dry up.

Table 9: How Recent?

rd6	Period of Time
1	rd4 weeks ago
2	rd4 months ago
3	2d6 months ago
4	2d12 months ago
5	rd4 years ago
6	2d6 years ago

In any settlement, each inn has the same chance of being a hybrid household as any other household (5% in towns, 10% in satellite villages). If the party is staying in such an inn, the easiest thing for the cult to do is to steal the party's weapons while they sleep, dump some womb-parasites in the room, and lock (and guard) the door behind them. Since hosts infested with womb-parasites give off a special scent detectable only to hybrids, hybrids will be able to smell when party members have become fertile from behind the door. If the hybrids believe they cannot safely manage entering the room and impregnating infested party members, they may at this stage bring one of the Druid's apprentices to the inn in the middle of the night to psionically charm party members.

If this "ideal option" does not become available, the cult will have to attack the party and subdue them. They will attempt to do this at night, and will bring rd4 human allies and one hybrid per party member to do it. An elite hybrid (p.11) will lead such an expedition, and will be accompanied by an even mix of common and experienced hybrids. The attackers will make liberal use of the Command psionic ability (p.12). If the party are successfully overwhelmed and taken prisoner then they will likely be taken directly to the prison/spawning ground complex itself (p.24).

## SPAWNING GROUND/PRISON

The underground prison /spawning ground was first constructed several centuries ago, before the cult started to find willing hosts in the community using the witchcraft ruse. Until recently, the cell blocks had been converted for use as storage, and the structure was only really used as a secret place of worship and the Druid's residence. Now that the cult has returned to the old ways, the cell blocks have been restored to their original purpose, and the underground complex serves as both a prison for hosts and as a sacred spawning ground for new hybrid young.

### PATROLS

Every turn the party spends in the spawning ground/prison, roll 1d6. On a roll of a 1, the party encounters a random patrol as detailed below. This chance increases to a roll of 1 or 2 if the alarm has been raised or if the party has discharged a firearm underground.

#### *Random Patrol*

A random patrol has a 1 in 4 chance of including one of the Druid's apprentices. In addition, the random patrol includes:

- 0-1 Elite Hybrid
- 2-8 Experienced Hybrids

#### **Experienced Hybrid**

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 9 (2 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 2

**Special:** Psionic powers - roll 1d4; 1 = 31, 2 = 27, 3 = 23, 4 = 20 power points

#### **Elite Hybrid**

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 13 (3 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 3

**Special:** Psionic powers - roll 1d4; 1 = 31, 2 = 27, 3 = 23, 4 = 20 power points

Keep track of the Druid's apprentices encountered in the spawning ground. If all three of them are killed or captured, then any encounter listed in the room descriptions which includes an apprentice must be modified to replace the apprentice with the Druid himself or nobody at all.





## ENTRANCE

The entrance may be concealed in a barrow, bushes, or other phenomenon of the local landscape. There may even be a rumour among common folk in the local area that the vicinity of the entrance is cursed, and honest folk know well enough to stay away from it, and will certainly tell anybody who asks them about it that it is an evil place and they should stay away. The entrance is just over five feet high - taller characters have to bend to walk through it - and gives way to narrow tunnel through the earth which leads down into the darkness.

The steps go down to another set of double doors, leading to Room 1: Entrance Hall.

## ROOM 1: ENTRANCE HALL

The guards in *Room 1* have a 1 in 6 chance of hearing the approach of a party which is coming down the stairs quietly notwithstanding successful Stealth rolls. If they detect an approaching party and are not expecting visitors, one of the guards will pull the lever on the west wall. This causes a bell to ring in room 4, raising the alarm. The remaining guards will flank the entrance and attack any intruder by surprise.

### Hybrid Guards (3)

**Armour:** Leather (14) **Hit Points:** 6, 2, 5 (1 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:**

9 **Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Medium Weapon (1d8 damage) or light crossbow (1d6 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 1

**Special:** Psionic powers - 27 power points available, will use *Command* to disarm and disable intruders. If they think they are outnumbered by their foes they will take no prisoners and will fight to kill.

## ROOM 2: APPRENTICE DORMITORY

A shared bedroom with three beds, chests, and bedside tables for the Druid's apprentices. If the party has already encountered one or more apprentices, then some apprentices may already be dead by this time. One apprentice will be with the Druid at all times. That will leave either 1 or 2 apprentices in this room when the party enters. There are four key rings on two hooks on the wall. One key ring on each hook unlocks the cells in the east or west cellblock, and the other key ring on the same hook unlocks the chains/manacles of hybrids in the same cellblock.

If there is a noisy confrontation in this room or if the apprentices feel threatened and have the opportunity to call for help, the Beast from Room 3 will come running the next round.

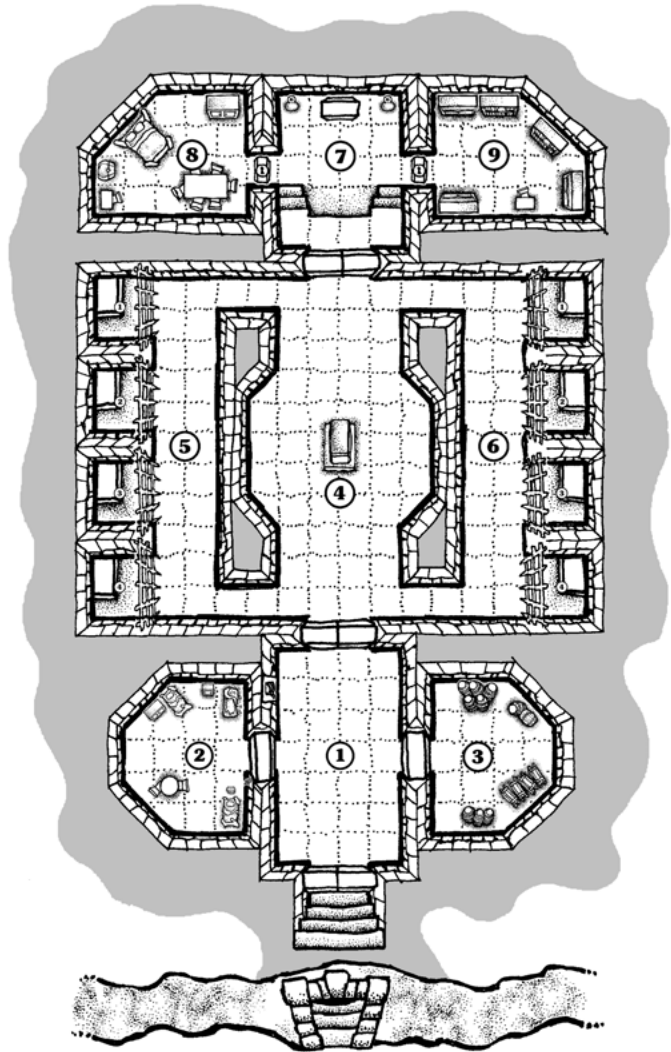


Figure 1: The Spawning Ground/Prison (1 square = 5<sup>2</sup>)

### ROOM 3: STOREROOM

This room contains all the necessary supplies for the cult, including large quantities of food (mostly barley, oats, and rye), and a rack of weapons. The room is guarded by the Beast, an unusually physically imposing hybrid.

#### The Beast

**Armour:** Tough Skin (13) **Hit Points:** 28 (5 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:**

**8 Alignment:** Chaotic

**Attacks:** 1 Great Weapon (1d10 damage)

**Save As:** Fighter 5

**Special:** Psionic Powers - 24 power points available, will use *Sicken* to target opponents not in melee range.

### ROOM 4: CEREMONIAL HALL

This large ceremonial hall features a large, solid stone slab in the middle of the chamber. Images of the six principle gods revered by the cult (Ceridwen, Creiddylad, Dôn, Math, Morfran, and Nudd Llaw Ereint - see p.17) are painted on the walls in crude frescos of the style typical of the Late Middle Ages. The frescos are of limited artistic merit, but are instructive - especially the image of Ceridwen, who is depicted rather graphically giving birth to a hybrid child. The slab is nearly the same height from the floor as a typical dining table. The slab serves a dual purpose - it is both an altar and a birthing bed. When one of the hosts imprisoned in the cellblocks is ready to give birth, they are brought to the altar for their labour (see Birthing). There is a 1 in 10 chance of a birthing being “in-progress” when the party arrives.

At midday and midnight every day, unless a birthing is in-progress, the Druid or an apprentice will be leading 2d6 hybrids in prayer in this room. The celebrant and congregation alike will wear hooded robes for these occasions, although the celebrant pulls back their hood before commencing the opening prayer. For these ceremonies, which last thirty minutes, the altar will be decorated with four silver candlesticks, fresh flowers, and a wine-filled silver chalice (worth 40sp). At the apex of the prayer ceremony, the celebrant takes a sip from the chalice and passes it to each member of the congregation, each of whom sips the wine in turn. A sip from wine which has been blessed on the altar in such a ceremony replenishes up to 1d6 psionic power points instantly in hybrids, or causes a non-hybrid to instantly fall unconscious for 1d4 turns unless they pass a saving throw versus poison.

#### *Birthing*

If a birthing is taking place, the room will be filled with 3d6 hybrids in ceremonial gowns. The Druid and one apprentice will be attending the host in labour, who will be lying on the stone slab in the middle of the room. If necessary, the host will be restrained on the slab - this is highly likely in the case of a male host or a host whose womb parasite infests their mouth or a wound. The crowd of hybrids will alternate between religious chanting and jovial casual conversations while they wait for the birth.

Just as womb parasite pregnancies are much faster than conventional pregnancies, womb parasite labours are also much faster, rarely lasting more than an hour.

## ROOM 5: WEST CELLBLOCK

This cellblock is used to house recently abducted victims. One cell is empty - the party will be incarcerated here if taken alive, and infested with womb parasites. The other three cells contain:

1. Mary, Emma, and Hilda; three girls from a nearby village whose families think they ran away with some young deserters who recently passed through. In truth, Emma had arranged to meet up with one of the deserters (Jack; see below) by a local landmark late at night, and her friends had accompanied her because nothing exciting ever happens in these parts, but all were abducted by the cult while waiting for the deserters. All three girls have already been infested with womb-parasites and are terrified beyond imagining.
2. Mad Agnes, “Drusilla”, and Frank the Mummer; Mad Agnes is a middle-aged widow who, as her name suggests, is mad, and would have been in an asylum if there was one in the local area - nobody will be particularly worried that she is gone. Drusilla and Frank are both actors - Drusilla is in fact Drew, a teenage boy, since women are banned from the stage in this gilded age. Frank and Drusilla were, however, abducted by the cult in the evening not long after a performance and Drusilla was still dressed in a female costume. All three have been infested and recently impregnated, but will not start to show for a few days.
3. Delilah, Sally, Philippe the Pimp, Jack the Deserter; Philippe the Pimp is a generally disliked foreigner who runs whores (like Delilah and Sally) through the local area, never keeping the same girls around too long before moving them on to the next region and taking on a new group of girls. Jack the Deserter was a customer, who deserted from the army and was passing through town. The cult prefers targeting people with few connections to the local community, so all four were taken by the cult in the midst of an argument about payment behind the stables of a local inn late one night. They have not yet been infested - if the alarm has not yet been raised and the apprentices are still attending to their normal work about the spawning ground, then a basket of womb-parasites has just been placed in the cell in the last 20 minutes or so.

### *Infestation of Unwilling Hosts*

The cult abducts a steady supply of unwilling hosts to maintain a consistent birthrate. These victims are usually individuals, although sometimes small groups, such as a married couple, a whole household, or an adventuring party, are targeted. The victims are placed in a vacant cell, and they are restrained to minimise the efficacy of their attempts to resist infestation. Up to four

occupants of a cell can be chained to the walls, rendering them effectively immobile, and if a cell must be filled with more than four occupants, each will be individually manacled around the wrists.

One of the Druid's apprentices then comes by not long after the victims have been restrained, carrying the keys to unlock each cell (but not the individual prisoners), carrying a basket of 2d12 womb parasites. The basket is placed in the middle of the cell by an apprentice and two guards. The apprentice opens the basket, then they and the guards leave the cell quickly, to let the parasites do their work (they do, however, watch the process from the other side of the cell door - they do not just walk away and assume it will happen). The unfortunate new hosts are left restrained even after they have been infested, so that they can also be impregnated.

## ROOM 6: EAST CELLBLOCK

This cellblock is used to house infested hosts who are already pregnant or who have just given birth. Its prisoners are generally restrained with chains binding their wrists to the walls or ceilings, but with longer chains than the west cellblock, allowing them enough freedom of movement to feed themselves. The prisoners in these cells are fed regularly, although the cult struggles to maintain the food supply necessary to prevent eventual starvation in its unfortunate long-term hosts.

A guard comes by these cells every two hours to place a bowl of porridge (or similar) for each prisoner in each cell. The guard has keys to the cells, but not to unlock the chains which bind each host to the cell walls.

### Guard

**Armour:** 12 **Hit Points:** 4 (1 HD) **Movement Rate:** 40' **Morale:** 8 **Alignment:** Chaotic  
**Attacks:** 1 Whip (1d3 damage)  
**Save As:** Fighter 1  
**Special:** Psionic powers with 23 power points

If a birthing has recently taken place, the "mother" is recuperating in the fourth cell. Otherwise, an extremely pregnant host is in the fourth cell, already starting to feel contractions. The other three cells contain:

1. An "Egyptian family"; four Romani Gypsies, including a middle-aged couple (Matthew and Helen Faw), and two young women (Magdelene and Barbara Faw). All are 20 days pregnant. Although lean they do not yet look malnourished. This is their first pregnancy and they are terrified, not knowing what to expect. Especially Matthew.
2. Elizabeth Bird, Mary Gilbert, Anna Smythe, and Jane Trussell; all four women in their twenties who have disappeared from the local community over six months ago. Since that time, they have been infested and impregnated multiple times. They look gaunt and weak, and are barely able to speak. Each is currently 5+1d12 days pregnant.

3. Clare O'Derrie, Cathleen Woulfe, and the remains of George Prescott. Clare and Cathleen are emaciated, although they are 18 and 22 days pregnant respectively. They can be roused to lucidity with some effort, but they have been imprisoned in this place so long and forced to bear so many hybrid children that they expect and welcome their imminent demise in those rare moments where they are capable of speech. George Prescott is still chained to the wall, but is recently deceased. He had not been imprisoned quite so long as Clare and Cathleen. Prescott died of starvation, with the cult just not able to feed him enough to keep him alive.

### ROOM 7: CHAPEL

The holiest part of the complex. Access is restricted just to the Druid, the apprentices, and the Druid's personal guards. If they have not already been encountered, the Druid, an apprentice, and two guards can be found here. The Druid is using an artefact (see below) on the chapel's altar to turn stone womb parasite statues into living creatures, which he promptly places in a clay pot being held by the apprentice. There are already 6 living womb parasites in the apprentice's pot, 6 more in the artefact, and 9 stone womb parasite statuettes on the altar to the left of the artefact, waiting to be transformed. If the party bursts into the chapel without the alarm being raised, the hybrids have a 4 in 6 chance of being surprised.

#### *The Holy Petrifier/Vivifier*

The artefact, which the Druid knows as the Holy Petrifier/Vivifier, is a square metal box, about one foot cubed, with two doors which open on the front. The Holy Petrifier/Vivifier has been elaborately decorated over the centuries with religious imagery, which disguises its true origin - it is a piece of alien technology which has survived from the spaceship which first brought the womb parasites to Earth (despite this, it detects as magical and can be identified as any other magic item). It has an internal power source which still provides enough power for it to perform the one function the Druid uses it for - to preserve surplus womb parasites by turning them from stone to flesh, and then to convert them back again when they are ready for use. In stone form, womb parasites can be stored indefinitely.

The Holy Petrifier/Vivifier works accordingly:

- Womb parasites (or any other flesh or flesh-like matter) can be placed in the device's inner compartment.
- Stone statue womb parasites (or any other stone object) can be placed in the device's inner compartment.
- The compartment is 10 inches cubed and can be completely filled without preventing the device's operation. Any combination of objects which fit into this space may be placed into the compartment.

- The operator closes the compartment. When this happens, the stone contents are transformed from stone to flesh as per the *Stone to Flesh* spell, and the flesh contents are transformed from flesh to stone as per the *Flesh to Stone* spell (the reverse of the *Stone to Flesh* spell). Objects in the compartment which cannot be broadly categorised as either stone or flesh are unaffected by the compartment.
- When the compartment is opened, the transformed objects/organisms can be retrieved. If the compartment is closed again, the contents will be transformed again, reversing the effects.

## ROOM 8: DRUID'S CHAMBER

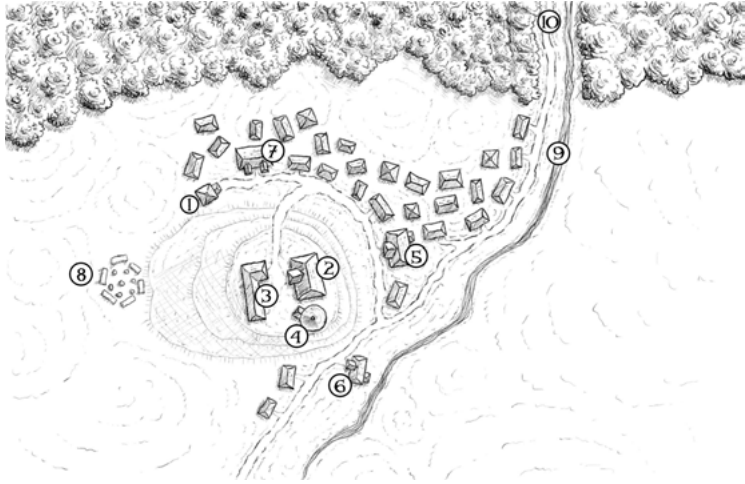
This room is the Druid's private chamber. It includes a wardrobe filled with good to fine examples of the clothing fashions of the day in the Druid's size, which might be worth 110 sp in total to somebody who could wear the same sized clothes as the Druid. The bed is large and comfortable, but not extravagant. The Druid has a purse of 96 sp stored in chest of drawers next to his bed.

The Druid has 1d4 hybrid concubines, each of whom has been infested with a womb parasite, so that they give birth to more womb parasites rather than children (as discussed in the "Pregnancy" starting on p.7). In this way, the Druid fathers the new generation of parasites which are in turn used to create hosts to bear the new generation of hybrid children.

## ROOM 9: CULT ARCHIVE

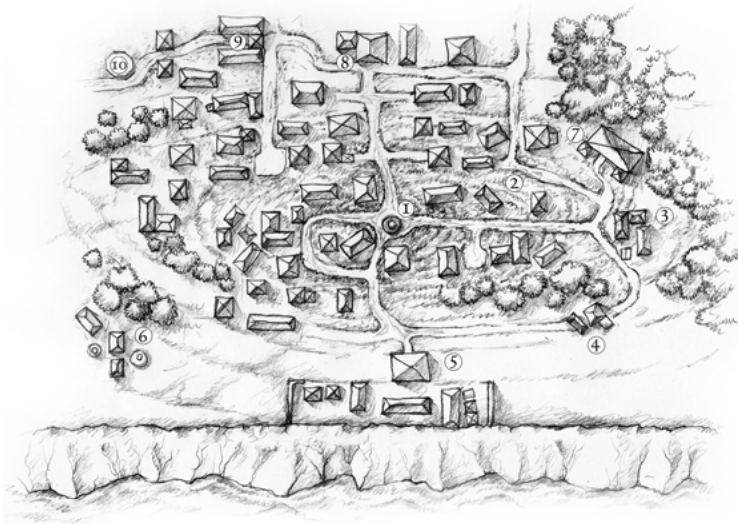
This room contains a library maintained by successive Druids over the centuries, documenting the history of the cult. Although much of it is relatively dry and uninteresting, covering the cult's finances in such and such a year, for example, it does contain lists of all of the hosts the cult knows about, living and dead, willing and unwilling, going back several centuries. This list may not be exhaustive - there may be some hosts who have been infested with womb parasites by accident or by somebody acting independently - but covers the cult's "official" hosts completely. The esoteric, arcane nature of the subjects the cult's library covers, with some texts dating back to the times of the Romans or earlier, makes the library useful for magical research. For the purpose of magical research, the library's value is 2000sp.

# VILLAGE MAPS

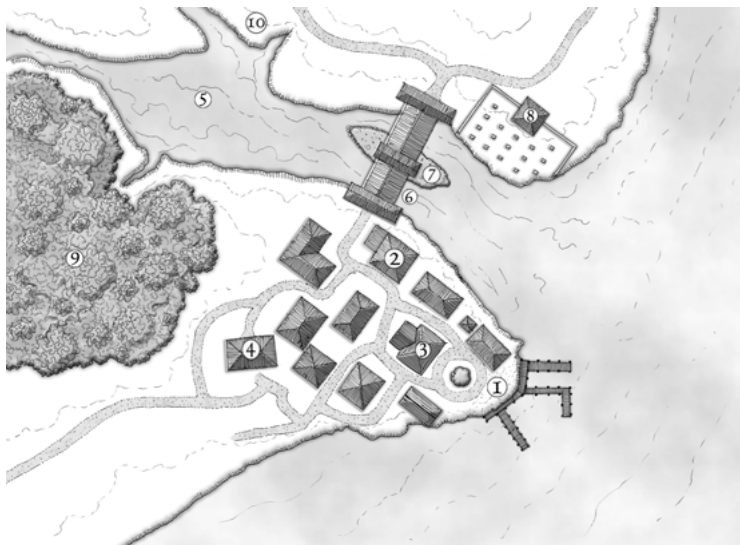


1. Chapel of Ease.
2. Farmhouse.
3. Stable.
4. Windmill.
5. Inn and hybrid household, 4 hybrid adults (2 2nd generation, 2 3rd generation), 1 hybrid child (4th generation).
6. Hybrid household, 3 hybrid adults (2nd generation), 2 hybrid children (3rd generation).  
2 human allies.
7. Inn (regular).
8. Standing stones - ancient pagan site now associated with witchcraft.
9. Stream.
10. Road to town.





1. Village well.
2. Two hybrid households, total 5 hybrid adults (2nd & 3rd generation) including 1 experienced, 4 hybrid children (4th generation), 3 human allies.
3. Host's household - a woman in her late 30s. Currently 1d20 days pregnant with a hybrid child.
4. An actual witch (level 1d4 magic-user) lives here. No relation to the cult.
5. Mayor's house. Also a hybrid household, total 2 hybrid adults (2nd generation), 3 hybrid children (3rd generation), 3 human allies.
6. Three hybrid households, total 10 hybrid adults (1st, 2nd & 3rd generation) including 1 elite and 1 experienced, 7 hybrid children (3rd & 4th generation), 5 human allies.
7. Inn (regular).
8. Hybrid household, 4 hybrid adults (3rd & 4th generation), 2 hybrid children (5th generation), 1 human ally.
9. Church and rectory.
10. Granary.



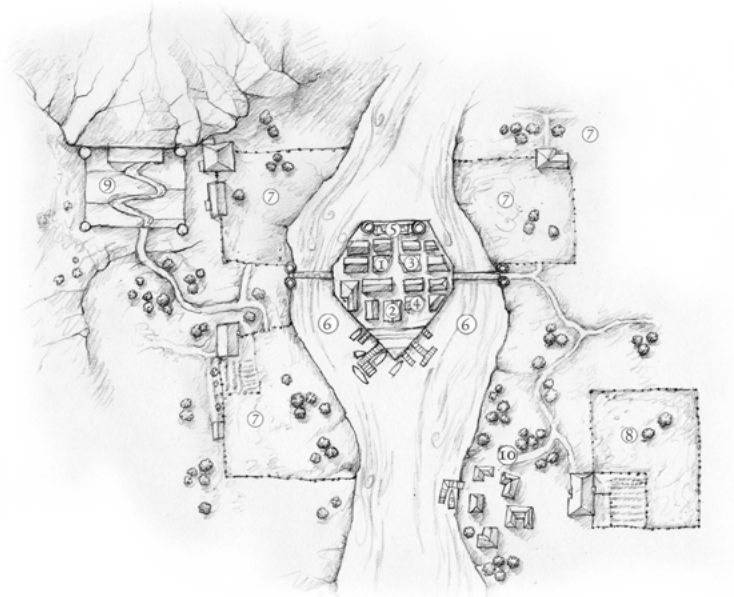
1. Docks, used mostly by local fishermen.
2. Host household. Old widow and her adult daughter are both hosts. No menfolk, yet neighbours think each has been pregnant within the last 12 months.
3. Inn (regular).
4. Hybrid household, total 3 hybrid adults (2nd & 3rd generation) including 1 experienced, 1 hybrid child (4th generation). 2 human allies.
5. Estuary.
6. Enclosed bridge, with houses built on it.
7. Hybrid household in middle of bridge, total 2 hybrid adults (3rd generation), 3 hybrid children (4th generation). 3 human allies.
8. Chapel of ease and cemetery.
9. Old woods, shunned by locals at night in particular. Witches are rumoured to meet here.
10. Road on north bank leads to town.



1. Inn and hybrid household, 2 hybrid adults (4th generation) and 4 hybrid children (5th generation), 1 human ally.
2. Alehouse and well.
3. Hybrid household, total 2 hybrid adults (4th generation) and 2 hybrid children (5th generation), 2 human allies.
4. Brothel, 1 in 6 of the girls is a host. Customers father hybrid children and are never the wiser.
5. Free School.
6. Church and churchyard.
7. Stables.
8. Mausoleum of local aristocratic family which is now extinct. Something evil is rumoured to live here.



1. Inn (regular).
2. Manor house.
3. Hybrid household, 6 hybrid adults (2nd and 3rd generation), 1 elite and 1 experienced, and 2 hybrid children (4th generation), 3 human allies.
4. Abbey church.
5. Hybrid household, 1 hybrid adult (2nd generation) and 2 hybrid children (3rd generation), 3 human allies.
6. Farm.
7. Fields.
8. Abbey house and school.
9. Host's household - a woman in her early 30s. Currently 1d20 days pregnant with a hybrid child.
10. Hybrid household, 1 hybrid adult (5th generation) and 3 hybrid children (6th generation), 3 human allies.



1. Hybrid household, 4 hybrid adults (3rd and 4th generation), 1 experienced, and 1 hybrid children, 2 human allies.
2. Chapel of ease.
3. Host's household, two women, one in her 60s and one in her 50s.
4. Rectory. The vicar's son is a host.
5. Ruined castle wall with towers. The whole island was

once fortified, this wall and the towers at the end of the bridges are all that remains.

6. River.
7. Fields.
8. Farm and hybrid household, 2 hybrid adults (2nd generation) and 1 hybrid child (3rd generation), 2 human allies.
9. Mine.
10. Hangman's tree.

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