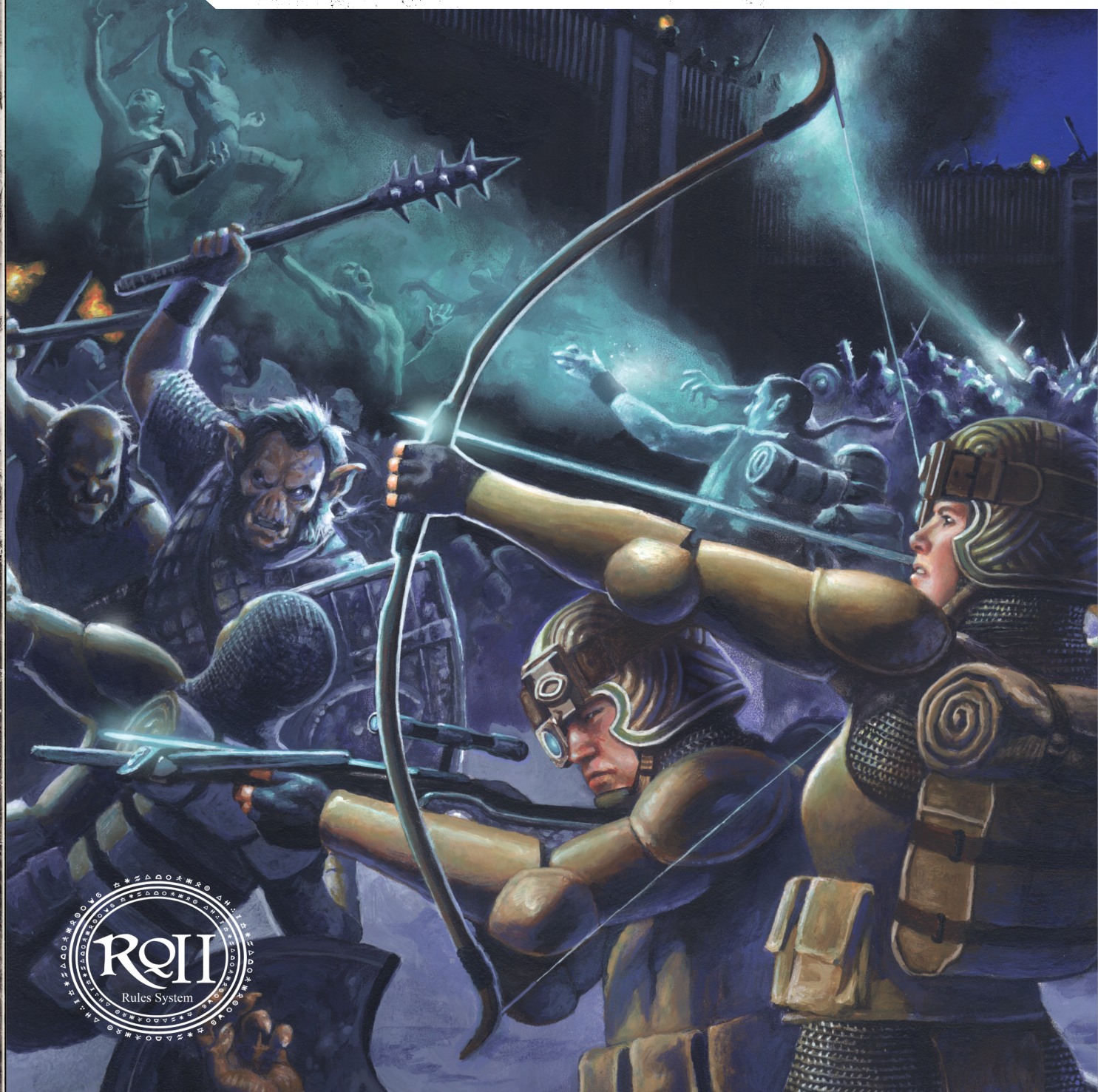


WRAITHRECON

SPELLCOM



WRAITH RECON



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Hansfeld Sithcuning, mage and grandmaster of SpellCom operations, listened intently to the communication being relayed from the deployed Wraith Recon squad. Judging the mission objective was fast approaching, he gestured for a wizard from Intelligence to bring up a magical projection. As the spell formed in the central pit of the chamber, ghostly images gradually resolved into green hewed huts, hobgoblin figures and a squat stone tower.

A moment later the wraith leader's voice echoed around the command centre, 'SpellCom 1, this is Wraith 7. We are in position and ready to call in the strike.' This was followed moments later by a softly sibilant 'Damn'.

Hansfeld glanced towards the young adept manning the Omnicix crystal. After a brief pause she lent forwards towards the communication device, 'Wraith 7 this is SpellCom 1...What is your problem?'

'SpellCom 1, there are Dardarrian POWs secured next to the target. Request authority to clear non-coms from the strike zone.'

The adept looked back towards Hansfeld awaiting instructions. The head of operations analysed the image in the huge projection. About the base of the tower was a series of cages stuffed full of dirty, half starved men. It was obvious why they were there, just as it was obvious that too many hobgoblins guarded the compound. No chance of a rescue without triggering an alarm.

He snapped a quick question, 'Johnus, what's the priority?'

His fellow black robed grandmaster sighed and shook his head. 'If there is a second dragon skeleton inside, then rescuing the prisoners will alert whoever is in command that we've located their secret base. We have to crush it now.'

Grimacing in distaste at what he must do, Hansfeld turned towards the adept and uttered a single word, one which would cost the lives of several hundred men and hobgoblins, friend and foe alike.

'Proceed!'

The young sorceress paled but carried out her order. 'Negative Wraith 7, I repeat negative. Intelligence reports that the tower contains a necromantic weapon of mass destruction on the verge of completion. It has taken a week to manoeuvre you into position; we cannot afford to blow the mission. Thousands of lives hang on this one.'

Hansfeld felt rather than heard the rapid build-up of magic across the chamber. A full Arcana Tactical team from Ordnance had been sitting in meditation, awaiting to perform their part of the mission. Already joined in a sorcerous meta-concert, each individual wizard wove their own strand of power to an evocation steadily swelling to titanic proportions.

From the Omnicix came a faint whisper from a second wraith operative, 'You can't do this, they're our own men.' Then a curse and scrabbling noises. The image in the projection remained firmly centred on the tower, despite sounds of combat coming from somewhere outside the field of view.

Feeling the spell nearing completion Hansfeld barked a warning to the young sorceress to clear her station. As she scrambled away from the crystal, the Arcana Tactical contingent focussed the release point of the evocation through the Omnicix and released its pent up energies.

By the gods it's big, thought the grandmaster as he watched it begin to blossom. Then abruptly the image twisted and Hansfeld felt a momentary nausea as the ground rushed up toward him. Thankfully the noise of the gargantuan explosion was filtered by magical cut offs. Eventually the point of view raised and elevated as the wraith squad leader hundreds of kilometres away regained his feet. A thick column of smoke roiled upwards into the sky, tinted green in the magically enhanced vision.

The silence dragged out for what seemed an eternity, before the grandmaster mimed a cut across his throat and the ghostly projection and audio feed dropped. There were no cheers, no self congratulations. Not even the normal grins of savage delight from the Arcana Tactical team, who normally revelled in such displays of might.

Hansfeld dismissed the mission support staff then curtly initiated the Air Cavalry pickup. There was still much to do before he himself could retire to bed, assuming he could sleep after the last brief glimpse of men – Dardarrians – being immolated in the horrendous fireball. Another memory to exorcise. Perhaps he would join Johnus that evening and they could both drink themselves into oblivion...

SPELLCOM

INTRODUCTION



WHAT IS SPELLCOM?

SpellCom is a supplement for *Wraith Recon*, examining in depth the magical resources of Dardarrick, the Lion of Rardarri.

Although Dardarrick has long been known for its powerful Wizards, over previous decades the kingdom has revolutionised the use of sorcery; organising practitioners of the craft to form several organisations, not only increasing their numbers but also learning to coordinate their efforts to create battlefield shattering effects.

Dardarrick possesses mighty priests too. The Trinity of the All Father, Matriarias and Praxious have long guarded the kingdom's borders against invasions from more belligerent neighbours. These are not the only divine faiths worshipped however. Several minor cults work within the faith, guarding against the lesser known horrors of the world.

This book explores these magical organisations, exploring their purpose within Dardarrick and how they aid both the government and military. Of the greatest importance and influence is SpellCom, short for Spellcaster Command, within whose ranks are assigned the special forces of Wraith Recon. Their surveillance, enchantments and surgically placed ordinance are invaluable tools in overcoming enemies.

WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

SpellCom starts with an in-depth look at the administration and responsibilities of the core organisation, followed by a closer look at the sorcerous infrastructure of Dardarrick focussing how magic is used to direct the nation's communications and transport and describe many of SpellCom's secret installations across Rardarri.

After this is an explanation of the advanced techniques used by the wizards and warlocks of Dardarrick, which give them a significant advantage in the scale of what they can achieve. Subsequent to this is a list of new spells and magics used by the various SpellCom departments, which itself is followed with a list of enchanted artefacts created by the artificers, including large scale transports and engines of war.

To counterpoint their dominance of high level sorcery, a chapter concerning the dark secrets of SpellCom follows, emphasising that no advance comes without a cost – whether physically or morally. Then comes an examination of some of the other cults working against SpellCom from within Dardarrick. Concluding the book is a section on how to use *SpellCom* as a key element of any Wraith Recon campaign.

This supplement should allow any Games Master to massively expand the use of sorcery within his campaign and provide a range of fascinating new locations for his players to explore.

CHAPTER ONE

SPELLCASTER COMMAND



The true power behind the lion throne, Spellcaster Command is the ultra secret organisation that provides the intelligence and sorcery, without which the Dardarrick Special Forces and military would not be able to operate. Behind each squad member or magical artefact lies a team of dedicated wizards who work ceaselessly to ensure the success of Wraith Recon and their nation's survival.

This chapter clarifies the role and utility of SpellCom, expanding the structure of the organisation, its staff and the departments that players can interact with as either wraiths or wizards of SpellCom itself.

THE ROLE OF SPELLCOM

A group of sorcerers selected from the most elite wizards and warlocks in the kingdom, Spellcaster Command is the operation, which ties together Dardarrick's complex military and spying organisation. Answering only to the king himself, their coordinated magical knowledge has revolutionised the battlefield, replacing the previously unassailable might held by regiments of war priests. As such, staff members are primarily skilled and highly trained wizards but also incorporate within their ranks non-spellcasting specialists.

At Spellcaster Command various departments of sryers, strategists, artificers and ritualists all use the unique abilities of the ancient Omnicix crystals to coordinate military responses, provide magical support and engage in espionage operations sometimes hundreds of kilometres away, safely ensconced in their headquarters. This ability to instantaneously observe, communicate and provide magical aid remotely is the secret to Dardarrick survival, which its belligerent neighbours are only now beginning to comprehend.

Spellcaster Command not only aids teams in the field with magical artillery but also provides ensorcelled equipment to some troops before deployment. The finest crafting minds in Dardarrick are recruited into developing innovative arcane items and alchemical potions for the use of military forces; although the majority of these items end up in the hands of Wraith Recon special forces, since some items are too valuable to risk on the unpredictable nature of the battlefield and small surgical strikes can maximise the effect of a well designed artefact.

Not all development is magical. Breakthroughs in the design and crafting of better weapons, armour and equipment are passed on from Spellcaster Command to those guilds producing such armaments for the military. Some of the research supports other areas of archaic knowledge; the breeding of flying mounts for the Dardarrick Air Cavalry or investigations into the deadliness of herbal and animal poisons, for instance.

Of course the sheer range of activities for which SpellCom is responsible is so great that not all of it can be contained within their main headquarters under Fort Brazen. Much of the more exotic research, especially that concerning development of war machines and vessels, is held in other remote locations well away from prying eyes – yet still accessible via the organisation's rapid transit portals.

As can be seen, Spellcaster Command controls the heart of the nation's defence, espionage and even politics. Unknown to most and often underestimated by those few who are aware of it, SpellCom is the lynchpin of Dardarrick. Without their unique skills the Lion of Rardarri would soon be torn apart by the jackals who surround it.

THE FOUNDING OF SPELLCOM

Originally created by a select group of warlock officers from the ranks of the Brotherhood of Magnus, the founders of SpellCaster Command were researchers given access to the first Omnicix crystal. Investigating the unique resonances between the crystal shards, these wizards soon grasped the potential that the communication links could provide, using it to provide succeeding rulers with an undetectable security surveillance, unsuspected by those seeking to harm the kings of Dardarrick.

Centuries later by the command of King Archiveldt, who at the time was trying to break the theological stranglehold of Praxious, a handful of Brotherhood mages who knew the secret of the Omnicix, crafted the first crystal into a ring, which was used as an implement of spying; a small team of wizards taking turns to keep tabs on its wearer, the Heirophant Tomarsson; sitting shifts in complete silence and darkness to observe the manipulations of the high priest.

With the discovery of further Omnicriex crystals however, the small cadre of wizards assigned to observation were redeployed as a separate organisation, under the direct authority of their own commander with the title of Arcanist General. The brightest and most inquisitive members of the Brotherhood of Magnus were recruited into this secret department, and set about exploring the capabilities of the crystal. With their military backgrounds these wizards soon saw the strategic benefits, permitting a constant real time exchange of reports and warnings between far flung commanders. Additional divisions were made for other branches of specialised research, that of spellcasting via crystals and enchanting magical artefacts incorporating the shards.

The first few years were spent operating from the Brotherhood guild house nearest to the Omnicriex mine near Clawspire. Their numbers swelled under the auspices of Archveldt, forcing them to seek a new set of offices. When Tomarsson fell from grace, his genocidal crusade into the Lorn held Claws proving him unfit to rule the Church of Praxious, the military power of the faith was broken and its high temple confiscated. Temple Brazen was renamed Fort Brazen and unknown to any save members of the Pillars of Dardarrick, its hitherto secret vaults were further excavated to provide the headquarters for Spellcaster Command.

This new location proved to be perfect, with ready access to the river for shipments of materials and close proximity to the capital in case of the necessity to send physical messengers. The temple

complex itself was so large and well fortified that the buildings were converted to use as a military warehouse and barracks, providing a perfect cover for the operation hidden below.

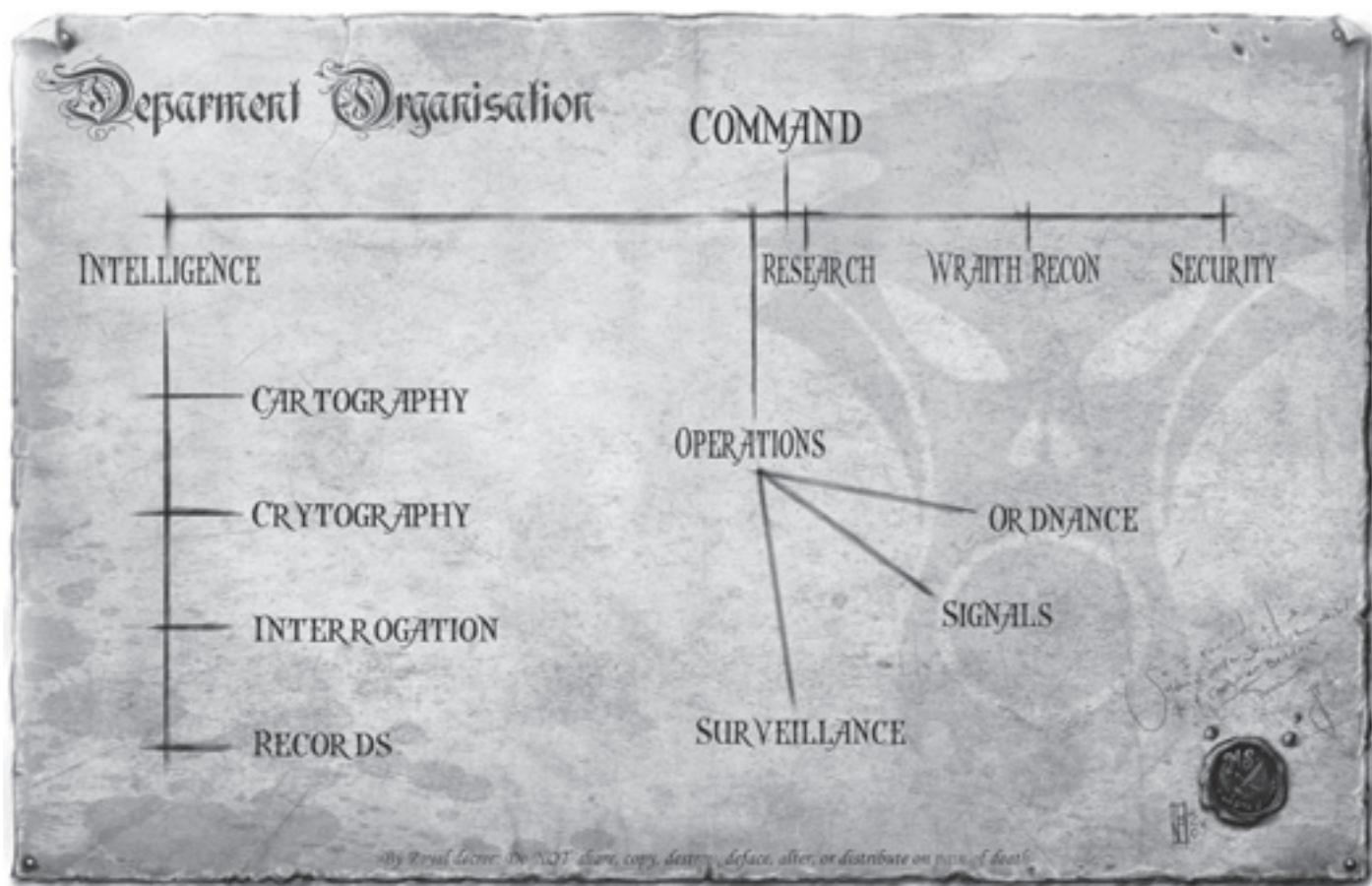
Matteau Raspeng, the Arcanist General, used their sudden growth to create supplementary departments, each one specialising in specific tasks, such as surveillance, intelligence, research, spell coordination and enchanting. This structure has continued to be refined under the Arcanist General's foresighted guidance.

SPELLCOM DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE

SpellCom is divided into multiple branches, each controlled by the highest ranking mages. They coordinate their efforts under the guidance of Raspeng who himself governs the entirety of SpellCom. The organisational structure is as follows.

Command

The highest tier in the organisational structure is Command and Control. Chief is the Arcanist General, supported by a staff of those mages not directly assigned to run a particular department. It oversees the strategic deployment of how SpellCom assets are allocated and utilised.



Below this the organisation splits into five separate branches, each with its own chain of command, reporting directly to the Arcarnist General. These are Intelligence, Operations, Research & Development, Security and Wraith Recon.

Intelligence

The Intelligence branch of SpellCom takes information provided by its departments, analyses the data and tries to predict future acts by those being scrutinised. If signs of threatening activity are detected, a warning is submitted to Command with a range of recommendations of how to investigate or neutralise the potential problem.

Intelligence also coordinates the gathering of surveillance and survey reports. These records are valuable resources with which to prime Wraith Recon teams during briefings. Wizards from Intelligence are sometimes assigned as a consulting specialist during missions where regional or cultural knowledge needs to be fed to operatives in the field.

The Intelligence branch supervises the following departments; Cartography, Cryptography, Interrogation and Records.

Cartography

Devoted to mapmaking and transportation this department possesses a staggering collection of maps, some centuries old, which are often reviewed for clues to ancient, forgotten places. The wizards are constantly working with the Department of Surveillance and Dardarrian Air Cavalry to update their topographical charts but also send requests for Wraith Recon missions to survey locations deep within enemy territory; particularly military fortifications and underground complexes.

In addition to their draftsmanship, the small department is responsible for maintaining magical transportation within Dardarrick, namely the essential portal network and a few experimental naval and flying vessels. They are also in charge of national scale engineering projects, for example designing the plans for the Pierceling Canal which runs under The Claws mountain range in the north of the country.

Most of the adepts and wizards assigned to transportation reside outside of Fort Brazen, in remote enclaves where their vessels can be built and tested away from prying eyes. As sorcerers trained in movement spells are in short supply, the number of vehicles they can operate is severely curtailed. With their increasing demand for magically powered ships, the Dardarrian Navy has plans to start its own guild of Sea Sorcerers but wishes to suborn the department wizards to work under its own authority – an action which will likely prompt an inter-service turf war.

Cryptography

Somewhat better staffed than the Cartographers, the Department of Cryptography is responsible for translating communications written in foreign languages or encrypted with ciphers. They also

Lost Treasures

Unbeknownst to most of SpellCom the Department of Cartography is a veritable mine of information leading to forgotten tombs, hidden temples, long lost treasures and miraculous secrets dating from before the Dawning. Most of the cartographers unceasingly update the modern maps but a couple are charged with preserving the musty archives of slowly disintegrating scrolls. A wraith who is willing to start talking with these individuals about their ostensibly tedious speciality, will soon learn of tantalising places left untouched for hundreds of years and may soon find themselves similarly enthralled by ancient rumours of powerful artefacts hidden in legendary places, which only exist as an ancient smear on rotting vellum.



create their own codes to secure messages sent physically to agents working outside of Dardarrick. Decoded information is passed up to Intelligence as a matter of course.

Most of the work involves long hours of trial and error, applying known ciphers to the ceaseless stack of written material intercepted and copied by Dardarrian agents. Long hours and single-minded concentration on their work makes the cryptographers some of the most boring members of SpellCom.

A small sub division of the department focuses on forgery, creating counterfeit travel documentation, bogus letters of introduction and fake evidence that can be planted on those individuals SpellCom wishes to incriminate. They also experiment with alchemical methods of hiding or protecting written messages, such as the use of invisible inks, slow accumulation contact poisons and incendiary powders, which react with skin moisture.

Interrogation

Whilst not exactly despised, this department has the most fearsome reputation within SpellCom, greater even than Ordnance. Interrogation is responsible for many areas, primarily those of debriefing Wraith Recon teams, cross-examining enemy captives and internal affairs. Although debriefing is a chore disliked by most wraiths and wolfs, it is the latter two that give the department its grim reputation.

Members of Interrogation are carefully vetted for high degrees of insight and slight inclination towards sociopathic traits. Many of the interviews coordinated behind closed doors require a certain lack of empathy. Taught that simple brutality or physical torture rarely results in honest answers, interrogators utilise sensory deprivation, verbal entrapment and psychological stress to lower a subject's mental resistance, priming them for specific sorcery spells designed to extract information.

Indoctrination is a lesser known task assigned to the department. Once a prisoner's will has been broken they are reprogrammed to become double agents or unwitting saboteurs, often unaware of the magical geases planted deep within their psyche.

However, it is in their unspoken role as internal security which installs a degree of mistrust between Interrogation and other departments, most members of SpellCom feeling slightly nervous or resentful in their presence. However no events have yet occurred in the organisation's short history to promote any form of internal witch hunt.

Extreme Measures

Although the Department of Interrogation is careful to keep its procedures behind closed doors, the simple fact that the doors *are* closed promotes suspicions of what happens to captives and enemy agents being 'interviewed'. After several gruelling days inside their chambers, most of those who have undergone cross examination emerge as weary and broken but with no physical sign of mistreatment. Occasionally however, a prisoner taken in never comes back out. A few rumours have spread telling of captives having their minds consumed by horrific spells, leaving them as mindless vegetables, or worse still having their entire personalities stolen by the interrogators who imprint them upon select sorcerer spies. Whatever the truth, nobody outside the department is allowed to penetrate the back chambers of their offices.



Records

Guardian of both the reference library and the mission and personnel archives, the Department of Records is manned by a modest staff of sages; sorcerers educated with extensive knowledge of multiple subjects. As well as controlling security on the archives, the department also attempts to compile new knowledge concerning any subject that might be useful in aiding the military or development of sorcery.

There are always three or more archivists on duty to locate or copy information requested by other departments. Access is limited to those of the correct security level and since the archive and library are magically indexed, it is near impossible for anyone else without the correct spells to find a specific file or book.

In addition, more knowledgeable experts are often seconded to a particular Wraith Recon support team in order to answer general questions about flora, fauna or customs the wraiths might encounter during a mission.

Operations

The second branch of SpellCom, Operations manages the equipping and real-time support of both Wraith Recon missions and entire Legions on the battlefield. This tactical guidance relies upon Omnicix Crystals to give remote sensory information which can be projected for the assembled specialists to analyse and provide warnings or supplemental advice when required.

Operations also acts as a hub for strategic level communications, allowing advanced notice to be issued of impending events such as border raids, the loss of a supply train or even bad weather. In addition it organises the provision of large scale sorcery, up to battlefield scale, to aid in combat situations.

Unlike the more methodical and cerebral Intelligence branch, Operations is often a hive of frenetic activity. Whilst army engagements are infrequent, there are often half a dozen Wraith Recon teams in the field at any time and the demands for real time communications between the highest ranking Dardarrian leaders is a constant demand.

The Operations branch coordinates the Departments of Ordnance, Signals and Surveillance.

Ordnance

Also known as Arcana Tactical, the Department of Ordnance is devoted to the remote tactical application of large scale sorcery. For the most part, this means blowing things up, the bigger the swathe of destruction, the more they enjoy it. Not all of their work is fun and games however. Often their task is to augment, transport or conceal small Wraith Recon teams when faced with non-combat situations.

Tactical scale magic, providing magical artillery for instance, normally requires a coordinated casting of many sorcerers via a ritual metaconcert. Somewhat time consuming to set up, the power of these spells is magnified to horrific levels, annihilating unprepared units in the blink of an eye. It is this less than subtle wielding of power that has made both the Brotherhood of Magnus and the Department of Ordnance feared amongst Dardarrick's enemies. Although not as numerous, the Ordnance sorcerers are far better skilled, which more than makes up for the shortfall.

The department's secondary responsibility is the enchantment of special ammunition used by the Wraith Recon teams or limited rounds of mission specific ordnance for an occasional unique weapon developed by the artificers. The latter types of ammunition tend to swing between polarised extremes; either non-lethal environmental effects or ultra-deadly missiles of mass destruction.

Last but by no means least, Ordnance maintains the magical defences and wards within SpellCom headquarters. With their wide knowledge of spell effects these protections prevent unauthorised subterranean entry and conceal those within from magical detection.

Signals

Perhaps the most vital task of SpellCom is its ability to transmit real time messages over vast distances. The Department of Signals is responsible for routing these communiqués, its personnel occupying the centre of the Operations room, turning it into a bustling centre of activity. Novices sit at the Omnicriex Crystals, relaying memos they receive to the adepts and wizards for passing onto recipients without access to crystal communications.

This single duty has, more than any other aspect, had the greatest strategic effect on the kingdom. The department maintains a complex web of links, allowing news and orders to be passed extremely quickly to those who need to know. Such links being immune to enemy surveillance and impossible to block, are designed to give Dardarrick an immense advantage if a major war breaks out – allowing the Legionary Generals to coordinate their forces, even if the battalions are separated by dozens of kilometres.

Due to the number of communication channels maintained by the Signals Department, it currently possesses the largest staff in the Operations branch.

Communications Breakdown

The deployment of Omnicriex crystals to Legion and Wing Commanders has posed some difficulties. Although cleft crystals allow direct communication between their shards, all the pieces resonate with whatever messages are passed back and forth, making absolute security impossible unless the crystal is simply split into two. For this reason only the smallest second rate crystals are used in this manner. Even so, the allocation of nearly 30 of the Omnicriex stones has drained the reserve of lesser crystals to a critically low level.

Assigning each legion and wing with a dedicated communication channel does not solve the difficulties however. The link only connects to the highest ranking officer, not to the rest of his staff and dispersed troops, which themselves might be stationed 50 or more kilometres away and in the case of Storm Bringers air transport wing, across the whole of Dardarrick. Contact with these requires sorcery cast by Signals adepts, who cunningly use the Omnicriex link to shorten the necessary range of the spell. Since such far reaching magic tends to lack much duration, the sorcerers handling multiple communication sequences during their shift can soon expend their Magic Points, causing a comms blackout if replacement staff are unavailable.



Surveillance

Whereas Signals uses the Omnicriex crystals to maintain communications channels, Surveillance utilises their crystals for remote observation instead. The department is responsible for

covert supervision of important personages such as the king, to guard against assassination or kidnapping attempts. They also spy upon suspicious individuals, shadowing their movements and listening to their meetings.

In addition Surveillance monitor Wraith Recon missions, ensuring that a record of the team's activity remains in case of failure – or perhaps to make certain that the operatives remain loyal to SpellCom. Acting as operation overseers they control information updates and assign a priority level to any magical support requested.

Not all surveillance assignments utilise Omnicriex links, only those tasks that require continual 24 hour observation. Lower skilled sorcerers are given the scut work of sitting in darkened chambers in complete silence, watching through the crystal shard and magically recording conversations or images the observer considers important. The high ranking adepts and wizards have the more difficult task of remotely locating targets and tracking them via Project (Sense) spells.

Research & Development

The third, and perhaps most idiosyncratic branch of SpellCom, the artificers of Research & Development are a group of experimental technicians who conceive, design and build most of the special equipment provided to Wraith Recon. Famed for novel enchantments and cunningly concealed devices, they not only construct personal weapons and tools but also build larger sorcery augmented machines capable of amazing feats. These, however, tend to be devised for war, most of the civilian vehicular enchantments being under the purview of the Cartographers.

Within this collection of temperamental geniuses, the skills of the best wizards are reserved for creating artefacts of great cunning. Since their magical strength is at a premium, the more mundane tasks of mass producing enchanted ammunition or common-garden potions are left to the Department of Ordnance, whose more numerous members and single minded dedication to destruction make them better suited for the task.

Due to their primary purpose of creating versatile enchantments, many artificers study multiple Grimoires in order to build up a diverse repertoire of sorcery spells. If they lack the particular incantation to generate a required effect they sometimes work with wizards of other departments, combining both participant's skills in a ritual casting in order to create the (usually temporary) enchantment.

Security

The fourth branch of Spellcaster Command, the Security Department is tasked with maintaining the secrecy of SpellCom's location and preventing it from destruction or capture by enemy forces. Comprised of veteran guards and weapon masters, openly armed warriors maintain a low profile presence in the secret headquarters. A few personnel are stationed at the entrances to highly sensitive areas and a fully prepared response team waits in readiness adjacent to the portal complex, in case of penetration via the permanent gates.

Queuing for Equipment

Members of the Department of Artifice share a passion for creating specialised enchantments and creating innovative equipment. Each enchantment they create is a literal Special Ops work of art. The love they hold for these items, combined with the need to bind parts of their own magical capability into them, makes the artificers leery of those who mistreat or are careless of their masterpieces. New recruits are always given a tour of the department's workshops below Fort Brazen, granting them an inside view of the lethal weapons and protective devices being developed, often disguised as innocuous objects and most being tested on dummies or unwitting volunteers. The range of items is mind boggling, anything from exploding gold coinage to telekinetically flying poisoned ink quills!

Although the guided tour is conducted in a jovial manner, sharp witted operatives will soon realise that the artificers are in reality giving the newbie a subtle warning of what might happen to those who borrow equipment from the department and fail to return with it – a heinous crime to enchanters whose magic may be permanently bound up into the device.



The eldest security personnel also make up the service staff, providing from their numbers the cooks, valets and any other general domestic help as required. Although they lack observable armament, each is an expert in unarmed combat or carries a concealed weapon hidden within their smart uniforms. Being capable of inflicting significant discomfort on their wards, most sorcerers treat the aged staff with the greatest of respect.

The remainder of security inhabit the converted temple above ground, providing a fearsome obstacle to anyone wishing to snoop around in the cellars of the supply depot which it has become, located as it is at the centre of a sprawling garrison. Under the fiction of retired soldiers granted an easy posting, SpellCom security blends seamlessly into the unwitting troops of the Ninth Heavy Legion – 'The Old Guard' – stationed in the extensive barracks of surrounding the defunct holy place now known as Fort Brazen.

Since the members of Security are tough survivors of countless years of combat, most are weapon masters with a wide range of tricks up their sleeves. This experience is placed to good use, the guards providing the instruction of new Wraith Recon teams in a variety of skills, not just fighting ones. Senior NCOs head training schools for different theatres of operation, some of which are described later.



Wraith Recon

The fifth and final branch of SpellCom is comprised of highly trained operatives who act as the eyes and hands of the organisation, sent out to do the dirty work, which the wizards cannot do from afar.

As described in *Wraith Recon* these Special Forces are effectively SpellCom's own private battalion. Although they possess a separate command structure – their senior officer answerable only to the Arcanist General himself – when deployed on operations they temporarily adopt a chain of command, which places them under a mission supervisor, normally a wizard from Surveillance through whom requests for magical or informational support are made.

Relations between Wraith Recon and the other branches of SpellCom are close with many operatives socialising when off duty, which encourages a more cohesive team spirit – a side effect of having to rely on the arcanists for survival. In the unlikely situation that SpellCom was ever attacked directly, the wraiths would fight side-by-side with Security to defend the headquarters and its personnel.

SpellCom Professions

Profession	Branch	Common Skill Bonuses	Advanced Skills
Analyst	Intelligence	Insight +10%	Culture (Other), Grimoire (<i>Facilitation Folio</i>), Lore (Regional), Manipulation
Archivist	Records		Grimoire (<i>Replevin Treatise</i>), Language (Other), Lore (Any), Lore (Other), Manipulation
Artificer	Research & Development		Craft (Any), Engineering, Grimoire (<i>Libram of Arcane Apparatus</i>), Manipulation, Mechanisms
Artillerist	Ordnance	Persistence +10%	Concert, Grimoire (<i>Tome of Tempestuous Transmogrifications</i>), Manipulation, Meditation
Cartographer	Cartography	Perception +10%	Grimoire (<i>Atlas of Topographical Translations</i>), Lore (Cartography), Lore (Regional), Manipulation
Coordinator	Operations	Influence +10, Insight +10%	Grimoire (<i>Arcanum Magnus</i>), Lore (Tactics & Strategy), Manipulation
Cryptographer	Cryptology	Persistence +10%	Grimoire (<i>Lexicon of Obfuscation</i>), Language (Other), Lore (Cryptography), Manipulation
Interrogator	Interrogation	Influence +10%, Insight +10%	Grimoire (<i>Codex of Coercion</i>), Lore (Interrogation), Manipulation
Investigator	Surveillance	Perception +10%	Culture (Other), Grimoire (<i>Manual of Observational Perspicacity</i>), Lore (Regional), Manipulation
Sentinel	Security ¹	Evade +10%, Insight +10%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%	
		+10% to a Combat Style	
Signaller	Communications	Perception +10%	Grimoire (<i>Compendium of Communiqués</i>), Language (Other), Lore (Military Protocol), Manipulation
Strategist	Command	Influence +10%	Courtesy, Grimoire (<i>Arcanum Magnus</i>), Lore (Tactics & Strategy), Manipulation
Warlock	Any	Influence +10%, Persistence +10%	Grimoire (<i>Arcanum Magnus</i>), Manipulation
		+10% to a Combat Style	

SPELLCOM PROFESSIONS

The following professions are available for creating Adventurers or Non-Player Characters that originate from, or serve in, SpellCom. Use the Character Generation sequence presented in *Wraith Recon*.

In addition to the profession skills noted, all SpellCom sorcerers are allowed to allocate their Free Skill Points (see Adventurer Generation in *Wraith Recon*) to any other Grimoire commonly accessible to an associate department, the Brotherhood of Magnus or the Mages Guild.

SPELLCOM OFFICERS

The arcanists of Spellcaster Command duplicate the grades and insignia of the Brotherhood of Magnus. Save for the heads of each department however, the rest of the departmental members have a very *informal* rank system compared to that of the military. Authority is generally granted to those who have a superior grade.

¹ Security can also draw upon any personnel who have served in any of the Military Professions provided in *Wraith Recon*

Whilst technically an Adept is superior to a Brother, leadership can occasionally be assumed by the lower ranked sorcerer who has more knowledge of the situation or area of responsibility.

SpellCom sorcerers will usually only command those in their own department. However, respect is often given to members of higher echelons allowing a wizard for example, make a polite request of an adept in another branch.

SpellCom Skill Grades

Grade	Skill Requirement	Insignia	Command
Novice	None	No robe	None
Brother	5 at 50%	Plain black robe	Novices
Adept	4 at 75%	Narrow band at cuff and hem	Brothers
Wizard	3 at 100%	Two narrow bands at cuff and hem	Adepts
Mage	2 at 125 %	Three narrow bands at cuff and hem	Wizards
Arcanist General		Single star over heart	Mages

Each branch within SpellCom is led by its own commandant with the title of *Grandmaster* if a sorcerer or *Commander* if a warrior. They hold authority over everyone in their own section including any subordinate departments under their chain of command. Departmental heads are known as Master.

Within the sorcery branches only those with the rank of Mage have thus far been granted these positions but nothing prevents someone of wizard grade being raised to the post if they are considered capable of the job.

The head of Spellcaster Command bears the official tile of Arcanist General. Currently Matteau Raspeng is the first, and thus far only, arcanist general; but if he were to die or step down, the next would be selected by the Pillars of Dardarrick from one of the three sorcery capable commandants.

Arcanist General Matteau Raspeng

Commander in Chief

The secretive and powerful leader of SpellCom, little is known about the ageless mage who was the inception behind the formation of the single most important facet of Dardarrick's military and arcane strength. Raspeng feels a great responsibility towards the organisation, and the Wraith Recon teams especially. If freed from the tedium of administration, he frequently stands shifts in the Surveillance section, personally supervising missions that he considers of great import. Many times it will be the Arcanist General's personal spells that send aid to an endangered team, as he is a powerful warlock in his own right.

The Arcanist General possesses pale ivory skin that glitters in twilight and his golden eyes never betray what he is truly thinking. He tries to wear garments made of silk or satin as much as he can and in metallic colours that he claims remind him of 'home' – a place he has never confided in a living soul. His voice is without accent and he always speaks clearly and succinctly, removing all signs he is from anywhere but where he is standing at the time.

His history is shrouded in mystery, no living wizard remembers when the mage arrived in Dardarrick, or where he came from. As his authority grows with the success of SpellCom, some of the Pillars of Dardarrick and the king himself are beginning to wonder as to what Matteau's personal motivations are, to the extent that Master Tanley Millgrom of Interrogation has been requested to begin a secret investigation of the Arcanist General.

Grandmaster Johnus Andor

Intelligence

Raised in the wetlands city of Southwatch, Johnus Andor began life as a novice in the Mages Guild. The tedium of book study bored the young man who took to performing daring deeds to impress his fellow students. His exploits eventually caused him to be expelled and he took to crewing river boats in order to earn a living. Known to be both energetic and observant, Johnus was approached by a Dardarrian officer requesting informal reports of events up and down the Walker River. Thus he unwittingly entered the profession of spy.

Able to work passages to places such as Torres and Ssint, Johnus developed his covert skills, applying his ever improving sorcery to gather, collate and analyse the information gleaned from his travels. After several decades Johnus had taken over the post of military intelligence in Southwatch, replacing the man who had recruited him years before. From there he was headhunted by SpellCom, invited by the personal request of the Arcanist General himself.

A short, spry man Johnus is in still middle aged, with weathered skin that has lost its tan. Long hours pinned within SpellCom however have begun to wear him down. A man of action he has begun to exhibit a habit of nervous twitching and drumming of his fingers. Occasionally he excuses himself from his tasks to venture 'upstairs' and practice combat with the off duty guards. In reality he spends more time drinking than training and is now dependent on alcohol to get him through, what has become to him, bland daily chores.

Master Davus Deathstone

Cartography

Driven from his mountain home in the western Claws after it was ravaged by an orc warband, Davus Deathstone swore an oath of revenge and set out to track them down. His extensive travels took

him first into the Wastelands, where he mapped most of the Queen's Litter range before picking up clues that the orcs had raided the Blood Ports and stolen a ship. He continued to follow the trail, joining a smuggling ship that delivered him to Torres where he lost the band amongst the endless swamp lands. Three years later a short muddy figure arrived in Saerding Keep after traversing the marshes in a handmade coracle.

In vexation Davus apprenticed himself to the lone wizard living in the town who supported the fort. Driven by his need to locate the orc band he advanced quickly, mastering unusual spells of transport and divination. On winning recognition as an adept, he resumed his self imposed quest and continued the hunt into Lorn, where eventually he located and killed the remnants of the band.

At least, that is what Davus tells everyone. The truth is that he never did find the orcs and after long years of wandering, eventually lost the desire for revenge. He instead turned his abilities to the creation of maps, of which he himself made many during his travels. Unfortunately he has an extremely high opinion of his skills, considering himself the foremost expert on Rardarri geography. Worse is that once asked a question about the inhabitants or customs of a location, he will expound to great lengths upon the subject. On the other hand he and his department are hardworking, always seeking to improve the quality of their charts.

Exceptionally stocky even for a dwarf, Master Davus cultivates a huge waxed moustache. He is quite elderly, his eyesight has grown very short sighted – a fact that he does not like to tell anyone about.

Master Alain Turrin

Cryptography

Born and raised in Graenwich a young Alain Turrin was apprenticed to the Mages Guide in recognition of his magical potential and love of science. Although approached by the Brotherhood of Magnus, Alain did not feel cut out for violence but fell in love with the high art of mathematics, soon superseding his teachers and developing new formulae that no one else could understand.

Endowed with a sages posting at the guild, he ultimately used his knowledge to develop several new spells. Though of little use to most Dardarrians, the newly formed SpellCom saw the possibilities of his work and immediately recruited him to their Cryptography department where he now thrives.

Despite his unquestioned genius, Alain is an uncompromising pessimist and highly superstitious. He rarely believes that he can solve new code problems presented to him but simply takes them back to his office, rearranges his talismans and relentlessly grinds away at them until they are solved. Most fellow sorcerers tend to ignore his dire predictions and simply wait for the success that they are reasonably sure will come.

Alain is easily identified amongst his team, having carrot red hair and green eyes. Only when he talks however are his fantastically wonky teeth seen, a slight embarrassment that encourages him to keep close mouthed in more social situations. Some of his friends joke that it is his dentition that has helped him become such an accomplished polyglot.

Master Tanley Millgrom

Interrogation

A short cheerful man, with a mullet of grey streaked black hair, long nose and odd coloured eyes (one blue, one green), Master Tanley Millgrom comes across as an affable character, expressing an interest in those he meets. The entire portrayal is a front however. Tanley is a sociopath who ingratiates himself simply to bypass natural reservation or suspicion, gaining the trust of whomever he targets with his charms.

Tanley never speaks about his past, obscuring polite questions by changing the subject of conversation or redirecting the inquiry to another, which is wise considering his history of unethical spell experimentation, blackmail of superiors and sadistic use of women for his own ends. The Arcanist General is fully aware of Master Tanley's predilections but employs him because of his razor-sharp, incisive mind.

For his part, Tanley is ostensibly honest and a pious worshipper of the Trinity. He is also an accomplished artist, with his own unique impressionistic style. The pictures mounted in his private chambers however, are disturbing insights into his rather unsettling psyche.

Whilst most of the sorcerers working in the department are taken in by his false personality, a few are growing concerned at the evident delight Tanley takes in callously manipulating the minds of those brought in for interrogation. In recent weeks Master Dezmynd Kluwellin has become suspicious of petty thefts from his section and that Tanley has a personal project locked within a magic shielded chamber off of his quarters. Security has been informed of these suspicions but Commander Zarius has been forbidden to press his investigations further by the Arcanist General himself.

Master Erato Ssthenes

Records

Born on the border between Dardarrick and Torres, Erato Ssthenes was lured away from the faith of Mersmerro by a thirst for knowledge. He travelled up the Walker River, bypassing Graenwich and settling in Rivermarck, which was more to his tastes. He wandered the streets as a beggar, asking for directions to a place of knowledge. He eventually ended up on the steps of a small sages' guild, which employed him as a kitchen lackey in return for teaching him to read.

Erato blossomed under the guidance of an elderly kind-hearted sage who, recognising the potential of the young lizardman's mind, took him as a personal assistant and taught him scholarship, administration and sorcery. Long considered a household servant, the guild was taken aback when Erato passed the qualification test for guild adept, then wizard. This did little to diminish the supercilious attitudes of the other sages, so after his patron eventually died, Erato applied for membership in the Brotherhood of Magnus, seeking acceptance from the other non-humans enrolled in its ranks. His gift for paperwork was soon discovered and shortly afterwards he found himself transferred into SpellCom in command of the records department.

Slender, with scales buffed to a high sheen, Master Erato is an unusual sight for SpellCom. His colourings are a moss green with occasional black tiger stripes over his shoulders, back and legs. He administers the records office and library with strict discipline, treating anyone requesting a book or file with a level of suspicion that nears to antipathy for those who damage or lose their withdrawals. Although he is a lizardman he feels welcome and at home within the organisation, where he is respected for his steadfast loyalty and sardonic wit.

Master Erato keeps the keys to the forbidden library with him at all times, storing them within his gullet (a lizardman trick). Around the department he keeps display cabinets filled with foreign art, with an emphasis on cruder Torres bone-carving work. Anyone who brings him an unusual new exhibit soon wins the lizardman's friendship.

Grandmaster Hansfeld Sithcuning

Operations

An elf who joined the martially orientated Brotherhood of Magnus, Hansfeld Sithcuning was a young adept during the Fourth Lornish War. He was present at the Slaughter of Bloodwater, where he witnessed the massacre of thousands of Lornish hobgoblins, humans and dwarves by the fanatical worshippers of Praxious who refused to accept the troops' surrender. Soon after he took an extended leave of absence but in due course returned to the Brotherhood, being promoted to wizard in the late years of the first Hierophant's rule.

When the situation worsened under the second Hierophant, Hansfeld tried to intervene to prevent the worst atrocities committed by the Brazen Priests. He was arrested and tortured for his efforts, spending several years in custody before the elevation of King Archiveldt gave the Archmage enough political power to grant his release.

Given time to recover physically, if not mentally, Hansfeld was encouraged to resume his role in the Brotherhood and soon promoted to mage. When the power of the Brazen Temple was finally broken, the embittered elf led the forces who captured the Hierophant of whom he had particular hatred. After reassignment

to SpellCom, Grandmaster Hansfeld has become deathly serious. He often uses his position to track down leads to the whereabouts of Tomarsson. Thus far nothing has come of his investigations.

Although the elf is still relatively young, his green eyes are old with cynicism and the sight of too much death. His hair is long and golden yellow, which cascades over his back, making him easy to spot in a room full of black robed sorcerers. One leg remains partially maimed from the tortures inflicted upon him by the Cult of Praxious. As a coordinator of spell assisted military operations however, he remains without peer.

Master Dezmynd Kluwellin

Research & Development

Serving half a lifetime in the Dardarrian Forge of Engineers, Dezmynd has devoted himself to the progression of scientific sorcery. An apprenticeship serving in the refineries taught him a respect for producing raw materials of high quality, whilst his journeyman years were spent mastering mechanics and clockwork. He continued his never ending education by combining magic with crafts, eventually graduating as a master enchanter.

Since being recruited to SpellCom, Master Dezmynd has led the development of novel new enchantments, making breakthroughs resulting in objects of hitherto inconceivable power. His dedication to innovation has created an atmosphere of energetic inspiration within his department, granting those assigned under his purview freedom to experiment as they will.

A stocky man growing bald with age, Master Dezmynd is famous for his irascibility with those who mistreat his ingenious items. Despite this front however, is a considerate man who tries his best to give each Wraith Recon team he equips the best possible chance of survival. To these ends he has begun to secretly collect forbidden sorcerous texts, studying them for new concepts. However, such books are banned for good reason, containing corrupting knowledge of necromancy and worse. Whether the old man can master the ancient temptations offered within their covers has yet to be seen.

Master Oppus Heimr

Ordnance

Master Oppus Heimr is the only hobgoblin sorcerer currently assigned to SpellCom. Formerly one of the top ranked wizards of the Brotherhood of Magnus, his aptitude with destructive and offensive magic brought him to the attention of the Arcanist General who needed to replace the last departmental head, who unfortunately died in a spell backlash.

Since hobgoblins are not normally able to become sorcerers, their culture rather disparaging of the art, how he managed to not only learn this form of magic but also master it, is a bit obscure. Not

the most intellectual mage in the organisation, he has however created several unique spells that have proven to be devastating on the battlefield.

Master Heimr's dominant will is useful in forming the ritual metaconcerts that magnify the department's spells. He does however possess a short temper, which becomes evident if his sorcerers do not meet his expectation of perfection. In fact his mastery of offensive sorcery is matched by a like mastery of explosive invective.

The hobgoblin is a towering specimen of his race, standing head and shoulders above his compatriots, with dark hair and red eyes completing his fearsome appearance. Oppus is noted for his bravery, which goes beyond simple superiority of size and strength. Rather he has often risked his own life overextending his magical powers to save fellow sorcerers when ritual castings sometimes go wrong. In one particular case when a rogue demon accidentally broke free of confinement Oppus threw himself at the beast, wrestling it to a standstill, immolated in flames until help arrived.

Occasionally Master Heimr suffers bouts of sentimentality, inviting other wizards or even wraiths to join him in a drinking session, whilst he recounts memories of the Claws. Why he never returns to his home in the northern mountains nobody knows, leading some to suspect he is an exile of some sort.

Master Mikhel Farddi

Signals

Mikhel Farddi is an example of fate interposing its will over that of mortals. Born a noble, third son of the Farddi line, he had planned to fritter away his time wenching and duelling with the rest of his wastrel peers. However, when his family and estates near Fort Vigilant were annihilated by a tribe of hyena headed savages out of the Wastelands, the Baronetcy ceased to be and Mikhel was forced to seek a profession with which to support himself.

Initially turning his hand to merchant ventures he was finally employed by an auctioneers company, where he displayed an amazing capability to juggle dozens of different bids simultaneously, as well as memorise precisely what each bidder owed. It was in this reduced state that the Arcanist General himself discovered Mikhel and offered him a unique chance to learn sorcery as his personal student. Never one to look a gift horse in the mouth, the ex-noble gratefully accepted and began a rollercoaster apprenticeship, rapidly

gaining experience in the art of long distance intercourse in the role of personal secretary whilst they journeyed about the kingdom. Seventeen adventurous years later, when SpellCom became an official entity, Mikhel was promoted to the rank of mage and given custody over the organisation's communications.

Master Mikhel is a middle aged man, somewhat vain of his appearance. He keeps his facial hair neat, sporting a precise pencil-line moustache and goatee beard. His voice is probably his most outstanding feature, speaking as he does with an impeccable upper class accent. Despite the series of misfortunes he has suffered, the last baron of Farddi remains unconcernedly optimistic; a fact which his department respects greatly. However something of late appears to have disturbed the mage since he is often seen very late at night wandering the halls and corridors. The cause of this apparent insomnia remains a matter of conjecture.

Master Isa Nuetone

Surveillance

Perhaps the least impressive of the mages at SpellCom, Master Isa Nuetone is something of a slob. Never one to stir himself to excessive physical effort, it is rumoured that he only succeeded in his guild rank examinations by casting various Project (Sense) spells and covertly spying on the wizards writing the test papers. Whether true or not, his exceptional mastery of remote observation made his name as a freelance investigator in Graenwich, earning him enough wealth to hire servants to wheel him about in a wheeled iron chair.

The future looked rosy until he was caught spying on one of the Pillars of Dardarrick and arrested for espionage. His defence, that he was actually satisfying a voyeuristic ardour for the Duke's wife and not engaged in treason, failed to help matters. Isa was placed into the deepest dungeon in Graenwich, one specially designed to hold wizards by cancelling out their magic. After three weeks unable to escape outside his own body, Isa was ready to agree to anything in exchange for his freedom. By strange coincidence this was about the time the Arcanist General arrived to offer him a position he could not refuse.

Physically lazy, as reflected by his overweight body, Master Isa once famously remained sitting in a plush armchair, perfectly sanguine as the roof collapsed in his newly excavated chambers. The only harm he took was from a piece of plaster fresco painted with fruit landed on his head. It is this very imperturbability combined with a childlike enthusiasm for scrying, which makes him beloved, his surveillance teams taking turns to keep him reasonably presentable by casting cleansing and deodorising cantrips on their leader.

In truth Master Isa is on a downwards spiral of self destruction. His apparent calm even in the thick of an emergency is due to an addiction to Skreflam Root, a narcotic taken by Lornish shamans to help them enter trances. He takes the drug to supplement the voyeuristic rush he gets from remotely spying on very important people both in Dardarrick and within SpellCom itself. Very soon Isa will find himself in deep water when he sees something that he should be ignorant of and being a judgemental kind of man, level a potentially fatal accusation.

Commander Bellin Zarius

Security

Bellin Zarius is a crotchety old human, grey, tall and lean but with knobby joints that often swell due to arthritis. Despite his advanced years and frail appearance, the man is lethal in combat. Over half a century of combat experience grants him an unerring knowledge of what his opponent will do and the absolute minimum movement needed to counter it.

After serving a lifetime in the legions, Bellin accepted the post of warehouse commander at the Brazen Fortress – ostensibly retiring to a select guard of pensioned war veterans granted baby-sitting duty on the military stores. This is of course a fiction. Bellin actually heads the security department for SpellCom, both protecting the subterranean headquarters from discovery and providing advanced tactical combat training to the wraiths stationed there.

The commander has a violent streak, inevitable in a soldier who survives to his age. Yet he is honourable in personal dealings and fiercely loyal to the Arcarnist General, which helps to mitigate his occasional outbursts. Although the faces of the dead have blurred over the decades, Bellin is plagued by bad dreams about which he tells no one. However, his sense of disquiet has increased recently,

believing that Master Tanley Millgrom may be a closet fanatical worshipper of Praxious.

Wraith Commander Derrall Ruhrk

Wraith Recon

Raised as a common soldier in the 5th Light Infantry Legion, Derrall Ruhrk led more successful infantry missions into Lorn-occupied territory than any other dwarf in the history of Dardarrick's military. Promoted through the ranks, he was deep in enemy territory when Warlord Guntheor II surrendered and the Dardarrian army was recalled. With his unit hampered with serious casualties, Ruhrk covertly remained behind in Lornish territory until they had recovered enough to try to escape to safety. It was this dedication and leadership that caused the Pillars of Dardarrick to choose him to lead the Wraith Recon project.

Sworn to secrecy and given full command over his battalion, he works hand-in-hand with SpellCom to arrange for the various Wraith Recon teams to fulfil the missions that the arcanists have scryed as 'viable influences on possible futures'. He may not care whether or not the wizards and such of his patron organisation are correct in their plans. He is a soldier first and foremost, dedicated to three things: following his orders, getting the mission done and getting his Wraiths home.

Commander Ruhrk is a grizzled old dwarf who looks as though he has seen his share of battles – which he has. No one in Wraith Recon would ever dare think that he is just sitting at a desk when they are out working their missions and the few teams who have been fortunate enough to see him in action due to 'special circumstance' testify to his prowess and call him the 'Lich'. Behind his steel-grey eyes and close-cropped beard is one of the finest military minds and one of the deadliest Dardarrian veterans alive.

CHAPTER TWO

INFRASTRUCTURE



Although SpellCom operates its headquarters from under Fort Brazen in central Dardarrick, this is only one of many secret bases scattered across the kingdom. These serve as out of the way places in which large enchanted vehicles can be built, destructive weapons tested, injured personnel recover from injuries and hostile environment training held.

In addition to their remote outposts are the more significant aspects of their communication and transport networks. These help unify Dardarrick in a manner hitherto thought impossible. Instantaneous communications have reduced message delivery times from weeks to mere seconds, whereas teleportation portals make travelling from one side of the country to the other a simple matter of walking a few paces.

These advances, although limited to the highest military echelons, have revolutionised strategy and will be vital in the near future if all of the Kingdom's enemies attack at the same time.

Spell Levels

Many of the locations described herein are protected by powerful spells. Cast by multiple sorcerers coordinated in ritual castings, these spell *concerts* are described in the next chapter. Unfortunately, depicting the power of such epic thaumaturgy in *RuneQuest* terms can be rather confusing.

To help clarify the terminology, sorcery spells in this section have a new definition – that of *levels*. Quite simply, each 10% of a sorcerer's Grimoire skill grants him one level of effect. So Draxous with a Grimoire skill of 63% can cast the spells from that book at Level 7. Where a casting skill is required to calculate the chance of resisting the spell, assume the original skill is 10 times the spell's level.

Whilst not significant for single sorcerers, it becomes more important when considering enchantments woven by multiple casters.



COMMUNICATIONS

SpellCom has established a complex network of communication links due to three separate developments; deployment of Omniciex crystals, application of the Locate spell and employing units of Air Cavalry.

Omniciex Crystals

As previously described in *Wraith Recon* the pieces of a split Omniciex crystal provide a direct communication link over any distance but only between the related shards of the original gem. All fragments will reverberate and transmit nearby sounds to every other shard, mystically transmitting these resonances into the mind of anyone touching the crystal.

Of more interest to the sorcerers of SpellCom is that the crystal shards also transmit sorcery, again as if there was no distance between the fragments. Thus a wizard skilled in scrying (using Project Sense spells) can observe what is occurring in the immediate vicinity of the other shards using whatever senses he sends through the link.

The most important aspect of these crystals however, is the fact that not only do the shards not radiate magic but their mystic link also *bypasses* any form of magic. This is of great use since it permits secret bases shielded within wards normally preventing magical or divinational penetration, to communicate via the shards. Of course there are still ways of negating or blocking magic in the immediate region of a crystal but only twice in SpellCom history have Omniciex crystals ceased functioning, those circumstances occurring in the ancient jungle bound city of *Tzarkesh*, planned by someone aware of the crystal's abilities.

The rarer, large Omniciex crystals are given into the hands of highly skilled lapidists. These masters cut the fist sized stones, cleaving and polishing them into identical lenses, resulting in between five and nine shards from each gem depending on its flaws. These harmonically matched sets are those that are assigned to the Wraith Recon units. Thus far only 13 of the larger crystals have been discovered, limiting the number of teams in the Special Forces brigade.

Lesser stones are significantly smaller, making them only suitable for matched pairs or triplets of audio communication shards, too diminutive to be used as lenses but large enough to make reasonably ostentatious jewellery. A team in Research & Development are given the fragments to mount into settings appropriate for their intended recipient. The noble members of the Pillars of Dardarrick for example have their Omnicix jewels set into coronets or necklaces of office. Military officers on the other hand are given less pretentious seal rings, which also double as the symbol of authority for their rank.

During the past four centuries, nearly six dozen lesser crystals have been discovered. They are distributed thusly:

- One to King Archiveltdt.
- One to each of the Pillars of Dardarrick – seven to the Privy Lords, five to the Voices of the All Father and three to the Brotherhood of Magnus.
- One to each of the four Legionary Generals.
- One to each of the 21 Legion Commanders (those assigned to the 4th, 6th and 7th Legions are currently MIA).
- One to each of the eight Air Cavalry Wing Commanders.
- Seven currently allocated to covert surveillance within Dardarrick.
- Eight used to maintain Portal links across the Kingdom (six gateways and two infrastructure).
- Five spare awaiting assignment.

The Locate Spell

A unique spell known to only a few select groups in Nuera, this magic allows a sorcerer to find someone from whom they possess some physical body part. This can be anything from toenail clippings to a mummified severed finger. All the spell does is grant the caster a metaphysical linkage with the target but this is enough to remotely aim a combined second spell such as Message. Clever use of Omnicix links means that the caster can rapidly establish communication with people great distances away, shunting the spell through the crystal to save on range requirements.

Due to the necessity for sympathetic body parts, SpellCom maintains a large library of hair, skin and clippings for anyone they are likely to need to contact. These remnants are magically set in amber to preserve them and then stored in the central operations area where they can be accessed quickly in case of an emergency.

Most of the 'Necrotic Library', as the novices like to call it, contains samples from military personnel from the rank of Captain and above. Specimens are also covertly collected from town mayors and other key civilian administrators but are rarely used.

Locate spells are generally held in reserve since they can consume a lot of a sorcerer's magical strength. Unless instant communication is vital, most Legion Commanders simply use standard messengers and scouts to pass orders. If an outlying fort has gone silent or a unit failed to return from patrol, some commanders request that contact be made magically to find out what has occurred.

Air Cavalry

The greatest proportion of important communications is carried by the Air Cavalry. Unhindered by terrain and mostly beyond the reach of interception, the winged mounts can travel faster and further than any land-animal based system. They are particularly useful when accessing outposts cut off by enemy activity.

Whilst not as rapid as a magical spell, AirCav have the advantage of being able to transport written messages, perhaps even parcels, in bulk. The sight of a hippogriff of the 5th Air Cavalry is usually a welcome sight to legionaries on long term garrison duty, since it normally means a mail delivery.

PORTALS

Portals are magical gateways linking two locations together. Unlike classical free-ranging teleportation, which is unknown to Dardarrian sorcerers, a portal requires the departure and arrival gates to be static objects capable of encapsulating the magical doorway, which forms betwixt the two. Both gateways must be marked with magical sigils, which are activated using the Tag spell. These are the inter-dimensional addresses of the gateways, the foundations between which the Portal spell connects. Without them the portal cannot form.

Such extensive preparations limit the versatility of the spell. In times past only highly skilled wizards, who could remotely cast the Tag spell over great distances, were able to activate gate pairs ready for a portal. This restricted their use to localised travel between chapterhouses of the Mages Guild.

Hidden Portals

Other, older gateway pairs exist across Rardarri, their sigils enchanted in times past, long forgotten by the descendents of those who created them. One, for instance, survives between the battered observation tower at Westwatch and the cellars of Fort Vigilant. Unsuspected by the occupants of either end, it offers a potential opportunity for troops from Westwatch to launch a surprise attack on the hyena headed savages occupying the lost fortress... assuming a mage capable of casting a Portal spell was made aware of the link. Of course the same possibility could be used by the cynocs – assuming they could summon a demon capable of doing the same.



SpellCom have taken the concept further, establishing permanently enchanted sigils on a number of paired gateways and opening continuous portals linking Fort Brazen with Pierceling, Sentinel Keep, Southwatch and Riverspire. Each of these gateways has

been enchanted using an Omnicriex crystal incorporated into their construction. This permits a portal to bypass the magical defences protecting the gateway locations.

Travel through the SpellCom portals is severely restricted. Only those aware of the secret HQ are permitted to enter the complex, unless somehow rendered unconscious or unaware of their surroundings. Hence only the top Brotherhood of Magnus mages, SpellCom sorcerers and Wraith Recon operatives are permitted to use the gates and even that is controlled.

To prevent unauthorised access or an attack launched through the gates, they are heavily guarded and incorporate a number of traps, barriers and embedded weapons. SpellCom HQ stations two fully armed and armoured six-man security squads in the portal complex. The other ends are themselves veiled in secluded or hidden locations, generally within a tower belonging to the Brotherhood of Magnus, or at least guarded by members and spells of that order.

FORT BRAZEN, SPELLCOM HQ

Built upon the ashes of the High Church of the All-Father, this fortified structure of stone and bronze was Hierophant Tomar's deathblow to the older faith in his ascension to leadership in 1,055 YBD. Originally called the Temple Brazen, the building is a huge monastery fortress of overly thick walls and bronze doors that cost millions of gold pieces to craft. Although it possesses three upper floors and separate crypts, the majority of the temple's volume was originally devoted to its echoing hall of worship.

Adjacent to the towering edifice of the temple itself are extensive barracks and stables, surrounded by a high buttressed wall, which is more a defensive barrier than a simple boundary enclosure. After the fall of Tomarsson, King Archiveltd expelled the Cult of Praxious from its stronghold but instead of tearing down the temple complex he utilised its obviously military design, garrisoning the 9th Legion in the readymade barracks.

The flamboyantly capacious temple itself is of little use save as a warehouse, being turned over to the storage of army supplies such as stores of grain, clothing, tents, riding tack, medicines, arms and armour. An honour guard protects this equipment, the top floors providing barracks for retired, yet still tough, veterans who have served Dardarrick faithfully all their lives. The main temple building is also protected by dozens of arcane wards, ostensibly to guard against fire and theft, checked and renewed by the Brotherhood of Magnus.

Of course the Brotherhood spells are not just to protect the supplies but also help hide the secret headquarters of Spellcaster Command and Wraith Recon. Hidden far below the temple, excavated into the solid bedrock, are a series of tunnels and chambers illuminated, heated and atmospherically purified by magic. The subterranean complex is reached by a masterfully hidden spiral staircase, which descends from the temple vaults.

Within the complex is a warren of barrack chambers, research laboratories, practice halls, records libraries, debriefing rooms and the SpellCom operations centre. This is where the covert organisation plans, trains and monitors all of Wraith Recon's missions. In the strongest defended parts of the complex wizards concentrate on Omnicriex crystals and several arcane artillery teams remain on constant standby.

A few amongst the Brotherhood think it is somewhat odd that Wraith Recon is based out of the old heart of the Praxious cult but the Arcanist General believes that it makes for the perfect hiding place of something so integral to Dardarrick's survival.

Ground Floor

The ground floor of Fort Brazen is mainly comprised of the vaulted nave, aisles, transepts and chancel. This vast space used to be able to hold 10,000 worshippers. Now it is subdivided into sections containing rows upon rows of storage racks, leaving open paths down the centre of the nave and transepts wide enough for two fully laden carts to pass one another.

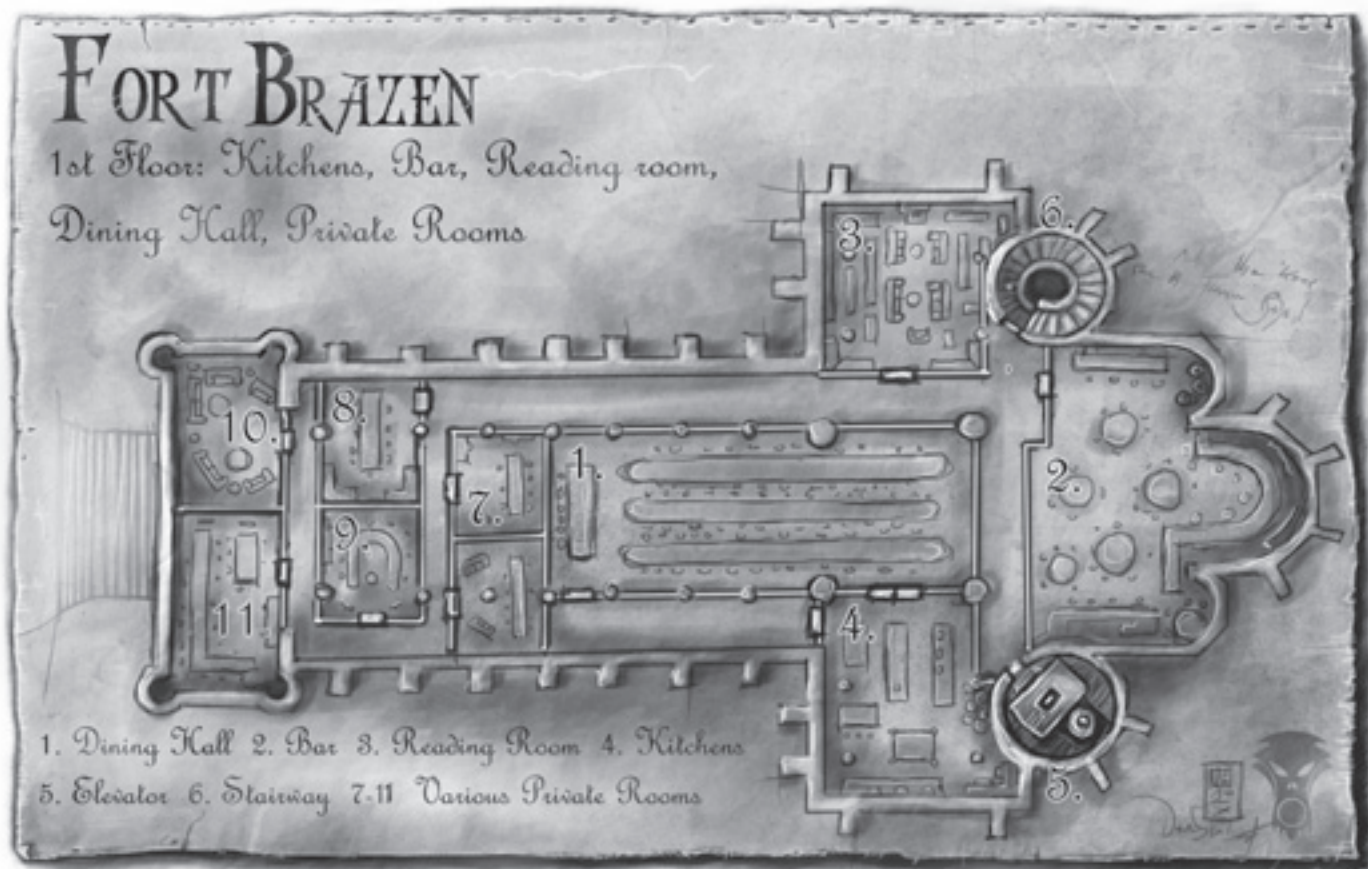
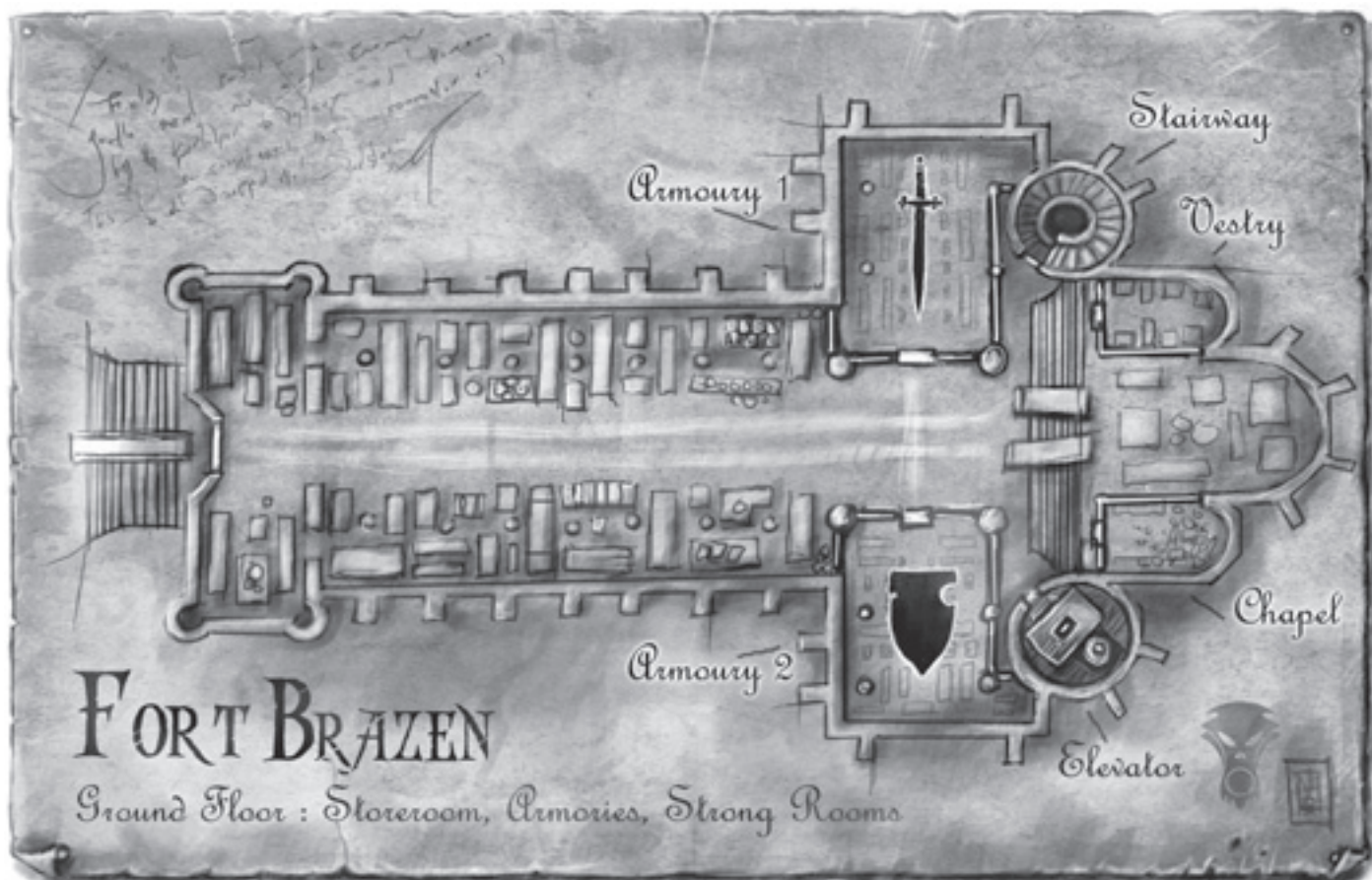
The main doors are impressive for their size, strength and intricate carvings of Praxious chastising the unfaithful. Thirty centimetre thick oak, studded and banded with iron, they are further warded from damage by the spells the Brotherhood place on them. As they weigh so much, it takes half a dozen soldiers to push them open. Fortunately there is a postern in the bottom of one door, enabling easier access. The great doors are the only way into the fort, save for a second entrance on the roof. All the tall stained glass windows on the ground floors are reinforced with closely spaced iron portcullis bars on the inside, which limits entry of sunlight, making the voluminous area dim during cloudy days.

Turned respectively into armouries, one for weapons the other for armour, the transepts have had their original external entrances filled with stonework solidly keyed into the walls. Unyielding oak doors 15 centimetres thick, iron bound and possessing heavy duty locks prevent unauthorised entry from the nave.

Off the chancel are what used to be a vestry and a chapel, which have now been turned into strong rooms. The former holds valuables, such as army pay chests and ingots of precious metals. The latter is technically a reliquary but in reality is used as a dumping area for icons or vestments sequestered from forbidden religions. It is rarely entered save to add more trinkets to shelves already overflowing with items first dumped there when Fort Brazen was confiscated from the Church of Praxious.

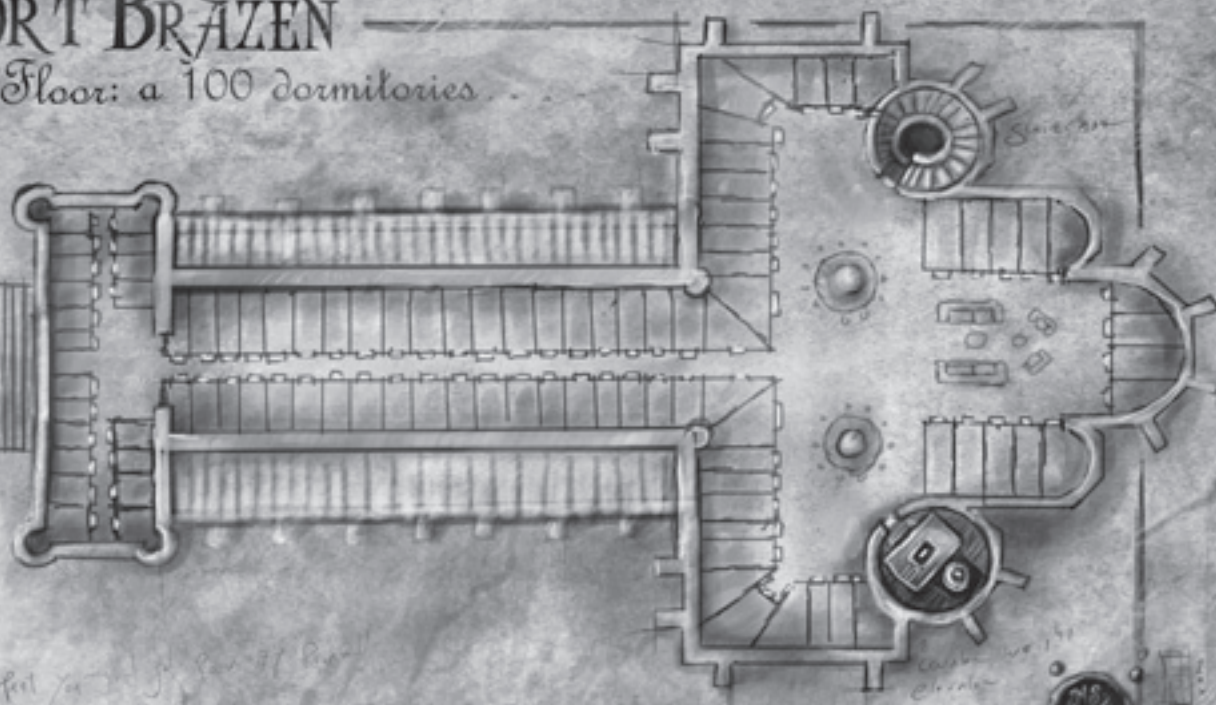
The two mighty bell towers have been converted to more practical employment. One now forms the main staircase to the upper floors, whilst the other is used as an elevator for raising supplies.

Although the statuary has been removed and most of the frescos whitewashed over, the overtly martial design of the temple still remains, even if Paraxious's divine force no longer resides in this



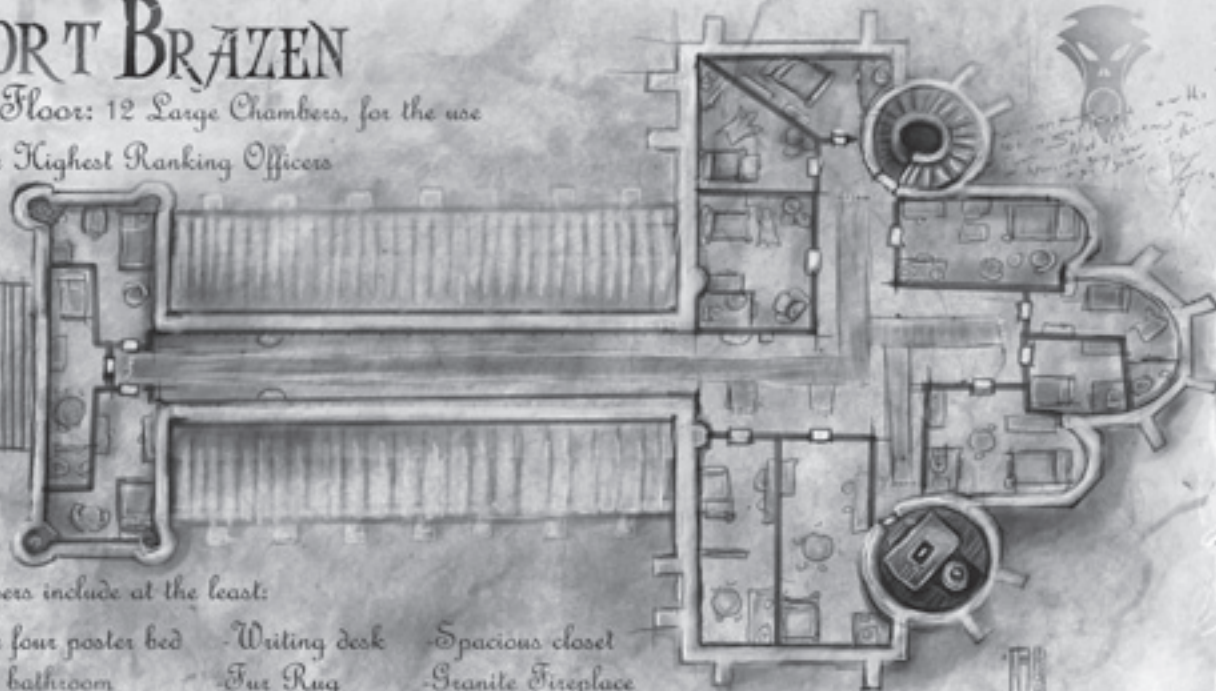
FORT BRAZEN

2nd Floor: a 100 dormitories



FORT BRAZEN

3rd Floor: 12 Large Chambers, for the use of the Highest Ranking Officers



Chambers include at the least:

- Large four poster bed
- Writing desk
- Spacious closet
- Large bathroom
- Fur Rug
- Granite Fireplace
- Oaken ironbound chest
- Goose down mattress

sanctuary. To instil a different ambience, the Fort guards have covered the walls with heraldry depicting the Legions and Air Wings of Dardarrick.

The entire ground floor volume of the fort is protected by a Repulse (Fire) enchantment. Since this prevents candles and lamps from working, lighting is provided by low level Glow enchantments on the ceiling mounted chandeliers.

First Floor

The first floor, like the two above it, is decorated with dark, wood panelled walls, beamed and plastered ceilings and floors covered with expensive carpets. Radiating elegant opulence, these floors were originally designed for the exclusive comfort of the priests who once lived above the temple.

Taking up the majority of the first floor are the kitchens, a dining hall, a bar, reading room (complete with leather bound texts on shelves around the walls) and half a dozen private rooms suitable for meetings or lessons. As with the main temple below, all the religious iconography has been removed; replaced with battle honours and trophies won by individual members of the guard. Many items are fascinating, such as monster skulls, feathered fetishes, war masks and ancient weapons. Each has a small label beneath explaining the provenance of the article and who donated it. For a drink from the bar, most of the guards are willing to tell the tall tales behind how they won a particular trophy.

Second Floor

The second floor is considerably narrower than the floor below it but shares the same decor as the others. However the entire floor is divided up into narrow chambers off a single corridor, each with a bed, chest, wardrobe and a tiny window to the outside, too small to crawl through. At either end of the corridor are several wash rooms for bathing and toilet purposes. The floor holds 100 separate cells, 50 each side, thanks to the great length of the building.

Third Floor

Obviously once the residences of the high priesthood, the floor contains 12 large chambers, each with its own bathroom and extensive furniture. These are now used by the highest ranking officers for their private chambers.

Roof

The centre ridge of the roof is a flattened area hidden behind several rows of faux spires and gargoyles. This obscurity is deliberate, since the flat area is sometimes used by the Air Cavalry to land messengers or pick up Wraith Recon teams without being noticed. All AirCav movements are done at night, often using bright lights in the windows of the lower floors to deepen the shadows of the roof above.

The roof is guarded by at least a four man security team at all times. The bolted door leading from one of the bell towers is as thick

as those built on the ground floor and can only be opened from the inside. Two more security guards are always stationed inside the door and can be summoned to open it with the correct coded knock. Fake knocks warn the guards that the outside security team has been compromised. A bell pull down to the common area on the first floor gives warning to the rest of the garrison.

Vaults

The majority of the vaults were originally designed for use as crypts to inter the highest ranking priests and heroes of Praxious. At its fall however, a considerable number contained wine and beer cellars, or had been utilised as incarceration cells, manacles and chains set into the stonework of the walls. To those who express an interest, some of the cells retain signs of torture or bloody butchery, scratch marks scarring the stones and dark stains still noticeable across the walls and ceiling.

The air of the vaults is cool and dank, although little water pools anywhere as the area is quite well ventilated by air shafts running up through the walls of the temple above. Its atmosphere, however, is a little oppressive and tinged with past horror. Those cellars not retained specifically for alcoholic storage have since been converted to additional barrack rooms for non-human members of Security who prefer (or are indifferent to) subterranean environments, such as the dwarfish contingent.

Despite the expulsion of the cult of Praxious, the crypt areas have been specifically left alone, save for installing several iron gates to segregate them from the rest of the vaults. The locks and hinges are well oiled since one of the empty crypts is the location of the secret stairs down to the HQ complex further below. This respect is due in part to a reluctance to desecrate the graves of the dead and also to retain the inherent dissuasion that the graves of the dead provide against snooping. None of the security guards fear the unliving since Praxious was ever the foe to the restless dead.

Subterranean Levels

Being located underground and home to almost 300 sorcerers and the Wraith Recon battalion, SpellCom headquarters requires a number of special magics to ensure it remains habitable. Of primary importance is the lighting and airflow. These are handled by two concert cast enchantments. The first is a Glow spell that extends almost to the outer walls, leaving the bedchambers uncovered, so as to not disrupt sleep. The second is an Animate (Air) spell, which pumps air from the surface via ventilation conduits hidden within the Temple walls above. Excess air escapes via small tubes leading back up to the Fort's chimneys.

Most of the heating is provided by cycling air or water near the Wrack (Heat) enchantments setup in the kitchens and R&D department. Fresh water and drainage utilise two dedicated portal enchantments connected to the plumbing. Thus in terms of climate control, SpellCom is an amazingly comfortable work environment, with hitherto unheard-of luxuries such as continuously flowing hot water!

The circular design of the base has been chosen to make the most efficient use of the space within its magical defences. If the complex ever needs to expand, there is technically room to extend downwards although it would require a major reweaving of the outer wards. Each level has a ceiling height of five metres.

Interior decoration matches the decor of the upper floors of the temple itself. Luxurious wood panelling covers the walls and floors are carpeted with richly coloured rugs from the Wildlands. The artworks are different however, more inclined to portraits of famous wizards or large landscapes of famous battles.

Magical Defences

The primary defence of the subterranean levels is the solid granite into which they have been excavated. No natural creatures can burrow through the rock and even tunnelling is slow, painstaking work. Buried 15 metres below the surface, the rock provides a barrier to divination as well as physical protection.

Further defences are provided by a Protective Ward running around the outer perimeter wall of the complex, combined with Toughen (making the rock pick-axe proof), Spell Resistance, Spirit Resistance, Alarm (to warn if the perimeter is penetrated) and Veil. These spells are permanent enchantments cast at level 13, by a concert coordinated by mages of the Brotherhood and SpellCom. As if this was not enough, individual departments within the headquarters possess their own additional wards for extra security.



HQ Level 1

The uppermost layer of SpellCom is primarily dedicated to residence. However, it does contain a workshop area to make more efficient use of the heat provided by the forges. Located on this level are the entry checkpoint, common room, stores, refectory, baths, officers' club, library and sleeping quarters.

Checkpoint: Based upon a standard design replicated throughout the whole of SpellCom HQ, each checkpoint provides a combined bottleneck and killing ground in case of assault. The approach is a brightly illuminated, long straight passageway, preventing large numbers of enemies from drawing near unobserved. At the end of the corridor, just before it enters the central guardroom, are two portcullis gates, mechanically linked by excess lengths of chain to a crank operated seesaw. Thus for one portcullis to open, the other must be fully dropped into place. Up to six men can fit into the space between the two gates. The entire corridor walls are deeply carved with runes and sigils, ready to be used for a remotely cast combined Encompass and Wrack (Lightning) spell.

The central chamber appears empty save for a wide desk, behind which sits a polite guard. It is in fact a collection of nasty traps. A solid iron door blocks the single exit behind the security desk. This is 10 centimetres thick, heavily bolted and can only be unbarred from the other side. Every cubic metre of the inner room is under the affect of a combined Encompass and Neutralise Magic enchantment, which negates any spell of Magnitude 10 or below that enters the area or is cast within it.

Around the upper walls are 10 arrow slits with a commanding view down over the chamber and into the corridor. It is from this gallery that the remaining members of the security team keep watch and operate both the crank for the portcullises and the bolts for the iron door. It also contains a number of bell pulls that ring alarm bells in the common room and ops centre. Stationed at some of the arrow slits are four Scorpions, two Ballistae and a number of repeating crossbows with enough ammunition for several hundred shots apiece. In several strong boxes are flasks of incendiary oil that fragment and splash when dropped into the chamber (1D6 damage for 1D6 Combat Rounds, accumulating damage to a random hit location so armour protects only until its AP is exceeded) and phosphorus sticks with which to light them.

The stone wall segregating the inner chamber and the security gallery is 30 centimetres thick. It can only be reached by opening a second iron door located in the corridor beyond the exit, allowing access to the stairs up. This door is kept bolted from the inside at all times during watch duty, the guards inside under strict orders to treat any hostage situation as a deadly attack. Members of SpellCom security are professionals who know that if they are stationed as the desk guard their life is considered expendable.

Common Room: Occupying the central area of the level, the common room is a general lounge for personnel to relax and socialise. It contains a large number of stuffed leather sofas, divans and couches encouraging groups to gather together. Small tables are available for those who wish to play card games or simply to place drinks upon. The ceiling is covered by a very clever enchantment combining the Project (Sight) and Projection spells, which creates an illusion mimicking the appearance of the sky above Fort Brazen.

Stores: A series of lockable chambers used to contain all of the necessary food and equipment required to run the base. With heat and light provided magically, most of the supplies are consumables. Some general goods are required however, such as a great quantity of ink, parchment and paper necessary for the prodigious amounts of record keeping and spare uniforms, bed linen and toiletries needed for general hygiene. Raw materials needed for crafting are kept in the R&D department on the 3rd level. Several of the chambers are kept chilled or even frozen by Wrack (Ice) enchantments.

Refectory: The combined kitchens and mess hall. Food is prepared all day long, only shutting down in the evening when a range of snacks is placed on offer and the cooks retire to bed. Staff can eat at any time of the day, serving themselves and sitting at extremely long tables ornately carved from dark, heavy wood.

The kitchen uses several low strength Wrack (Fire) enchantments to heat the ovens and stoves. Next to the chimneys run the incoming

ventilation conduits, which absorb waste heat, providing the entire complex with warm air heating.

Baths: The baths are a series of communal bathing pools heated to various temperatures. Due to space limitations there is not enough room for separate facilities, so bathing hours are set up to cycle between male and female use. Hot water rises from heating cisterns on the 2nd level, located directly above the Research Department. Since water is not recycled, entering through one portal and vanishing at the bottom of the waste water sluice through another, there is effectively an unlimited supply of hot water.

Classically beautiful, the interior of the bathing section is surfaced with fine-veined marble and frescoes of aquatic scenes. To prevent the often excessive humidity from causing dampness problems elsewhere, the inside walls and doorway of the baths are protected with a low level Repulse (Moisture) enchantment, trapping the dampness within. Water that condenses on the floor flows into the drains.

The baths also contain a laundry room, which hold several enchanted cleaning tubs. One removes dirt, one sterilises and the last neutralises any odours.

Officers' Club: The officers' club is the private dining and relaxing area for sorcerers of Wizard rank and above, although high ranking nobles of the Privy Council or senior military officers may be invited as guests. The chambers are opulently furnished with overstuffed armchairs and foot stools, with lots of nooks and crannies for discreet conversations. The dining hall is smaller but the food is served directly at the table on silver dinner services. Unlike the refectory, alcohol is freely available in the officers' club.

Library: Technically a major part of the Records department, the library is the biggest collection of general books and scrolls outside of the Mages Guild itself. The subjects covered by the collected works range from poetry and story fiction all the way through treatises upon serious scholarly subjects. Since book publication is rare outside of Dardarrick and Lorn, most of the reading material is written in those languages.

Within this chamber is rack upon rack of shelves, broken up with the occasional comfy seat or study table. A Repulse (Fire) enchantment covers the entire room, preventing any chance of the collection burning.

The library has a rating of 65%, indicating the chance that the library has a work concerning a specific subject or question. Adventurers who wish to find a particular book must normally ask the archivists for help locating the text, since the library has no specific catalogue, merely an arcane based indexing system!

Sleeping Chambers: The outer ring of the 1st floor is dedicated to small sleeping chambers. These are tiny rooms that only contain a comfortable bed, a large wardrobe, chest of drawers and a little writing desk. Although the fixtures and fittings are excellent quality, they are too small to socialise in and most of the SpellCom sorcerers

only use their rooms to sleep and store personal possessions. Brothers and Adepts are assigned the smaller chambers, whereas Wizards have more luxurious bigger rooms. There are 179 small bedchambers (2.5 metres wide and 4 metres deep) and 90 larger ones (6 metres x 6 metres).

Every 20th door leading around the circular corridor actually leads to a small toilet complex. These have water constantly running through the bottom of them, flushing waste into the sewage sluice. The toilets are also where the ventilation outflow pipes lead from, wafting any bad smells up and out of the complex.

HQ Level 2

The second level of SpellCom is devoted to command and control. Around the combined Ops centre, comprising of Signals, Surveillance and Ordnance, are distributed the remaining departmental offices providing mission support; these being Command, Intelligence, Cryptography, Cartography and Records.

Ops Centre: Taking up the entire centre of the complex, the Ops Centre is contained within a sunken area of descending concentric rings, which provide seating for the numerous communications and surveillance personnel. These overlook the middle which is often used to display audiovisual projections gathered from Omnicix crystals. Several chambers adjacent to the Ops Centre provide secluded offices for senior staff and ready rooms for up to four Ordnance teams.

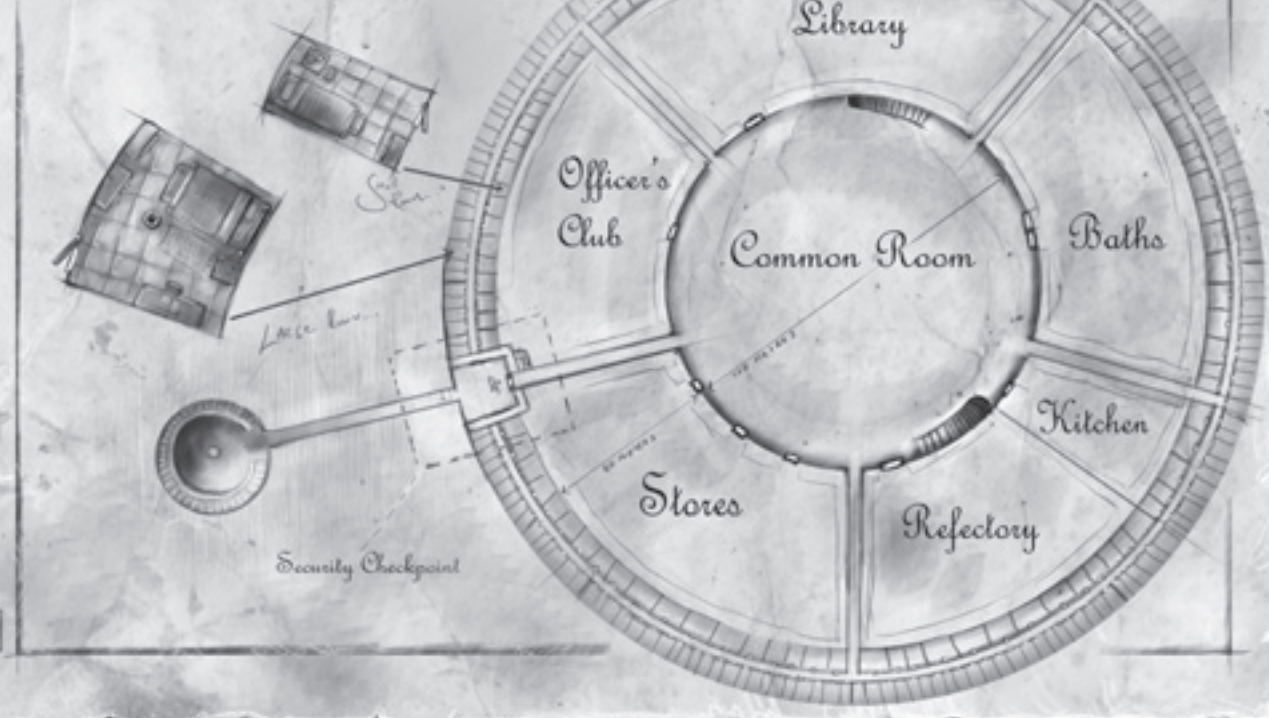
Polished wooden desks are placed around each ring, furnished with a comfortable leather chair for the operator and a cup like indentation, into which an Omnicix crystal can be placed. They are also stocked with a blotting pad, sheaves of paper, sharpened quills and inkpots of several different coloured inks. They are also equipped with a chime, its tone unique to the desk it is allocated to, enabling listeners to immediately identify which desk is requesting attention. The number of tones struck indicates which action the operator is requesting. A single tone summons a messenger, two tones are a call for Arcana Tactical and three tones indicate that an emergency is occurring.

Of the 69 work stations, 56 are assigned to Signals and 13 to Surveillance. The majority are SpellCom Adepts, with Brothers making up numbers and fulfilling half a dozen positions as messenger carriers between desks. Every sorcerer is responsible for erecting their own long duration Silence spell over the desk surface, which prevents any extraneous noise from being broadcast back to the crystal wearer. As long as the observing sorcerer maintains physical contact with the gem they can mentally hear whatever is being broadcast to SpellCom but they themselves must deliberately lean forwards, penetrating the silence barrier in order to speak back.

Such communication protocol ensures that the chamber remains relatively clear of background chatter, allowing commands to be verbally passed between the higher ranking wizards. These sit in large high-backed chairs stationed around the top level ring coordinating operations. Additional chairs are also available for personnel from the Intelligence branch to sit in on missions, giving

LEVEL ONE

most Secret, do not divulge or in any way make public



LEVEL TWO

most Secret, do not divulge or in any way make public

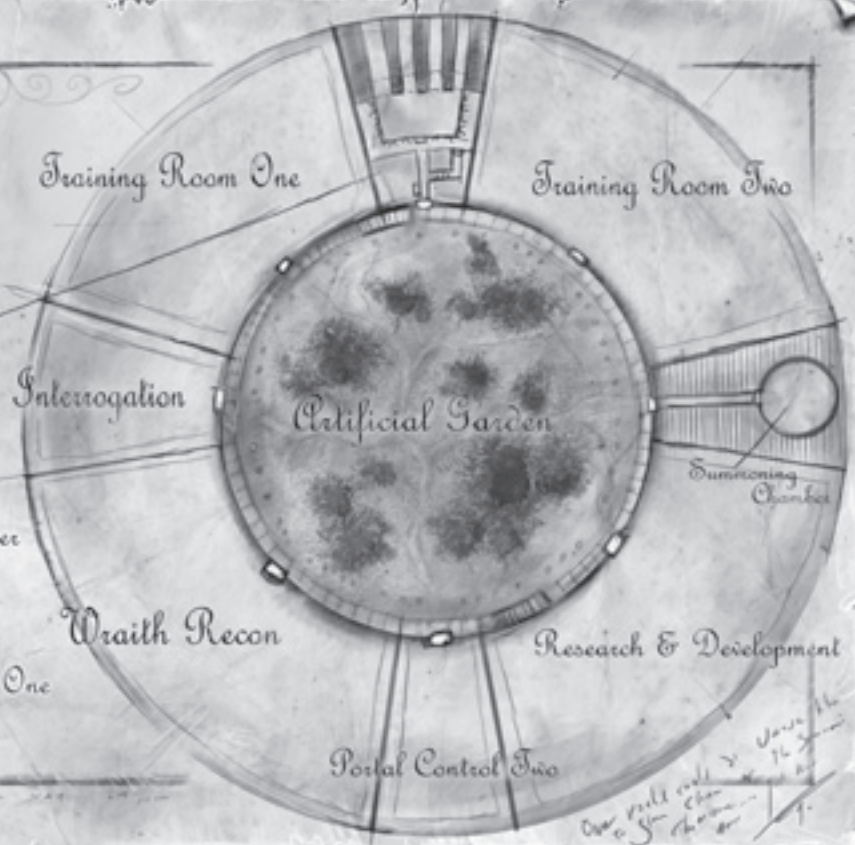


LEVEL THREE

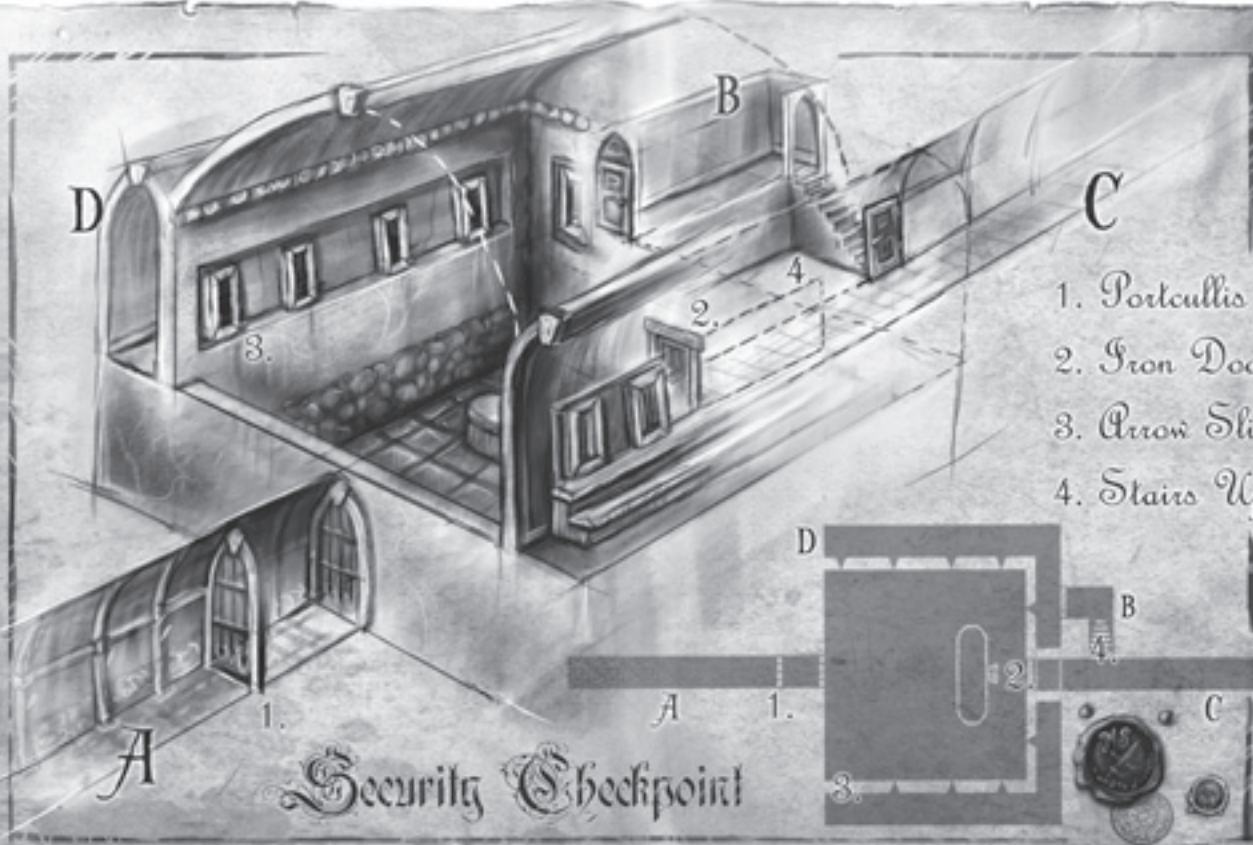
most Secret, do not divulge or in any way make public



- 1. Transit Chamber
- 2. Gallery
- 3. Ready Room
- 4. Portal Control One



Handwritten notes:
 One will only be able to see the chamber
 1.



- 1. Portcullis
- 2. Iron Door
- 3. Arrow Slit
- 4. Stairs Up

Security Checkpoint

advice to the senior Mage in charge of the Ops Centre. To aid him are several specialists who provide direct telepathic connection between the specific sorcerers handling the Omniciex link, the Arcana Tactical team leader, and anyone else deemed necessary, so as to cut out time delays and distractions; and clairvoyant experts who can project their senses through the link and project them as a large illusion in the centre of the chamber.

Depending on the number of Wraith Recon squads approaching mission critical stages or whether a Dardarrian legion is facing imminent battle, usually only two Arcana Tactical teams are held on standby in their ready rooms. Informed of the situation and granted either a direct telepathic link or coordinates of where to target a spell. Although Legion Commanders and Wraith Recon squads can request specific spells, the leader of the Ordnance team is free to override their suggestion if a more effective option presents itself.

Command Offices: These are a series of small offices for the senior mages not in charge of their own department. They are elegantly placed about a waiting lounge provided with some comfortable chairs and a secretary who coordinates appointments and scribes any official paperwork. To one side is a doorway leading to a conference room where detailed strategy plans are made.

The largest office, comprising of two rooms, belongs to the Arcanist General who has his own personal secretary – Ms Goldpfennig, a charming female warlock who is an excellent administrator. She sits in the outer office preventing unauthorised access and flirting with the occasional Wraith summoned to see the big boss. Within the inner office, which is closed off with a red leather upholstered solid steel door, is a rather spartan chamber lacking the nominal collection of strange art and trophies other mages accumulate. Instead the walls are simply panelled and a thick rug covers the floor.

In reality the carpet and panels cover hundreds of carved sigils, pre-carved in case the Arcanist General needs to cast a powerful spell with little or no preparation time. Also concealed in the wall behind his desk is a gateway, permanently enchanted and veiled so as to provide his own personal portal, its existence secret and destination unknown.

Intelligence Department: Similar to the command offices of the most senior SpellCom staff, Intelligence is a collection of modest administrative rooms assigned to the study and extrapolation of information provided by its sub departments. Each chamber specialises in a different geographical region, analysing news, troop movements and local politics, holding between three and six personnel headed by a sorcerer of Wizard rank. The largest chambers are of course dedicated to Lorn, Torres and the Wildlands but other sections exist covering smaller polities or more esoteric information such as sea trade or religions. A private office is granted to the mage in charge of the branch, who collates the reports submitting those which need further investigation or direct action to the chiefs of command, the nickname for the mages the Arcanist General uses as trouble shooters.

Cryptography Department: Although it possesses the fewest staff of all the departments, the nature of the work attracts prickly geniuses who need to be carefully segregated in order to give them the peace and quiet needed to apply hundreds if not thousands of different ciphers. Thus the layout of this section is an unimaginative collection of narrow corridors with a dozen bland cubicles, each one occupied by a single sorcerer and large blackboards on every wall.

Deeper within Cryptography is the forgery department, which takes up the lion's share of the department's space. More akin to a scriptorium, the huge hall is filled with hundreds of different types of paper, parchment, waxes, inks and even ribbons. An entire section is given over to the copying and creation of false seals.

Only the departmental head rates his own office, which is filled with pot plants and soothing art since it more often acts as a place of conciliation between irate cryptographers.

Cartography Department: Another department with large space requirements, almost half of the volume of the Cartography Department is devoted to massive chambers, the floors of which are taken up with scale models of topographical maps. Although impressive in their detail and of great aid to actually visualise paths and views, especially across mountainous regions, they do suffer the distinct problem of requiring a fly spell to move over them without causing damage.

The remainder of the department is divided between a hall for illustrating or copying maps and secure stone chambers using Repulse (Fire) and Abjure (Decay) enchantments to preserve thousands of atlases, charts and maps. A small chamber abutting the drawing hall is reserved for sorcerers or Wraith Recon squads who wish to study any of the documents the department keeps.

Records Department: These ultra secure archives are protected by a swathe of enchantments set up by the wizards of the department. The entrance leads into a small cul-de-sac, a bare room in which there are two iron doors and a tiny iron shuttered window. Both this chamber and those on the other side of the partitioning stone wall are subject to a Neutralise Magic enchantment, to prevent magical influence of the staff or direct manipulation of the doors, which are barred and can only be opened from the inside.

Behind one door is the request office and access deeper into the department. Behind the other door is a reading room, which itself is further blocked off from the rest of the section by a second similar iron door in the far wall.

Requests for records must be submitted through the window and are double checked against lists of personnel permitted access. Records are never allowed to leave the department, unless a mage authorisation grants issue of a copy. Thus to perform research on original documents SpellCom staff have to enter the reading room where the material is brought to them for study; whilst being politely kept under the eye of a staff member.

Beyond these two rooms is the copyists hall where sorcery enhanced scribes can make up to a dozen duplicates of anything they are ordered to, animated quills mimicking the deft strokes of the sorcerer maintaining the spell. Other magics are utilised, transcribing audio or visual records into neat precise text and illustrations. At one end of the hall is located the office of the department head. This overlooks the one and only access into the records section proper.

The archives are warded with a number of shielding magics, the ubiquitous Repulse (Fire) and Abjure (Decay) enchantments to protect against flames and mould. There is also an Alarm, Spell Resistance and a combined Blind and Trigger spell on the iron door to remove the sight from those who are not authorised wizards or mages. Behind a door ensorcelled with Conceal and Obscure is the hush-hush library, in which all the forbidden tomes, grimoires and books of ancient secrets are squirreled away. All these enchantments are created at level 13 and consume most of the commanding mage's magical strength.

The Hush-hush Library

Due to the nature of the texts contained within the Hush-hush Library, it has its own additional wards; Veil, to prevent famous grimoires being traced within, and Banishment, to forbid the entry of demonic entities which might be drawn to the books.

A number of terrible works are stored inside, books which should be destroyed for their amoral or diabolical content but kept safe in case the secrets contained within will prove necessary to master in the future. This is something of a time bomb, as eventually a Wizard or Mage will become tempted to read the horrible things, potentially corrupting themselves in the process.

Most of the volumes are concerned with necromancy, demonology, plagues, time travelling and ways to achieve deification.



HQ Level 3

The deepest level of SpellCom is given over to Portal control, the department of Interrogation, Research & Development and Wraith Recon.

Portal Control: Similar in its depth of protection to the checkpoints elsewhere within the complex, Portal Control is especially well guarded since it potentially offers direct access to the heart of SpellCom HQ. To bolster the defences, two six-man security teams guard this area, one standing sentinel and the other on standby in its ready room.

The portals are clustered into two separate groups. The first handles all traffic through the permanently active portals to Brotherhood of Magnus guildhouses in Pierceling, Sentinel Keep, Southwatch and Riverspire. The second complex is magically barred and has its own wardens, enchanted automatons created by Research and Development. It contains the more secret gateways to Kasim's Doom and Godsholme, neither of which is known to the King, his Privy Council and the high priesthood of the All Father. These gateways are activated on a weekly basis, thus no permanent portal exists, although Omnicrystals are embedded within them.

This segregation is important for reasons of strategy and practicality. It firstly prevents the entire base from being cut off if one of the portal intersections is invaded and held by the enemy, an event more likely to occur via the permanent portals. Secondly it allows the rapid redirection of cross-Dardarrick travellers without having to fully clear the security controls, which also improves security *if* someone normally forbidden portal access is required to use the city gateways.

Each gateway is built at the end of a long narrow tunnel, set against solid stone. Anything exiting the gate triggers an Alarm spell to alert the security guards to incoming travellers. Just in front of the stone dolmen or mirror are groves in the walls and ceiling, which allow a solid steel portcullis to descend from the roof. This metal slab can be dropped in an emergency, sealing off the activated portal and held in place by its own immense weight.

The corridors themselves are covered with permanent Neutralise Magic enchantments cast at level 10. At the other end of the passageway is a similar airlock style arrangement of seesawing portcullises (bars this time to enable sentries to look down the corridors), which enter the same intersection. From here those in transit to another portal may simply present their identification and authorisation, before stepping directly into whichever passageway leads to their ultimate destination.

The transit chamber is similar to the other subterranean checkpoints, in that it is sealed from outside and its interior is covered by murderous arcs of crossfire from arrow slits located in an external upper gallery. However, to provide additional firepower, some lower arrow slits are positioned so that they look directly down the passages. These bunkers have ballistae located behind iron shutters, provided with a range of non-magical ammunition, such as hollow glass bolts full of acid or inflammable oil, which ignites with air; as well as normal heavy bolts.

Half of a security team, namely three men, are stationed in the transit chamber to greet travellers or provide the first line of defence. The remaining three are located in the outer section, controlling the portcullis winches and can man the siege weapons in case of attack. The second team remain in a ready room beyond this section. They can quickly be summoned to reinforce the shooting gallery by a bell pull, or in dire circumstances, begin a fighting retreat holding up invaders who manage to break all the

way through the transit chamber. Several large emergency chimes, one-use Alarm enchantments and single use level 10 Wall spells line the exit corridor into the central vestibule.

Research & Development: The largest department in terms of space, rather than personnel, Research & Development is where the creative enchantment and engineering geniuses end up. Granted a massive budget, R&D spends most of its time designing military equipment whether it be weapons, vehicles or cunning gadgets for espionage.

The entire section is a large open-planned hall, supported here and there by pillars and short walls. A line of small offices line one wall, used by those requiring a little peace and quiet to conceive new ideas. Along the opposite wall are storerooms full of raw materials from which their equipment is made, such as a range of metals, woods, leathers, ivories and so on, much of it exotic in nature. For example, here can be found substances that are almost impossible to find anywhere else in Dardarrick such as dragon bone, giant's hair, sea serpent ichor and even phoenix feathers.

Along the far wall are a number of enchanted forges that are used for metalwork, their chimneys running through the stonework of the rest of SpellCom on the way to the surface, providing heating. The smithing areas are partitioned off with Silence enchantments to cut down on noise.

Another walled section is the Firing Range where new magical weapons are tested, using Wraith Recon volunteers to give the articles a thorough appraisal. A number of alchemists also labour enthusiastically concocting new salves, poisons and explosives. For safety reasons explosives are tested in the Training Rooms where accidental damage can be limited.

The whole department gives a feeling of frenetic progression, as if a group of enthusiastic children were given free rein to indulge in any mad experiment they liked. Perhaps this is not so far from the truth, since anyone not employed in the department often risks life and limb transgressing its manic chambers.

Wraith Recon: Little more than a barracks and support area for the Wraith Recon battalion, this section is often rather quiet due to nearly half of the personnel being on deployment.

About a third of its volume is taken up with six-man bunk rooms, one apiece designated for each Wraith Recon squad and the others used by support staff, mainly training specialists, unassigned Wolves or medically retired Wraiths who cannot be assigned missions due to serious maiming. These fill in as orderlies, fetching meals or doing the squad's laundry for them.

In the remaining sections are located the Wraith Commander's private office, which adjoins his bedchamber, an armoury for the Wraiths' personal equipment, a briefing room in which teams are given mission outlines and a private common room for rest and relaxation. Although Wraiths are technically allowed free run

of the common areas on level 1, their assignments often involve killing and murdering, which forms a certain reserve or stigmatism between themselves and the sorcerers. Whilst relations are friendly enough between the branches, certain people cannot overcome a feeling of discomfort in their presence, so unless celebrating some significant victory, the Wraiths tend to restrict themselves to the lower levels.

Last, but by no means least, the Wraith Recon section possesses a small medical centre. The staff consists of a combination of skilled healers headed by a trusted priestess of Matriarias. Although their services are normally more often required by the wraiths, the medical personnel also serve the health care needs of the rest of SpellCom.

Interrogation: A small but very cagey department, Interrogation remains closeted on the 3rd level for several reasons. Primary amongst these is the fact that prisoners brought into the complex normally arrive via portal, in order to keep the location of SpellCom secret. Keeping the debriefing rooms close to the gateways prevents captives from observing anything more than required, in case they are not properly sedated when transported in.

Secondly, although most of the SpellCom personnel are aware of the sometimes questionable tasks they coordinate, few really want to know how exactly the department extracts valuable information from their 'guests' or what happens to them afterwards. Out of sight is out of mind, so the department offices are squirreled away on the lowest level. Many dark rumours suggest the remote location prevents the rest of the complex from hearing the screams of those being tortured behind their doors.

There is some degree of circumstantial evidence to back up the gossip, as the individual interrogation rooms are actually enchanted by Silence spells, although this is explained as more to prevent eavesdropping than quieten interrogation victims. Most cross examinations are mental cat and mouse games utilising magic to pick up on subtle clues. Rarely is physical torture ever resorted to.

Since the department is also responsible for internal security, they also check all mail arriving at and leaving the base. Dubious messages or unusual activities may sometimes result in an invitation to come and chat. Sorcerers under suspicion are often covertly followed when given furlough to double check their movements and activities.

Within the small area devoted to it are half a dozen shared offices for its few staff, several interrogation chambers and a gaol, able to hold up to 15 prisoners in isolation from one another.

Training Rooms: Three separate chambers, two of these have been enchanted with combined Phantasm spells so as to recreate terrain or an environment necessary for a training mission. When in use a sorcerer normally controls the illusions so that they respond realistically to the occupants.

Deeper Secrets?

Interrogation has two secrets of its own, that thus far, have managed to remain clandestine. Both are enchanted with level 14 Veil spells, in case tales of their existence leak outside the department.

Beyond the small collection of offices, isolation cells and interrogation rooms is an ultra-secure area, which nobody save for the departmental wizards is permitted to enter. Inside the heavily warded chamber is a device appearing like a spherical cage, formed from vertical metal bars. Within is a high backed armchair with complex looking magical equipment mounted over the head region. What the device does is unknown to any but the wizards but the last Wraith Recon team who arrived for debriefing swore that before they were unexpectedly hustled out, they heard strange warbling noises combined with the sound of squeaking metal and heavy gears.

Nearby is a tiny room kept locked at all times. No larger than a broom cupboard, it is completely empty save for an old rug on the floor. However, under this is a heavy wooden trapdoor, which is enchanted with a level 23 Toughen spell. What lies underneath this is unknown, especially considering that SpellCom is only supposed to possess three levels.



These specific chambers are normally booked by Wraith Recon and the Department of Ordnance to perform specific exercises in preparation for future operations. Their walls are heavily augmented with Toughen spells so that they can resist heavy duty destructive magic cast within. However, due to their practicality, the rooms are also used by sorcerers of the Department of Cartography to give detailed renditions of manmade structures and Alchemists from R&D to test explosive concoctions.

The third chamber is kept magically locked, as it contains numerous summoning circles and protective wards to practice demonology. Only specialist members of Ordnance are ever allowed to enter.

SpellCom Enchantment Commitments

As can be seen in the previous descriptions, SpellCom has a great number of enchantments built into its structure and those of its other complexes. The power for these creations has to be drawn from the personnel of SpellCom itself, which is a considerable drain on staff members.

Since the higher skilled sorcerers create more potent enchantments, it is primarily the higher ranks who shoulder the burden of these sacrifices. The Arcanist General's plan is that in successive

generations, new sorcerers will not need to invest so much of their own magical strength as the wards about SpellCom and its other bases will have already been formed.

In general, members of SpellCom devote a proportion of their POW into permanent enchantments according to the following list.

Brothers donate none if not members of Ordnance.
Adepts donate one quarter of their POW.
Wizards donate one third of their POW.
Mages donate one half of their POW.

OTHER SECRET BASES

Besides its headquarters below Fort Brazen, Spellcaster Command maintains several other secret locations. Built in places hard to reach on foot, they are normally equipped with an enchanted gateway so that they can be reached by portal.

Storm Crag

Located about 40 kilometres away from Pierceling, Storm Crag is found nestled high-up in a narrow, sea battered ravine along the eastern cliffs of Salt Bay. The base has been magically hollowed out into the cliff face. It has two purposes. The first is to provide sea-based training for Wraith Recon units. The second is the construction and testing of enchanted sea going vessels.

Storm Crag Magical Defences

The illusion that covers the sea level and sub-sea level entrances is a complex combination of Phantom (Sight) and Phantom (Touch) bound into a Protective Ward and covered with an Obscure spell to hide the magical emanations. Anyone approaching within 20 metres is subject to the illusions and must resist them. Above water it merely suggests the presence of further rocks just under the surface, which would rip the hull out of any boat attempting to negotiate the small channels between the teeth. Under the very murky water the image is of a solid shelf of natural rock disguising the existence of the rift, combined with a steady current commiserate with the visual illusion.

The spells woven into the permanent enchantments have the following power: Level 12 Phantom (Sight), Level 12 Phantom (Touch), Level 20 Obscure and Level 20 Protective Ward.



The bottom of the firth is just wide enough for a ship yard with enough space to moor a single vessel but its entrance is a tricky labyrinth of jagged, tooth like rocks that jut up out of the surf and

protect the inlet from pounding waves. This dangerous entrance is also covered by an illusion spell, making it appear even more formidable and incidentally hiding any ship currently at anchor within. The illusion extends underwater as well to dissuade any inquisitive sharkfolk.

Storm Crag has several sections distributed up from the bottom of the sheer cliff. All are excavated inside the solid rock of the bluff, granting some protection from the often foul weather and hiding the base from prying eyes.

The top of the complex is a sheltered bowl near the top of the towering cliffs, which is used as a wyvern landing area. A natural cave leading back under the vertiginous rock face is used to house mounts that arrive bearing messengers or guests. Stout doors, camouflaged as grey rocks disguise the entrance. Inside the short tunnel several sets of heavy curtains help cut down drafts and insulate the small grotto, which is additionally provided with charcoal burning braziers to keep the stall warm.

Also present to one side of the landing hollow is the Storm Crag gateway, whose sigils link it to its twin at Pierceling. The gateway has the appearance of a lopsided dolmen formed from three roughly hewn stone blocks. It looms grey and brooding against the cliff face, unrecognisable from the air unless the flyer comes close enough to see the engraved runes. A faint worn path leads from the megaliths into a narrow rift in the wall of the bowl. It descends a tight series of salt covered steps to a reinforced iron door hidden from view by an overhang.

This entrance has no outside handle and is further strengthened with iron bars, making it nearly impossible to break down physically. Nobody stands guard on the door but a bell pull installed next to it connects to a chime in the living quarters, enabling visitors to ring for someone to let them in. Next to the door is a little hollow cut into the rock and covered with a piece of seal skin. Large enough for two people to snuggle tightly together, within is stored an emergency kit comprising of half a dozen thick blankets, a large flask of spirits, meat jerky, sweetened biscuits, dry clothing, candles, a tinderbox and a high pitched horn. This is left here in case the bell pull breaks, leaving a traveller to a night in potentially fatal weather conditions.

Behind the iron door is a short passage ending in a spiral staircase. These stairs lead all the way down to the bottom of the cliff. The next level down however is the living quarters of the wizards and craftsmen who work here. A small kitchen provides food throughout the day, providing hot drinks and soups to keep staff warm against the chill. Smoke from the cooking fires and common room chimneys is cleverly piped out to the parts of the cliff face that deflect the strong prevailing winds downwards, carrying the faint smell of burning charcoal out to the sea. An enchanted siphon in the cooking area magically removes salt from any water pumped through it, converting it to fresh water.

The level contains 26 snug bedchambers, each room double occupied save for the one assigned to the commander of the base. A

dormitory is set up for temporarily visiting guests, holding enough bunks to sleep a further dozen in compact comfort. Although the main rooms and corridors are covered with thick rugs, a slowly numbing cold penetrates the carpeting, not helped by the omnipresent dampness the floor coverings seem to suck up. Unlike the SpellCom headquarters, most of Storm Crag is lighted with whale oil lamps. These provide a soft warm light but fail to dismiss the shadows, which flicker constantly when the winds rise.

Only the seaward side of the living quarters possess windows. These however have both inner and outer shutters, the outside ones covered with a layer of salt crystals deposited from the spray thrown up by waves crashing onto the bottom of the cliffs. Most of the time the chill of the wind forces the windows to be tightly closed but sometimes, when the weather is good, they are thrown open to let sunlight flood into the dark chambers.

A staircase leads up from the common room to several watch posts above. The corridor has several air tight doors to prevent draughts blowing back into the living quarters, since the watch posts are open to the elements. Glass cannot be used as it could reflect light and reveal the presence of the base. In an antechamber before the viewing points are racks of oilskins and a large brazier for warming sentries. The observation stations themselves are little more than small caves with a horizontal slot cut into the wall, granting a bird's eye view of Salt Bay. Each post has notebooks for recording ship movements and bell pulls to alert the commander in case of an emergency.

Below the living quarters are the stores. These comprise of the provisions and supplies needed to keep the base personnel fed, clothed and warmed for six months. Isolated from one another, the small rooms contain a wealth of various bits of equipment, from spare lamps to boot laces. Most of the food is grain, dried meats and sweetened preserves. Salted food is avoided since the whole environment leaves a salty tang in the mouth. The stores also contain copious supplies of hard alcohol, which is consumed in large quantities by the workforce, especially during the winter months. It takes a huge amount of materials to keep the base running, necessitating a supply ship to visit twice a year to restock. Several cats prowl the stores, keeping the occasional rats that arrive with each new delivery under control.

From the stores the circular stairs descend nearly 80 metres to the sea caves. A second shaft also exists, containing a small lift that can be driven by Actuate spells. This eases the work of transferring goods up to the storage level.

At the bottom of the bluff are several sea caves. One is open to the narrow ravine, allowing ships to sail directly into the construction yard located within. The second cave is artificial, carved out of the cliff base and only accesses the sea via an underwater passage. Both are perfectly suited to the tasks they are used for.

The open sea cave is where the master shipwrights build vessels in collaboration with SpellCom artificers. They blend function with sorcerous enchantment to create novel new designs inconceivable

to normal sailors. It is also the dock where supply ships offload their cargos of timber, cable, sailcloth, metal ingots and paint with which they construct the vessels. All chandler stores are held in sealed chambers located well above the high tide mark.

In addition, a small area of the dock is given over to small boats. These are often used by some of the sailors and craftsmen to go fishing. Their real purpose however is to teach Wraith Recon teams how to sail or conduct naval landing operations.

The second sea cave is a pen for SpellCom's new concept, underwater boats. Still in the experimental stage only three of these vessels have been built. They reach the sea via a submerged tunnel, normally blocked with a heavy portcullis, enabling the strange boats to exit the base unseen and below the dangerous waves that pound the base of the bluff. Workmen access the pen from a passageway leading from the construction dock.

After work has concluded for the day, guards are left in both caves watching for sharkfolk who may have penetrated the illusion warding the base from accidental discovery. Alarm spell enchantments that trigger in the presence of sharkfolk are maintained by the commander as a secondary backup.

During the long winter, most of Salt Bay freezes over for several months. The cliff walls become a beautiful sculpture of ice sheets and icicles forming weird organic patterns where droplets of water condensed whilst flowing back to the sea. During these months ship construction is impossible, the cold causing wood to freeze, so that it cannot be warped into shape. Those craftsmen with families often return home to take a well deserved holiday, whilst their quarters are taken over by Wraith Recon.

The Special Forces teams use this period to practice arctic warfare training, being put through their paces by masters of the subject. Travel out onto the ice is dangerous but provides invaluable experience in skiing, ice fishing and survival. At the completion of each exercise, the wraiths join with the security skeleton watch and celebrate with true gluttonous excess.

During the spring, summer and autumn, Storm Crag maintains a full complement of 10 sorcerer artificers, 20 shipwrights and 20 security guards. Cooking and cleaning are handled in rota, the better cooks usually managing to exchange their cleaning shifts in exchange for extra portions. The commander is normally a SpellCom wizard from Research & Development.

Mist Fort

Hidden in the endless fens and bogs along the southern border with Torres, is one of SpellCom's most unusual secret installations. Although named Mist Fort, the base is not static. Instead it meanders at random across the wetlands to the west of Southwatch.

Mist Fort is a platform 23 metres across, seemingly fashioned from a single piece of obsidian. Atop this are built a number of roughly beehive shaped buildings. A ziggurat crenulated wall

made of cyclopean blocks follows the outer circumference, carved with primitive bas reliefs of reptilian warfare and capitulation of enemies. The platform appears to float despite the vitrified material it is constructed of. Motivation is provided by seven articulated legs, each ending in a lizard-like claw, granting it a crocodilian menace. When the base stops moving it lowers itself into the bog, folding its legs under it.

The strange artefact was created long ago by a cabal of reptilian wizards. Though they and any record of their cult have long since vanished, the walking platform still exists, powered by permanent enchantments, which can only have been woven by an immense sorcerous concert or perhaps a lone mage of near divine power.

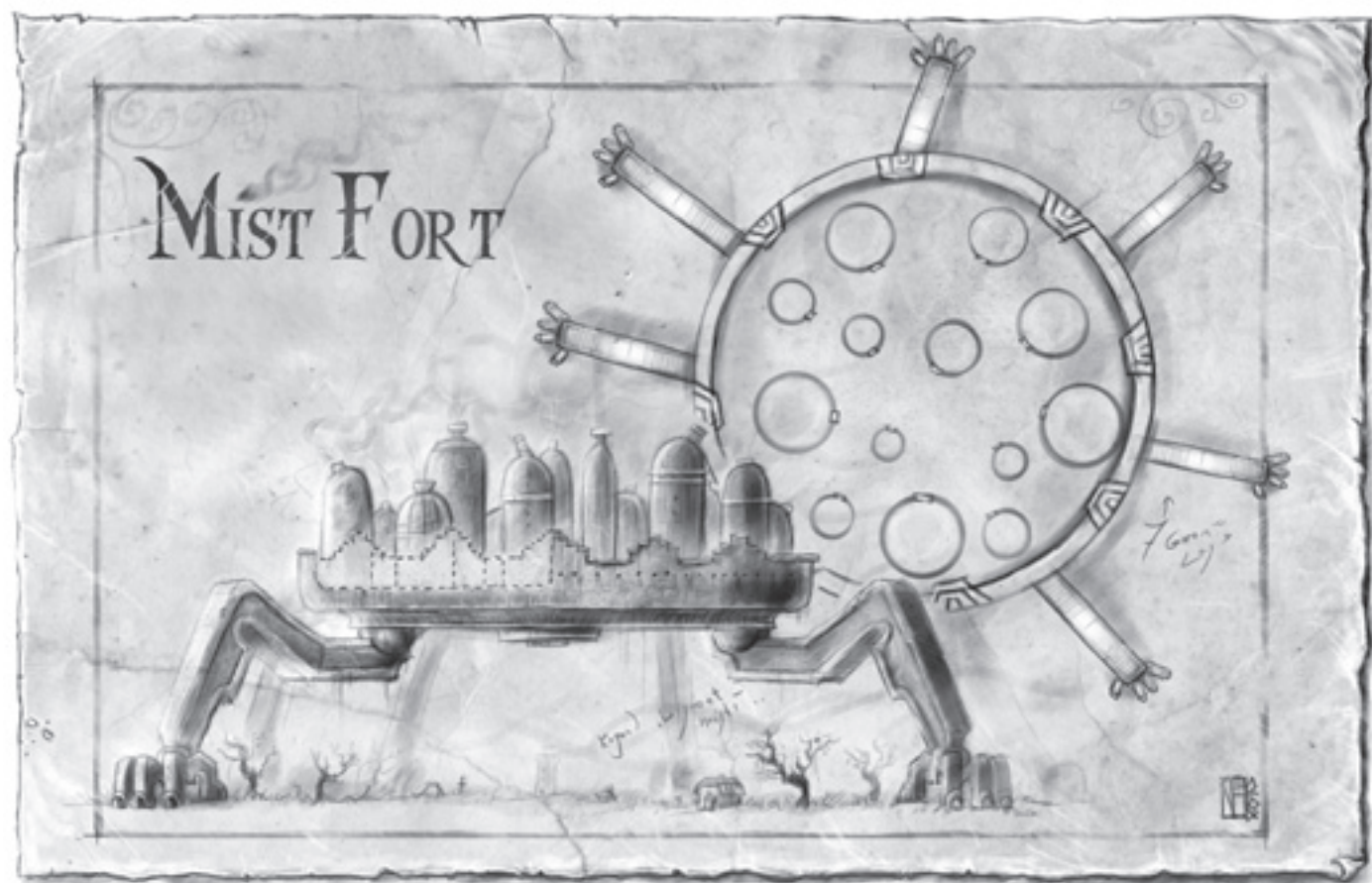
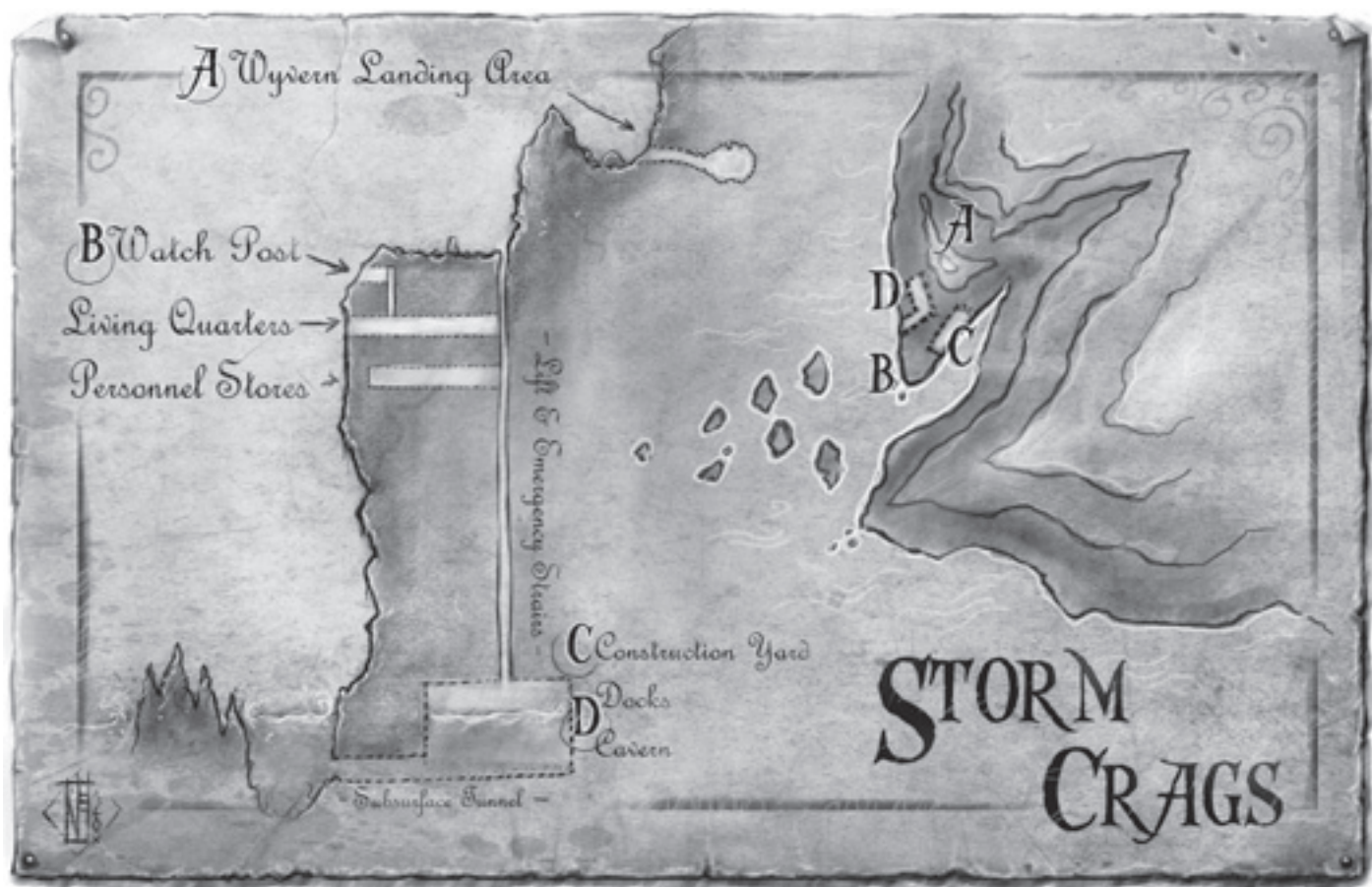
Due to its modest size Mist Fort only holds a small crew of adepts and security staff, acting as both a surveillance post over western Torres and a forward deployment point for Wraith Recon missions into the region. Unfortunately for SpellCom the movement of the walking base is beyond their control, so it rambles according to its own undecipherable patterns. On the other hand it is a trove of curious powers some of which have since been reverse engineered by artificer wizards to create new sorcery spells.

Most obvious of these is the base's ability to weave about itself a concealing cloud of mist. This bank extends for several kilometres, not always centring on the platform. It appears to gather natural mist together, preserving it against the effects of sun or wind. Vision within is restricted to less than 10 metres, with wisps flowing in strange, almost living tendrils. Those who enter the cloud can quickly become lost if they do not possess some method of locating the installation.

Secondly the base defends itself against attack, using its clawed walking legs to crush opponents of humanoid size, or rip apart larger foes such as swamp dwelling dinosaurs. How it determines who, or indeed what, is friend or foe remains unknown but those able to cast sorcery never seem to be attacked. Thirdly, the stone is near impervious to any damage inflicted upon it, although a number of scratches and clips have accumulated over time.

Last but not least, the platform can travel at a speed of up to 30 kilometres per hour across wetlands. Despite its obvious mass and the size of the clawed feet, the base leaves no discernable trail. This makes it impossible to track. Although technically the platform can be detected by its magical emanations, the fact that it regularly moves makes it a difficult for non-swamp dwellers to catch. Whilst none of the lizardfolk of Torres are aware of the magical fortress itself, numerous rumours abound of a strange killer who travels under a cloak of mist. Few marsh folk are brave enough to investigate the strange cloud sometimes spotted during clear weather.

Upon the platform are 13 buildings of irregular size, yet vaguely shaped like beehives. The largest is used as a command centre for scrying operations. The next largest is the common area where food is prepared and eaten in shifts. The remaining chambers are utilised for storage, bathing and sleeping. Space being at a premium, has



Mist Fort Enchantments

Mist Fort is a miraculous creation, comprising of many spells woven into an immense enchantment. Its formation must have consumed a great deal of power, perhaps explaining the cult's eventual downfall and fading from history.

The bastion enchantment contains the following spells:

- Actuate Level 239
- Animate (Obsidian) Level 77
- Castback Level 13 – On the skulls themselves
- Erase Tracks Level 11
- Gather (Mist) Level 107
- Prognosticate Level 10
- Protective Ward Level 12 – Woven with Prognosticate, Spell and Spirit Resistance
- Spell Resistance Level 19
- Spirit Resistance Level 15
- Toughen Level 30 – Obsidian construction only



encouraged the installation of hammocks instead of beds, which adds to comfort when the platform walks. The odd stone huts appear to be constructed like a dry stone wall, each slab of obsidian fitted with precision to the next without need of mortar. The walls slowly slope together in a tapering cone, so that they lack a proper roof. All the low doorways face towards the middle.

A small plaza exists in the centre of the platform. This is normally used to store small boats, which are often crushed or fouled in the legs if left moored beside the platform. To one side has been erected a stone gateway, its twin located in Southwatch. Made of a slightly different volcanic rock, the stones were specially imported from Sando and delivered to Mist Fort by giant eagles.

The base has a compliment of 30 SpellCom personnel. Twenty are adepts from Surveillance, Signals and Ordnance; the remaining 10 are members of security. Oddly, crew who remain at Mist Fort for more than a week begin to experience strangely prophetic dreams or nightmares of scaled humanoids conducting ritual sacrifices.

The Mine

Perhaps the most vital secret in the whole of Dardarrick is the source of the Omnicix crystals. Thanks to a stroke of fortune four centuries previously, these fascinating gemstones are the foundation of the kingdom's defence. Located under an extinct volcano somewhere to the north east of Clawspire, the catacombs from which they originated were originally discovered by dwarf miners excavating a seam of sapphires.

The unsuspected cave complex they uncovered was strangely formed, suggesting that it had been artificially created. Its ambience and unusual mineral veins spooked the miners, so a wizard of the Mages Guild was sent to investigate. It was during this exploration that the first fist sized Omnicix stone was found, half extruded from a disturbingly patterned rock wall. It was carefully chipped free but nothing else of interest being found, the mine was abandoned for a number of centuries. Not until the latter years of Hierophant Tomarsson's reign did an adept of the Brotherhood of Magnus wonder if more of the amazing gems still remained hidden in the weird rock strata.

The Brotherhood reopened 'The Mine' with uttermost secrecy but suffered little success in locating more crystals until someone came up with the idea of looking for places that *failed* to register under

The Skull Masters

Some of the secrets of Mist Fort remain unsuspected. The building actually predates the Dawning. Once an awe-inspiring bastion of a crushing mageocracy, the walking palace was created through the sacrifice of 10,000 sentient beings. Deep within the apparently solid obsidian platform are 13 rune inscribed skulls, each one belonging to a member of that long passed council of evil. Every skull contains the undying soul of a reptilian mage who remains bound to its mortal remains. Each is of a different species, of which only six are now recognisable – Lizardman, Troglodyte, Crocodilian, Serpentman, Saurian and Kobold.

After each mage died, a new sorcerer of that species was brought to the palace, ostensibly to rule in his place. In reality the replacement was possessed by the eternal soul of the original ruler, granting it a puppet body from which to continue their despotism. Ultimately the God Wars exterminated entire races, causing some of the mages to be unable to reincarnate. This weakened their power and the savage civilisation collapsed.

Over centuries the entombed intellects have sunken into torpidity awaiting new reptilian sorcerers to possess. Whilst they dream through possible futures, only instinct remains to manoeuvre and defend the platform. The current SpellCom occupation however is beginning to gradually draw the ghosts back to full alertness.

Once awakened the primordial reptilians are likely to try to subvert the foreign sorcerers to their own ends. Prehistoric and amoral, these ancient ones have no sympathy with the current religious situation in Torres, seeking instead to rebuild their primitive sorcerous empire using whatever slaves are at hand, be they humans or lizardfolk.



a Sense (rock) spell; Omnicix gems being undetectable by normal magic. Thus a painstaking search of the mines began, new gems only found after weeks or months of effort, requiring a literal crawl along endless kilometres of passageway, straining magical senses to penetrate a few metres of rock. Once the more easily accessible crystals had been dug out, new exploratory shafts were struck to access new areas of ubiquitous rock – the work continuing unceasingly for 19 years.

Although the effort required finding a single Omnicix crystal seems excessive, each one is priceless. So the search continues, even though the gems are becoming harder to find.

All surface access long since been blocked off for additional security, the excavation is a self contained underground world. The majority is a labyrinth of twisting passageways dug through strangely hard variants of sandstone and granite. It is the odd patterning and strata in the rocks that has a disquieting effect on those who work in the complex, combined with feelings of being watched, even hunted, so that most of the miners negotiate the passages in groups of at least three. Even so, lone people occasionally disappear in the tunnels with their bodies not found for days, if at all.

Only three locations of import exist in the complex; the gate room, the living quarters and the gem cutting workshop. All three are located in proximity to one another, taking advantage of the largest caverns initially found in the mines.

The gate room contains the gateway linking the warren to a secure chamber in the bowels of SpellCom HQ. It is a large mirror of polished steel about three metres tall and two metres across, protected by at least one squad of heavily armed guards. These sentries are members of SpellCom security who are relieved weekly from headquarters and are forbidden from entering any deeper into the mines. Several locked iron gates, set up in the fashion of an airlock, seal off the cavern from the rest of the warren, preventing unauthorised access to or from SpellCom. Two ballistae provide additional firepower in case of an assault from either direction. Off to one side the guards have their own chambers that provide them with a degree of comfort during the tedious posting. Two men stand guard whilst the remaining four rest, read or gamble.

From the gate room is a long passageway connecting to the living quarters. It is here the adepts and miners reside in a closely grouped network of hewn halls comprising of rooms full of barracks style bunk beds, a refectory, a bathing area supplied by a hot water spring and a tool storage room. Segregated from the miners' section are more opulent rooms, the personal chambers of the sorcerers stationed here.

The only other area of note is the gem cutting workshop. It is here that the Omnicix crystals are cleaved to form their mutually resonant shards. Two elderly dwarfs, each a master lapidist in their own right, staff the chamber. As members of Research & Development on voluntary detachment, they are quite content to remain in the mine and study the interesting finds frequently

A Dirty Little Secret

The Mine is where the Department of Interrogation deposits enemies of Dardarrick who need to 'disappear'. Riveted into enchanted slave collars, these men are sentenced to hard labour in the mine for the rest of their natural lives.

Despite the work the prisoners are not abused, being permitted access to medical care, hot water baths and decent quality food.

They are trusted to police themselves and may wander the labyrinth unsupervised but their prospects of liberation are bleak. Any thoughts of digging an escape tunnel soon fade from sheer exhaustion, combined with the unofficial rumours (which are true) that the complex is hidden hundreds of metres under a mountain. Frustrated or violent prisoners who assault one of their gaolers have their collar replaced with one that also suppresses their intelligence to little more than a mindless zombie; the adepts use Dominate spells on them to continue digging tunnels.

The slave collars are said to have been confiscated from a Zritec dark elf slaving cult, which has been fashioning them since the Dawning. A basic model contains the following spells – Diminish (POW), Wrack (Heat) and Trigger all enchanted at Level 8. The trigger is set with conditions to activate the Wrack component of the enchantment if the collar draws too near a specific warding sigil (which has been chiselled into the floors of the gate room and sorcerers quarters) or the collar itself is harmed. The trigger shuts down the Wrack if it leaves the previously mentioned areas, the collar stops being damaged or the wearer is dead. Punitive slave collars encompass the same spells, as well as Diminish (INT), and raise the level of the spells to 10.



discovered entombed in solid rock, such as skull shaped pieces of flint, or long deposits of iron rich minerals in the shape of a sword.

As one of the artificers is an amateur palaeontologist and the other an archaeologist, their frequent debates over the provenance of the articles often become heated exchanges of personal insults, regardless of the fact that they are close co-workers. The first believes that the catacombs were once flooded lava tubes in an underworld sea, which were then filled with volcanic mud during an eruption, trapping exotic creatures and corals within and turning them into fossils. The second has a theory that the tunnels were once a hidden complex from before the Dawning, subject to petrification magic of such magnitude that the very air was turned to stone. Most who listen to them espouse their conjectures usually draw the conclusion that both have been driven insane by remaining too long in the complex.

Negotiating the remainder of this bewildering warren requires learning a new skill of Lore (The Mine). This allows the visitor the

ability to find their way around in relative safety, memorising the routes to new rock faces and avoiding pits or areas where dangerous subsidence has occurred.

Mine Defences

Due to its location far, far below the slopes of an innocuous and isolated extinct volcano, most of the Mine lacks any sort of magical defence. With no surface traffic to give clues as to what might be occurring under the surface and the thickness of the rock providing a near impenetrable barrier to magic, SpellCom believes that the location of the mine will remain a secret, even if its existence leaks out. However, to help run the mining operations and prevent embarrassing escapes, several extra spells have been put in place.

Around the gate room is a relatively modest level 13 combined Protective Circle and Toughen enchantment. This effectively prevents anyone from digging a passageway through the walls of the chamber with a pickaxe.

To prevent information about the prisoners leaking to the rest of SpellCom, the gaolers – all recruited from the Interrogation department – have been granted several wands permanently enchanted with Level 5 Sense (Rock) spells. This helps them locate Omnicix crystals without needing to bring other sorcerers in to do the job.



Kasim's Doom

Named for the wizard who led the excavation of the Pierceling Canal under the Claws mountain range, this clandestine complex is located at the apex of the canal lock system, near where Kasim was killed whilst magically moulding water conduits to the lakes far above. Although his death was a setback, the project was completed and now all traffic between Dardarrick and Salt Bay passes through the magnificent tunnel.

During construction a number of small bases were dug out by labourers, to provide areas to rest between shifts. The main complex at the midway point has since been sequestered by SpellCom, fulfilling several key strategic roles.

Of primary import is the ability of Kasim's Doom to act as a choke point for canal traffic. A number of concealed gates have been secretly installed in case a Lornish naval fleet lands at Pierceling and launches an invasion down the Walker River, behind the Dardarrick legions deployed along the border. These massive portals, combined with the ability to control the water levels, grant an ability to cut off or even drown any such foray.

Its secondary function is as a backup operations centre and emergency shelter for SpellCom personnel in case the Fort Brazen HQ is ever successfully attacked. Hidden deep beneath an entire mountain range, the Arcanist General feels convinced Kasim's Doom is secure from any dragon assault. A backup 'Necrotic Library' is installed here, in case of a complete loss of the Omnicix links.

A number of security steps have been taken to prevent the secret complex from being discovered or attacked by surprise. An Alarm spell combined with Obscure covers both ends of the top stretch of canal. It triggers if anything touches the lock gates or passes along the foot paths on either side, alerting the steward who then passes on the information to the commander of the watch.

Closer to the base a tunnel and steps have been created, choked full of large boulders and rubble. This a false passageway designed to mislead spies. The original entrance has also been filled but using Form/Set (Rock) spells to create a permanent plug.

Only a single physical entrance remains; a concealed stone trapdoor in the ceiling nearly impossible to spot – even if aware of its presence – in the dim illumination of a canal boat's oil lamps. It can only be opened from the inside, leading into a smooth sided tube, which rises five metres vertically before reaching a more spacious tunnel heading to the complex proper. Climbing the sheer tube is itself a heroic task unless the rope ladder at the top is lowered and it too is covered by the Alarm spell in case of unauthorised access. Normally this route is never used except for the delivery of supplies, or covert Wraith Recon entrance or exit; squad operatives being quite capable of dropping silently onto the cabin of a passing canal boat.

The remaining layout comprises of the following areas.

Security Posts: Two chambers are dedicated to base defence, one at the end of the canal entrance tunnel, the other controlling gate room access. These act as containment areas where guards can apprehend or engage those trying to penetrate (or flee) the base. Normally their iron bound doors are locked and barred at all times, the key remains in the custody of the superior officer.

Dormitories: Several dormitory rooms are set up with triple level bunk beds. There is little space for personal possessions save for hooks by the beds and no privacy. Each is designed to sleep up to 60 people in minimal comfort.

Bathroom: Again designed for communal use, at either end are bathing pools providing continual warm water heated by a low powered Wrack spell. Along the back wall are private stalls for sanitary considerations, which empty into a sequence of cess pits where accumulated solids can be annually Wracked into oblivion. All the waste water flushes into the next lower section of the canal.

Kitchen: A low strength Wrack (Fire) enchantment is used to heat the ovens and stoves. The room provides enough bench and table seating to feed a fully occupied base on a rotating sittings system.

Stores: Sealed with a heavy locked door, this room holds all of the consumables required to feed the base at a maximum occupancy for three months. The food is comprised purely of long term preserved goods. Barrels of flour, dried fruits, sugar and desiccated meat and fish predominate. A small section contains medical supplies and some spare clothing.

Gate Room: This gate has been carved directly into the far wall of the chamber and links to SpellCom HQ. Two ballistae with missile shields can be turned to cover the gateway or the chamber entrance. The door to this room is made of five centimetre thick, solid iron with several spy holes. It has a complex internal lock system, sending bolts into the floor, ceiling and both walls, the key working from either side. The door is kept shut at all times, only opening to allow permitted visitors to pass.

Operations Centre: Taking up the majority of the lower second level, the operations centre is the backup to the one at SpellCom HQ. Laying in constant readiness, the chamber possesses a similar layout, furniture and equipment.

Armoury: Packed with a range of weapons, armour and potions this room is a warrior's dream. All of the equipment is stored very carefully, wrapped in oiled cloths to prevent rust. Most of the gear is of excellent quality but not magical. Only the potions are enchanted, old concoctions created by wizards long dead and never used. Due to the rarity of such an event the potion selection is rather eclectic but still potent. The chamber is heavily booby trapped to prevent looting. Like the nearby strong room, the door has two master crafted mechanical traps designed to kill anyone attempting to pick the lock. A third magical trap is triggered if the door opener does not possess an Omnicix crystal, blasting the

room contents and anyone standing outside the door with a very powerful Airburst spell.

Commander's Office: The only private room in the entire base, this chamber contains a bed, desk and enough extra chairs to hold a staff meeting. Like the rest of the complex, the furniture is simple and functional, with no ostentation anywhere. Hidden in a locked floor safe under the rug beneath the desk, is the equivalent of 250,000 gold lions, in a range of different denominations and jewellery. This is an emergency fund in case of needing to fund a resistance organisation from Kasim's Doom.

Strong Room: Similar to the armoury, this chamber is designed to be highly secure. It contains the backup Necrotic Library in addition to copies of the important library texts kept in the SpellCom library. Other valuable objects and minor enchantments are also held here. Clandestinely hidden behind one wall is a secret room. Unknown to anyone save the Arcanist General, stored within are shelves stacked with parchment, ink, quills, copies of SpellCom's most secret files, a duplicate of every Grimoire the organisation possesses and an Omnicix shard through which the archmage accesses the chamber. The priceless cache is devilishly trapped and further protected by 15 centimetres of metal which lines the inner surfaces of the isolated chamber. Accessing the room is impossible without the Form/Set (Rock), Form/Set (Lead) and Form/Set (Steel) spells and knowledge of where to dig.

Although recently completed, Kasim's Doom is considered an emergency retreat and only maintains a skeleton staff of 12. Six adepts, two each from Intelligence to keep note of barge traffic, Signals to communicate with HQ and Surveillance to covertly observe the contents of each passing shipment. Six security guards are also present. The gruelling duty cycle is six hours on and six hours off, with personnel being relieved after a week.

In contrast to the temporary staff, the last occupant is a steward on permanent assignment. A blind lizardman known only as Jy-Ves, he retired from the Brotherhood of Magnus after his eyes were consumed by some horrific demon. His blindness does not hinder him in his cooking or cleaning duties and he can navigate the entire complex with ease. He is well loved by those serving in the dark shadowy base, bringing drinks and canapés to those on watch and offering his insightful wisdom to anyone asking his opinion. It is he who maintains the few enchantments protecting the base and is a powerful warlock in his own right, despite what his harmless appearance belies. Although utilising an Abjure (Sleep) spell, when off duty he often meditates whilst sitting in one of the hot baths.

Godsholme

By far the biggest conceit that the Arcanist General has undertaken, Godsholme is another of Wraith Recon's great secrets. Realising that SpellCom employees cannot be allowed to mix with the general public in case of security lapses or even kidnapping attempts, a segregated residential area was needed to house staff whilst off duty. Searching for suitable locations however soon proved far more difficult than expected. Isolated regions were near to the borders with hostile nations and considered unsafe, as the ravaging of the east by an undead dragon has recently proved. Central Dardarrick was also considered unsuitable, due to the population density making any restricted residential area stick out like a sore thumb.

Left with no other choice, the Arcanist General cast his thoughts outside of the kingdom and found what he considered the perfect location... the Venghattermount! Considered a place of great holiness by many races of Nuera, the tallest mountain in the world was the mythical staircase that the gods used to climb up to the heavens. Located deep within the Wildlands few ever travel its slopes, as monstrous creatures hunt and consume any who transgress its sanctity. With its remote location, fearsome guardians and an insane degree of impudence, the archmage considered it to be the perfect location for a secluded settlement.

Several SpellCom mages were detached from duty and sent on a scouting mission to the Godsreach Mountains. Reaching the 'Fang of the World Dragon' they eventually found an inaccessible ledge two thirds of the way up a vertical cliff on its southern face. Working hard, they spent several weeks shaping and levelling the outcropping into a series of terraces, before creating a portal gateway, twin to one created in advance of the mission, deep in the bowels of SpellCom HQ.

Summoning all their power a portal was formed, returning the mages to Fort Brazen only long enough to reform the engineering team responsible for the Piercing Canal and co-opt several sorcerers with specialised grimoire knowledge. They departed en-mass through the portal and began building a beautiful city with the rock excavated from chambers carved into the rock face.

To prevent observation from the giantkind living in the foothills, an enchantment was woven to create a permanent raft of clouds below the settlement. The unexpected benefit of the spell was to provide a wondrous view across a fluffy sea of bright whiteness, through which the peaks of the Godsreach Mountains towered majestically, incidentally reducing the feeling of vertigo felt by many sorcerers.

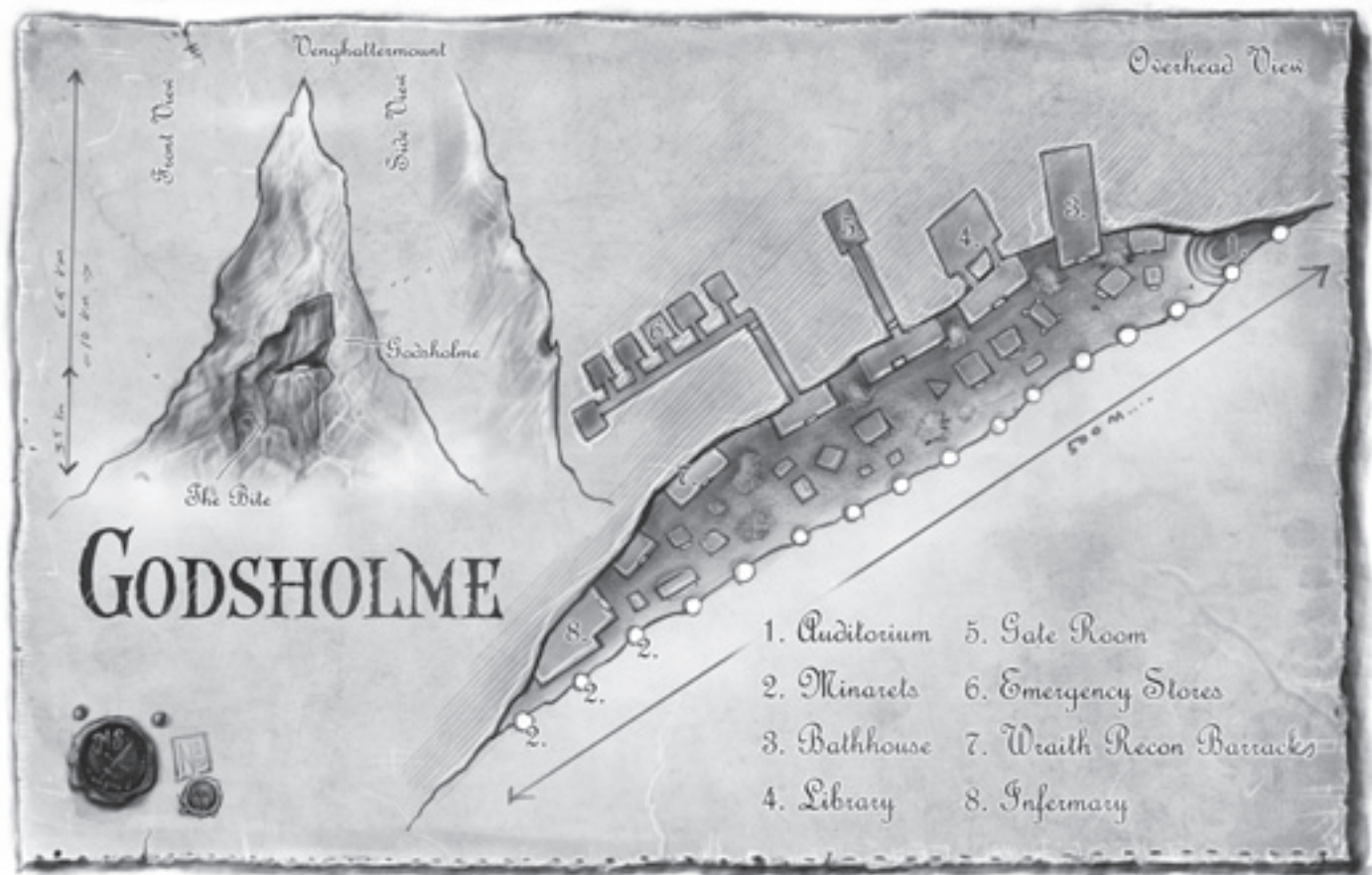
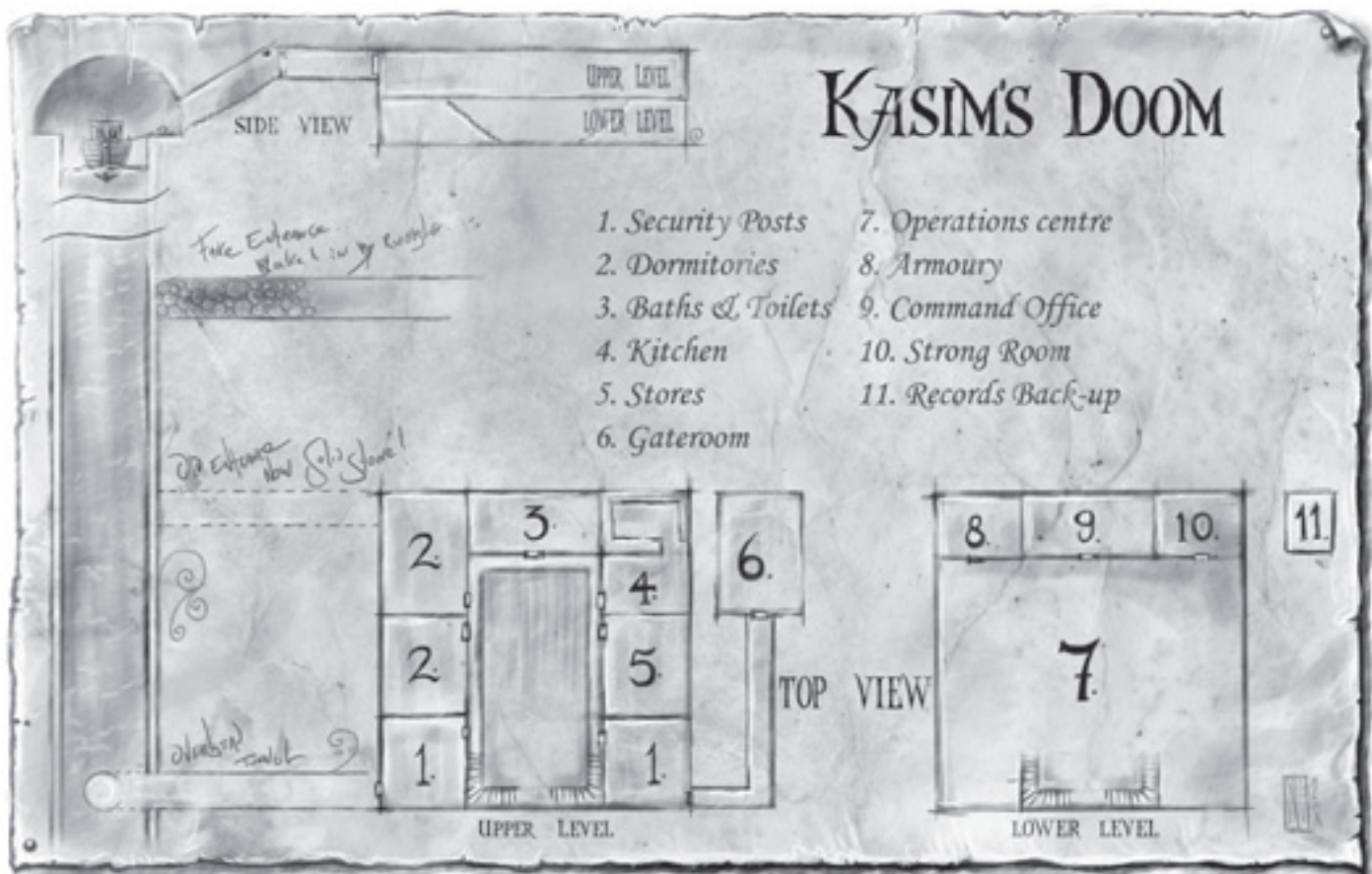
From their coordinated efforts, a beautiful work of architecture has been created. Named Godsholme for its location rather than the egotism of its inhabitants, it perches against the cliff, a thin ribbon of plazas and simple yet elegant buildings. Not designed as an operations centre or military base, the settlement merely provides a location to rest and recuperate, well away from the stresses of SpellCom. In a pinch however, it could act as a remote fastness hidden beyond the reach of its enemies. Save for emergencies or personal visits by SpellCom mages, the portal to Godsholme is only opened once per week, during which time staff transfer back and forth according to whom is on leave.

Most of the dwellings are comfortable stone walled hostels or cottages, their rooms assigned on an ad-hoc basis for the duration of a guest's stay. To preserve the view, the buildings are restricted in height so that they do not overshadow the frontage of the next highest terrace. Thus the settlement is layered in descending height as it approaches the edge of the outcropping. The largest buildings are those that butt up against the back cliff wall. Although these have four or five floors, they also have storage chambers and connecting passageways dug into the mountain, the latter granting sheltered access when the weather is at its most foul.

A few other facilities have been constructed, such as a small library and an auditorium for entertainment or lectures. In addition, a modest infirmary is located at one end of Godsholme to tend those seriously injured during duty, which mainly involves members of the Security or Wraith Recon branches. As a perk of their rank, mages are permitted to maintain full time residences here, each being granted one of the slender minarets which grace the cliff edge.

Altitude is a problem, the ledge more than three and a half kilometres higher than SpellCom HQ. For the first week of residence, visitors suffer a temporary Fatigue Level of Winded. After this they become acclimatised. The temperature variance at Godsholme is also unusual for Dardarrians. Air temperatures range from cool to freezing but the direct sunlight is always hot, warming the stone of the buildings even in late autumn and early spring. Several gardens planted with frost hardy plants decorate the plazas, watered by an ingenious mini-aqueduct system that taps condensation and snow melt from the upper slopes.

To ensure that Godsholme cannot be located by the use of divination or observation magic, the SpellCom mages have woven a combined Veil and Protective Ward enchantment over the entire



settlement. Neither the settlement nor anybody residing within it can be found using magic of less than divine scope. Other than the artificial cloud bank beneath it, Godsholme utilises no other major enchantments, relying on its unusual location to protect it from most other threats.

With the recent dragon experience fresh in mind, a number of prototype magical siege engines have now been installed to bolster its air defences. Realistically though, if ever attacked the combined forces of occupying wizards and warlocks should be enough to defeat most enemies.

SIEGE WEAPONS

As part of their fortifications, some SpellCom bases utilise heavy weapons as a line of defence. Unlike most weapons, almost all siege weaponry is beyond the scope of single individuals to transport, let

alone operate. Even the Scorpion, a heavier version of the Arbalest, requires a mount to steady the weapon whilst firing.

Most siege weapons are used to lob simple bolts or stones at targets. They are so powerful that a direct hit will generally cripple or kill most armoured humanoid with a single shot. However, against larger creatures such as giants or dragons, it is often only siege weapons that can hurt them. If not being used in battle most siege weapons are used to reduce fortifications, breaching holes in walls or destroying defensive towers hosting their own siege weapons.

Other types of ammunition exist for these mighty weapons, as described later.

The following weapons do not use handedness, damage bonuses, STR/DEX or ENC being beyond such issues. The Size of their projectiles is rated as Beyond Enormous, meaning that no shield will protect against the force of such impacts.

Siege Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Range	Load¹	Crew²	SIZ	Combat Manoeuvres³	AP/HP	Cost
Scorpion	3D6	150m	4	1/1	BE	Impale, Sunder	4/15	750 SP
Ballista	6D6	200m	5	2/4	BE	Impale, Sunder	4/25	1,000 SP
Mangonel	9D6	250m	6	2/4	BE	Bash, Stun	4/50	1,250 SP
Onager	12D6	300m	7	3/6	BE	Bash, Stun	4/75	1,500 SP
Couillard	15D6	350m	8	3/6	BE	Bash, Stun	4/100	3,000 SP
Trebuchet	18D6	400m	9	4/8	BE	Bash, Stun	4/150	5,000 SP

¹ Reloading time is measured in *Rounds* not Combat Actions.

² This is the minimum and maximum crew required to operate the weapon. Each extra man above the minimum value reduces the load time by one.

³ These manoeuvres are included for attacks against large or colossal creatures. They are superfluous against fortifications.

CHAPTER THREE

MAGICAL SKILLS



Whilst any sorcerer, priest or shaman can be a potent force due to their spell casting abilities, a number of other magical techniques are known within Nuera, which allow for the creation of far greater phenomena. Powerful and potentially hazardous, knowledge of these skills is often restricted, even forbidden, as they can prove highly dangerous in inexperienced hands.

These techniques can be used by any type of caster. Technically nothing prevents a shaman from learning how to summon demons or priests forming concerts to invoke greater miracles, only that the cult they belong to needs to pass on knowledge of the skill to its members.

Considering the effect these techniques can have on a game, Games Masters are at liberty to reserve access to this knowledge. Only a few cults have access to more than one of these skills, let alone all of them. If Adventurers are to be permitted such exotic powers, then a further decision should be made to either allow learning the following skills during Adventurer Generation or reserve it as an in game reward; possibly after several quests to locate a cult or master who is willing to pass on such knowledge.

Like most magical powers in *RuneQuest*, a degree of common sense should be applied by the Games Master to prevent the campaign from becoming unbalanced. If a party of Adventurers start summoning huge demons or concert casting death spells against their enemies, then have those foes *learn* from these attacks and set up adequate defences or use cunning tactics to circumvent the strategy. Most societies are aware of the power that can be wielded and plan contingencies when facing it.

Similarly the Games Master should not use the battlefield scale of these methods against Adventurers without careful consideration of the consequences. Such efforts are inherently risky and no sane magic user will attempt these techniques on a small group of individuals without a serious reason.

The three magical disciplines are Concert Casting, Enchanting and Summoning.

CONCERT CASTING

Although a lone magic user of high skill is capable of invoking some amazing effects, there are finite limits to their power. No single sorcerer can level a city and no isolated shaman can awaken

a mountain to life. In a world like Nuera such limits on personal power have saved nations and entire races from utter annihilation.

However, where one caster is restricted, multiple casters working in concert can combine their efforts to overcome these boundaries. Called rituals, gestalts and even metaconcerts, the technique provides a way of controlling the perilous levels of power created, weaving individually cast spells into a larger coherent effect.

Concerts provide the potential for great power at the risk of great danger. Stories of terrible failures have led many societies to ban them or heavily prescribe their use and many thaumaturgists would rather rely on their own powers than risk combining with others. Technically there is no upper limit to the number of participants within a concert. Yet, if things go wrong, the bigger the concert the worse the fallout becomes. Taking an increased time to cast spells during the metaconcert can help improve its chance of success but has no effect on controlling the results of a calamitous failure.

Global Disasters

Concert cast spells offer a terrible temptation to crush entire armies with a single magical effort. Several times in Rardari's history have such vast undertakings catastrophically backfired, creating continental scale effects. The first is legendary, dating from before the Dawning, when the civilisations of the Wildlands fought against the gods themselves, reducing the entire west to a desert waste. The second and more substantiated was the creation of the Eastermarch Rift in 367 YBD by an experimental metaconcert of wizards. Led by the immortalised Magnus, the cabal intended to swallow the invading Lornish army in a localised earth tremor but the spell ripped free from their control, killing all of the sorcerers and tearing a ravine from The Claws to the Redwater River.



The saving graces of this dangerous ability is that everyone within the casting group must be gathered together in the same location, know the particular spell or miracle being cast, and be of like mind.

It is the latter requirement that is perhaps the most important. Lack of conviction or outright dissension within a gestalt can cause it to fail, sometimes with devastating effects on the participants. The chances of unified commitment shrinks as the size of any group rises, especially if the concert cast spell is against the ethics of its members.

Whilst knowledge of coordinated concert casting has been kept a closely guarded secret in the Dardarrick Mages Guild, in past centuries the Brotherhood of Magnus has often recanted the bans, utilising it on a modest level to produce battlefield scale effects. Although only of significant use against the Lornish army, until now the Hegemony have held their own, countering such magics with spirit bound battle banners. The last decade has seen several breakthroughs in sorcerous gestalts however, with Dardarrick concerts now reaching horrific intensities, allowing the potential obliteration of entire companies or centuries of troops with a single incantation.

Metaconcerts need not be just used for war. They are often dedicated to building, binding, warding or enchanting on a very large scale. The priesthood of a temple may concert cast certain miracles for festivals, for example, granting blessings across an entire city.

Concert (INT + CHA)

The Concert skill allows a group of two or more casters to pool their magical skills together in order to create a spell of greatly augmented effect. To form a concert every contributor must know the Concert skill and one member must be designated the coordinator of the gestalt.

The time taken to build the concert is equal to one minute per participant. Once the gestalt is fully formed then, depending on the type of high magic, it may invoke spells or spirit combat as needed using the normal times for those activities. Thus a sorcery spell cast by metaconcert takes the same length of time as a solo sorcerer would require.

Whilst joined in concert however, the attention of each member is fully engaged in maintaining its metaphysical structure. Thus participants cannot move and even perception rolls may be subject to situational penalties as desired by the Games Master. This vulnerability is a serious weakness, especially on a battlefield, and most metaconcerts are usually well guarded against assault or interruption.

In situations where a member leaves an active gestalt, whether voluntarily breaking free or being violently incapacitated, the leader must make a Concert Skill Test that is opposed by the ejected member's concert skill. The higher their skill, the more vital their roll was in the structure of the gestalt. If more than one member is removed at the same time, use the highest Concert skill of the sundered members.

If the leader makes the skill roll but loses the contest then the concert is dissolved without causing any harm to its members.

If the concert leader fails the skill roll but loses the contest then roll twice on the relevant mishap table, keeping the lowest roll. Removing the concert leader immediately dissolves the gestalt, forcing a roll on the mishap table.

There are many events that can eject a concert member; trying to cast a spell without enough Magic Points to draw on is one or being asked to invoke a miracle that they do not have access to is another. Losing concentration for any reason such as being wounded, tempted by a demon or stepping out of the prepared area will also lead to the member being removed but such situations should normally be permitted a Persistence save.

A metaconcert can only use high magic known to *all* of its members. Thus the participants must all have a Piety skill to the same god, know the same Grimoire or be brothers to the same spirit tradition, since they cannot otherwise cast the perform the same specific miracle, spell or binding. This synchronisation is a fundamental part of cult training. Two wizards who both knew the same spell but from different Grimoires could not coordinate themselves due to different philosophical approaches.

All magic the concert performs costs the members either Magic Points or prepared miracles. Running out of either causes that participant to be unable to further contribute to the metaconcert, removing them from the gestalt.

Although metaconcerts operate by combining the magical skills of their members, the overall success or failure of the concert depends on the ability of its coordinator. Each magical effort, be it a spell or initiating a Spirit Combat, requires the leader of the gestalt to roll against their *un-augmented* Concert skill. If used to cast a spell with the Resist Trait, it is this dice roll that targets must roll against to avoid the magic.

- Critical: As for a success, and in addition a miracle is not placed beyond use, Spirit Walking or Sorcery spells consume no Magic Points and the first attack of a Spirit Combat is unopposed.
- Success: The concert manages to retain its cohesion, the magic is cast or Spirit Combat begins.
- Failure: The concert collapses and nothing is achieved.
- Fumble: The concert collapses and something very bad happens. Roll on either the Spell Mishaps or Spirit Mishaps table.

Once the concert ceases, any spells cast by the gestalt expire. Likewise, large spirits under the domination of a shamanic metaconcert are released from control once the concert ends, unless bound or returned to their fetish.

The following tables give examples of what can happen if a concert is dissolved in an uncontrolled manner. Add the number of participants in the concert to any roll on these tables.

Spell Mishaps Table

1D100 + Number of Concert Members	Divine Magic or Sorcery Mishap
01–15	The concert members each suffer 1D8 damage to all locations.
16–29	The concert members lose all of their remaining Magic Points or Miracles.
30–42	The concert members collapse into an untreatable coma lasting 1D8 hours.
43–64	The concert members cannot perform any magic for 1D8 days.
65–75	The concert members are reduced to drooling, gibbering idiots for 1D8 weeks.
76–85	The concert members gain a permanent Insanity.
86–94	The magic being performed affects everyone within range, whether friend or foe.
95–102	The effect or magnitude of the magic becomes multiplied by the number of concert members.
103–109	The magic being performed becomes permanent, forever removing the MPs or miracle from the concert members.
110–115	Something irreversibly horrific occurs to the concert members, for example they all physically meld into a single body, they immolate in flames and die in agony, they transform into undead and so on.
116–120	Utter annihilation of everything for a radius in kilometres equal to the number of concert members.
121+	Roll Twice and take the higher result.

Spirit Mishaps Table

1D100 + Number of Concert Members	Spirit Magic Mishap
01–15	The concert members each suffer 1D8 damage to all locations.
16–29	The concert members lose all of their remaining Magic Points or Miracles.
30–42	The concert members collapse into an untreatable coma lasting 1D8 hours.
43–64	The concert members cannot perform any magic for 1D8 days.
65–75	The concert members are reduced to drooling, gibbering idiots for 1D8 weeks.
76–85	The concert members gain a permanent Insanity.
86–94	The concert members all permanently swap bodies with each other.
95–102	The souls of the concert members exchange places with the spirit of their most powerful fetish.
103–109	The concert members form a hive mind and can no longer distinguish themselves.
110–115	The souls of the concert members are ripped free from their bodies, which die in a disgusting outbreak of bubonic pox and melt into the ground.
116–120	The bodies of everyone in a radius in kilometres equal to the number of concert members is dominantly possessed by a random spirit.
121+	Roll Twice and take the higher result.

To calculate the effect of the gestalt, sum up the Concert skill of every participant. In addition, the individual magical skills should be separately totalled as described here.

Type of Magic	Augmented Skills
Divine Magic	Invoke <i>and</i> Piety
Sorcery	Grimoire <i>and</i> Manipulation
Spirit Magic	Spirit Binding <i>and</i> Spirit Walking

The combined value of the group's two magical skills is capped by the sum of their Concert skill. It is the metaconcert leader who decides how much of each skill is utilised when the gestalt is formed, these values remaining static for the remainder of the concert.

Divine Magic: The magic may be cast as a single miracle at the assigned Piety value; or split between a number of targets, each fragment possessing an equal share of the Piety value. Since Divine Magic is backed by the strength of a deity, any concert cast miracle imposes a Resistance roll penalty of one tenth of its Invoke value.

The range of any Divine Magic is based upon the combined POW of all the concert members.

Facing a Dardarrick assault on one of their swamp shrines, 11 druid-priests of Mersmerro form a ritual concert to defend the sacred spot. After spending time to form the gestalt, they are ready to repulse the interlopers, a group of Warlocks glistening with protective sorceries. Between them the druid-priests have a combined Invoke of 800% and Piety of 775%. However, their combined Concert skill is only 600%. The Druid in charge decides to use the entire 600% limit as the concert's Piety, casting Beast Form at Magnitude 60 to transform one of the shrine guards into a colossal, monstrous crocodile. To further bias matters, the following round he decides to follow up with six Drown spells at Magnitude 10 but since no points were placed in Invoke the victims of the death spells may resist without any penalty.

Once cast, every participant loses one instance of that spell. To ensure that all the members of the concert have the same prepared miracles, such rituals are planned long in advance to give everyone a chance to pray for the correct magic.

Sorcery: The sorcery spell can be modified by either producing a greater base effect, applying more levels of Manipulation, or a combination of both. All Manipulation effects are based upon the concert leader's personal POW Characteristic.

Lady Xocatal leads her cabal of five other necromantic cult members in a magical attack upon a Temple of Praxious. Transporting several wagons full of bones to a ridge overlooking the hated place of worship, they form a metaconcert; resulting in the gestalt gaining an overall Grimoire skill of 340% and Manipulation of 250%. This exceeds the combined Concert skill of the necromancers, which is only 480%. So Lady Xocatal decides to use only 230% of the Grimoire skill and all of the accumulated Manipulation, casting a very large Animate Bone spell (69 SIZ of bones) with 5 points of Manipulation in Range (1.9 km), 7 points in Duration (over two hours), 10 points in Magnitude to resist dispelling and 3 points into Targets allowing the four complete dinosaur skeletons to be raised, ready to instil terror on the Brazen Cult!

A concert cast sorcery spell, costs every participant the same amount of Magic Points it would normally require if cast singly.

Spirit Magic: The ritual may combine Spirit Walking skills to extend the spirit travelling range of one or more of the participating shaman, equally splitting the skill total between those chosen to travel. This can even provide lesser shaman lacking the aptitude to spirit travel the ability to do so.

Hearing rumours of a great disaster befalling Dardarrick, Harshaak, hobgoblin shaman is asked by his clan patriarch to scout the region of Sentinel Keep. Although capable of sending his soul into the spirit world, it is beyond the shaman's capability to project himself over the 200 kilometres required. So Harshaak summons his many Kupua and Yachak apprentices. Together he leads them in a ritual adding their Spirit Walking strength to his, gaining an augmented skill of 430%. Since the participants have a combined Concert skill greater than this, the Spirit Walking value is not reduced. Instead the Shaman decides to bring along his most advanced student to accompany him and divides the skill equally, granting both of them a skill of 215%, enough to travel to the Dardarrian fortress and observe the disturbed spirits there.

Concert led Spirit Walking costs each participant the normal number of Magic Points as if they themselves were performing the action.

Combining Spirit Binding skills permits larger spirits (or multiple smaller spirits) to be bound or controlled. If the leader is able to hold the gestalt together before Spirit Combat ensues, the metaconcert uses its total augmented Spirit Binding skill to fight with. Any Magic Points lost during battle are divided as equitably as possible across all members.

A fetch and sometimes even an Ancestor Spirit is permitted to join a shamanic metaconcert but only if it possesses the Concert skill. In such situations it will be treated as an equal member of the gestalt and can precipitate the collapse of the concert if it runs out of Magic Points.

Extending Spirit and Wrack Damage

This table extends the damage progression dice for both Spirit Combat and the Wrack spell for the previously unforeseen skill values. This slightly revises the original Spirit Damage table in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook* but better smoothes the progression and attempts to limit excessive amounts of dice at very high levels. The average result column provides rounded up values for Games Masters who wish to avoid the tedium of rolling.

Extended Damage Table for Spirit Combat and Wrack

Skill Value	Damage Inflicted ¹	Average Roll
01–20	1D2	2
21–40	1D4	3
41–60	1D6	4
61–80	1D8	5
81–100	1D10	6
101–120	2D6	7
121–140	1D8+1D6	8
141–160	2D8	9
161–180	1D10+1D8	10
181–200	2D10	11
201–220	2D10+1D2	13
221–240	2D10+1D4	14
241–260	2D10+1D6	15
261–280	2D10+1D8	16
281–300	3D10	17
Each +20%	Follow above progression	

¹ Magic Point damage for Spirit Combat and Hit Point damage for the Wrack spell.

ENCHANTMENTS

In a world where magic users are rare rather than the norm, the creation of items blessed with supernatural power has always been a vital commodity. Such articles enable the storing, transportation or extension of magic. This technique allows, for example, a priestess to send forth a healing miracle with a petitioner whilst she remains on duty at her temple, a sorcerer to create an unending protective ward around his tower or a shaman bind a spirit to guard a sacred location.

Enchantments, however, are not a means to stockpile power. Every article merely holds part of the creator's magical strength separated from them metaphysically, to operate continuously or be hoarded until some point in the future. Both approaches weaken the caster whilst the magic remains tied up in the enchantment.

Whilst this ostensibly prevents excessive manufacture of enchantments, some magic items survive the demise of their creator and as such many wondrous devices have survived the centuries. Occasionally when facing death, a sorcerer or priest of great ability will pour their magic into an item to be used by their successors. These are often mighty artefacts, yet many of these potent tools are sought out by enemies of that cult or guild for theft or destruction.

Although enchanting seems like a worthwhile ability to learn, it is a skill more suited to the altruistic or mistrustful and not so much for the adventurous. Games Masters running campaigns *not* based upon playing *Wraith Recon* operatives, are encouraged to include the odd enchantment in their games, whether as eternal sorcerous traps, famous treasures to be discovered or cult heirlooms passed down to those proven as worthy.

As described in *Wraith Recon*, Enchant is an Advanced skill with a starting value of POW x 2. However the specific rules for its use depend on the type of High Magic it is applied to. Employ the sorcery version as the basis for its general utilisation then apply the guidelines for Divine and Spirit Magic enchantments as necessary.

Sorcery Enchantments

The Enchant skill allows the creation of magical objects with either a temporary or continuous duration. There are three main types of objects that can be created:

- Objects that enhance themselves (such as a sword enchanted with Damage Enhancement).
- Objects that confer a benefit (or ‘curse’) on the wearer (for example a ring with Enhance DEX).
- Objects that allow the user to impose a spell on a target (for example an arrow with Palsy).

Temporarily enchanted items normally take the form of potions, powders or ammunition; which trigger when the item is broken, dispersed or digested – but only work a limited number of times. They are created by the sorcerer binding a spell into the article and placing it on an indefinite hold until the item is activated. The Magic Points used to power the spell do not regenerate until it is completely used, or the sorcerer decides to allow the ‘held’ spell to lapse, at which point the article loses its enchantment.

Psychic Shock

The destruction of a permanent enchantment has a detrimental effect on its creator. Linked by their metaphysical bond, the pain and shock of the sundering can cause consequences. These are risks that any enchanter must take in order to invest their power into an object.

Whenever a permanent enchantment is broken, roll on the following table. Although this seems to lessen the desirability of manufacturing magical items, it should be noted that many good reasons exist as to why an artefact is created in the first place.

Roll once for the effect and a second time for the duration.

1D10	Shock Effect	1D100	Shock Duration
1	Blind	01–20	A number of Combat Actions equal to the POW invested.
2	Catatonic	21–35	A number of Rounds equal to the POW invested.
3	Confused (lose 1 CA per round)	36–50	A number of Minutes equal to the POW invested.
4	Deaf	51–60	A number of Hours equal to the POW invested.
5	Delusional	61–70	A number of Days equal to the POW invested.
6	Dumb	71–80	A number of Weeks equal to the POW invested.
7	Enfeebled (no MP regeneration)	81–85	A number of Months equal to the POW invested.
8	Incapable (all skills at –20%)	86–90	A number of Years equal to the POW invested.
9	Insane	91–95	A number of Decades equal to the POW invested.
10	Numb (no sense of touch)	96–100	Permanent.

Permanent enchanted items are usually crafted from more substantial materials such as stone, wood or metal. Instead of containing a one-shot spell, they operate continuously. They are powered by the sorcerer hiving off part of his personal Characteristic POW and placing it into the object. Since he has reduced his POW he lowers his maximum number of Magic Points but does not need to reduce any skills due to the lowered Characteristic. The enchanted item remains eternally functional (anti-magic spells merely suppress the effect temporarily) and cannot be unwoven unless handed back to the sorcerer who created it or the item is physically broken.

Breaking a permanent enchantment scatters the invested POW into the aether, causing the original sorcerer to suffer a psychic shock as the bond between the disparate parts of his soul is briefly riven. However his lost points of POW slowly return at the rate of one point per week. Conversely, if the sorcerer is slain, then any enchantments he created continue to function.

To create an enchantment, a sorcerer first selects the spell(s) he wishes to cast into the object and decides which, if any, Manipulations will be added. Spells woven into an enchantment cannot be cast at a skill level greater than the value of the Enchant skill. For example, a sorcerer whose Grimoire skill is 78% and Enchant skill is 34%, cannot cast any spells from that Grimoire into an enchantment beyond the 34% cap. Thus if he attempts to create a magical ring that increases STR, he could only bind an effect of +8 STR into the enchantment, not his maximum possible effect of +16 if casting the spell normally. The amount of Manipulation is also limited by the Enchant skill. So the same sorcerer with 34% Enchant and 61% Manipulation can add a maximum of four points of Manipulation.

The time required to enplace an enchantment is the same as it would take to cast the spell in Combat Actions but is measured in hours. The cost to create the enchantment is equal to whatever the cost would normally be to cast the spell.

Once the parameters of the spell(s) are decided, the sorcerer must successfully roll against their Enchant skill. A critical success reduces the amount of POW or Magic Points invested by a single point (to a minimum of one). A failure has no detrimental effect save that the enchantment failed but a fumble causes the sorcerer to not only fail but also suffer a temporary reduction of their Characteristic POW equal to the cost of the enchantment. These points return at a rate of one per week.

The Combine Manipulation can be used to create complex enchanted objects, however if any of the combined spells have the concentration trait then the combined spell as a whole gains the Concentration trait. If any of the combined spells have the Resistance Trait then the whole spell gains that Resistance Trait. This may mean that a spell can be resisted in more than one way, in which case the target makes one roll for each Resistance and the spell must overcome *all* of the target's appropriate Resistance skills at once. Generally sorcerers attempt to avoid combining spells with different Resistance traits for this very reason.

When creating a temporary enchantment, the sorcerer can use Magic Points from any source he has access to. So if he has access to a *power crystal* or additional Magic Points (due to a Tap Spell for example) then those Magic Points can be used. He cannot, however, have a third party donate the Magic Points for him: the Magic Points must come directly from the sorcerer or something he has a psychic link to. If creating a permanent enchantment, the sorcerer must use his own POW.

Temporary enchantments have a number of uses equal to the Target's Manipulation used at the time of creation. An unmanipulated enchantment would have one use but one with four targets could be used four times. The sorcerer needs to provide one dose of enchanted material or equivalent for each Target. For example, a Treat Wounds enchantment with four targets would require four doses of potion or pills. A Puncture enchantment with four targets would require four items of ammunition. When the spell (or spell fragment) is triggered, it usually continues to affect the target(s) until its Duration expires.

To use a temporary enchantment, the wielder performs an appropriate activating sequence; swallowing healing pills, firing an enchanted arrow and so on. Using the enchanted item is automatically successful. However if an enchanted spell requires concentration, then the *wielder* of the enchantment must provide it. Therefore an enchantment with the concentration trait needs to remain in contact with the wielder. Common sense should be applied for items such as Wrack enchanted ammunition, which should only inflict a single Combat Action's worth of magical damage, before guttering out.

Where a magical effect has the Resist trait, it is the value of the creator's Enchant or Grimoire skill (whichever is lower) at the time of its manufacture, which is used as the opposed casting roll. If the target manages to resist, the spell is still consumed.

Permanent enchantments are used in the same way as temporary enchantments except that they are not consumed by being used. However permanent enchantments with the autonomous trait are *always on*. In most cases, such as a ring of Enhance (Dex) or a mask of Abjure (Air) this is not a problem but some more dangerous items such as a Hood of Smothering will attempt to cast its spell on anyone who touches it, making handling such objects very risky.

Permanent enchantments with the Concentration trait are quiescent until being actively wielded and concentrated upon. This works for most items but for offensive objects there is always a risk of such items being accidentally activated by stray thoughts or magic, in which case it may discharge unexpectedly. For this reason, SpellCom artificers generally avoid creating permanent enchantments designed to inflict harm.

Divine Magic Enchantments

Enchantments created with Divine Magic work similarly to those of sorcery. Although most faiths have ready access to the Extension spell, enchantments provide several advantages – namely the inability to be terminally dismissed, a higher chance of overcoming a target and the chance of surviving the caster's own demise.

Temporary enchantments can be formed from spells with either the Instant or Duration trait. They are normally bound into potions, candles, clay chits and similar objects. However, only spells with the Duration trait can be made into permanent enchantments. Any miracles bound into an enchantment remain unrecoverable until it is used, broken or unwoven; according to its type.

Enchanted miracles with the Resist trait use the lower value of the creator's Enchant or Invoke skill (at the time of its manufacture) as its opposed casting roll. Similarly, the Magnitude of the miracle is based upon the lower of the creator's Enchant or Piety skill.

For example, a Cleric of the All Father with an Invoke skill of 110%, Piety of 65% and Enchant of 85%, decides to create a Rod of Disarming. The temporary enchantment is a one-shot item, which triggers if snapped in two. When used, the miracle affects up to seven targets, which must resist against a target number of 85%.

Unlike sorcerous enchantments, different miracles cannot be combined into a single object. However, a temporary item can hold multiple charges of the same miracle, providing something on the article ablates or is consumed with each casting. A Staff of Storms could be enchanted with three Call Winds miracles, each placed in a sapphire mounted into the shaft. As each spell is used, one of the gemstones might blacken and crack.

To create the article the priest must successfully roll against their Enchant skill. There is no additional bonus for a critical success. A failure indicates the creation failed and the miracle must be prayed for again. A fumble means the priest not only failed but also suffers a temporary loss of Dedicated POW equal to the number of miracles involved in the enchantment. These points of Dedicated POW return at a rate of one per week.

Spirit Magic Enchantments

At first glance there appears to be no possible purpose for Spirit Magic enchantments, since the fetishes they create are effectively permanent bindings. Yet a number of subtle tricks can be accomplished by a shaman with the Enchant skill.

In such cases the POW of the largest spirit that can be enchanted is based on the lower value of the shaman's Enchant or Spirit Binding skill. A Yachak with a Spirit Binding skill of 90% but only an Enchant skill of 60% would be restricted to creating enchantments with spirits of up to 18 POW, rather than the 27 POW they could normally bind.

More than one spirit may be bound into the same item or location. However, a temporary enchantment will release all of its captive spirits simultaneously when used.

To perform the enchantment the spirit must already be under the control of the shaman and will count towards his maximum number of spirits limit until the enchantment is used, unwoven or destroyed. To create the enchantment the shaman must succeed in his Enchant roll. There is no additional bonus for a critical success but a failure indicates that the attempt was unsuccessful and the spirit escaped to freedom. A fumble means the shaman not only failed but also suffers a temporary reduction in their CHA equal to the number of spirits being enchanted, reducing their captive spirit limit. These points of CHA return at a rate of one per week.

Temporary spirit enchantments are akin to one-use fetishes designed for use by those who lack the Spirit Binding skill, or to act as diabolical traps. The spirit contained within the enchantment is given pre-set instructions in advance by the creator. When the enchantment item is broken, the spirit is released and performs the task assigned to it. On completion of its instructions or the removal of the situation it was prepped for, the spirit returns to the Spirit Plane.

Permanent spirit enchantments are often used to bind a spirit to a location rather than a fetish, although they can still be tied to an object if desired. The spirit is able to freely shift between the spirit and material worlds, and has a degree of autonomy, but cannot move away from wherever or whatever it is bound to. In addition it gains the Recurring trait, meaning that even if it is dissipated via Spirit Combat or direct magical assault, it will gradually reform a number of Magic Points equal to one tenth of the Enchantment value per day, only returning once fully recovered. Many hauntings are the result of binding a spirit or soul to a site, so they can act as warnings, guardians or deadly sentinels.

Concert Cast Enchantments

The Concert skill can be used by groups of thaumaturgists to create very large scale enchantments. Those involved in the ritual can also total their Enchant skill to raise the capping limit. In such a case, every participant must invest an equal share of the underlying cost, whether that is Magic Points, miracles or spirit slots – the minimum investment always being one.

If a group creates a permanent enchantment, it may un-weave the artefact at a later date. However, all the *surviving* members of the original concert must be present to perform the task, otherwise it fails.

SUMMONING

When the All Father discovered Nuera he sent a call into the void, inviting others to join him in creating a home for all those willing to travel from alternate worlds. The deities of other realms heard his song and crossed the dimensions, bringing their worshippers with them. Since that time, those with the knowledge can repeat parts of that primordial mantra and draw beings from beyond Nuera to their aid.

Summoning allows casters to bring forth creatures native to other planes of existence. Generally known as demons, meddling with

these powers is very dangerous, not only due to the energies required for opening portals to other dimensions but also due to the alien attitudes and desires of the beings so contacted. Cautionary tales tell of demonologists destroyed by misshapen monsters or portals that warp out of control.

Few summoners can singlehandedly call a demon to Nuera and those that manifest tend to be minor creatures of limited utility. To draw a being of significant power normally requires combining the strengths of several summoners. Such potent creatures tend to be dangerous servants however, difficult to control and potentially treacherous.

Priests, sorcerers and shamans are all capable of learning and utilising this skill. The specific rules for summoning are as follows.

Summon (INT + CHA)

Summon is a ritual skill that combines the techniques of manifesting and controlling extra-dimensional beings, generally known as demons. It may be utilised in several ways, either to summon a random creature, or call forth a specific entity that the summoner has previously researched or encountered.

The ritual requires a considerable amount of preparation, one hour per Magic Point invested into the summoning. Huge summonings can necessitate days to carefully inscribe arcane sigils containing the summoned entities and build up the power to open the portal. If the summoning involves more than one participant, then they must all combine their efforts. If created successfully the wards prevent a summoned entity from directly affecting its summoners via physical or magical means.

In emergencies a summoning can be rushed, taking only a minute per Magic Point, but this forfeits any sort of protective wards to contain the manifestation; relying on the ritual leader to successfully convince the demonic entity to aid them. If this fails the demon is free to act as it will, so such summonings are usually acts of desperation.

Similar to concert cast spells, participants in a ritual summoning pool their Summon skills, under the leadership of a single coordinator. The maximum number of Magic Points that can be invested in the summoning is one tenth of the group's combined Summon skills.

Mepath-Ka, an ancient Dark Elf wizard of House Xuan, convenes a summoning ritual to exact retribution for the death of a favoured servant. Aided by his six foremost adepts, they combine their Summon skills, gaining a total of 365%. Technically the ritual may have up to 37MP placed into the summoning. However, the wizard decides to call forth something a little more modest and chooses to summon an entity that he has summoned before. This being 'only' requires a ritual of 28MP to summon, requiring the cabal to spend over a day to carefully clean and ward the summoning area, then sit in ritual meditation to form the portal.

Once preparations have been completed the ritual leader must roll against their *un-augmented* Summon skill. The result of the roll determines the effect of the summoning.

- **Critical:** The demon arrives in a magnanimous or subservient mood, willingly following the ritual leader's commands without question.
- **Success:** The demon arrives but requires convincing to perform a service. The ritual leader must win an opposed roll of their Influence against the demon's Persistence, otherwise the creature returns to its home plane (or if no wards exist, act in accordance with its Emotional Attitude).
- **Failure:** The demon arrives and finds a flaw in the containment wards. Depending on its Emotional Attitude it will attempt to take advantage of, subvert or slay its summoners, who have no control over it.
- **Fumble:** The portal fails to form correctly and the wards fail catastrophically. Roll on the Summoning Mishaps table.

Summoning Mishaps

1D100	Mishap
01–20	The portal explodes, inflicting the summoners with 1D8 damage to all locations.
21–35	The portal collapses draining the summoners of all of their Magic Points or Miracles.
36–50	The portal warps dragging the consciousness of the summoners into the ethereal realms, placing them in an untreatable coma lasting 1D8 hours.
51–60	Before the portal crumples, the summoners glimpse some ghastly cyclopean horror, reducing them to drooling, gibbering idiots for 1D8 days.
61–70	The portal forms but summons a random demonic entity or entities of equivalent MP value and extremely hostile nature.
71–80	The portal inverts, throwing the summoners into an alternate plane for the intended Duration, their reception depends on the Emotional Attitude of the being they tried to summon.
81–85	The portal warps out of control, multiplying the number of demons summoned by the number of participants in the ritual.
86–90	Different portals equal in number to the summoners open, each spewing forth random demons, which immediately begin to battle, overrunning the local area.
91–95	The portal rips open a permanent gateway between the two planes, allowing demonic hordes free access to Nuera, until it can be shut. The portal has a Magnitude equal to the total Magic Point cost originally invested in it.
96–100	The summoners attract the attention of a long imprisoned minor deity, which permanently transfers itself and its followers through the rift and begins a war of extinction against the inhabitants of Nuera

Once summoned, a demon remains in Nuera for a minimum of one hour. The Duration can be extended if further Magic Points are diverted into keeping the demonic manifestation stable. This requires that the participants remain locked in their ritual and feed an extra Magic Point per hour, via their metaphysical link, to the creature. If the ritual is disrupted at this point the creature will return to its home plane after 3D10 minutes.

No matter the form or intelligence of the demonic entity, the ritual leader can converse with it empathically or telepathically. This communication is local however and the summoners lose any direct contact once it leaves their presence.

Designing the Demonic Creature

The final form and powers of the demon can either be handled in a free-form manner, the leader of the summoning ritual making the relevant choices, or the Games Master can prepare a number of specific demons, each one a specific individual known to that cult.

Magic Points invested in the ritual are used to pay for the Characteristics, improved skills, protections, mystical abilities and other random features.

Use the following design steps to create an otherworld entity:

- Spend Magic Points to purchase its Characteristics.
- Roll twice on the Demonic Physique table to determine its form and calculate locational Hit Points.
- Roll 1D3 times on the Natural Weapons table and calculate the damage, size and reach of each armament.
- Roll on the Natural Protection table to determine the appearance and armour value of the its outer layer.
- Spend Magic Points to improve its skills .
- Spend Magic Points to assign additional protections.
- Spend Magic Points to grant it mystical abilities.
- Spend any remaining Magic Points to purchase Random Features.
- Roll on the Emotional Attitude table.

Purchase Characteristics

Magic Points must be invested to pay for the creature's Characteristics. Since demonic entities arriving in the world must possess all seven Characteristics this places a lower limit of 7 Magic Points for any summoning. Such tiny beings are often called Homunculi if vaguely humanoid in shape.

Demon Characteristic Costs

MP Cost	Characteristic Value
1	1D6
2	1D6+6
3	1D6+12
4	1D6+18
5	1D6+24
Each +1	Add an extra +6

A summoned demon has any Common Skill suitable to its form and original plane. These are calculated as per normal but have a base value of 50+pertinant Characteristics. For example a demon with STR 16 and DEX 15 would have a default Unarmed skill of 81%.

Determine Physical Appearance

Once the Characteristics of the summoned creature have been selected, the summoner should determine its shape. These should be randomly generated unless the summoning has called forth a known species.

The first step is to roll twice on the Physique table to give the creature's form. Choose which of the rolls represents the underlying basic structure, the other giving alternate body parts or surface appearance. For example rolling Arachnine and Feline could create a furry eight legged body form with a cat head instead of a spider, a chitinous cat shape with compound eyes, or anything that can be imagined.

Demon Physique Type

1D100	Species	Description	Hit Location Chart
01-04	Arachnine	Spider	Arachnid
05-08	Avian	Bird	Avian
09-12	Canine	Dog	Quadruped
13-16	Caprine	Goat	Quadruped
17-20	Cancrine	Crab	Decapod
21-24	Crocodilian	Crocodile	Quadruped – Tailed
25-28	Equine	Horse	Quadruped
29-32	Feline	Cat	Quadruped – Tailed
33-36	Glirine	Rodent	Quadruped – Tailed
37-38	Hirudinal	Leech	Gastropod
39-40	Humaniform	Human	Biped
41-44	Insectile	Insect	Hexapod
45-48	Lupine	Wolf	Quadruped
49-52	Noctillionine	Bat	Avian
53-56	Octopine	Octopus	Cephalopod
57-60	Ophidian	Snake	Serpent
61-64	Piscine	Fish	Piscine
65-68	Porcine	Boar	Quadruped
69-72	Ranine	Frog	Quadruped – Jumping
73-76	Saurian	Lizard	Quadruped – Tailed
77-80	Scorpioid	Scorpion	Arachnid – Tailed
81-84	Simian	Ape	Biped
85-88	Taurine	Bull	Quadruped
89-92	Ursine	Bear	Quadruped
93-96	Vermian	Worm	Gastropod
97-00	Vespine	Wasp	Hexapod – Winged

Arachnid

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Fourth Leg
2	Left Fourth Leg
3	Right Third Leg
4	Left Third Leg
5-10	Abdomen
11	Right Second Leg
12	Left Second Leg
13	Right First Leg
14	Left First Leg
15-20	Cephalothorax

Arachnid – Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1-4	Tail
5	Right Fourth Leg
6	Left Fourth Leg
7	Right Third Leg
8	Left Third Leg
9-12	Abdomen
13	Right Second Leg
14	Left Second Leg
15	Right Claw
16	Left Claw
17-20	Cephalothorax

Hexapod

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Rear Leg
2	Left Rear Leg
3	Right Middle Leg
4	Left Middle Leg
5-9	Abdomen
10-13	Thorax
14	Right Front Leg
15	Left Front Leg
16-20	Head

Hexapod – Winged

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Rear Leg
2	Left Rear Leg
3	Right Middle Leg
4	Left Middle Leg
5-7	Abdomen
8-9	Thorax
10-11	Right Wing
12-13	Left Wing
14	Right Front Leg
15	Left Front Leg
16-20	Head

Avian

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Right Claw
4-6	Left Claw
7-9	Body
10-12	Breast
13-15	Right Wing
16-18	Left Wing
19-20	Head

Biped

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Right Leg
4-6	Left Leg
7-9	Abdomen
10-12	Chest
13-15	Right Arm
16-18	Left Arm
19-20	Head

Biped – Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1-2	Right Leg
3-4	Left Leg
5-6	Tail
7-9	Abdomen
10-12	Chest
13-15	Right Arm
16-18	Left Arm
19-20	Head

Cephalopod

Octopus 1D20	Squid 1D20	Hit Location
	1-4	Tentacle 1
	5-8	Tentacle 2
1-2	9	Arm 1
3-4	10	Arm 2
5-6	11	Arm 3
7-8	12	Arm 4
9-10	13	Arm 5
11-12	14	Arm 6
13-14	15	Arm 7
15-16	16	Arm 8
17	17	Head
18-20	18-20	Mantle

Decapod

1D20	Hit Location
1	Right Fourth Leg
2	Left Fourth Leg
3	Right Third Leg
4	Left Third Leg
5	Right Second Leg
6	Left Second Leg
7	Right First Leg
8	Left First Leg
9-10	Abdomen
11-16	Cephalothorax
17-18	Right Claw
19-20	Left Claw

Gastropod

1D20	Hit Location
1-20	Body

Piscine

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Tail
4-8	Hindbody
9-13	Forebody
14	Right Fin
15	Left Fin
16-20	Head

Quadruped

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Right Hind Leg
4-6	Left Hind Leg
7-9	Hindquarters
10-12	Forequarters
13-15	Right Front Leg
16-18	Left Front Leg
19-20	Head

Quadruped – Centauran

1D20	Hit Location
1-2	Right Hind Leg
3-4	Left Hind Leg
5-6	Hindquarters
7-8	Forequarters
9-10	Right Front Leg
11-12	Left Front Leg
13-14	Chest
15-16	Right Arm
17-18	Left Arm
19-20	Head

Quadruped – Jumping

1D20	Hit Location
1-5	Right Hind Leg
6-10	Left Hind Leg
11-13	Hindquarters
14-16	Forequarters
17	Right Front Leg
18	Left Front Leg
19-20	Head

Quadruped – Tailed

1D20	Hit Location
1-3	Tail
4-5	Right Hind Leg
6-7	Left Hind Leg
8-10	Hindquarters
11-14	Forequarters
15-16	Right Front Leg
17-18	Left Front Leg
19-20	Head

Serpent

1D20	Hit Location
1-9	Tail
10-18	Body
19-20	Head

Determine Natural Weaponry

The natural weapons of the creature can be rolled randomly, or a particular type of weaponry can be selected if it fits one of the physique types. The damage dice, size and reach of the weaponry depends on the SIZ of the creature and the type of attack.

Natural Weapon Size and Reach

Creature SIZ	Size	Bite Reach	Horn Reach	Limb Reach	Tongue/Tail Reach
1-10	S	T	T	S	M
11-20	M	T	S	M	M
21-30	L	S	M	M	L
31-40	H	M	M	L	L

Natural Weapon Type

1D10	Armament	Description
1	Beaked	The head possesses a beak.
2	Clawed	Claws at the ends of arms and legs.
3	Hoofed	Hooves or trotters at the ends of its legs.
4	Horned	Horns placed upon its head or back.
5	None	Uses weapons, has 1D3 different types; roll randomly on weapon list.
6	Pincer	Pincers or segmented claws at the ends of its arms, or perhaps at the end of a tail. A successful un-parried attack with a pincer results in an automatic grapple.
7	Sting	Stingers are located on either the tail or arms.
8	Tentacle	Can sprout from any location or be the substitute for limbs. A successful un-parried attack allows a tentacle to automatically grapple that location and Inflict Pain for each Combat Action thereafter.
9	Tongue	No damage, grapple attack only. If it successfully hits then the sticky tongue Immobilises the opponent and they can be automatically bitten or swallowed the following Combat Action.
10	Toothed	A tooth filled maw, usually located in the head but could also be placed directly in the abdomen or at the ends of limbs.

The natural weapons of the creature are usually a function of its basic size. Some beings however may have unusually big or small examples depending on its physiology and proportions. Games Masters should treat the following tables as average values. If a summoned creature has more than one natural weapon, the Size or Reach of one may be increased at the expense of reducing the value of another.

Natural Weapon Damage

Creature SIZ	Bash/Crush/Claw	
	Damage	Bite/Stab Damage
1-10	1D3	1D4
11-20	1D4	1D6
21-30	1D6	1D8
31-40	1D8	1D10

Determine Natural Protection

The protective outer layer of the creature should be resolved, using the same guidelines as natural weaponry. Larger creatures have a default value due to the gradual thickening of their outer layer. Although the type of skin can appear formidable, the actual protective value may be superficial, unless additional physical protection was defined as part of the summoning and paid for in Magic Points.

Natural Protection Type

1D10	Protection	Description
1	Chitinous	Insect-like chitin, which gives the creature an exoskeleton.
2	Crystalline	Plates of crystal, stony or sandy crust.
3	Feathered	Feathers and down, usually brightly coloured and iridescent.
4	Furry	Short fur to thick hairy pelts, often with beautiful patterns.
5	Hide	Thick leathery skin.
6	Metallic	Metal protection, such as thin flexible skin, scales or heavy plates.
7	None	Has no natural protection but can wear armour of the right shape.
8	Scaly	Reptilian scales, sometimes brightly coloured.
9	Shelled	Crustacean carapace, reptilian plastron or mollusc shell.
10	Spiny	Opponents in melee suffer half their own rolled damage if they successfully land an attack with a weapon of equal or shorter Reach. To calculate their length, treat spines as Horns in the previous table.

Base Natural Protection

Creature SIZ	Base AP
1–10	None
11–20	1 AP
21–30	2 AP
31–40	3 AP

Improve Skills

Expertise can be purchased for the demonic being, making it a sage or savant of its race. Each Magic Point spent can either purchase an Advanced Skill at base value (using the creature's own Characteristics), or increase the value of an existing skill by 10%. Although some Common Skills may start off with a higher default value, no skill can be raised above the ritual leader's own un-augmented Summon skill using this method.

Advanced Magical skills cannot be purchased in this way.

Add Protections

Additional defences can be purchased for the creature, demonstrating its overall toughness and the nature of its home plane. These may

be physical or magical but tend to be very specific so as to not generate universally invulnerable demonic beings. Remember that larger creatures have a default level of natural armour, as described in the Base Natural Protection table.

Magic Points can be spent on the following:

- **Magical Resistance:** 1 Magic Point per Magnitude of magical protection, so that investing 3 MP would grant a 3 Magnitude Resistance. Incoming spells must exceed this Magnitude to affect the creature. Although highly resistant demons can be summoned, they are extremely dangerous if the summoners fail to control the creature.
- **Environmental Immunity:** 1 Magic Point to provide complete immunity to one form of environmental damage; heat, cold, electricity, poison and so on. Purchasing a second immunity costs two Magic Points, a third 3 Magic Points and so on.
- **Additional Armour Points:** Adding one extra Armour Point all over costs a single Magic Point. Each point beyond the first is incrementally more expensive. Thus adding 2 AP would cost 3 MPs in total, 3 additional AP would cost 6 MPs and so on.

Additional Armour Points

Extra AP	Total MP cost
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10
5	15
6	21
7	28
8	36
9	45

Grant Mystical Abilities

Demonic entities may possess mystical abilities. These are inherent magical powers that have a default skill value of 50+INT+CHA. The base values can be increased with Improve Skills. Mystical Abilities are treated as having a default Magnitude of POW divided by three (rounded up). Any use of such an ability requires the creature to expend one of its own Magic Points.

- 1 Magic Point to duplicate the effect of a specific Divine Magic or Sorcery spell. In the latter case the creature lacks any form of additional Manipulation (beyond its default Magnitude) but calculates its effect as if the ability skill was the Grimoire value. A succubus type demon may have the ability to Dominate (Human), for example.
- 1 Magic Point to gain the ability to Discorporate others and engage them in Spirit Combat (as described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*), using the skill value of this ability to calculate spirit damage. Discorporation attacks cost the entity a personal Magic Point and may be resisted with the Persistence skill. In general most demonic beings possess their victims rather than dissipating them.

Purchase Random Features

If the summoner is haphazardly drawing a creature from an alternate plane, they may utilise the Random Feature table to create some unusual abilities. Each roll costs one Magic Point.

Random Feature Table

D100	Ability	Effect
01–02	Absorbing	All spells it comes into contact with are immediately neutralised.
03–04	Acidic	Possesses a flesh dissolving acidic ichor that sprays whenever the skin is penetrated, causing damage to the attacker; roll a D4 to determine the strength of the acid, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per wound.
05–06	Alluring	Produces pheromones that attract and seduce victims, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid approaching defencelessly.
07–08	Asymmetric	One half of the creature is larger, longer or taller than the other, double the Hit Points of locations in the larger side and halve the Hit Points of locations in the smaller.
09–10	Boneless	Can squeeze through any gap and survive any fall.
11–12	Brainless	Sense organs are distributed over the entire body and sentience is located elsewhere from the head, roll a random location and place the 'brain' there.
13–14	Burning	Glow with burning heat, injuring anyone within melee range; roll a D4, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per round.
15–16	Chameleon	Cannot be perceived using vision but may be heard, smelled and so on.
17–18	Climbing	Has a spider or lizard like ability to scale surfaces.
19–20	Contagious	Inflicts a virulent disease with a delay of 1D8 hours and potency of CONx5%, which causes a penalty of 1D8 points to; roll a d6, 1=STR, 2=CON, 3=DEX, 4=INT, 5=POW or 6=CHA.
21–22	Corroding	Weapons take 1D8 damage each time they strike the creature, ignoring their Armour Points.
23–24	Dampener	All magical effects in the vicinity are suppressed by 1D8 Magnitude. Spells reduced to zero Magnitude are dispelled unless part of a permanent enchantment.
25–26	Deathly	Can drain the life force of nearby plants and creatures. Those in the immediate area must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test each round to avoid suffering one point of damage to every location, ignoring armour.
27–28	Disturbing	Creature is covered with unsettling forms, such as baby arms, or multiple eyes or mouths; viewers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test or be helpless with horror.
29–30	Domineering	Manipulates those around it with mental commands, which cannot be Resisted unless the target is successful in an unopposed Persistence test.
31–32	Draining	Temporarily weakens the magical power of an opponent, draining 1D8 MP each successful hit.
33–34	Droning	Produces a buzzing noise that sedates listeners, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid falling asleep for 1D8 minutes.
35–36	Entangle	Restricts the movements of those within melee range, who must succeed in an unopposed Brawn test to avoid being rendered physically helpless each round.
37–38	Frightening	Creature appears terrifyingly dangerous; viewers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test or flee from the creature.
39–40	Icy	Radiates freezing coldness, injuring anyone within melee range; roll a D4, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per round.
41–42	Intangible	Can move through solid objects at will. Whilst intangible it cannot be harmed physically but neither can it attack.
43–44	Leaper	Has powerfully sprung limbs, multiplying its jump range by 1D4+1.
45–46	Levitating	Has the capability to move over any solid or liquid surface without sinking or leaving tracks.

D100	Ability	Effect
47–48	Mimic	Changes into the shape of a creature it successfully touches, maintaining its own Characteristics but assuming the locations and the duplicate countenance of the being contacted.
49–50	Mournful	Appearance is so sad or pathetic that observers must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to be able to begin attacking it.
51–52	Mutated	Roll a random location, which no longer exists.
53–54	Nerveless	Cannot feel pain and does not suffer the ill-effects of Serious Wounds.
55–56	Obfuscating	Produces a cloud of mist, spores or darkness that blinds observers, who must succeed in an unopposed Perception test every Combat Action to observe the creature.
57–58	Oversized	One location is swollen to a very large size or length, doubling its Hit Points.
59–60	Paralysing	Able to render victims incapable of movement; those touched must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid paralysis, which lasts 1D8 minutes.
61–62	Perceptive	Possesses an odd primary sense; roll a d6, 1=Echolocation (sonar), 2=Thermoception (heat), 3=Cerebralception (sapient consciousness), 4=Nociception (pain), 5=Ethoception (souls), 6=Thaumaception (magic).
63–64	Poisonous	One unarmed attack inflicts a venomous poison with a delay of 1D8 Combat Actions and a potency of CONx5%, which inflicts a Poison Condition selected from the table on page 56 of the <i>RuneQuest Core Rulebook</i> .
65–66	Polymorph	Changes form every round, maintaining its own Characteristics but assuming the locations of the new shape and carrying over any damage already suffered (various forms should be prepared in advance by the Games Master).
67–68	Projector	Any damage inflicted on the creature is felt by everybody nearby, who suffer the psychological, but not physiological, effects as if they had been wounded too.
69–70	Quick	Movement rate is multiplied by 1D4+1.
71–72	Reflecting	All magic cast on the creature is reflected back upon the caster.
73–74	Regenerating	Recovers 1 Hit Point per round to every location, except for Major Wounds.
75–76	Roaring	Produces a thunderous sound that deafens listeners, who must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid becoming temporally stunned for 1D3 Combat Actions.
77–78	Scintillating	A shifting polychromatic appearance that confuses onlookers, who must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test to avoid becoming mesmerised.
79–80	Shadowy	Can control the ambient light in its immediate surroundings.
81–82	Shocking	Charges itself with electricity, inflicting a shock on those that hit it or are struck by it; roll a D4, 1=1D2, 2=1D4, 3=1D6 and 4=1D8 damage per blow.
83–84	Silent	Cannot be heard; even its attacks are inaudible.
85–86	Slimy	Cannot be grappled in close combat and leaves a sticky trail wherever it travels.
87–88	Stench	Gives off nauseating odours that sicken inhalers, who must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid dropping prone and vomiting.
89–90	Sticky	Secretes a strong glue or mucus that causes items to adhere to its skin, requiring a successful unopposed Brawn test and a Combat Action to remove.
91–92	Teleporter	Can freely change its location once per round at no cost in Combat Actions.
93–94	Transmuter	Changes the substance of touched organics into another material; living victims must succeed in an unopposed Resilience test to avoid the struck location being changed into crystal, dust, plants, wine, bronze and so on.
95–96	Vampiric	Hit Point damage inflicted on an opponent is transferred to itself, healing any wounds currently suffered.
97–98	Warded	Invulnerable to one specific type of material; steel, wood, stone, flesh and so on.
99-00	Weakening	Temporarily weakens the strength of an opponent by 1D8 STR each successful (un-parried) hit.

Determine Emotional Attitude

The demon's attitude is important: it determines how it reacts to the summoner and what kind of services it will perform if successfully influenced by the summoner. The attitude is usually rolled randomly using the following table:

Demon Attitude Table

1D10	Attitude	Game Effects
1	Amorous	The demon develops a physical attraction for anyone who tries to engage with it. It may become protective, jealous or seductive depending on how the encounter develops.
2	Argumentative	The demon delights in contradictions and arguments. It does not become physically aggressive but may be verbally abusive. It certainly sticks to its own point of view, rejecting all except the most reasoned of cases put to it.
3	Arrogant	The demon treats those who interact with it as worthless scum, unfit to occupy the same physical space as itself. If the Adventurer might be useful in some capacity, then the demon might deign to engage but is otherwise contemptuous of such an inferior, mortal being.
4	Dismissive	Unless beaten in an opposed Influence or Insight test, the demon dismisses anyone who tries to engage with it. Not a team player.
5	Domineering	The demon seeks to use Influence or threats of retribution to browbeat anyone it meets into some form of service.
6	Hostile	The demon is hostile to all mortals. If possible it attacks immediately.
7	Intrigued	The demon expresses a huge degree of interest in the Adventurer's motives. It spends 1D3 hours engaged in deep and detailed questions. At the end of this period, roll again on this table to determine the demon's final reaction.
8	Neutral	The demon has no strong opinions one way or another. It simply goes about its business.
9	Vengeful	The demon will attempt to extract some form of revenge for being summoned, such as finding a loophole in any negotiation or informing its victims exactly who summoned it.
10	Welcoming	The demon is open, friendly and willing to engage in conversation. Friendship may result.

In most cases a demonic entity requires some form of payment or service for its aid. This can range from the traditional fresh meat to virgin sacrifices, or more bizarre requests such as being granted a copy of a particular book, an exchange of philosophical knowledge, or even being permitted to return to its plane of existence with physical trophies of its kills. Such exchanges normally occur before the creature performs its end of the bargain.

Final Notes

The metaphysics of summoning can be very complex. Games Masters are free to decide whether the physical nature of a demon is their actual body, drawn across the infinite planes, or if the magical strength of the summoning provides a temporary manifestation, which the demon inhabits.

This decision has consequences. Demons who are fully present are at risk of a true death if exposed to assault and thus may display some caution, or at least cunning, when sent to perform an act of violence. It also means that most of these creatures are one-off castaway encounters, since a summoning most likely transports a random member of their species.

Demons that inhabit a temporary manifestation are more inclined towards risky gambits having no fear of actually dying if the temporary body is destroyed. In fact, demons forced to perform deeds against their will may enthusiastically attempt suicidal acts, hoping to destroy their manifestation and free themselves from further slavery. An interesting side-effect of such a summoning is that the same demon may be repeatedly summoned, allowing it to develop as a major Non-Player Character. Such demons can possess their own personality, developing a relationship with their summoners or the cult if the same creature has served for centuries.

Powerful demons can be extremely dangerous to groups of Adventurers. Games Masters are encouraged to only use the largest of these creatures as non-confrontational protagonists, battlefield scenery or the reason d'être for a scenario – offering other methods for their defeat rather than direct violence. If the game calls for a demonic conflict, it is generally better for the foes to summon multiple lesser beings, rather than one huge beast.

CHAPTER FOUR

SPELLS AND GRIMOIRES



This chapter examines, in-depth, the spells available to SpellCom sorcerers, the minor enchantments they create for Wraith Recon squads and the Brotherhood of Magnus warlocks, along with some large scale magical artefacts built to serve as battlefield scaled engines of war. It should provide a large number of devices that can be assigned to Adventurers, whether as equipment, loot or a long lost magical treasure.

Although the following grimoires, spells and devices are ostensibly designed for use by SpellCom, there is nothing stopping a Games Master from utilising these ideas for campaigns not set within the strictures of *Wraith Recon*. In fact they can easily be ported to campaigns set within alternate high fantasy settings.

SORCERY GRIMOIRES

Most of the sorcerers within Spellcaster Command are trained in at least one of the *Essential Essays* taught by the ubiquitous Dardarrian Mages Guild; the six Grimoires known as the *Elementary Exertions*, *Evolutivity Excogitations*, *Eidolon Execrations*, *Excellent Exculpations*, *Ethereal Evulgations* and the *Existential Exclusions*. (See *Wraith Recon* page 81)

However SpellCom is privy to a select number of unique spells, developed over centuries of esoteric arcane research by various minor Dardarrian wizardry schools. Brought together under a single organisation, this collaboration has spurred further progress; creating a number of novel incantations, which have been inscribed into new grimoires, each one assigned to separate departments within the organisation. Thus SpellCom thaumaturgists usually know at least two Grimoires, one from their basic education and one associated with their department.

Foreign trained sorcerers occasionally appear with knowledge of other Grimoires and a number of exotic volumes are kept within the reserved library; but purposeful study of such books is rare, save amongst the Artificers whom are always seeking new magics to embed within their enchantments.

Departmental Spellbooks

Each department within SpellCom has its own particular grimoire. The spells collated inside these books are fundamental to the tasks assigned to their casters. Nothing prevents a sorcerer from cross-training in the other available grimoires save time and legitimate access but most prefer to specialise in mastering their own section's magic first.

The following Grimoires contain both Cantrips and Sorcery Spells, giving their users a versatile collection of magical knowledge. However, learning the incantations from these books still requires an investment of effort. The amount of spells a thaumaturgist Adventurer begins with is covered on page 21 of *Wraith Recon*. Rules for how many Improvement Rolls are needed to advance currently known cantrips or learn new sorcery spells from a grimoire are described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Games Masters are at liberty to restrict access to particular incantations to particular ranks. In general only the highest ranked wizards and mages know all of the spells within their own departmental grimoire. It should also be remembered that sorcerers have an INT based limitation as to how many sorcery spells can be kept in their mind concurrently.

Alternate Minor Magic Rules

Whilst Common Magic is considered 'lesser' due to its limited effect and expense in terms of Magic Points, it may seem contrary to some players that a Blessing, Cantrip or Charm actually costs more magical effort than casting a big powerful Divine or Sorcery spell.

As an alternative rule, Games Masters may consider allowing any Common Magic spell to be cast for no Magic Points. In this case however, the caster may only maintain a *single* Common Magic spell at any time, casting another immediately dismisses the first, which makes them far less useful. Neither should they stack with High Magic effects. In addition the casting time still remains the same, reducing the efficacy of being able to repetitively cast something like a high Magnitude Disruption.

If this is still too powerful a Games Master is at liberty to offer a compromise, which reduces the cost of the spell according to the following table.

Common Magic Magnitude	Casting Cost
1-2	0
3-4	1
5-6	2
7-8	3

Artificer

The artificers of SpellCom are granted access to the *Libram of Arcane Apparatus*. The book includes a great deal of knowledge concerning materials, craftsmanship and mechanical engineering. The spells held within manipulate the basic physical capabilities of objects, allowing the creation of superior equipment. Most artificers within the department know several other spells that aid their particular specialisation. For example, an artificer who focuses on the design of naval vessels might know Form/Set Wood in addition to the spells within the Libram. These additional magics are usually passed down from previous master artificers to whom novice sorcerers are apprenticed to.

Libram of Arcane Apparatus: Cantrips – *Armoursmith's Boon, Chill, Endurance, Extinguish, Ignite, Mason's Boon* and *Repair*. Sorcery Spells – *Actuate, Farther, Puncture, Reload, Recall, Toughen, Trigger* and *Unburden*.

Cartography

The spells known by members of the cartography department are concerned with mapmaking and transportation. It is the cartographers who maintain the portal network that connects the borders of Dardarrick and much of their unusual magic is focused on this. More Common spells are used to help illustrate maps, grant elevation via flight or even create lighter than air vessels. Within the *Atlas of Topographical Translations* are detailed the rudiments of draftsmanship, surveying and the esoterically complex theories of dimensional transfer.

Atlas of Topographical Translations: Cantrips – *Abacus, Clear Path, Detect (Life), Endurance, Light, Mobility* and *Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Actuate, Conjure, Fly, Measure, Portal Sketch* and *Tag*.

Cryptography

Code breakers and specialists in the concealment of secret messages, the department of cryptography has some very obscure spells within their grimoire, the *Lexicon of Obfuscation*. Within this lone text are described mathematic principles, designing sigils and the basics of hiding messages within text or numbers. The prevalence of high level arithmetic makes this book impenetrable to readers who are not already highly skilled in abstract maths.

Lexicon of Obfuscation: Cantrips – *Abacus, Babel, Bearing Witness, Detect (Cipher), Endurance, Lucky* and *Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Conceal, Decode, Encode, Enthral, Obscure, Reveal* and *Trigger*.

Intelligence

The wizards of this branch of SpellCom are information analysis specialists, relying on their intuition and intelligence to find patterns behind events. Most of their magic is used to cogitate upon vast quantities of raw data. Their operational protocols and magical tools are compiled within the *Facilitation Folio*.

Facilitation Folio: Cantrips – *Bearing Witness, Becalm, Endurance, Fate, Lucky, Mindspeech* and *Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Deduce, Enhance INT, Prognosticate, Projection, Recollect, Telepathy* and *Veil*.

Interrogation

The department of interrogation has a wide mandate from debriefing Wraith Recon teams to questioning important enemy captives. However they also encompass less savoury tasks such as brainwashing prisoners into sleeper agents. Some of the spells available within the *Codex of Coercion* are ethically questionable, with the power to completely subvert free will. Because of their often despicable, but necessary, tasks the department wizards have a grim reputation and often remain silent about what really happens within their sound-proofed chambers.

Codex of Coercion: Cantrips – *Bearing Witness, Becalm, Endurance, Glamour, Golden Tongue, Mindspeech* and *Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Dominate (Humanoid), Intuition, Mindrape, Recollect, Silence, Subvert* and *Torment*.

Ordnance

Masters of destruction, the Department of Ordnance specialise in offensive magic capable of being boosted to battlefield scales and launched remotely through Omnicix crystals. They are also responsible for the manufacture of baneful ammunition and explosives provided to Wraith Recon teams. Only the most precise and self controlled wizards are allowed to peruse the pages of the department's grimoire, floridly entitled the *Tome of Tempestuous Transmogrifications*. Held within are many dangerous theories of energy evocation, force dispersion and physiological effects of different elemental magics. The book is so dangerous that it is kept under lock and key in a specially strengthened iron coffer when not being studied and further warded by the most lethal spells known to the department's head mage.

Tome of Tempestuous Transmogrifications: Cantrips – *Befuddle, Demoralise, Disruption, Dragon's Breath, Frostbite, Hand of Death, Mutlimissile* and *Skybolt*. Sorcery Spells – *Airburst, Banish, Neutralise Magic, Scythe, Smother, Wall* and *Wrack*

Records

Internal SpellCom documents are maintained by the Records Department. Their magic concentrates on recording and retrieval of information stored in the scrolls, books and ledgers stored within the archives. The sages have perfected a number of spells held within the *Replevin Treatise*. Whilst not particularly hazardous in its own right, the grimoire is jealously guarded since it holds the keys to comprehending the archive's convoluted filing system, obfuscated by magic, which prevents unauthorised perusal of the valuable (and oft times deadly) secrets hidden within.

Replevin Treatise: Cantrips – *Abacus, Bearing Witness, Detect (Any Book), Endurance, Extinguish, Push/Pull and Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Alarm, Blind, Duplicate, Holdfast, Index, Retrieval, Transcribe and Trigger*.

Signals

Acting as the main communication exchange between the disparate Omniciex crystal holders, the *Compendium of Communiqués* focuses on message transmission in various forms. Advanced wizards within the department often learn additional, but less common, spells such as Phantom (Sense) to pass messages in alternate forms, or Form/Set (Wax) to aid in forging false physical messages.

Compendium of Communiqués: Cantrips – *Bearing Witness, Endurance, Glamour, Golden Tongue, Mindspeech, Second Sight and Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Locate, Message, Silence, Telepathy, Telesthesia, Translate and Veil*.

Surveillance

The department of surveillance concerns itself with observation and recording information. They are skilled in projecting their senses, copying what they see or hear for later reference by the intelligence experts and keeping alert for exceptionally long periods of time. Their core spells are contained within the *Manual of Observational Pespacacity* along with techniques for interpreting body language, memorising scenes or conversations and improving memory.

Manual of Observational Pespacacity: Cantrips – *Bandit's Cloak, Bearing Witness, Endurance, Detect (Magic), Mindspeech, Second Sight and Understanding*. Sorcery Spells – *Project (Hearing, Scent, Sight), Record, Sense (Weapons), Silence and Sketch*

NEW SPELLS

The following new spells use the standard Sorcery rules and Traits as described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*.

Actuate

Concentration

Provides mechanical objects with motivating power so that they can move or crank themselves. The spell provides a device with *either* a Movement rate *or* STR of three times the critical range of the Grimoire skill. Actuate affects objects of up to 5 SIZ per 10% of

the caster's Grimoire skill. The spell is quite versatile, allowing for the design of automated engineering, such as forge trip-hammers or paddlewheels on ships for example. In such cases the SIZ limits of the spell must include the entire vehicle or load, not just the mechanical drive.

A wizard with a Grimoire skill of 83% casting Actuate on a horseless carriage could cause the wheeled vehicle to move at 27 metres per round (about 20 kilometres per hour) providing that the vehicle had a SIZ of less than 45. Steering the carriage however might be a problem if the vehicle had not been designed for use without drawing beasts...

Airburst

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

Once per *round* this spell creates an airborne explosion, which inflicts damage over a wide area. The radius of effect is equal to one tenth of the Grimoire skill. The amount of damage done at the centre of the blast is equal to that inflicted by a Wrack spell but decreases by one step for every two metres further away from ground zero. Unlike a Wrack spell however, armour does provide protection. Damage continues each Combat Action the sorcerer concentrates on continuing the sequence of blasts, until victims flee the static area of effect or find sufficient cover to hide.

The type of damage inflicted by this spell depends on the cult or school that provides it, each possessing their own unique twist to the appearance of the blast. For example a lightning airburst may appear to be a bolt that drops from the sky and explodes into chain lightning, individual bolts jumping from victim-to-victim until they finally dissipate at the periphery of the spell's radius.

Alarm

Autonomous

Cast onto an object, Alarm activates when the item is touched or moved. Instead of triggering an embedded spell, all the Alarm does is alert the caster of the event, providing they are within range of the spell. Multiple bypass conditions equal to the critical range of the Grimoire skill can be set up by the caster so that the spell does not trip for specific persons, species or materials. The number of objects that Alarm can cover is equal to the Target's Manipulation used during casting. No individual object can exceed a SIZ of three times the critical range of the Grimoire skill.

Kortto Piera decides to place an Alarm spell on his valuable collection of stuffed owls. He has a Grimoire skill of 47% and Manipulation of 61%. He decides to only use one of the five bypass conditions available to him, to make himself immune to the spell. He uses the seven points of Manipulation to add a further four Targets, allowing the alarm to cover his five most prized birds and the rest to quadruple the spell Duration. Half an hour later he receives a mental alert and he rushes back to his chamber to discover the cat dragging one of the stuffed exhibits under his bed...

Blind

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

A sorcerer may attempt to blind a target of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of his Grimoire skill. If the target fails to resist, it loses any vision based senses for the Duration of the spell. It is often used in enchantments subtly inscribed into the covers or pages of dangerous books, or runes warding the doors of private libraries.

Conceal

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

Hides the exact nature of the item it is cast upon, causing the viewer to see something innocuous and fitting for the setting it is placed in. The target can be either an object or a living being but in the latter case the creature has a chance to resist if the spell is used maliciously. Conceal can obfuscate an object of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of his Grimoire skill, keeping it from notice by any senses or perception, although the target will still radiate magic. However, only detection spells of equal or higher Magnitude can penetrate the nature of the concealment. Additional points of Manipulation assigned to Targets allow several objects to be affected.

Svartulfr, a captured Dardarrarian elf spy, has escaped his cell in Redwine Keep but must now bluff his way past the outer wall gate guards. He casts Conceal with a Grimoire skill of 55% and Manipulation of 48%, splitting the manipulation points to give the spell 2 Targets and 4 points of Magnitude. This allows him to Conceal his race and his ragged prisoner's clothing. The hobgoblin guards see only a lowly dwarf servant in his clan livery leaving the castle. In a dramatic moment, a passing shaman sensing the magical aura around the dwarf casts Detect Enemy but since the Detect spell has less Magnitude than the sorcery, the Conceal spell is not penetrated. Unable to sense any threat and disarmed by the innocuous appearance, the shaman gives the servant no more thought allowing Svartulfr to slip out of the castle to freedom.

Conjure

Autonomous

A limited form of teleportation, Conjure summons a specially pre-prepared item to hand from anywhere within range. The item to be summoned must be marked with the Tag spell and can be no larger than 1 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. At the end of the spell however, the object returns to whence it was first summoned. The Target's Manipulation allows more than one object to be conjured simultaneously. An advantage of this spell is that the item (or items) summoned arrive in the same position or configuration they were previously left in. Thus a suit of chainmail mounted upon an arming dummy can be summoned directly around the caster's body.

Alerted by the smell of smoke, Earl Peregrine gallops back to his burning castle when he is ambushed by Lornish assassins. Not expecting such an attack on his own lands he is unarmed but possesses a magical heirloom, a ring that can summon the family Longsword to its wearer.

Peregrine activates the enchantment, calling forth the sword from his private chambers to his waiting hands. Unfortunately summoned from the conflagration, the blade is red hot and the noble lord screams in agony as the blade welds itself to his flesh...

Decode

Concentration

This spell allows the recipient to mentally decrypt ciphers. Decode will crack any secret code written at a Lore (Cyphers) skill less than or equal to the Grimoire skill. Decode can also decrypt text written under the effects of the Encode spell, providing the Decode spell is cast at a Grimoire skill equal to or higher than the encoder.

Deduce

Concentration

Allows the user to correctly answer a question concerning a single past event, such as a crime or an unusual troop deployment, providing the spell casting roll succeeds and is equal or less than any other relevant skills used to compile information about the problem.

For example, to successfully deduce what occurred at the scene of a mysterious death, the sorcerer not only needs to succeed in his Grimoire skill but the roll must also be equal or under his Perception and First Aid skills, with perhaps Combat Style if killed by a weapon or Lore (Regional) if killed by an animal or plant. Every point of Manipulation devoted to Targets allows an extra question to be asked.

The results of this spell depend on a Games Master to answer truthfully about the event being analysed but only information that could be deduced from the clues or situation presented. A fumble should cause the caster to jump to a false conclusion.

Duplicate

Concentration

Duplicate animates a number of quills, styluses or similar implements, equal to one tenth of the Grimoire skill, so that they copy any text or illustrations being inscribed by the recipient onto additional scrolls or pages. Using Manipulation to include extra Targets allows multiple scribes to have their work duplicated. This spell is particularly useful for publishing large numbers of pamphlets, or if cast sequentially over several weeks, entire books.

Encode

Concentration

This spell encrypts a message as it is being written, in a code unbreakable by non-magical means. The text produced is not itself magical, only the cipher used to create it. Messages can only be decrypted by use of a Decode spell cast at an equal or higher Grimoire skill than the Encode spell was cast. If aware that the

intended reader is less proficient in this form of magic, the author does not need to cast the Encode spell at his maximum skill.

Encompass

Autonomous

Similar to Protective Ward, the Encompass spell requires use of the Combine Manipulation, designed as it is to be coupled with one or more other spells. Instead of preventing or affecting something passing through the perimeter, the Encompass spell constantly affects everything *within* its area of effect.

The caster can cover an area with a radius equal of up to one tenth of their Grimoire skill in metres, although the actual volume can be reduced and shaped to fill the casters needs. However, just as with Protective Ward the caster must inscribe the sigils of the ward into the solid surfaces of the area delimiting the spell's effect.

Any spell can be combined with Encompass but the Games Master should utilise common sense to avoid abuse. For instance, with enough preparation time a sorcerer could prepare a corridor as a trap, casting a combined Encompass and Shapechange Humanoid to Hedgehog spell within the inscribed sigils. Anyone crossing into the area who failed to resist the magic would indeed be transformed into a small spiky omnivore. However, those that emerged from the ensorcelled area would immediately be freed from the magic, returning to their original shapes.

Due to the necessary preparation times Encompass is often used in enchantments, either as protective zones or magical traps.

Enthral (Sense)

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

Causes onlookers within range to become completely fascinated with the object of the spell, forgetting to eat, drink or perform any other task required of them. If threatened or attacked they will defend themselves long enough to defeat the opponent and then return to contemplating the object. The caster can affect targets of up to 3 INT per 10% of his Grimoire skill.

Each version of this spell affects a different sense of perception but the object itself must provide the discernable stimulus. A perfumed flower could be used as the target of Enthral (Scent) or a harp for Enthral (Sound). If the object ceases to produce its stimulus or can be cut off from the enthralled victim's perception, they are immediately released from the spell. For example, Enthral cast upon a dancing flame would work only as long as the victim could see the flame or the fire was extinguished. Likewise enthralling music would last as long as the instrument played.

Kortto Piera, in his quest to add to his owl collection, sets a crystal ball atop a tree stump in the middle of the forest. Around the stump he places a number of dead mice as a lure. Unthinkingly casting the spell at its full effect and extending its Duration and Range, the wizard returns several hours later to find a bear, two foxes and a soon to be

very irritated woodsman mesmerised by the crystal ball shimmering in the moonlight.

Farther

Autonomous

Cast upon ranged weapons, whether thrown or those that fire ammunition, Farther increases the weapon's effective range to the Range of the spell. Although this can allow weapons to fly an incredible distance, the chance of hitting is reduced by 20% for each multiple of the weapon's original range, beyond its normal capabilities. The trajectory of the weapon and its target must remain directly observable for any chance to hit. Of course the size of the target can inflict additional penalties to hit, as hitting a specific human at half a kilometre is near impossible whereas hitting a colossal city wall may be relatively easy.

A light crossbow for example can normally fire 100 metres. Under the effect of a sufficiently large Farther the spell its range can be extended to several kilometres. However, if the user aims at a target 350 metres away, he suffers a -60% penalty to hit.

This spell is normally used for weapons designed for highly skilled snipers, or for siege weapons intending to pummel fortifications, which offset the range penalties to hit due to their scale. The caster can affect a weapon of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of his Grimoire skill.

Comparative Sizes of Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Weapon SIZ
Hand weapon	3 or less
Scorpion	6
Ballista	12
Mangonel	18
Onager	24
Couillard	30
Trebuchet	36

*Note: This version of the spell supersedes that first mentioned in **Wraith Recon**, granting a beneficial effect to larger weapons such as siege engines.*

Realistic Range Penalties

Trying to hit small targets at long range with missile weapons is much harder than most people expect. Unlike modern firearms human powered arrows, bolts or even slingshot are heavily affected by cross winds, air resistance and the length of time the projectile takes to travel the distance. Mobile targets, especially those actively dodging and weaving, are very difficult to hit. In real life hunters must use stealth to stalk close enough for an accurate shot.

These difficulties are overcome in war by the use of volley fire against large troop formations. Although striking a specific soldier may be near impossible, there is still a good chance of hitting an area densely packed with men. Of course, even in this case a

Target SIZ

Range	<10	11–20	21–40	41–80	81–150	151–300 ¹	>300 ²
1–20m	—	+20	+40	+60	+80	+100	+120
21–40m	-20	—	+20	+40	+60	+80	+100
41–60m	-40	-20	—	+20	+40	+60	+80
61–80m	-60	-40	-20	—	+20	+40	+60
81–100m	-80	-60	-40	-20	—	+20	+40
101–200m	-100	-80	-60	-40	-20	—	+20
201–300m	-120	-100	-80	-60	-40	-20	—
301–400m	-140	-120	-100	-80	-60	-40	-20
401–500m	-160	-140	-120	-100	-80	-60	-40

¹ Such as battlefield troop formations or an individual house.

² Objects of this size are specific sections of fortifications.

proportion of missiles fall between available targets but enough still strike to give troops second thoughts about standing still and taking casualties.

Of course some creatures can grow to enormous sizes. A dragon for example would be much easier to hit at long range simply because of its bulk. When considering the use of siege weapons the same principle applies, the scale and fixed positions of fortifications making ranged attacks against them almost child's play once the correct range has been discerned.

The above table is provided for those seeking greater verisimilitude when performing missile combat. They show the bonuses or penalties for striking *stationary* targets of a particular size. Moving targets should impose an additional penalty of its current Movement rate in metres x 5%.

Gather (Substance)

Autonomous

Gather brings together the substance specified by the spell, corralling and preserving it within its radius until the Duration expires. The caster can affect an area with a radius equal to up to one tenth of their Grimoire skill in metres. The magic only contains the substance that crosses its boundary, it does not create it.

Although this might sound rather strange, sorcerers can use it to collect clouds of obscuring mist or accumulate a sand dune during a desert storm to cover up an ancient ruin. This versatile spell is of particular use for collecting water in arid areas, or sifting gold particles out of river silt.

Locate

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

Identifies the metaphysical location of a person of whom the caster possesses a physical part, such as hair or nail clippings. Although no sensory information is received about the exact locality, the caster

can combine it with a secondary communication spell, to correctly aim at targets outside of direct observation. Targets unwilling to be contacted may attempt to resist the Locate spell. If successful, any other piggybacked spells automatically fail too.

Measure

Concentration

Accurately determines the distance, size, weight or number of items within range. Each minute spent in concentration the recipient may visualise a different item, species or even geographic feature and receive a number of measurable facts about it equal to the one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill. The spell is normally used to perform topographical or population surveys.

Message

Concentration

A less intrusive form of telepathy, the spell allows the two way transfer of verbal messages only audible to the caster and recipient. The target must be within range and directly observable, either in line of sight or by use of a Project (Sense); or Message must be combined with a Locate spell. When manipulated to include multiple Targets, the caster acts as the intermediary hub of a communications network. Since the spell requires concentration, the caster can raise and lower each line as desired until it expires, avoiding the risk of mental overload from too many simultaneous conversations. In addition, because the spell does not transmit any other information or intrude into deeper parts of the mind, it is the favoured method of sending long distance messages.

Mindrape

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

This diabolical spell plunders the victim's mind of its memories, leaving them catatonic wrecks. The caster can affect targets of up to 3 INT per 10% of his Grimoire skill. If the target fails to resist, the sorcerer plunges into their mind and begins ransacking its knowledge. Each minute the target suffers a point of damage

to their INT. At zero the transfer is complete, leaving the victim mindless. Interrupting the process before it has completed causes the spell to fail but any accumulated damage to INT is permanent.

If the memory was successfully ripped free, the caster may then access these memories until the spell expires. In game terms the caster can recall any fact the victim knew if they spend one round in concentration searching the plundered knowledge. In addition, the caster is able to substitute any ransacked skill that the victim knew at a higher level for their own before making a skill roll. When the spell ends, the memories dissipate into the aether, forever lost.

Using stolen memories in this way can be extremely dangerous. A fumbled check of a plundered skill causes the caster to suffer a permanent blurring of their personality with that of their victim. This can often drive the sorcerer to insanity. For this reason SpellCom reserves its use to only the most desperate of situations and never knowingly permits the retention of a stolen personality in an enchantment.

Obscure

Autonomous

Obscure hides the existence of magic within its area from senses, spirits and other spells. The caster can obscure magic upon or within a target of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of his Grimoire skill. The spell is normally cast on a member of Wraith Recon so that their equipment or magical augmentations do not attract the attention of observers alert for such things. It is sometimes used as part of a permanent combined spell enchantment so that the item concerned cannot readily be detected as magic, even if it leaves the person of an Obscure warder operative.

Only a magical detection spell of higher Magnitude than the Obscure can penetrate its effects.

Portal

Autonomous

This spell forms a portal between two static points, each previously prepared by the caster with a separate Tag spell. The aperture may only pass objects of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. However, the object within which the portal forms must be made of some solid material and be at least double the SIZ of the aperture. Thus portal *gateways* are often formed from such objects as huge ornately framed metal mirrors or rune carved stone dolmen, usually in places which are well guarded.

Since the formation of a portal usually requires a significant range component, SpellCom has been unwilling to create permanently enchanted, long distance portal links that would be vulnerable to dispelling. Using an Omnicix Crystal with each pair of gateways effectively reduces the range to zero, allowing the most points of manipulation to be spent on Magnitude instead.

Prognosticate

Concentration

Prognosticate sheds insight into the most likely occurrences in the near future. Accuracy of the information provided depends on having in depth and up-to-date knowledge of the subject or subjects being analysed. The Duration of the spell is how far into the future the sorcerer can accurately predict. The scope of the foretelling depends on the Grimoire skill (see table). This spell is of minor use when cast by a lone sorcerer, although it can be valuable in avoiding traps or ambushes. To receive a foreboding significantly in advance of a future event generally requires a metaconcert involving other members of the department. Individuals targeted by this spell can be shielded from it by having some form of spell resistance or magical concealment at an equal or higher Magnitude.

Scope of the Prognostication

Skill	Scope
Up to 20%	Prognostication will cover a single person.
21–40%	Prognostication will cover a family, group or squad.
41–60%	Prognostication will cover a small guild, petty cult or platoon
61–80%	Prognostication will cover a clan, village or company.
81–100%	Prognostication will cover a town, minor cult or battalion.
101–120%	Prognostication will cover a small city or regiment.
121–140%	Prognostication will cover a large city, major cult or legion.
141–160%	Prognostication will cover a nation, global cult or entire army.
161–180%	Prognostication will cover a continent or entire race.
181–200%	Prognostication will cover the whole world.

A prognostication provides a foreboding of what is *likely* to happen if nothing is done to prevent its occurrence. Such predictions can be overturned by a significant intervention. As with Deduce, the information imparted by this spell depends on the Games Master. However, instead of being a threat to plot lines, Prognostication can actually be used as a spur to propel Players into performing quests and missions.

Projection

Concentration

Transmits an image of something the caster is touching or seeing as a large scale, holographic illusion. The size of the projection is a hemisphere with a diameter in metres equal to one tenth of the Gimoire skill. The spell is generally used as a tactical display for Wraith Recon support or battlefield analysis and coordination;

using the feed from an Omnicrux Crystal to project current events within the shard's point of view to multiple observers.

Puncture

Autonomous

The spell enhances the ability of a weapon to puncture, sheer or crush through armour and natural protection. Puncture ignores 1 AP per 10% known in the Grimoire. If the creature attacked possesses thicker armour, then the spell reduces its protection by this amount. Weapons enhanced by this magic can also ignore the AP of inanimate objects, allowing for example a sword to cut through other weapons, or a pickaxe to quickly reduce a stone wall to rubble.

Facing a plate armoured thug intent on apprehending him, Svartulfr casts Puncture upon his dagger and holds it up threateningly. With a Grimoire skill of 55% his weapon now ignores the first 6 AP of anything struck. The hobgoblin laughs at the puny elf and his knife, taunting with his hand for the elf to do his worst. Svartulfr accepts the invitation, stepping towards the passive Asagi and stabs the overconfident warrior in the lower abdomen. The blade passes straight through the metal armour as if was not there, inflicting a Serious Wound to its groin. The hobgoblin's gasps out something concerning a low blow, then collapses in agony, allowing Svartulfr to slip into a side street and disappear...

Reload

Autonomous

Similar to the Actuate spell, Reload works by re-cocking trigger operated torsion or spring powered missile weapons, such as crossbows and siege engines. The spell reduces reload time for such weapons by 1 per 20% of the caster's Grimoire skill, effectively providing the energy to draw the weapon back to a firing position. It does not however, load the next round of ammunition, merely speeds up the whole process. For crossbow style weapons a magazine arrangement can be placed atop the stock to automatically drop a new bolt into position as the weapon re-cocks. For catapult style siege engines Reload can be combined with an Actuate spell that tips rounds from a hopper into the ammunition cup.

Recall

Concentration

Cast upon a throwing weapon, the spell returns the item back to the thrower's hand, providing it has not impaled the foe. The range of the spell denotes the maximum distance the weapon will return from. The speed of its return is equal to five metres per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. This is the distance it will travel before the caster's next Combat Action. Thus a wizard who casts this spell at 36% upon a dagger, could have the weapon fly back to his hand prior to his next attack, providing the dagger was still within 20 metres – which may not necessarily be the case if the dagger

missed its target. Recall can also be cast upon arrows, potentially permitting an archer to reduce his reload time to zero.

Recollect

Concentration

Recollect allows the recipient a second chance to recall a specific piece of information. If a check against a knowledge skill fails, such as Culture, Language or Lore, they can roll again. The second attempt however is limited to the value of the Grimoire skill, if it is lower than the knowledge skill being tested.

The precise skills this spell can be applied to are subject to Games Master fiat. For instance it may be permissible to use Recollect to reroll a Combat Style test, providing the original test concerned remembering the name of the master who first taught that fighting style in Dardarrick.

Record

Concentration

This novel spell enables the caster to magically record an audio sequence, such as a song or spoken conversation, into an object capable of producing sound. Until the spell expires, the caster can cause the article to repeatedly replay whatever sequence was stored within it. Since the quality, indeed the comprehensibility, of the replay depends on the sound capabilities of the device, most wizards use musical instruments or chimes to store the recording. The length of the original recording is limited to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill in minutes, during which time the caster must continuously concentrate to store the sounds.

Re-index

Concentration

When cast upon a significantly large assortment of small items (usually less than 1 SIZ) it telekinetically re-organises them into a complex and utterly bewildering order, the articles randomly shifting and swapping positions until the spell expires. The caster can affect an area with a radius of one tenth of their Grimoire skill.

Once the spell lapses the objects are left in an unfathomable mess. Collections of items similar in appearance, for example an assortment of featureless leather bound books, makes locating a particular volume very difficult – requiring a painstaking sequential search through the entire collection. As the size of the assortment grows larger, the time to locate a particular item lengthens exponentially. Recovering specific articles from a large re-indexed assemblage requires use of the Retrieval spell.

This spell is normally used for securing secret records within the SpellCom archives. It is reputed that the entire archive is under a massive Re-index enchantment, files and ledgers constantly circling about one another in a huge cyclone of paperwork.

On several occasions this spell has been used to cause mayhem. The first was to cover the escape of a Wraith Recon team in an alchemical reagent storehouse in the undercity of Darkenholme. The flying vials and potion bottles provided a perfect distraction. The second, more recent use was on the Library of the Iron Circle in Fogreach. A devastating blow from which the Lornish order is still recovering... and resorting.

Repulse (Substance)

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

Opposite of the Gather spell, Repulse *gently* forces the specific substance away from the target of the spell. The magic only affects substances that are fluid in nature or small enough to be moved by the power of the spell. Thus gases, mists, mud, liquids, flames and even small gravel or sand particles can be repulsed. Objects firmly affixed in place will not shift but may bend away if flexible. A Repulse (Vegetation) spell cast whilst within a forest may make nearby saplings bow and fallen leaves blow away as the sorcerer passes by, for instance.

The distance that a substance can be repulsed depends on its nature. Solids and fluids are pushed back a number of metres equal to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill. Insubstantial material such as gases or flames is repulsed 10 times that distance. If used offensively the target of the spell may attempt to resist. Those not directly targeted but caught within close proximity are at liberty to flee the area of effect.

Care must be used when casting this spell for fear of the sorcerer accidentally causing a fatal mistake. For example, a sorcerer casting Repulse (Sand) to protect against a sandstorm, whilst unwittingly standing upon a dune, may slowly sink, entombing himself in a magical bubble under tons of material if he fails to abort the spell in time.

Retrieval

Concentration

The key to bypassing the effects of Re-index, this spell permits the immediate retrieval of a specific object from a collection, not matter how jumbled or confused. Each additional Target allows a further item to be located. The more skilled the caster, the larger the collection his spell can sift through. Use the Re-index table to determine the searching capability of the caster's Grimoire skill.

Retrieval only works if the caster has precise knowledge of the article to be located.

Reveal

Concentration

Reveal permits the recipient to penetrate any illusion or concealment magic of a Magnitude up to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill. Additionally the recipient may also see through a Disguise skill of lesser value than the Grimoire skill. Reveal only

shows the recipient the truth behind the magic or disguise – it does not dispel or negate it. The Target Manipulation allows the caster to grant this penetrative insight to other recipients.

Scythe

Concentration

Animates a number of bladed weapons or equivalently sharp objects and sends them in whirling paths anywhere within spell range. The sorcerer can control a number of Small sized objects equal to one tenth of his Grimoire skill, such as daggers. Larger weapons require a greater portion of control – where small sized weapons would take one slot, Medium sized weapons take two slots, Large weapons three slots and Huge weapons four.

Every Combat Action the sorcerer can direct the animated weapons to attack, splitting them between the targets of the spell. Each weapon strikes at a skill equal to the Grimoire value and counts as a separate attack if the target attempts to parry them. Conversely if the target decides to dive for cover instead, they may make a single opposed roll against the multiple attacks; only those weapon attacks that beat the Evade roll hit.

Silence

Autonomous

Silence provides a spherical area cut off from its surroundings by a sound-proof barrier. The volume inside is still able to carry noise but anyone standing outside the warded area would be unable to hear it. Likewise any noise outside the sphere cannot penetrate into the sphere. The sphere may have a radius of up to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill in metres.

Due to the two-way nature of the sound barrier, this spell has little tactical use as a method of improving stealthy movement, since the recipient cannot hear the approach of foes. However, it does provide a method of suppressing noisy activity in hostile territory, such as breaking down a door inside a garrisoned fortress.

The Signals Department of SpellCom use this magic at a very localised level in order to mute background noise whilst communicating via Omnicix links.

Sketch

Concentration

Akin to the Record spell, Sketch enables the caster to magically store a picture of what they are seeing into an object capable of displaying or morphing the image. Normally the item takes the form of a mirror or wax tablet but similar objects will suffice. Until the spell expires, the caster can cause the article to repeatedly portray whatever pictures were stored within it. A number of images equal to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill may be recorded. Since the likenesses are taken directly from the wizard's mind, quirks which degrade the image such as short sightedness or colour blindness will be accurately reproduced.

Subvert

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

The Subvert spell twists the loyalty of the target to the caster, potentially causing him to betray his friends and convictions. A caster can affect targets of up to 3 INT per 10% of his Grimoire skill. If the target fails to resist, the sorcerer perverts their allegiance until the spell expires. Although the target still possesses free will, they cannot betray the caster or reveal any hint of their magical subversion to others.

Despite any change in ideology, the spell is immediately broken if the victim is ordered to perform a suicidal action. Orders contrary to the target's ethics (other than those concerning loyalty) allow another opposed Persistence roll to break free of the magic.

SpellCom usually utilises this magic during cross-examinations. However, if a key individual is captured alive the Department of Interrogation will sometimes place a permanent Subvert enchantment on the victim, turning them into double agents.

Tag

Autonomous

Marks an inanimate object with a metaphysical identifier, allowing the caster to remotely locate it when casting another spell such as Conjure or Portal. Sorcerers may tag a number of different items simultaneously by using the Targets Manipulation, provided all the objects are within range.

Telesthesia

Concentration, Resist (Special)

Establishes a telepathic link with the target but instead of mental communication it provides a physical link. This allows the sorcerer to control the target like a puppet. Normally this spell is used to substitute the sorcerer's own skills for the recipient's but can be used in a more versatile manner. If used offensively the target is permitted to make a Persistence roll to resist the spell. Any attempt to force the target into performing an act contrary to their ethics or instincts, such as attacking a friend or attempting suicide, permits an unopposed Persistence roll to break free of the spell.

If the target of the spell is injured, then the caster shares any pain experienced – possibly causing them to become unconscious if a Serious or Major Wound occurs, although the sorcerer does not suffer any actual damage. If Telesthesia is manipulated to affect more than one target, they all act identically in perfect synchronisation.

Exiting a dockside dive, Lady Sathril observes a group of Dardarrian soldiers abusing an elderly lizardman. Irritated by such ethnic hatred, the sorceress slips into the concealment of a side alley and casts Telesthesia on one of the bullies. The man fails to resist the spell and finds himself kicking his sergeant in the backside. Fuelled by a torrent of foul insults Sathril spouts via her puppet towards the other soldiers,

an altercation breaks out. Unfortunately, before she can drop the spell the enraged sergeant punches her bewildered victim and she suffers the unexpected pain of being smacked in the face. The damage is enough to inflict a Serious Wound on the rodent-like soldier, forcing Lady Sathril to make an opposed Resilience roll which she fails. Several hours later she awakes to find herself in the alley, robbed of her purse and boots.

Torment

Concentration, Resist (Resilience)

The caster can inflict dreadful amounts of pain on a victim of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of his Grimoire skill. If the target fails to resist the spell, no actual damage is caused but the agony cripples the victim. When the target attempts any Skill Test, the dice roll must also be equal to or less than their Resilience; else they fail due to the torment.

Earl Peregrine (Resilience 67%, Hack and Slash Combat 103%, Athletics 60%) tracks down the employer of the assassins that burned down his castle. Assaulting the magician's dark tower, he scythes his way past several guards on the drawbridge then enters the main hall. Awaiting his arrival, the magician arrogantly casts Torment on the vengeful lord. Peregrine fails the opposed test and staggers under the crushing pain. Faced with certain doom unless he can kill the wizard, Peregrine stumbles forwards and attempts to cut down his foe. He rolls an 85, which although normally a success with his Combat Style, exceeds the value of his Resilience. Thus he is overcome with a sickening wave of agony and the attack fails, leaving the earl in serious trouble. As the magician begins a new spell, Peregrine realises he is outmatched and instead tries to throw himself out of a window in order to escape. This time he rolls a 23 against his Athletics skill. Since the roll also succeeds against his Resilience, he manages to grit his teeth, briefly overcome the pain and crash through the stained glass – landing in the moat below. Fortunately this takes him outside the range of the Torment spell and once free of its effects, the earl escapes to plan a different path of vengeance.

This spell has other more ethically questionable uses. Repetitive application on a daily basis is sometimes used to break the resistance of prisoners being interrogated. Each day after the first, the victim must make an unopposed Persistence test, else succumb to the torture and break down, revealing what their interrogators want to know even if this means outright lying to satisfy the questioners preconceptions – anything to stop the pain. A critical success during the process sends the victim into a temporary catatonic state to escape awareness of the torture, after which the spell no longer has any effect until a long period of recuperation passes. A fumble breaks the victim's mind, inflicting some form of insanity.

Toughen

Autonomous

Toughen grants an inanimate object a number of Armour Points equal to one tenth of the Grimoire skill of the caster. These do not add atop any natural armour the article may already possess but

rather supersede the original value if greater. If the Armour Points granted by the spell are less than the object's original number, then the spell takes no effect.

Although suits of armour are commonly composed of multiple segments, they are treated as a single object for the purposes of this spell. This spell is often used to enchant items other than armour, such as doors or weapons. As the spell normally only affects objects of up to 5 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill, to increase the protective value of colossal sized objects like a castle wall for instance, requires a metaconcert casting.

Transcribe

Concentration

An ostensibly simple spell, Transcribe converts sounds or visual images directly into text or illustrations. Although it is normally utilised with parchment, the magic can be applied to any substance capable of being inscribed with ink (or similar) or possessing a soft surface which can easily be moulded, such as wax or wet sand. Transcribe is normally used to recover information stored in a Record or Sketch spell, to create a permanent copy.

The spell will transcribe a number of minutes of sound or a number of visual images, equal to one tenth of the caster's Grimoire skill. Audio transcriptions may be written in any language known to the caster.

Translate

Autonomous

Allows the caster to comprehend and speak languages normally unknown to them, at a value equal to their Grimoire skill. Each point of Manipulation placed in Targets allows an extra person or written text to be comprehended.

Trigger

Autonomous

Used during the creation of enchantments, Trigger allows the embedding of either an activation or deactivation condition. This can be fairly complex but requires a physical, elemental, runic or racial component. It cannot discern motive or thought. One trigger condition can be emplaced per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill.

Unburden

Autonomous

Either reduces an item's Encumbrance by three points or its Armour Penalty by one point, per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. Thus a sorcerer with a skill of 58% who cast Unburden on a suit of Chainmail would reduce its armour penalty from -7 to only -1. As with the Toughen spell, an entire suit of Armour is treated as a single object.

Veil

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

Veil can be cast on targets of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. It prevents the target from being detected, located or observed by any magic of a Magnitude less than the Veil spell. This protection includes being shielded from prophetic types of magic too. If Veil is used in a hostile manner, such as keeping the location of an unwilling prisoner secret, the target may attempt to resist the spell.

Wall

Autonomous, Resist (Resilience)

Generates a static magical wall with a surface area of one fifth of the caster's Grimoire skill in square metres. Thus a wizard with 70% could erect a wall of 14 square metres, either as low barrier one metre high and 14 long, or two metres high and seven wide, or any other combination. Walls can be angled, curved or shaped as the caster desires, conceivably permitting the erection of a hemisphere, cube or similar.

Anything touching or crossing the wall must resist the magic or suffer an amount of damage equivalent to a Wrack spell of equal skill. The type of damage inflicted by this spell depends on the cult or school that provides it. Countless variations exist, each possessing a different appearance or type of elemental damage inflicted.

Chased by a horde of ravening wolves, Lady Sathril seeks shelter in a rock tomb cut into a cliff. The ancient burial chamber lacks any gate or door to bar her pursuers' entrance, so the sorceress takes a moment to cast a Wall of Fire. She has a Grimoire skill of 82% allowing a barrier of up to 16 square metres and inflicting 1D10 damage. Comprised of scintillating blue flames, the wall easily fills the passageway and burns a random location on each maddened wolf as it passes heedlessly through the magical defence. This is enough to cripple most of the animals, allowing the sorceress to finish them off with her blade.

FORBIDDEN SPELLS

The following sorcery spells are either unknown to Dardarrian sorcerers or their teaching is forbidden to members of the Mages Guild, Brotherhood of Magnus or SpellCom.

Unknown Spells

Attract (Harm)

Damage Enhancement

Damage Resistance

Enhance (POW or CHA)

Regenerate

Restoration

Teleport

Treat Wounds

Forbidden Spells

Dominate (Humanoid)

Smother

Tap

MODIFIED SPELLS

The following sorcery spell works in a slightly different manner to that as described in the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, permitting it to act in a slightly more flexible manner.

Protective Ward: Although this spell still retains the radius limitation, the *actual* warded area need not be a regular geometric shape. For instance a Protective Ward could be restricted to cover a single doorway. However, in such cases the area so protected must be inscribed with suitable runes to mark out the surfaces or perimeters warded by the spell. In addition the ward can be combined with most other spells known to Dardarrian sorcerers, not just Damage, Spell and Spirit Resistance. Thus a wizard could cast a circle of enervating doom, comprising of a standard Protective Ward combined with Diminish STR, in which case the reduction in strength only affects those crossing *into* the warded area.

CREATING NEW SPELLS AND GRIMOIRES

A few sorcerers during the volatile history of Dardarrick have struggled to expand the frontier of arcane knowledge. Researching new theories and developing complex formulae, some exceptional wizards have managed to create new spells. For the most part these unique incantations have remained the jealously guarded knowledge of individual cults or schools of wizardry. The recent formation of SpellCom however, gave the Arcanist General the power to recruit all those he deemed necessary for national defence, bringing many of these once dispersed spells under its direct control.

The following guidelines are provided for those who wish to devote part of their lives in creating new sorcery spells and the grimoires that contain them.

To create a new spell, the sorcerer must:

- Possess at least 101% in Manipulation and one Grimoire skill.
- Invest 15 Improvement Rolls to research and develop it.
- Create a new Grimoire skill specifically for that spell.

The final spell should have a unique and *single* effect. Its potency ought to be scaled to existing Sorcery Spells and not exceed their efficiency. Last but by no means least; any spell which can be used in an offensive manner requires the Resist trait. As always, it is up to the Games Master to judge whether the new spell is permissible.

For example if an Adventurer attempts to make a more lethal version of the Wrack spell, say by allowing it to always target the head, that should be considered excessive. On the other hand a spell that allowed objects to float but imposed no motive force, could be permitted to affect 5 SIZ per 10% of the Grimoire skill, instead of the 3 SIZ per of a Fly spell.

Since newly created spells are treated as individual Grimoires, its creator gains the default value and must invest time in mastering its unique idiosyncrasies. Due to the efforts involved, sorcerers rarely endeavour to create their own spells save a few who are seeking immortality or those that are naturally selfless in their passion to further knowledge of sorcery.

Producing a new Grimoire is the pinnacle of a sorcerer's career. Since grimoires are more than just a collection of spells but rather the formulation of a philosophy and methodology to learning magic, such occurrences usually coincide with the foundation of a new school of wizardry. Depending on the ethics of the originators, this new sorcery sect can be anything from a secret cult of diabolical necromancers to a fashionable club of high magic for young Dardarrian nobles.

To found a new grimoire, the sorcerer or sorcerers must:

- Possess at least 101% in Manipulation.
- Know the Grimoire skills for *all* of the Spells they contribute at 101% or better.
- Know all of the Cantrips they contribute at a Magnitude of 6 or better.
- Invest 10 Improvement Rolls per Sorcery Spell and 5 Improvement Rolls per Cantrip, the costs of which may be divided; each sorcerer paying the Improvement Rolls for the spells they personally contribute.

It is recommended that new Grimoires have no more than seven spells and seven cantrips contained within them. Lesser grimoires are permissible and many forbidden texts only contain two or three spells of dire purpose, often padded out with methods for studying an advanced magical skill such as Concert or Enchant, possibly a specific demon or three, and long-lost ancient secrets.

If the new Grimoire was created singlehandedly it provides no benefit to its author, since the sorcerer already knows all of its contents. He may use it however to found a new school or cult. Joint efforts allow the contributors to gain the new Grimoire at a base starting value, permitting access to spells and cantrips they may have hitherto not known.

As can be seen, developing new spells and grimoires is not a path which provides significant increases in personal power. It does however, allow sorcerers to create their own legacies.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAGIC ITEMS



Magical items in the world of Nuera are typically enchantments of one form or another. Since their effects are persistent, enchanted objects can often be centuries old – often worn and battered but still magically potent. Most are creations of sorcery, with a lesser number of divine enchantments and a few Spirit Magic fetishes, which tend not to last as long due to their organic nature.

A tiny number of enchanted items are unique artefacts whose creation appears to violate the universal laws of thaumaturgy; not registering as Sorcery, Divine or Spirit Magic, yet possessing supernatural properties. Omnicix Crystals are a prime example of this, able to connect two separate points as if no distance separated them but not detectable as magic. Whether these are devices created by the gods or simply a fourth type of High Magic is unknown. The only feature they share is that all date from before the Dawning.

The following lists present both temporary and permanent enchantments, demonstrating how such items can be created using the Enchantment rules (see page 43). Although some items are given a physical description, their appearance and the materials used in their creation are completely arbitrary. No two thaumaturgists create exactly the same item, even if the enchantment bound within is identical. Whilst form does not necessarily reveal nature, most items are created with some acknowledgement of the law of sympathetic resonance. Thus magic which affects manual dexterity or the hands themselves is commonly enchanted into gloves.

Although a wide range of enchantments are included in the following lists, they are not intended to be exclusive. Games Masters are encouraged to study these examples and create their own unique items, or versions of slightly stronger or weaker nature. A few tables are included to help generate random magical treasures.

The Prevalence of Enchanted Items

Within Nuera magic is a rare and wondrous thing. Villages, clans and other small communities normally include only a handful of individuals capable of using magic. With maybe one in 100 people proficient in thaumaturgy, these are further divided between the prevalent types of High Magic available to that culture. In Dardarrick for example, the majority of spell casters are priests, with sorcerers coming second and next to no shamans at all.

In cultures with so few magic users there is a commiserate lack of enchanted items in circulation. Most are heirlooms jealously guarded by the guilds or families, who are fortunate enough to own them. Others are lost treasures, long buried in tombs or cataclysmically destroyed cities. Recent developments in the Dardarrian military have led to the manufacturing of temporary enchantments on an almost industrial scale. Such efforts tend to cripple thaumaturgists however, requiring them to invest much of their power into those items they create. Hence unless a member of a privileged organisation such as Wraith Recon, access to most of these ensorcelled articles is very limited.

Of course limiting the availability of magic items has profound effects on a campaign. Too few and each item is a priceless treasure, potentially frustrating more materialistic players. Too many enchantments become commonplace, losing their special nature and ultimately becoming boring. Indeed, if every opponent owns and utilises magic items the success of adventuring parties can become more dependent on the artefacts they own rather than the Adventurer's own skills, ultimately threatening game balance.

Temporary Enchantments

Temporary magic items are designed to be either single use, or contain a limited number of charges. These enchantments are normally intended for use by neophytes unskilled in magic who need some form of aid or augmentation when a thaumaturgist is unavailable. Most deadly magics are bound into single use items, preventing abuse and runaway destructive effects. Items requiring concentration may lapse, becoming quiescent unless the user maintains contact with the object.

Permanent Enchantments

Permanent Enchantments usually involve binding passive spells or augmentations to an item. Their effects are continuous but because of the ongoing costs in miracles, POW or CHA, permanent enchantments are generally made to order for elite ranks only; or are relics that have survived their creator's demise. Since they require an ongoing investment of magical power, most permanent magical items tend to be made by the most skilful practitioners to gain the greatest thaumaturgical effect for the sacrifice. Many combine multiple spells or miracles and possess very high levels of

Magnitude. Such items can radically augment the skills or abilities of its wielder, so should be assigned with care.

DIVINE MAGIC ENCHANTMENTS

The following items are created by the enchantment of Divine Magic into items. Since miracles have a minimum priest rank associated with their granting by a deity, many of these articles require a minimum Invoke and Piety skill to create. The majority of these examples, especially the temporary enchantments, use a default lower value but the same magic item could potentially be manufactured at far higher strength.

A disproportionate number of items are biased towards healing since only a few divine faiths in Nuera have access to major restorative magic. With injury and disease ever present threats such potions or salves are highly valuable commodities. Wraith Recon itself commissions much of its magic healing from the Cult of Matriarias.

These enchantments assume the Invoke and Piety skills are capped by the value of the priest's Enchant skill.

Divine Enchantments have the following traits.

- **Effect:** The miracle or miracles bound into the enchantment and the Invoke skill used to cast them. If the spell possesses the Resist trait, use this value as the target number to beat.
- **Magnitude:** The Magnitude of the magical effect, based upon the creator's Piety skill. The value is noted in case the enchanted item is subject to magical dismissal.
- **Range:** The range of the magical effect.
- **Duration:** The same as the base miracle.
- **Uses:** How many doses or charges are created; each use requiring a further instance of that miracle embedded into the enchantment. Only used for temporary enchantments.
- **Description:** A brief description of the item and how it is triggered.

Temporary Divine Magic Enchantments

The items described in this section are generally single use articles. Specific articles that have more than one application are produced by casting multiple incidences of the same miracle into them, something which is rarely done save in preparation for a major conflict, or in situations where the priest knows the item will be used quickly.

Ashes of Aberration

Effect: Madness 50%

Magnitude: 5

Range: Touch

Duration: 5 Minutes

Uses: Once

Description: A fine soot created from the wood ashes of the poisonous bloodthorn tree, mixed with mild psychotropic

hallucinogens. It is often discovered packaged in simple leather pouches, originating from deep within the desert savannas of the Wildlands. The ashes trigger by being absorbed into the victim's body, via the eyes, mouth or lungs. It is usually applied by being blown from a short blowpipe at close range but can be thrown directly provided the caster takes precautions not to get caught in the cloud.

Bark of the Berserk

Effect: Berserk 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Once

Description: The finger sized strips of bark used to contain the enchantment come from lightning struck trees. When inserted into the mouth and chewed, the miracle activates turning the masticator into a ravening, unstoppable warrior.

Bestial Bones

Effect: Beast Form 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Once

Description: These items come in many forms dependant on the culture that creates it. The druid priests of Mersmerro, for example, often cook up a stew of bones from the animal into which the users wish to transform. They collectively enchant the miracles into the cauldron, each bone absorbing one application of the magic. Triggering such items generally requires snapping or even chewing on the bone, which causes the transformation to take place.

Dagger of Slaying

Effect: Sever Spirit 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Uses: Once

Description: A dagger of dark, smoky glass that shatters on a successful hit. On breaking the Sever Spirit is triggered, targeting the struck victim who must try to resist the magic. Such blades are often viewed with horror. Fortunately these weapons are extremely rare, specially made to slay a particular enemy of the cult.

Koka Leaves

Effect: Channel Strength 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: 6 Hours

Uses: Once

Description: Simply enchanted into innocuous looking leaves or roots, the miracle is triggered by chewing the blessed materials. This fills the consumer with a euphoric feeling of tirelessness enabling them to perform great deeds of endurance.

Perfume of Seduction

Effect: Aphrodisiac 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Three applications

Description: An exotic perfume of wondrous scent, this precious liquid is normally concocted from rare blossoms, which grow in deadly regions in the swamps and jungles of Torres. The perfume is contained in a tiny bottle, artfully fashioned of precious metals.

Potion of Healing

Effect: Heal Body 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Uses: Once

Description: A thin watery liquid smelling of peppermint tea normally contained within very rugged metal hip flasks with screw on lids. Drinking the amazing fluid immediately cures all damage suffered, provided the imbibers are still living. When used by Wraith Recon, they are normally reserved for 'abort and evac' situations when a team has been hammered by unexpected resistance. These potions are extremely valuable, as they must be imported from foreign cults.

Resin of Conflagration

Effect: Summon Elemental (Salamander) 50%

Magnitude: 5

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Once

Description: A highly inflammable resin made from a mixture of mountain pine sap and chemical reagents, it is moulded into the shape of a cone shaped taper. When set upon a pile of combustible material and ignited, or simply cast into an existing fire, it summons a salamander of up to five cubic metres in size.

Salve of Soothing

Effect: Heal Wound 50%

Magnitude: 5

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Uses: Three doses

Description: A thick greasy paste that is packed into small, wax sealed clay jars. Applying a third of the contents of the jar to a wounded location heals all damage short of a Major Wound.

Scourge of Expulsion

Effect: Exorcism 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Description: Created by the priests of Praxious but often specially commissioned by priests of other faiths, these whips are used to free

victims possessed by evil spirits and demons. Made of leather cured from the hides of cult enemies, the short, many thonged scourges are also barbed in order to inflict additional pain to cleanse the mind of the afflicted. Any extra-dimensional entity who resides within the scourged victim must resist the magic at a -40% penalty or be expelled from the host.

Spliff of Synchronicity

Effect: Mindlink 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: One cheroot

Description: Enchanted into a roll of aromatic herbs, the miracle is triggered by igniting and smoking the cigar. Up to four people can draw on the cheroot, sharing mental contact with all the other smokers until the miracle ends.

Sun Sphere

Effect: Sunspear 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: 2m diameter

Duration: Instant

Uses: Once

Description: A sun sphere is a fist sized crystal ball of perfect clarity and roundness. They are enchanted by casting a Sunspear miracle into them during midday under a cloudless sky. The sphere is triggered by breaking the crystal, generally by throwing it at the target, which releases the Sunspear trapped within. Unusually this allows the miracle to be used at night, circumventing one of its weaknesses.

Tincture of Cure Disease

Effect: Cure Disease 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Uses: Once

Description: A tiny phial of thin glass containing an indigo liquid. When dripped into a mug of water it activates, forming a blue elixir that will cure any mundane disease (and many magical ones) of the person completely imbibing the drink.

Unerring Arrows

Effect: Sureshot 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: One arrow

Description: Usually only applied to arrows of exceptional quality, formed from woods or bones significant to the cult, the priests normally combine their efforts to create a dozen of these arrows at the same time. Triggered by being fired, these arrows nearly always hit their target despite the range or cover.

Permanent Divine Magic Enchantments

Enduring divine enchantments can be frighteningly powerful, especially when created by a cleric or hierophant of a cult. The following examples are intended to be unique items in their own right, historical survivors of fallen priesthoods. Few high ranking clergymen are willing to squander their souls in the creation of materialistic objects unless directed to do so by their god or driven by overwhelming passion.

Due to their rarity, most of these antiquities are jealously guarded by their stewards and only brought out for important occasions. As holy relics of central importance to their faith, their loss would result in worshippers mobilising to find and return the icon. Failing to do so would threaten the faith's standing.

Blade of Brightness

Effect: Gleam 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: The Blade Itself

Duration: Permanent

Description: A longsword of ancient design, this weapon has played a pivotal role in the rise of many heroes in Dardarrian history. Although demonstrating no power to slice through stone or blast bolts of elemental force, its subtlety lies in its ability to dazzle those which face it in combat. Anyone fighting against the bearer of the Blade of Brightness suffers a -50% penalty to parry or evade its attacks.

Censer of Sanctity

Effect: Spirit Block 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Description: An old silver thurible designed for the burning of incense, this article was lost from the church of Praxious during the 4th Lornish War. Once granted to its champions, the censer provides its wielder with an almost invulnerability against spirits and the ethereal undead.

Collar of Chastisement

Effect: Mindblast 130%, Shield 130%

Magnitude: 13

Range: Wearer

Duration: Permanent

Description: Formed from crude, blackened iron, the hinged collar is currently held by the high priests of the All Father. It is unknown where it originated but the punitive item has been used to great effect in castigating nobles and sorcerers who have plotted treason against the kings of Dardarrick. Once riveted around the neck of a prisoner, their INT is reduced by 13 points, usually, in all but the most exceptional individuals, reducing them to the state of animals. Under this curse the humiliated victim is usually penned in a metal cage before the Royal Palace in Graenwich, where they

are pelted by angry townsfolk with filth or even stones. However, since the collar also grants its wearer 13 points of armour all over, they rarely suffer any damage from the cast missiles.

Crown of Light

Effect: Clear Skies, Harmony (See *Wraith Recon* page 71) and Illusion at 120%

Magnitude: 12

Range: Special

Duration: Permanent

Description: Another relic whose origin is lost in history, the Crown of Light is part of the royal regalia of Dardarrick. This multifaceted heirloom definitively displays the wearer's divine right to rule. Its primary effect is that it keeps the weather pleasant for a radius of six kilometres around the crown. In practice this means that wherever the king travels is blessed with bright sunshine, a fact the inhabitants of Graenwich often enjoy. Secondly the crown suppresses unnecessary argument, anger and more importantly assassination attempts within a six metre radius. Lastly the wearer is granted a mantle of authority, his skin glows with an inner light and emits warmth, he smells of heavenly perfumes, his voice is given a deep resonant tone and the crown itself shines with a divine scintillating radiance.

Sceptre of Death

Effect: Raise Undead 90% (See *Wraith Recon* page 82)

Magnitude: 9

Range: 20m

Duration: Permanent

Description: A lesser relic of the cult of Mortessal, the sceptre takes the form of a humanoid forearm and hand, its ancient yellowed bones fused together into a wand of sorts. Gripped within the bony fist is a large reddish hewed crystal glowing with a faint divine light. The sceptre animates the nine nearest corpses within range, raising them as skeletons or zombies for as long as they remain within range of the item. Providing the wielder concentrates, the undead may fight or perform other physical tasks at the bearer's own skill value but may not exceed 90%. If any of the undead are destroyed, the Sceptre will animate the next available (reasonably intact) corpse within range to take its place.

Gem of Perception

Effect: Soul Sight 110%

Magnitude: 11

Range: Anything within line of sight

Duration: Permanent

Description: This large jewel appears to be a perfectly clear emerald the size of a plover's egg. Anyone looking through the gem will see the current Magic Points, active spells and enchanted items of a target. In addition any spirits or disincorporated souls will also be revealed. The power of this item lies within the Magnitude of effect, being able to penetrate most wardings or protections designed to counter such magical insight.

Helm of Terror

Effect: Fear 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: 15m

Duration: Permanent

Description: An ornately decorated helmet made of blackened steel, embossed with the skeletal face of Mortessal. Another relic of the Queen of Darkness's priesthood, whoever wears the helm is granted a terrifying countenance. As a Combat Action the wearer may stare at a single opponent forcing them to resist the magic. Those who fail flee in blind panic, whereas those who succeed are immune to the helm's power for the rest of the day. Due to the indiscriminate effect, the item is generally worn by champions leading the cult faithful from the front.

Mace of Disruption

Effect: Dismiss Elemental 90%

Magnitude: 9

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Description: The mace is of a style deemed unfashionable for decades, plain and undecorated by precious metals or jewels. Its surface pitted with age and corrosion, the battered appearance belies a potent force against elemental creatures. Any sylph, undine, salamander or gnome struck by the weapon must resist the magic or be dismissed from the material world. Repeated blows require recurring saves until at last the creature is forced to depart. Elementals of 10 cubic metres or larger are immune to the powers of the mace.

Mantle of Protection

Effect: Shield 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Wearer

Duration: Permanent

Description: A beautiful cape of heavily embroidered white wool, its embellishments contain the glyphs for the magic enchanted within it. Whoever dons the mantle gains an additional five Armour Points and five points of magical protection, which stack atop any existing defences the wearer possesses as per the Shield miracle. Thus a cleric wearing a suit of chainmail under the mantle will have a total of 10 Armour Points to all locations.

Robes of Inviolability

Effect: Alter Target 110%

Magnitude: 11

Range: Wearer

Duration: Permanent

Description: Worn by the high clerics of the All Father, these purple silk garments are hemmed in golden thread and radiate an aura of divine sanctity. The enchantment permits the wearer when spending a combat action to deflect, any ranged attack or spell of lesser Magnitude against a target of their choice.

Sarcophagus of Regeneration

Effect: Regenerate Limb 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Contents

Duration: Permanent

Description: Carved from a solid block of black granite, this antique heirloom is owned by the Temple of Matriarias in Rivermarck. The sarcophagus resembles a massive stone coffin into which has been carved the appearance of a female deity surrounded by runes and sigils of some prehistoric language. Due to its great weight the sarcophagus is never moved but those who wish to utilise its powers must petition the temple priestesses, offering some sacrifice or quest in exchange. If deemed worthy the huge stone lid is briefly removed allowing the supplicant to be placed inside. Once sealed within any severed or maimed location slowly regenerates back to full health, which can take up to 10 minutes depending on the injury and the size of the petitioner. Since the Regenerate spell is unknown to the Dardarrian Trinity, the origin of the sarcophagus is a mystery.

Shield of Reflection

Effect: Reflection 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Wielder

Duration: Permanent

Description: Decorated with scenes of a mythology unidentified in the kingdom of Dardarrick, this very old shield appears to be formed from a single piece of beaten gold. Its surface is beaten and dented yet still retains the magical potency enchanted within it. Any spell aimed at the wielder, whose Magnitude is not greater than the miracle, is immediately reflected back at the caster.

Spear of Suffering

Effect: True (Spear) and Shield cast at 150%

Magnitude: 15

Range: The weapon itself

Duration: Permanent

Description: A spear made of swamp oak whose black shafted haft has been long polished by the hundreds of hands that have wielded it, its head formed from a skilfully knapped piece of volcanic obsidian. Now in the hands of the cult of Mersmerro, the relic's only significant power is to double the weapon damage it inflicts. However, the strength of the miracle means that the weapon is almost unstoppable in battle. The spear has an additional 15 Armour Points, which protect it from damage.

Staff of Storms

Effect: Summon Elemental (sylph) and Call Winds cast at 120%

Magnitude: 12

Range: 6 km radius

Duration: Permanent

Description: An unusual item last believed to be in the custody of the Lornish Navy, the origins of the staff have yet to be discovered.

This dangerously potent article appears to be made from a silvery wood shod with gray metal caps at either end, which are inscribed with magical sigils. In the hands of someone aware of its powers, it permits the wielder to control the strength and direction of winds up to gale force. Whilst frightening in its own right, the enchanted item also has a 12 cubic metre air elemental bound to it, which faithfully serves the wielder. Utilising the sylph's abilities allows the owner to fly or have his enemies buffeted and thrown about.

Trident of Submersion

Effect: Breathe Water and Command Sea Creature (See Wraith Recon page 80) cast at 100%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Special

Duration: Permanent

Description: Thought to be an item sacred to the sharkfolk, the trident seems to be fashioned out of coral encrusted whale ivory, scrimshawed to a very fine detail with carvings of sharks, kraken and other monsters of the deep. Anyone carrying the trident is granted the ability to breathe underwater, no matter what their origin. In addition, the wielder can command up to 10 sea creatures within sight, which need not be all of the same species. Those which fail to resist become subservient creatures, willing to follow any primitive mental order given to them that they can understand. It is said that the Trident now lays within the Alter of Scales, owned by a high druidess who looted it from the ocean.

SORCERY ENCHANTMENTS

Magic items created using sorcery have a number of advantages. Whilst less directly powerful than their divine equivalents, permanent sorcery enchantments can create some very versatile magical items with imaginative application of the Manipulation skill.

The following examples are all created with a Grimoire and Manipulation skill of equal value, capped by the creator's Enchant skill. Some of the items use spells unknown or forbidden to major schools of Dardarrian wizardry and are included here to arm foes from secretive cults or foreign nations.

Sorcery Enchantments have the following traits.

- **Effect:** The spell, or spells, bound into the enchantment and the Grimoire skill used to cast them. If the spell possesses the Resist trait, use this value as the target number to beat.
- **Magnitude:** The Magnitude of the magical effect, indicating how easy it is to dispel or puncture through enemy magic.
- **Range:** The range of the magical effect.
- **Duration:** The *effective* Duration of the magical effect. Enchantments designed to leave the user's presence and which require concentration have two values; the first is a default of 1 Combat Action before the spell goes quiescent, the second in parenthesis is the duration in which the item can be recovered and used again.
- **Uses:** How many doses or rounds of ammunition are created.

- **Maintenance:** Whether the magic runs autonomously or requires ongoing concentration.
- **Description:** A brief description of the item and how it is triggered.

Temporary Sorcery Enchantments

The examples assume that the creator is a warlock or sorcerer of Adept rank or lower with a default POW of 15. Such items are often intended as battlefield munitions, or sometimes as specially designed tools to be used for specific quests.

Arrows of Thunder

Effect: Wrack (Lightning) 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 CA (15 Minutes)

Uses: 6 Arrows

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Copper headed arrows with blue stained runes carved into their shafts and coppery-orange coloured cockerel feather fletching. The Wrack spell triggers on firing and lasts only a single Combat Action before going quiescent due to lack of concentration. However, if the arrows do not break and can be recovered, they may be reused a number of times before the enchantment finally dies. Arrows which successfully hit cause an additional 1D6 Lightning damage to the target.

Bolt of Suffocation

Effect: Smother 60%

Magnitude: 7

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: A single crossbow bolt

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: An ivory white crossbow bolt carved out of the thigh bone of someone who drowned, these articles are favoured assassination weapons. Triggered by being fired, a target impaled by the bolt (or anyone who tries to physically remove it) who fails to resist the spell finds their lungs seize up, making it impossible to cry out or breathe. This coincidental gagging makes this the perfect weapon for stealthy kills. Even if the victim is discovered in time, the high Magnitude of the spell makes it often difficult to dispel the murderous magic on the bolt. Once physical contact with the bolt ceases the magic is no longer effective.

Bone Dust of Revivification

Effect: Animate Dead Flesh 90%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 2½ Hours

Uses: A single pinch of powder

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: A strange powder of pale greenish hue, made from ground up bone and the mould of partially rotted bodies. It allows the user to animate up to 27 SIZ of dead flesh. Since contact must

be maintained to actively control the animation, the dust is often used to creating zombified mounts from creatures, such as the carcass of a dead horse.

Candle of Exorcism

Effect: Banish 70%

Magnitude: 4

Range: 15m

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: A single candle with five uses

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A black candle made from the purest beeswax blended with an elixir of squid ink, hawthorn sap and salt. The candle contains five separate uses of the Banish spell, triggered by lighting its wick. Each use consumes a fifth of the overall length but during this time free roaming extra-planar entities of up to 21 POW that fail to resist the spell are dismissed by the candle light.

Cordial of Curse Removal

Effect: Neutralise Magic 60%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Seven doses of bitter tasting cordial

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A vivid red juice brewed from holly berries seeped in mountain stream water, which is stored in a cut crystal vial. Each sip temporarily neutralises up to 6 Magnitude of magic affecting the drinker.

Dust of Delusion

Effect: Phantom Sight 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 1½ Hours

Uses: A single pinch of dust

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A grey dust formulated from ancient crumbled parchment and various psychedelic narcotics, it is contained within an ornate silver snuff box. When blown or thrown over a target who fails to resist, it inflicts a non-reactive illusion upon the victim. The actual content, credibility and complexity of the illusion are pre-generated by the sorcerer who created it. For example, a dose could be enchanted to force the target to think that everything around him was burning, or that all humanoids he saw appeared to be hobgoblins.

Elixir of Heroism

Effect: Combined Enhance STR & CON at 30% each

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Hour

Uses: Single dose of elixir

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A yellowish syrup of royal jelly liquefied by heather grain alcohol. This valuable substance is contained in a small phial

of solid gold. When drunk the elixir increases the consumer's STR and CON by six points each.

Incense of Augury

Effect: Project (Sight) 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: 1½ km

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Single use incense stick

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: The spell is triggered by lighting the incense and inhaling the smoke given off. If the user withdraws their concentration, they can return at any time as long as the incense is still burning.

Javelin of Desiccation

Effect: Wrack (Dehydration) 90%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 CA (15 Minutes)

Uses: A single javelin

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Carved from petrified wood, the javelin has a gritty feel to its beautiful stone grain. A devastating weapon it adds an additional 1D10 damage; destroying the moisture in the location struck, causing flesh to wither, crack and potentially reduce it to dust if a Major Wound is inflicted. The high Magnitude ensures that the spell can survive penetrating most Countermagic Shields or Protective Wards.

Oil of Sharpness

Effect: Damage Enhancement 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Hour

Uses: Three doses of oil

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A gourd of fine quality mineral oil, filled with tiny silver reflective flecks. A single dose of oil will cover a slashing or piercing weapon with a maximum damage potential of 10 or less. The magic begins once the application is completed.

Philtre of Water Breathing

Effect: Abjure Air 60%

Magnitude: 4

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 Hour

Uses: A single dose

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: An effervescent potion of clear fluid kept in a sealed glass ampoule. When consumed it allows the imbiber to cease breathing without harm. The philtre is created with a higher Magnitude to protect the consumer from casual magic dismissal, which can be highly dangerous if deep underwater.

Sling Stone of Clumsiness

Effect: Diminish DEX 50%

Magnitude: 4

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 Minutes

Uses: Three sling stones

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Bullets of baked clay, etched with magical sigils. Upon striking a target and shattering, the spell triggers. If not resisted it will reduce the target's DEX by 10 points, down to a minimum value of 1.

Permanent Sorcery Enchantments

As with the permanent divine relics mentioned earlier, each of these examples is intended to be a unique item in its own right, heirlooms of sorcerers who desired to leave part of their power in the hands of those to succeed them; or were simply killed before they unbound the magical strength woven into their own creations. However, investing too much of one's own force into creating enchantments is a path to vulnerability and stagnation, despite the benefits such items can bring.

Only a few sorcerers ever specialise in the forging of permanent enchantments. Of the countless magical items created through history, the majority have been lost due to either carelessness, being buried with their jealous creator or simply destroyed in the unending cycles of war and conflict.

Most of the following antiquities are owned by the supreme masters of their art, either by their authority and dominance in the cult or order they belong to; or claimed as spoils of victory when one sorcerer challenges another for a valuable relic. Due to the risk of being hunted down and having such items wrested from rightful ownership, less skilful practitioners keep any rare enchantments that fall into their grasp hidden safely away, only bringing them out to perform specific tasks of great importance.

Amulet of Warding

Effect: Spirit Resistance 90%

Magnitude: 9

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A smooth, flattened river stone about the size of two fingers, with a hole bored in one end. The stone is threaded with a heavy silver chain, which suspends the amulet around the wearer's neck. Whilst worn, the stone protects its bearer against incorporeal entities and spirits of up to 27 POW – preventing them from touching, casting magic or otherwise directly harming him.

Armour of Invulnerability

Effect: Toughen 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: The armour itself

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A full suits of chainmail, its iron links blackened and edged with brass rings for decoration. Under the effects of the enchantment it grants eight Armour Points to the wearer but retains the default -7 Strike Rank and associated movement penalties for normal chainmail.

Enchanted Armour

Many different forms of enchanted armour exist in Nuera, this being one of the more ubiquitous items created by past sorcerers for noble clients, only to be later killed in the same expedition or betrayed and slain by their employer.

In general most enchanted armour is of the heavier sort, chainmail or plate being preferred. This is primarily due to metal armour being able to endure better against corrosion or the direct application of elemental damage. Apocryphal tales tell of great heroes who request shirts ensorcelled with spells to protect against blade or spear, wearing them under additional armour. Believing themselves invulnerable they quest against deadly monsters only for the enchantment to fail when the shirt rots away from the sweat of their own body. Likewise, enchanted underclothes are vulnerable to burning, becoming snagged and even un-weaving.

A second reason that heavier armour is utilised is in case the sorcerous enchantment is suppressed by some form of magical negation. Although lighter armours reduce Strike Rank penalties and enable easier climbing, jumping and swimming, all too often an overconfident fool dressed in ensorcelled light leathers finds themselves facing a cleric with Dismiss Magic and their vaunted protection vanishes.

More powerful suits of armour are sometimes fashioned with several spells combined into the enchantment, for example enhancing some of the wearer's Characteristics, granting flight or providing some form of Spirit Resistance.

Arrows of Returning

Effect: Recall 100%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Up to 150m

Uses: Three Arrows

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Beautifully crafted white arrows fletched with feathers from a peregrine falcon and tipped with razor sharp silver heads. When fired the arrows return to the firer's hand provided they do not impale the target. The arrows fly back at a rate of 100 metres per Combat Action, permitting the archer to fire sequentially without pausing to draw another shaft, ignoring the reload time.

Backpack of Holding

Effect: Unburden 50%

Magnitude: 5

Range: The backpack itself

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A large leather haversack made from red dyed mule skin. Whatever is placed inside is rendered lighter, provided it can fit inside the backpack. Thus it could be filled with lead weights or gold coins, yet still be able to be carried. The enchantment allows up to 15 ENC of equipment to be carried as if weightless.

Blanket of Choking

Effect: Smother 70%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Seemingly a normal blanket, albeit one of soft texture and warmth, this object is a cursed item that was once famously used to commit regicide. When drawn or cast over a, usually, sleeping victim it smothers them in its thick folds, unless they resist the magic. Against alert targets it is less useful, since the blanket is easily shrugged aside. The item does however present a useful aspect, that of being able to beat out large fires of up to 21 cubic metres in size, making it a potent weapon against salamanders.

Blindfold of Detection

Effect: Sense Flesh & Blood 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: 1.5km

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Appearing as a simple slip of black silk, when placed over the eyes it permits the wearer to detect creatures of flesh and blood, 'feeling' their direction and range.

Bolts of Banishment

Effect: Banish 60%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Uses: Seven Bolts

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Each bolt is forged from iron inscribed with a rune inlaid in silver. Any extra-dimensional creature or spirit struck by a bolt, that fails to resist the enchantment, is forced back to its home plane, wailing and screaming.

Boots of Quickness

Effect: Haste 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Calf high boots of highly polished dark leather, on closer inspection the human footwear is made from black coloured snakeskin with copious lacing to adjust for foot size. The magic of the boots allows the wearer to move at double their normal rate, providing they are no bigger than SIZ 18.

Bracelet of Spirit Hostility

Effect: Attract (Spirits) 70%

Magnitude: 3

Range: 1.5km

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A bracelet formed from the picked remains of a rat, inscribed with strange sigils. The yellowed bone denotes it as an article of great age and it radiates a powerful aura of magic. Its sinister appearance reflects the nature of the enchantment. Another example of a cursed item, this bracelet antagonises spirits of up to 21 POW within range. Those capable of malicious acts will follow the wearer and attack or curse them at an opportune moment.

Carpet of Flying

Effect: Fly 150%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: A once luxurious rug, age has diminished its colourful patterns and the weave has become rather threadbare in several places. When unrolled and commanded to fly, the carpet is capable of supporting up to seven passengers of no more than 18 SIZ. It moves through the air at a movement rate of 10, travelling indefinitely as long as the 'pilot' maintains his concentration. If focus is lost the carpet merely hovers in place, awaiting new commands.

Circlet of Intuition

Effect: Intuition 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: 15m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Subtle and unadorned, this narrow circlet is a simple silver band that is ostensibly used to keep the wearer's hair out of their eyes. In reality the circlet allows the user to discern the emotions and motivations of anyone they concentrate on. Targets who fail to resist are open to empathic analysis. However the enchantment will only work on those with 18 INT or less.

Cloak of Suppression

Effect: Obscure 90%

Magnitude: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Looking like a plain gray cloak to protect against adverse weather, this garment is in fact a method of concealing the magical accoutrements and auras of its wearer. Only a magical detection spell of higher Magnitude than the enchantment can penetrate its effects.

Crossbow of Reloading

Effect: Reload 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: The crossbow itself

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A marvellously ostentatious heavy crossbow, its stock of polished rosewood inlaid with mother of pearl. Set atop the weapon is a complex looking magazines, which can hold up to six rounds of ammunition. The effect of the enchantment is that when shot, the crossbow immediately re-cocks itself, in the process dropping a new bolt into the firing groove. This allows the crossbow to be fired once per Combat Action with no intermediary loading time. Once emptied however, the magazine must be reloaded by hand, which takes several minutes.

Crown of Slavery

Effect: Dominate Elf 100%

Magnitude: 4

Range: 150m

Duration: Permanent

Targets: 5

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Taking the form of a high pointed golden crown, this item is of dread power. Fashioned by a Lornish sorcerer ages past, it was long used to enslave elves under the rule of the hobgoblin and dwarven patriarchs. Any elf who fails to resist its power is subjugated to the wearer's will. However only up to five victims may be controlled at any one time.

Crystal Ball

Effect: Project Sight and Project Hearing 80%

Magnitude: 1

Range: 75km

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: A near transparent sphere or egg shaped ovoid of quartz crystal, this item allows its user to send forth their perception to far off places. It functions precisely like the spell, allowing the holder to see and hear in familiar places within the range of the enchantment. If necessary the user can shift the point of view by concentration; moving it by up to eight metres per round. Although the crystal ball has great range, its low Magnitude means it has trouble penetrating magical defences.

Darts of Hindrance

Effect: Hinder 70%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Uses: Three Darts

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Short, steel tipped darts with raven feathers for flights, these throwing weapons are ensorcelled to slow down the movement rate of anyone they *impale*. Merely striking the victim and falling to the ground will not work, since the darts require

constant physical contact. If successfully lodged in the foe's body, the target's base Movement is halved automatically.

Knife of Door Slicing

Effect: Form/Set Wood 50%

Magnitude: 1

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: An innocuous looking knife of seeming bluntness and rust bitten blade, this battered appearance hides a tool of potent application in the right hands. Under its touch any wooden object of up to SIZ 15 becomes as malleable as clay, thus a hatch could be cut into a door and then the panel replaced once the user had crawled through, or the lid of a solid oak chest forced to disgorge its lock. Larger objects such as drawbridges or the trunks of full sized trees are unaffected. Any changes made to a wooden item remain permanent after the knife is removed.

Girdle of Toughness

Effect: Enhance CON 50%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A broad belt made from the cured hide of a wyrm or dragon, embossed with runes denoting endurance and studded with bronze. Anyone wearing the belt is granted a boost of 10 points to their CON Characteristic, incidentally raising any skill using CON as a base and increasing Hit Points by two in every location.

Gloves of Great Strength

Effect: Enhance STR 50%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Made from the skin of a colossal constrictor snake, these enchanted gloves have a red scaly texture that helps the wearer grip whilst applying his augmented strength. They only fit humanoids of up to SIZ 21 and no more than four fingers and a thumb on each hand. The gloves boost the wearer's STR Characteristic by 10 points, temporarily raising any skill that uses STR as a base and increasing their Damage Bonus by two steps.

Harp of Nostalgia

Effect: Record 80%

Magnitude: 1

Range: 15m

Duration: Permanent

Uses: Seven Sequences

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: This lap harp is a rather plain looking instrument, its varnish scratched and chipped from many years being carried by wandering bards. Despite its worn facade the harp itself sounds

sweet and melodious, obviously the work of a master craftsman. In truth the real power of the harp is in its ability to record snatches of music, or even conversations, and play them back again flawlessly using its own strings to recreate the sounds. To store such sequences the owner must concentrate on the session or speech to be recorded and be within range. The harp may save seven separate audio sequences, each up to eight minutes long – enough to store most songs which are not of ballad length.

Hat of Charming

Effect: Enhance CHA 60%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A hat of questionable style and almost outrageous flamboyance, which never seems to be quite in fashion. Despite its ridiculous griffon feathers the wearer seems to glow with an inner self confidence, blessed with charm and grace. The hat grants a boost of 10 points to the wearer's CHA Characteristic, temporarily increasing any skill that uses CHA as a base and incrementing their Improvement Roll Modifier by two points if the hat is worn continuously.

Helmet of Brightness

Effect: Glow 110%

Magnitude: 12

Range: 11m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A boon to underground delvers or those facing combat at night, this famous but archaic helmet is enchanted by a soft scintillating light, which illuminates a wide area around the wearer. Due to the strength of the enchantment its light is rarely ever extinguished, often turning the tide against creatures of darkness who often rely on concealment to overcome their foes.

Mask of Discernment

Effect: Mystic Vision 80%

Magnitude: 8

Range: 15m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: A wooden mask of grotesque features, formed from the wood of a lizardfolk shamanic totem pole, its antique wood darkened with the years. Placing the demonic countenance over their face grants the wearer the ability to look into the otherworld of the spirit plane and even perceive portals to the demonic realms. The mask also allows the perception and identification of spells and enchantments of 8 Magnitude or less.

Necklace of Sustenance

Effect: Abjure Food and Water cast at 70%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Enchanted into a simple chain of iron links, the combined magic of the necklace removes any necessity for the wearer to eat or drink, keeping them alive indefinitely. The wearer will still feel hungry and thirsty however.

Plate Armour of Drawing

Effect: Attract Magic and Toughen cast at 90%

Magnitude: 8

Range: 75m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Another cursed magic item, this magnificent brass armour appears to be blessed with increased protection for its wearer, granting nine Armour Points to each location (–9 Strike Rank penalty). Its secondary enchantment however is not so beneficial. Any offensive spell of Magnitude 9 or less, cast within a 75 metre radius of the armour will be drawn directly to the wearer, who must resist as per normal to escape the effects. Due to the high turnover of its wearers, the brass panoply often goes missing for years or decades before being seen again, worn by another ill advised hero.

Ring of Sorcery

Effect: Enhance INT and POW cast at 60%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A famous ring, worn by Archmage Arcos, Guildmaster of Wizards. Its appearance belies its power, a modest silver band set with a diamond into which is carved the Mage Guild seal. The ring boosts the wearer's INT and POW Characteristics by 12 points apiece, increasing any skills that use either stat whilst simultaneously expanding the wearer's memory for 12 more sorcery spells and increasing their Magic Points by 12 also. Despite the incredible utility, knowledge of the component spells is either lost or restricted, preventing its replication. Nevertheless, other similar though lesser rings are rumoured to exist, providing a never ending lure for younger sorcerers who inevitably end up dead, or returning empty handed and a little wiser.

Robe of Wizardry

Effect: Spell Resistance and Veil cast at 80%

Magnitude: 9

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: This plain white robe has nothing to distinguish it as anything unusual, save that it is woven from a coarse but durable woollen fabric. The garment has a pair of benefits however. Firstly it blocks offensive spells of up to Magnitude 8 from affecting the wearer. Secondly, the wearer is warded from magical observation and location by any magic of similar Magnitude.

Rope of Binding

Effect: Diminish STR, Diminish DEX and Toughen cast at 70%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch (Toughen affects the rope only)

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A little known hank of frayed rope, which survived its creator, a sorcerous judiciary officer who captured and transported criminals to their final incarceration. The rope was simply a tool he created on the fly to ensure thieves would not wriggle free of their bonds. Unfortunately the wizard ended up being strangled by his own creation, when a brute of a man decided to kill his captor rather than break free of his bonds. When tied about a victim, the rope reduces their STR and DEX by 14 points each, incidentally penalising any skill that uses those Characteristics. This normally enfeebles the bound individual so much that they cannot naturally escape their bonds.

Shield of Arrow Attraction

Effect: Attract Missiles 80%

Magnitude: 6

Range: 150m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Similar to the Plate Armour of Drawing, this hoplite shield draws all missile attacks of 1D8 damage or less towards its wielder. If multiple arrows or sling stones are launched on the same Strike Rank, the wielder may use a *single* Combat Action to roll his parry as an opposed test against *all* the separate shots. Those that fail to beat his level of success strike the shield, whereas those that do strike him normally. Although technically a curse, this item can prove to be very useful if utilised in a tactical manner.

Shirt of Protection

Effect: Castback 50%

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: This Parennaxian silk shirt is normally worn under other garments or armour. Once white, its threadbare nature illustrates it being at least a decade old but the garment still manages to survive. The shirt reflects hostile magic of Magnitude 5 or less, specifically cast at the wearer which he successfully resists.

Skin of Shifting

Effect: Shapechange Human to Panther 70%

Magnitude: 8

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: A cured panther skin of excellent quality, similar to those used as wall hangings or floor rugs. However, when placed upon the back of a human, they are transformed into a black panther of STR 17, CON 11, SIZ 19 and DEX 19. They remain in this form till they concentrate on stopping the spell, at which point the skin falls off.

Socks of Silence

Effect: Silence 10% (Manipulation 50%)

Magnitude: 6

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Whilst perhaps the least important looking magical item in the history of Dardarrick, the Socks of Silence have been widely sought after by thieves of all ilks. Thick socks woven from a mixture of faded red yarn and spider silk, oft patched at the toes and heel, their straightforward enchantment is a zone of noiselessness, which radiates a single metre from the feet blessed with their presence. This permits the wearer to stomp, dance or run in complete silence from the waist down, whilst retaining their own audio perception.

Staff of Fiery Doom

Effect: Wrack (Fire) 90%

Magnitude: 7

Range: 150m

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: An unusual article considering the Dardarrian disapproval of creating such magical items, the Staff of Fiery Doom is a 180 metre long shaft of dark wood carved from the heart of a 500 year old oak burned by dragon fire, engraved with runes and capped at either end with iron. The magic of the enchantment reveals itself with the occasional flicker of ethereal flame along the wood. When pointed and concentrated on, the staff will damage a target who fails to resist as per a Wrack spell, inflicting 1D8 damage to a random location.

Sword of Slicing

Effect: Puncture 120%

Magnitude: 13

Range: The sword itself

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: No common war sword, this blade reflects light like a mirror, its edge as keen as a razor and golden hilt encrusted with rubies. Forged from meteoric iron and magic, then quenched in the blood of a demon lord, the Sword of Slicing is infamous across Rardarri. In combat it ignores the first 12 points of armour when it hits. This includes inanimate objects such as parrying weapons and shields, permitting the sword to literally slice through anything used to block it, if taking advantage of the Damage Weapon Combat Action. It can even cut through iron chains or embed itself into rock if the wielder deliberately attempts such acts, although at the risk of damaging the blade.

Whip of Paralysis

Effect: Palsy 100%

Magnitude: 11

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Woven of sharkskin leather and giant jellyfish tendrils, then seeped in ghoulish ichor for 13 months to soften, this bullwhip

has dreadful consequences when it strikes an opponent, paralysing entangled locations as per the Palsy spell if the target fails to resist.

SPIRIT MAGIC ENCHANTMENTS

Whilst shamans can freely create fetishes in which to bind favoured spirits, these items are of little use to those unskilled in Spirit Binding. Without the native ability to release, command and recall the spirit of a fetish, it is reduced to being as useful as the base animal skull or wooden stick.

Temporary spirit enchantments are magic items designed for use by those who lack the Spirit Binding skill, in effect they are one-shot fetishes. Breaking the fetish frees the spirit which performs a single pre-ordained task, before vanishing back to the Spirit Plane.

Permanent Spirit Magic enchantments are a different kettle of fish altogether. Rather than manufacturing a single-use fetish, the shaman binds a spirit for all eternity to a specified object or location. This is often ethically questionable, especially if it concerns nature or ancestor spirits. Whether a guardian, trap or punishment, a permanent enchantment creates a neigh immortal spirit forever bound in servitude.

Generating Spirit Enchantments

Rather than create a dedicated list of example fetishes, a number of tables are provided for Games Masters to generate random items and the spirits they contain. These can be used by many enemies of SpellCom and Wraith Recon, for instance the hobgoblin necropolis shamans of Lorn, or the lizardman swamp mystics of Torres. Conversely they can be tools provided by friendly shamans in order to help Adventurers complete a quest.

Whether gifts, opposition weapons or merely treasure looted from sacred sites, temporary spirit enchantments make excellent magic items for any campaign.

Use the following steps to generate spirit items. Games Masters are free to pick or substitute their own table entries to produce specific or unusual enchantments more fitting to their game. The following process assumes only a single spirit is bound within the enchantment. An example of a multiple binding is presented in the Artefacts section.

First decide whether the enchantment is temporary or permanent. Then progress through the stages, rolling on each applicable table:

- Roll to see the purpose of the enchantment.
- Roll to resolve the Duration of the spirit's manifestation.
- Roll the object it is contained within.
- Roll the type of spirit.
- Roll the power of the spirit.

Determine the Purpose of the Enchantment

The purpose of the enchantment can significantly affect the type of spirit bound and its instructions.

Purpose of Enchantment

1D100	Purpose	Spirit Inclination
01–50	Augmentation: Boosts the user's personal capabilities in some way, either by increasing skills or raising attributes or manifesting traits.	Neutral
51–70	Guardian: Manifests as a helper that protects or advises the user, or summons material aid.	Defensive
71–90	Weapon: Directly attacks the user's enemies either physically or via possession.	Aggressive
91–00	Trap: Attempts to restrain, kill or possess anyone transgressing the area or object it is warding.	Aggressive

Determine the Duration of the Spirit's Manifestation

Once the purpose is known, the length of time the spirit will remain and continue to follow its specific instructions before returning to the Spirit Plane must be resolved. This can be anywhere from a single attack to an extended period of days. Permanent enchantments need not roll on this table as they are compelled to continuously fulfil their duty.

Duration of Spirit Manifestation

1D100	Duration of Aid
01–50	One adventure
51–70	One day
71–90	One scene or battle
91–00	One challenge or opponent

Determine the Physical Object which Contains the Spirit

Spirit enchantments may be bound into a very diverse range of objects. Nevertheless the majority use natural or organic objects. Temporary spirit enchantments are deliberately designed to be fragile so they can be easily broken to release the spirit within. Permanent spirit enchantments are far more rugged, bound into materials like hardwoods or stone so that they cannot be sundered.

Physical Object of the Enchantment

1D100	Permanent Object	Temporary Object	Trigger
01–06	Boulder	Antler	Breaking
07–12	Carving	Bone	Snapping
13–18	Cave	Doll	Twisting
19–24	Fossil	Drum	Tearing
25–30	Gemstone	Feather	Burning
31–36	Painting	Flower	Crushing
37–42	Plaque	Hide	Tearing
43–48	Pool	Horn	Crushing
49–54	Statue	Knotted String	Untying
55–60	Tattoo	Mask	Shattering
61–66	Tomb	Nut	Crushing
67–72	Tooth	Pot	Smashing
73–78	Totem Pole	Sand or Soil Pattern	Scuffing
79–84	Tree	Shell	Crushing
85–90	Waterfall	Skull	Smashing
91–95	Weapon	Stick	Snapping
96–00	Roll Twice and Choose	Roll Twice and Choose	Roll Twice and Choose

Type of Spirit

1D100	Neutral	Defensive	Aggressive
01–09	Ancestor Spirit – Shaman	Ancestor Spirit – Shaman	Ancestor Spirit – Insane
10–18	Ancestor Spirit – Warrior	Ancestor Spirit – Warrior	Bane Spirit
19–27	Nature Spirit – Boost Armour Points	Elemental Spirit – Gnome	Curse Spirit ¹
28–36	Nature Spirit – Boost Damage Bonus	Elemental Spirit – Sylph	Demonic Possession ²
37–45	Nature Spirit – Boost Hit Points	Elemental Spirit – Undine	Elemental Spirit – Gnome
46–54	Nature Spirit – Boost Movement	Guardian Spirit	Elemental Spirit – Salamander
55–63	Nature Spirit – Boost Strike Rank	Nature Spirit – Boost Armour Points	Elemental Spirit – Sylph
64–72	Nature Spirit – Dominate Species	Nature Spirit – Boost Damage Bonus	Elemental Spirit – Undine
73–81	Nature Spirit – Increase Skill	Nature Spirit – Boost Hit Points	Nature Spirit – Dominate Species
82–90	Nature Spirit – Manifest Trait	Nature Spirit – Boost Movement	Sickness Spirit ¹
91–99	Nature Spirit – Combat Manoeuvre	Nature Spirit – Boost Strike Rank	Undead Soul ³
00	Unusually powerful Spirit, roll twice and combine both abilities		

¹ Roll on the Conditions Table page 56 of the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook* to determine its effects.

² See Demonic Possession Text Box

³ These are ghosts or wraiths. Treat as Bane Spirits but any Magic Point damage they inflict recovers at 1 point per day of rest.

A great degree of imagination can be used to make such objects surprisingly exotic or dangerously innocuous. For example a subtle trap could be formed by enchanting a patch of subtly scattered sand, releasing the spirit if the sand is scuffed by an unwary footfall. Permanent enchantments could be something as terrible as binding a spirit into the tooth of a huge carnivorous dinosaur!

Determine the Type of Spirit

The type of spirit depends in part on the purpose of the enchantment. Roll on the above table using the column matching the previously determined Spirit Inclination.

Demonic Possession

Not everything that roams the Spirit Plane is technically a spirit. Often extra-dimensional beings, or *demons*, find themselves drawn there by failed summonings or simply exploring the otherworld. They find to their cost however, that shamans can bind just as easily bind the soul of a demon as any other spirit.

Demons disincorporate the souls of their victims and engage them in Spirit Combat. Winning the conflict permits the demon to possess their victim, utilising the opportunity to cause as much mischief and strife as possible. They never destroy the soul of the

Nature Spirit POW and Abilities

1D100	POW	Nature Spirit Ability		Increased Skill Bonus	Number of Manifested Traits	Combat Manoeuvres Granted
		Attribute Bonus	Number of Dominated Creatures			
01–10	1D6+6	+1	1	+10%	—	—
11–25	1D6+12	+2	2	+20%	—	—
26–50	1D6+18	+3	3	+30%	1	—
51–70	1D6+24	+4	4	+40%	1	1 Normal
71–85	1D6+30	+5	5	+50%	2	1 Critical
86–90	1D6+36	+6	6	+60%	2	1 Critical
91–94	1D6+42	+7	7	+70%	3	1 Normal + 1 Critical
95–97	1D6+48	+8	8	+80%	3	1 Normal + 1 Critical
98–99	1D6+54	+9	9	+90%	4	1 Normal + 1 Critical
00	1D6+60	+10	10	+100%	4	2 Normal + 1 Critical

Other Spirit POW and Abilities

1D100	POW	Spirit Ability		Curse or Sickness Spirit Conditions
		Ancestor Spirit Skills ¹	Elemental Spirit Size ²	
01–10	1D6+6	—	1 m ³	3-4
11–25	1D6+12	2	2 m ³	5-6
26–50	1D6+18	2 + 1 Heroic Ability	3 m ³	7-8
51–70	1D6+24	3 + 1 Heroic Ability	4 m ³	9-10
71–85	1D6+30	3 + 2 Heroic Abilities	5 m ³	11-12
86–90	1D6+36	4 + 2 Heroic Abilities	6 m ³	13-14
91–94	1D6+42	4 + 3 Heroic Abilities	7 m ³	15-16
95–97	1D6+48	5 + 3 Heroic Abilities	8 m ³	17-18
98–99	1D6+54	5 + 4 Heroic Abilities	9 m ³	19-20
00	1D6+60	6 + 4 Heroic Abilities	10 m ³	21-22

¹ The value of Ancestor Spirit skills is 90%+POW.

² Elementals in temporary enchantments can be used possess the body of a willing user.

³ This is the maximum spell Magnitude the spirit can neutralise.

loser, preferring to enjoy the pleasures of the flesh, however brief or vicariously. However, when their time to depart has come, they are not above placing the host body into extreme danger before abandoning the possession.

Demonic entities have an INT of 2D6+6 and CHA of 3D6. Their POW varies and can be established by rolling on one of Spirit POW tables. Other than being able to disincorporate targets and their inherently malicious nature they have no other abilities.

Determine the Power of the Spirit

The power of the spirit illustrates the strength and intensity of its abilities. The potency of the larger spirits can be overwhelming, yet enchantments of this scale are possible, requiring coordinated shamanic ritual concerts to summon and bind the spirits.

Since there is a wide variation of spirit types, the table is broken into two parts for ease of use.

ARTIFACTS

Although the term *artefact* has been used loosely in *Wraith Recon* in terms of this chapter it specifically refers to magical items of extraordinary power, normally created by the coordinated efforts of multiple thaumaturgists working in concert.

Such enchantments are inherently dangerous, not only to create during metaconcerts but also because of the pivotal effects they create at the national scale. Manufacturing a divine weapon of mass destruction for example, is likely to provoke a fearful neighbouring country to proactive measures seeking to destroy the artefact before it can be used to coerce or conquer. A prime example is the newly raised undead dragon, which ravaged Dardarrick's eastern border. Not only has the sorcerous creation provoked a war, it has also begun a power struggle between competing necromantic cults.

The following example artefacts comprise of legendary objects of power and the cutting edge developments of Dardarrian

military research, both of which can be used as stimuli on which to base adventures.

Arngrim's Invulnerable Wagon

Effect: Actuate and Toughen cast at 200%

Magnitude: 21

Range: The vehicle itself

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Conceived by a warlock of the Brotherhood of Magnus, this vehicle is a prototype military design given over to the Forge of Engineers for limited production. The basic structure is lightweight wood and sheet metal panelling but the chassis is a unique feat of heavy duty carpentry intended to support the four massive iron rimmed wheels. With crew on board the entire vehicle weighs nearly half a ton.

Inside the cabin are two seats, one mounted behind the other. The forward seat is for the driver who must concentrate on the Actuate spell to motivate the vehicle. Since the wagon has no steering devices, its driver must mentally control the speed of each wheel to change direction. For example, causing the wheels on one side to go forwards whilst reversing those on the other enables the wagon to turn in place.

The rear seat is where the gunner sits, set in a roof-top cupola to grant him a better view. The wagon has several pivot mounted repeating crossbows around the rim of the cupola for defence against foot troops. Atop the cupola is set a main weapon of some design. This was initially a ballistae but with only one crewman manning it the siege engine took too long to reload. Recent developments however led to the development of a magical cannon (see Cannon of Blasting), which is easier to position atop the wagon and fire rapidly.

To grant the crew significant protection, the vehicle is enchanted with 20 Armour Points. The heavily protected wagon has a potential Movement Rate of 60 metres per round (43 kilometres per hour) but the lack of suspension prevents the vehicle coming close to that speed except on reasonably flat surfaces.

Cannon of Blasting

Effect: Airburst (Fire) 200%

Magnitude: 8

Range: 7.5km

Uses: 8

Duration: 15 Minutes

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: The latest concept developed by the Forge of Engineers, these frightful weapons are set to turn battlefield strategy on its head. These cannon are capable of maintaining a barrage of magical damage over a wide area. Fortunately for the enemies of Dardarrick, these items are expensive to enchant, tying up the resources of several sorcerers for each one.

Physically, Cannons of Blasting are four metre long tubes of thick iron, designed to resist the heat of constant shooting. The black coloured cylinders are engraved with magical sigils to help contain the forces generated within them. Once a round they fire a magical blast which inflicts 2D10 damage, reducing by one step for every two metres further away from the centre of the explosion. Aiming and firing requires constant concentration, with the caveat that targets must be directly visible to the user, else the blast misses.

Unlike other artefacts in this section, each gun is 'only' a temporary enchantment; the reason being that such dangerous weapons should not have an unlimited capacity to cause destruction, especially if they fall into the hands of Dardarrick's foes. In this form the cannon can be rendered safe by the removal of its invested Magic Points by the creators. They can be used on up to eight separate occasions before the device must be returned for recharging.

Drums of the Dead

Effect: Raise Undead 1000% (See Wraith Recon page 82)

Magnitude: 100

Range: 200m

Duration: Permanent

Description: Twin drums made from the sectioned thigh bones of some colossal beast and covered with the skins of flayed demons, these accursed instruments have long plagued Dardarrick for centuries.

The dark magic of the drums continuously animates the nearest 100 dead bodies as either skeletons or zombies depending on their state of decomposition. They act as faithful servants to whoever plays the drums, following the instruments and obeying orders for as long as the macabre rhythm continues. Skeletal undead fight and perform physical tasks at the drum beater's skill value whereas zombies may use their original skills if higher. As each animated body is destroyed, new corpses are raised to take their place, assuming such are available.

If the drumming ceases for whatever reason, the deathless servants become quiescent, still animated but unresponsive and unable to act independently. Those undead that pass out of range of the drums collapse inert, no longer affected by the magic. The drums normally make their dire appearance during battles when fresh bodies are plentiful to ensure the undead entourage remains at full strength.

Though claimed to be securely sequestered by the Cult of Mortessal, the recent destruction of one of her remote temples in the foothills of The Claws has led to the circulation of rumours that these dread drums are now in the possession of necromancers of the Black Circle.

Pocket Submarine

Effect: Abjure Air and Abjure Warmth cast at 110%; Actuate cast at 150%; Project Sight 30%

Magnitude: 6 for the combined Abjure spells, 15 for the Actuate spell

Range: 150m for Project Sight

Targets: Six for the combined Abjure, Two for the Actuate

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Autonomous

Description: Developed at the Storm Crags secret base, this submersible was originally designed to enable a Wraith Recon team to investigate numerous Sharkfolk sightings in Salt Bay. Once built and tested, the underwater boat proved to be a very versatile craft for covert coastal transportation, suggesting other tactical operations for which it could be used – such as commando raids on the Lornish fleet. SpellCom currently has two active submarines with another one in the process of construction.

The vessels have a strange appearance, almost as if someone had taken a massive barrel, added crystal portholes and extended its staves to points at either end, rather like the shape of a rugby ball. Mounted externally are a number of steering rudders and two nacelles, one placed on either side of the body. Each nacelle is enchanted with an Actuate spell that pushes water from one end of the tube to the other, thus providing the craft with motive power. Positioned at the bow are two special underwater ballistae, one shot weapons unless a crew member swims outside to reload them.

Within the submarine is a complex enchantment enabling a crew of six to survive without heat or air. Once outside the cabin such necessities return. The vessel has a watertight hatch mounted in its belly for crew members to exit whilst it is still underwater. As this is the only ingress, the craft is normally provided with towels and spare dry clothing. At the front is the pilot's seat, enchanted with a Project Sight spell to provide an external view – even permitting the navigator to see what is on the surface. Other than storage cupboards for food and equipment, and the controls to steer the craft, what little space remains is taken up with seating.

Although the small size allows the submersible to sail along the narrow streets of long abandoned sharkfolk settlements or nose its way into enemy harbours, SpellCom is considering the construction of a much larger version. A submarine capable of ferrying an entire company of troops would allow direct assaults on foreign ports.

Skull of a Thousand Dooms

Effect: Permanent spirit magic enchantment

Spirits: 582 Sickness Spirits of various types

Magnitude: 8

Range: Within the skull

Description: Four centuries past, during the height of the Prey Mask cycle, the shamans of Torres undertook a tremendous enterprise to relieve the swamp folk from the most dreadful diseases, which lurked in their wetland's foul, corrupt waters. In

a concerted effort the marsh mystics hunted down the deadliest contagions then bound them in a vast ritual to forever trap them within an item of power, a huge skull of an ancient black dragon.

This skull now lies locked in the bowels of the Altar of Scales, closely watched over by the Fanged Knights. It is an old and fragile relic some four meters long, shadows filling its empty eye sockets. Although it was once solid, the yellowing bone is seemingly being corroded from the spirits it contains, weakening the prison. At some point the skull will fracture, releasing a veritable plague of deadly spirits into the immediate region. The druid-priests of Mersmerro entrusted with its safeguard have now entered the Predator Mask cycle, causing some to consider using the skull as a weapon.

The 582 Sickness Spirits contained within the skull are of many disparate types. Each however is deadly in its own right, possessing three or more conditions of which one is always Death or Contagion. If the skull was ever broken within a highly populated city the effects would be horrific.

Skybase

Effects: Fly cast at 1666%; Gather (Clouds) at 500%; combined Protective Ward and Spell Resistance cast at 200%

Magnitude: 8 for each of the Fly spells, 51 for the Gather, and 21 for the Protective Ward enchantment

Range: Touch

Targets: 160 for the Fly spell

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: What once started out as research into creating flying vehicles, to avoid paying the ruinous costs of raising and feeding flying mounts, eventually turned into plans to provide an aerial depot from which to support AirCav squadrons. A top priority project for the SpellCom's R&D department, the establishment of this particular artefact has taken a team of over 20 sorcerers several years to complete.

The eventual result was Skybase, a small flying castle, made of blocks carved from light volcanic rock. A magical wonder in its own right, the floating fortification is supported by 160 foundation stones, each enchanted with a Fly spell capable of supporting 500 SIZ! This permits the fort to float slowly from place-to-place, or keep station above a particular location. Concentration is only required to direct movement, not to remain hovering in situ.

Beneath the castle dangles a long iron chain. At its terminus is a metal ball into which is enchanted a Gather Clouds spell which extends 50 metres in all directions. This provides the fort with cover, disguising its presence from anyone on the ground below. To further obfuscate its nature the castle is whitewashed to help it appear to be merely an extension of the thick clouds surrounding its foundation. Additional defences are provided by the 21 point Spell Resistance, a number of magical siege weapons and its garrison.

Despite the efforts involved in its creation Skybase remains little more than a modest fort, notwithstanding its unique mobility. It can contain a single squadron and its support staff but not much else. As a platform from which to launch raids deep into enemy territory, however, it remains unequalled.

Stormwalker's Ebony Horse

Effect: Animate (Wood), Fly, Teleport and Toughen cast at 370%

Magnitude: 8

Range: 15km

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: An amazing relic that dates from before the Dawning, this swift mount is a near invulnerable golem made from rich woods. Its beautiful body is exotic ebony, the hooves ironwood and its teeth are of ivory. The Ebony Horse is only of modest size but can carry a person of up to SIZ 18. When the rider concentrates on animating the horse it has a trotting Movement of 24 but may canter or gallop as desired. The golem requires no solid ground since it can also levitate and ride through the air. In addition, the horse is able to teleport itself and its rider, at will, to anywhere within range, provided the destination is in sight – allowing it to cover vast distances in a matter of hours even across the sea.

This magnificent artefact was reputedly lost when its last master, the mage Rochmire galloped northwards from Pierceling, in a drunken wager to ride across the frozen ice flows to see what lies behind the Hyrric Tempest. Neither he nor the Ebony Horse returned.

Wrackling Gun

Effect: Wrack and Trigger cast at 110%

Magnitude: 5

Range: 20m

Targets: 7

Duration: Permanent

Maintenance: Concentration

Description: Technically not an artefact as such, this creation has released the sorcerous genii from his bottle, showing how destructive magic could be harnessed to magnify its effects to horrific levels. So far only one of these has ever been produced and that by a somewhat insane senior wizard, who was promptly retired afterwards whilst the SpellCom artificers considered his design.

Fundamentally it is an enchantment holding a Wrack (Electricity) spell. The device consists of 7 rotating tubes each capable of belching 2D6 of Damage when operated, hitting the nearest seven targets in the line of fire with crackling bolts of energy. Although there is no requirement to trigger all Seven barrels at once, in practice no one who has ever used the Wrackling Gun has fired at less than maximum output. Indeed anyone triggering the device

in combat must succeed in an unopposed Persistence test, or be overcome with the scale of destruction and unable to stop firing until all visible targets have been scythed down, with often fatal friendly-fire results if compatriots are engaged with the enemy.

The Wrackling Gun is extremely heavy, requiring both STR and SIZ of 17+ to operate unless mounted on a tripod. Whoever is aiming the weapon must concentrate to fire it. The device has a number of rather idiosyncratic safeguards built in to prevent it from being used without proper authority, the most prominent being that the operator being human, wear a Dardarrian uniform and have both hands on the firing/support handles. As an additional safety feature, the wielder is required to scream at the top of his voice to maintain concentration. Unfortunately this requirement has also made the device prone to unexpectedly discharge in the proximity of loud noises.

Unique Metamagical Materials

A number of interesting substances capable of affecting or circumventing thaumaturgy exist in Nuera. Primarily crystalline in nature these *metamagical* materials are very rare, usually requiring extreme labour to locate or extract from their native environment.

Each substance has a particular ability that makes it very valuable to spell casters, whether allowing the storage of personal Magic Points or the ability to absorb spells wholesale. Their primary advantage however is that they do not inherently radiate magic as of themselves, making them particularly sought after by organisations like Wraith Recon or professionals of a covert nature such as thieves, spies and assassins.

A small selection of example materials is listed here.

Adamantus Crystals

Strangely elongated crystals of hexagonal cross section, this material has the milky colour of opal, with rainbow threads of scintillation running through its structure. Despite its soft appearance the crystal is incredibly hard and cannot be sawed or cut by normal methods. Instead it must be painstakingly ground into shape using course diamond dust to abrade its surface.

Due to the strength of its mineral lattice, weapons made from this substance possess double the Armour and Hit Points of their iron equivalents. Its primary advantage though, is its total immunity to magic. Spells which would normally affect or block a weapon are completely ignored, permitting blades fashioned from Adamantus to shear through spells like Shield or Protection. Fortunately for thaumaturgists everywhere large pieces of this crystal are very rare, so that only the occasional Adamantus dagger or shortsword is ever seen.

Manakua Crystals

These unusual gems are a source of magical energy, from which they gain their colloquial name of *Power Crystals*. When discovered in a virginal state they are translucent gemstones about the size of a large grape, with a deep royal blue tint. As Magic Points are drained from the crystals they dim and become increasingly opaque. The number of Magic Points is finite and cannot be replaced. Once fully expended, the crystal crumbles into soft powder.

Power crystals are usually found with 1D6+6 Magic Points contained within, although bigger gems have been found with much more.

Necomegar Crystals

Strange black gemstones looking rather like faceted obsidian, these stones consume spells cast near them, converting them back to raw Magic Points. A thaumaturgist holding one of these gems as it absorbs a spell or miracle will find his own Magic Points restored by a number equal to the original MP cost of a sorcery spell, or the Magnitude of the miracle or common magic cast at them.

The size of the crystal limits the maximum strength of magic it can transmogrify. The smallest gems are about fist sized and can

only absorb up to 1D3+1 Magnitude, whereas the biggest stones, head sized or larger, have been known to transmute magic of up to 1D6+9 Magnitude. more powerful spells bypass the crystals without incident.

Omniciex Crystals

Omniciex crystal is a hard mineral, completely transparent yet capable of transmitting more than just light. The primary property of these crystals is that all the shards cut from the same stone remain magically connected to each other – no matter the distance separating them. Sounds are naturally transmitted via this mystical web, the possessor being able to telepathically ‘hear’ what is occurring in the immediate vicinity of the other shards.

Sorcerers skilled in scrying can further manipulate this link, being able to perceive with additional senses through a harmonically linked shard. The paranormal bond is even capable of transmitting sorcery, allowing spells to be remotely cast to help the wearer or against a nearby target.

Although they do not radiate as magical themselves, they internally fluoresce in the presence of magic. Gazing through a shard allows the viewer to see magical items and operating spells in their direct line of vision.

CHAPTER SIX

ENEMY CULTS



'It is not the enemies we know of that should frighten you, milord. It is all those we have yet to discover.'

— Arcanist General Matteau Raspeng

Dardarrick is a large kingdom; a nation full of splendour that commands the central, most fertile region of Rardarri. It is the home of many happy family lines that can trace their lineage all the way back to the Dawning. Through the glory and the teachings of the All Father, Matriarias and even Praxious, the 'noble lion' that is the Great Kingdom of Dardarrick has grown into the most powerful nation on the continent – perhaps even the world.

Amidst the fairy tale castles and comfortable cottages scattered across the kingdom however, there are many places where Dardarrick is sparsely populated. These places could be normal areas of wilderness simply waiting to be explored, or they may be shadowy regions dominated by unpalatable cults and secret forces waiting to extend their reach over the nation.

This chapter looks at several cults and secret societies that are hiding within the boundaries of Dardarrick. It details their whereabouts, their reasons for existing and their motivations for acting in secret (if indeed they do). Each entry also includes several plot hooks for Games Masters wishing to involving that group within their campaigns.

The Brass Assembly

When the Brazen Legion disbanded after the rise of King Archiveltdt, several hundred elite mercenaries of questionable ethics and extreme racist opinions were suddenly without cause, career or purpose. Surviving in a land with no chance of employment, and surrounded by nations harbouring 'foul' creatures mimicking humanity, became a personal hell for the mercenary warriors and it did not take long before they began to gather for camaraderie and safety, resorting to banditry to stay alive. When a few of their number came forward with ancient writings looted from the Brazen Templars with schematics to recreate the 'forgetopia' – a thaumaturgic device which could transform both willing and unwilling supplicants into invulnerable metal skinned warriors – they formed this secretive collective, planning to overthrow the weak faith of the All Father and carve out their own province.

The aptly-named 'cult' of Brass Assembly nominally worships the god of smithing, Vulka. They are actively seeking a way to recreate the mythical legions that were part of the legendary Hyrric society at the northern edge of the world. They have agents moving about Dardarrick, normally as soldiers or mercenaries but they are concentrated at the north-eastern most coast of the Claw Mountains, near Stone Forest without crossing into Lorn.

From these ore-rich mountains and the salty Cliffside town of Pierceling, the Assembly has no lack of raw materials to create more of their kind. A population of nearly 100 mercenaries surrounded by countless failed experiments make up the main body of the Assembly and they increase their ranks weekly with kidnapped homeless folk disappearing from the streets only to end up as mindless, partially transformed golems. The Assembly is still refining their crudely constructed forgetopia, searching for the perfect combination of Vulkite miracles, crystal salts and refined alloys to recreate the brassforged warriors of the Hyrric myth – perfected creations by the Forge Father himself, requiring no food, drink or sleep, ageless and invulnerable.

Those failed experiments still capable of movement hobble around with half metallic skin, grinding joints and suffering an agony their rigid, inflexible faces cannot express. Such creations are powerful enough both in numbers and toughness to make the foolish King Archiveltdt to give the Brass Assembly a piece of the kingdom to call their own. Unfortunately much of the schematic gospels of Vulka were lost before the Dawning and only one perfectly functioning Hyrric brassforged has been constructed as of yet; a model of gleaming beauty and physical perfection, which continues to spur the cult to greater efforts.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- The Brass Assembly needs to test one of their latest Hyrric Brassforged, which is too 'inexperienced' to know the full extent of his abilities as of yet. Surviving the transmutation with less flaws than normal, the Assembly has chosen to send the willing volunteer toward the southern side of the Stone Forest as a 'training exercise' to test its combat potential. Unfortunately the exercise's path has led it directly into the secret refugee camp consisting of the escaped citizens of Grainington. One force of soldiers has already tried to stop the metallic golem and failed; it is time for the Wraiths to come and deal with the situation.

- An Adventurer member of Wraith Recon has received an invitation to visit the Brass Assembly by an unwitting close relative who believes his military trained relation would be a worthy recruit and potentially join them. The invitation was intercepted by Commander Ruhrk, who has formed a plan to send the Wraith to infiltrate the cult and secrete an Omniciex chip somewhere within their hideout, allowing SpellCom to acquire otherwise impossible-to-witness intelligence on the growing movement. When the Adventurer arrives, however, they will be faced with an unspoken offer of willingly entering the forgetopia, earning glory and rank within the cult, or being forcibly bound within the machine to test its new settings.

The Black Circle

A truly ancient collection of necromancers, liche priests and dread warlocks from the ages before history, this is a corrupt cult dedicated to Mortessal who originally granted them unlife in return for protecting the dead. Some of these powerful and millennia-old creatures have faint memories of when the Queen of Darkness and the Damned walked the world, especially Baphomes – the oldest liche priest in existence, who claims to have known Mortessal's love during the War of Creation. Whether this is true or not is beyond the knowledge of any mortal being but nothing live or dead would dare question.

The Black Circle was once very strong in Lorn but started moving west into Dardarrick after the Great Plague of 435 when hobgoblin shamans began their rise to ascendancy. Using witch covens and the faithful worshippers of Mortessal as their eyes and ears, the Circle has managed to thrive in hidden mausoleum-temples and morgue-shrines across the continent. Even during the religious purges under the Praxious theocracy the Black Circle remained strong yet elusive. Whenever a force of authority that would stand against their practices would get close, the Circle would select a lesser cult to 'make mistakes' and get caught, taking the attentions away from the dark heart at the web's centre.

In Dardarrick the Black Circle is quite strong but not as active as it could be, especially as of late with the increase of undead on the eastern borderlands. The undead rising up in the wake of the Lornish minions are not of Mortessal's creation; they come from another dark source and her Circle sees them as a challenge to her authority. The liche priests tend to keep their temple-lairs in the Wildlands to the west, where they can carry out their dark schemes and experiments without constant meddling from would-be heroes and Dardarrian soldiery. Along the seldom travelled caravan routes in the southwest, the Black Circle has several small cells of faithful servants.

The cult leaders in Dardarrick have commenced sending their more powerful agents eastwards trying to contain the waves of mindless undead, binding them under the control of Mortessal as they should rightfully be. Unfortunately most Dardarrians view any undead or necromancer as being suspect, especially ones diverting

skeletal hordes rather than destroying them outright, which has led to a number of mistaken conflicts and subsequent reprisals.

Although the cult of the 'true' Black Circle is very small (less than 70 members), the larger network of Mortessal-worshipping devotees that fall under their influence is more numerous, widespread and ultimately sacrificial for the greater good of the Circle.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- A 'dread warlock' from the Black Circle has been somehow trapped in a dungeon complex under an old ruin in the southwest that was being used as a highly secret depository for SpellCom equipment and evidence. This 'black museum' contains a number of failed artefacts, imprisoned diabolical creatures and sensitive information under mystical wards; the same wards that accidentally trapped the undead sorcerer. Sending common soldiers or adventuring heroes into the complex not only puts them at great risk but it also endangers the confidential information tucked away in those scrolls. Only Wraith Recon can be trusted to deal with the situation.
- The rise of the undead in the east has forced the mummified hand of Baphomes, who has sent a mouthpiece-emissary to the Pillars of Dardarrick to serve as his conduit to them. He claims to want to help King Archiveltdt in dealing with these 'poorly animated meat trinkets' but SpellCom is not yet trusting of him. The mouthpiece brings with him a powerful anti-undeath spell, a way for Mortessal worshippers to clean up their mistakes. The Wraiths have to put the liche priest's ritual to the test – without anyone knowing who is doing it and where it came from.

The Bronze Fist of Praxious

There are generally few cults that are 'cults-within-cults' but the Bronze Fist is exactly that. Wherever there have been followers of Praxious in large enough numbers to spawn evangelising clergymen, there has likely been a member of the Bronze Fist somewhere nearby. They are master manipulators and mighty combatants, buying fully into Praxious' tenets of might makes right. They are happiest playing several sides of a situation against one another, ensuring that the winner is someone they can then control or crush as the need demands.

Mysterious and powerful, the existence of the Bronze Fist is honestly only known to Hierophant Tomarsson, his closest clerics and the leaders of both Dardarrick and Lorn. The cult has interacted with both of these kingdoms in the past, helping overthrow leaders and initiate new allies in their stead. Estimates of the numbers of the Bronze Fist fluctuate depending on who is asked but roughly several hundred members exist. These men and women do not wear the traditional masks, plate armour or flowing robes as the Hierophant taught his priesthood; they wear simple clothes and no mask at all – it is easier to be anonymous when you look just like everyone else.

The Bronze Fist has chosen not to interact with Tomarsson's new secret cult of Praxious. They instead manipulate what Tomarsson's minions find or 'discover' in their espionage and research into the old ways. Making certain artefacts and rituals available to them, the Fist empowers the Hierophant-in-Exile without actually making a direct link to the vengeful man. The Fist knows that Tomarsson is too volatile and bent on revenge (rather than focussed upon the bolstering of the faith) to be Praxious' perfect instrument, forcing them to try to use him to undermine the All Father in the meantime.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- The Bronze Fist originally set up a small collection of powerful Praxious litany scrolls for a group of Tomarsson's cultists to find but they were sidetracked and ended up missing their first opportunity. Their actions attracted the attention of SpellCom and now the area is being watched by a Wraith Recon squad. The cultists will surely be back but the Fist member cannot risk those writings to end up in an infidel's hands. The Wraiths may suddenly get a chance to capture a member of the Bronze Fist – during their mission.
- One of Tomarsson's clerics has been skimming far too much coinage from the tithes that are supposed to go to the Brazen Hall and a local member of the Bronze Fist sees this as a sin against Praxious. The Fist has decided that this priest has to happen into a terrible situation, so they have fed his whereabouts to the Brotherhood. A Wraith Recon team has been sent to deal with the wayward cleric, creating a multi-sided conflict as the Wraiths face off against Tomarsson's agents and the followers of the cleric. Meanwhile the Bronze Fist agent stands back and admires the carnage his handiwork has caused.

Father's Stern Hand

Formed at the closing of the first millennium after the Dawning, the Father's Stern Hand rose out of the ranks of angered paladins in the service of the Dardarrian church. Worshippers of the All Father had been watching people suffer under the Lornish War for years and a circle of veteran paladins of the faith had enough. They gathered in secrecy, branded themselves pariahs from the common teachings of the church, and went out to protect the All Father's creations by aggressively putting evil to the sword.

They equate themselves to the bittersweet feeling that a father gets after physically disciplining a misbehaving child. They know it casts a poor pallor upon their piety but surely the All Father will forgive them for ending such dark and terrible evils in his name?

Based out of Rivermarck, the Father's Stern Hand are led by Jhuradeil, an old elven veteran of the Fourth Lornish War, from out of an old paladin training shrine on the outskirts of town. Every member is tattooed between their thumb and forefinger on the palm of their hand the symbol of their 'order', a sword whose tip supports an unbalanced set of scales.

Jhuradeil was there as a boy at the forming of the Stern Hand and he carries all of the old traditions with him into the future – including secrecy. With a membership of roughly 30, the Stern Hand is relatively easy to hide from the scolding clergy and meddling authorities throughout the kingdom they are trying to protect.

Father's Stern Hand is still very active in the kingdom of Dardarrick and sometimes across the borders of Lorn or Torres despite the official disapproval they received from the High Clerics and the king in 1,199 YBD. They actively seek out enemies of the All Father's teachings and force them to recant their evil ways – oftentimes leaving unexplained dead villains in public places in their wake.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- One of the Adventurer Wraiths is a family member of a member of the Father's Stern Hand, who believes he and his 'order' have found a powerful necromancer within the boundaries of the local city. He tells the Wraith that he wants to go and deal with the problem but would like some help from the Adventurer and his friends. This puts the Adventurer in an odd place. If he refuses the Stern Hand member will likely go to his death but if the Wraiths go they risk revealing their existence to the paladins.
- An important member of a visiting envoy from the Wildlands border regions has been targeted for 'justice' by the Father's Stern Hand because of his clan's penchant for violence and preying the weak. The envoy and his entourage are visiting Dardarrick to talk about a potential military cooperation treaty and several members of the Stern Hand are going to ruin everything and likely make *another* enemy for the king to deal with. They might not like having to fight good-aligned paladins but the kingdom always comes first.

The Sword's Bound Alliance

This strangely charismatic collection of All Father and Matriarias fanatics has been making the military's life hard for almost seven years. They are the stalwart believers that the gods will protect Dardarrick from its enemies once the kingdom has fully given itself over to the idea of 'defence, not offence'. It is their firm stance that the very existence of an armed force that is trained to go to war is what keeps 'holy sanctity' from falling upon the kingdom. Only through a complete disarming of the kingdom can it hope to find complete peace, so they believe.

The Sword's Bound Alliance would not be much of an issue, just another activist group speaking out against battles and wars, if it were not for their self-righteous belief that it is their *duty* to disarm the sovereign kingdom. On the least end, they march in protests and stand in the way of armed columns. In a more worrisome regard, they instigate sabotage missions and vandalism of military assets – going so far as to set food stores alight or damage essential wartime goods. Of late the cult has become aware of SpellCom and has focussed on somehow sabotaging the influence of the secret organisation.

They are not dangerous in and of themselves but what they do hinders the greater war engine of Dardarrick's armed forces. Dealing with them harshly is a political nightmare but ignoring them gives their movement credence. How can the king hope to wage a successful war on his enemies when his own people fight against his chances?

Plot and Mission Hooks

- An army training ground has come under siege by the Sword's Bound Alliance, who have camped their wagons directly in front of the training grounds' entrance (and exit, as it happens). Those soldiers are needed on the front lines in a week but they cannot mobilise without physically assaulting the Alliance members in the way. King Archiveldt would never send soldiers against a bunch of unarmed naysayers – but Commander Ruhrk has no problem using the Wraiths to do little 'forcible relocation' of the Alliance's leaders in the area.
- Something strange has happened to the Alliance in the area surrounding Southwatch. They have taken a more offensive stance upon how they are treating the local soldiery and it is not like them. SpellCom is worried that they might have been infiltrated by another more-militant faction, something that could be very detrimental to the area's defence. Wraith Recon is being sent in to investigate this potential new leadership factor and if they have to, eliminate them.

The Hearth Guard

Considered an offshoot of the loyal staff assigned to temples and shrines of Matriarias, the Hearth Guard is a fully sanctioned force of paladins and clerics devoted to protecting the moral traditions of Dardarrick. Displaced by manipulative followers of Praxious, the faith of the Hearth Goddess was taken in by the All Father's worshippers and given a warm fire and a new home. This respected group of faithful warriors has made it their long and steadfast tradition to ensure that such hospitality is never forgotten or taken for granted.

From healing the sick, feeding the hungry and giving shelter to the homeless *between* seeking out threats, uncovering corruption and standing watch over holy places; the Hearth Guard are not typical clergymen of Matriarias. They have no qualms about drawing a blade against a known threat or even of taking that first step toward an enemy.

In Dardarrick, the symbol of their cult – a fireplace behind crossed swords – is a welcoming sight in many larger cities. Where there are holy sites of Matriarias and the All Father, there will likely be at least a small number of Hearth Guard around to safe keep it. It was one of the Hearth Guard's most vital and important actions to find and protect the good King Archiveldt as a child. Few know that they were instrumental in the bloodless overthrowing of the Praxious theocracy; else they would be even more well-loved in Dardarrick.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- The leader of the Hearth Guard, a dwarven paladin named Terronce, has been kidnapped by Torresh mercenaries looking to prove how 'weak' other religions' warriors are. They took him at night with great numbers (and not without losses) but they managed to smuggle him back over the border into the swamp kingdom. The king cannot send troops to retrieve him; things are just too tense at the moment. It is the perfect mission for a skilled Wraith Recon strike team.
- A radical member of the Hearth Guard, an elf who goes by Fayathe is gathering other zealots from around the kingdom to try and make a massive move against the Lornish battle lines forming beyond the border. A lot of good and faithful soldiers are being misled by the charismatic cleric and the Pillars want his rumour-mongering and rabble rousing to stop before it gets too large to control easily. They are sending the Wraiths in to the zealot groups to undo any damage done, staying their hand, while seeking Fayathe out to silence him – hopefully with a magical ritual or potion instead of the edge of a blade.

The Heralds of Praxious

Another example of an elite sect within a given cult, the Heralds of Praxious were initially clergy serving under the first Hierophant, Tomar. It was their goal and their right to bring the word (and paymaster's coffers) of Praxious to the 'pagan heathens' of Parennax.

Although Tomar truly believed he was bringing the faith to the pirate continent, it was the gold and silver that spoke to their hearts, not piety. Several boatloads of saurian mercenaries joined the Brazen Legion; all by the actions taken by the Heralds.

During the theocracy, the Heralds took on a different form; that of evangelising pilgrims. They donned the masks of the priesthood, picked up the blades of the Order Templar and took the litanies of Praxious to the lands of 'lesser faiths'. They were often met with great resistance and violence, which they returned tenfold. Forced confessions, the torture of those who resisted conversion and even public bisecting of prisoners were all within the remit of Heralds during Tomar's rule.

With the theocracy removed and the Hierophant exiled, the Heralds have evolved once more. They are the fleet footed messengers and delivery men who move from cell-to-cell bringing supplies and news of what the rest of Tomarsson's breakaway cult is undertaking. They are also still in charge of any torture that needs to take place in Praxious' name but they no longer handle executions; that is the duty of the templars. They primarily work in the public eye, travelling between cells to serve as the best communications network they can.

Dardarrick's rangers and soldiers on road patrol know what to look for in a lone traveller, keeping their eyes peeled for these troublesome cultists.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- A very important message was memorised by Rhella, a Herald of Praxious, to be run down to one of the clerics from the Hierophant-in-Exile himself. This messenger was intercepted and arrested by local authorities, who cannot even begin to try to get the message out of him. After the sun goes down and the gaolers all go home, the Wraiths will need to break into the dungeon and *question* him a little more effectively.
- Gorran is a known sadist who was convicted of crimes against the people during the last days of Tomarsson's rule and is a steadfast member of the Heralds of Praxious. After his escape in 1,199 he had yet to be seen or heard from but the arcanists have found him. He has surfaced in one of the small border towns out west and is still seemingly active in the cult of Praxious. SpellCom wants him recaptured so he can be executed properly and as a symbol to other cultists.

The League of Shamans

Based for the majority in Torres, this cult of lizardfolk animists has only recently become more active across the border into Dardarrick. Those making up the League of Shamans are all part of the overarching collective but each shaman orchestrates a small group of spirit magicians in order to keep the congregation strong. They are devout protectors of the wilderness and serve as a spiritual conduit to the druid priests of Merstorres, whipping their spirit allies into frenzy with the Predator's mask mantras or forming them into an overwhelming hordes of supernatural beings when the Prey mask demands their power.

With Lord King Bloodak's recent call to arms for his faithful servants, he relies upon the League of Shamans to summon greater spirit allies to guard them on the righteous path towards victory. Their crusade has led several small cult groups of lizardfolk, troglodyte and human worshippers to spirit walk across the border into southern Dardarrick, spying on the troop movements and undefended settlements. The League knows they are outnumbered and out-magicked facing coordinated Dardarrian sorcerers but they have steely relentlessness and know many subtle arts of how to suborn key officials with covert possession, or slay with far ranging Spirit Combat across great distances.

These recent incursions into Dardarrick's southern lands have resulted in several small villages being raided and peasant kidnappings are on the rise for human sacrifices to appease Mersmerro. They have yet to strike at a major military target but their disincorporated presence cannot be ignored. The League summons up spirits from the rivers and streams at night to steal away livestock and infect lone citizens with disease, making them more of a nuisance than a major threat.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- The League of Shamans has gathered a warband just south of Southwatch, in the protected lands of Torres, making preparations to summon a truly immense spirit via sacrifices.

Several people have gone missing in the dead of night when on perimeter patrol but no proof can be mustered to urge the king do anything about it. Diplomacy says that Dardarrick cannot attack the warband, despite what common sense says of the situation. When one of the Commander's nieces, a young dwarf girl of nine years, goes missing, he does not wait for approval – sending the Wraith Recon teams to go across the border and find the scared little girl to bring her home.

- A strange and enigmatic River Crime Lord operating out of Southwatch has informed the Arcanist General about a particularly bloodthirsty cell of Mersmerron crusaders led by a nasty troglodyte shaman named Oorlur. This group is swimming up the Walker River toward Rivermarck and the crime boss thinks they are going to be bad for business. The Arcanist General cannot act on his word *officially*, lest he undermine the informant's reputation, so he instead turns to Wraith Recon to dissuade these zealots from coming too far north, river or no.

The 'Jury' of Rivermarck

This criminal crew is unsurprisingly based out of the social underground of Rivermarck and made up of two dozen retired officers, magistrates, watchmen and even a former member of the roguish Lion's Wolves – Graycoen Bennetent. Although opportunists and profiteers all, the Jury is actually looked upon favourably by the people of Rivermarck. The group makes its reputation as a heavy-handed group of vigilantes that do not wait for courtly approval or royal edict – they exact their brand of justice without the law's backing.

Every 'Juror' comes to the organisation after being dismissed from their career or service because of some technicality or so-called dishonourable act. Soon after this instance a member of the crew comes to the person with an invitation or *summons*, to help clean up Rivermarck off the record.

The Jury is attempting to turn the tables on the criminal element of Rivermarck, which has always been substantial. They do this by ignoring the moral and legal leashes of common law, using the 'law of the sword' above all else. The Jury is, by all accounts, a group of violent psychopaths; but how different are they truly from the strike teams of Wraith Recon?

Plot and Mission Hooks

- A member of the Jury has come forward to surrender to the local authorities, knowing that he will likely hang for the numerous crimes he supposedly committed. This is a strange act for the organisation and the powers-that-be know it. Considering the chief gaoler of his holding cell is known to be corrupt and targeted by the Jury in the past, Command believes that this is just a way to get an agent close to the gaoler. If a few Wraith Recon team members are 'arrested' and placed in the complex could save the gaoler's life – but should they?
- The Jury is making a move against a specific member of a local criminal family, the head of which is also being targeted by Wraith Recon for elimination. Having two sets of assassins

moving on the family estate at the same time could get interesting – especially if the two sides are targeting the *same* individual!

The Fearful Followers of the Great Dragons

From the first days after their return to the continent, those few dragons that inhabit Rardarri have found mortal followers worshipping them. Not a true religion, as they cannot grant powers to priests or support templars and paladins, the greatest dragons remain an elusive source of power for those who dedicate their lives to them.

For some races, the dragons are the only beings they worship. Rather than rise up at the beck and call of their followers, the devotion shown to the Great Dragons propitiates them, feeding the creatures livestock and warding their endless hunger away from those residing near their lairs. Of course if a loyal tribe of devotees comes under threat by more intolerant races it behoves a dragon to answer his worshipper's pleas and destroy the interlopers – gaining a significant meal in the process!

Other than the rumours of a mated couple in the most remote parts of the Claws, the existence of the great dragons is mostly unbeknownst to the Dardarrian people. However, several other beasts have lairs in sparsely populated locations in Dardarrick, kept secret by those who live in fear of reprisals, unwilling members of the cults which sacrifice to them. Even the Pillars do not know about these strange yet powerful reptiles, which often use sorcery to help conceal their presence.

Only the Arcanist General is aware of all the great dragons, mentioning them in passing once to the king when Spellcaster Command argued against sending exploration vessels to the Uramandi Empire. Exactly why Raspeng is hiding the true nature of the creatures from his friends and allies is unknown but the golden dragonscale he has framed like a trophy on the wall of his office must be related to this in some way...

Plot and Mission Hooks

- A gifted draconic prophet in a nomadic tribe to the north has been given a vision concerning the hatching of a new dragon in the Stone Forest. They have pulled up their camp and now plan to march *directly* to the hatching, as per the vision told them to. It just so happens that several small towns and the fishing villages south of Pierceling are not prepared for 200 humanoids to rampage through their area. Wraith Recon must deal with this prophet before the humanoids reach raid momentum – or else the wayward tribe will become a much larger issue.
- Arcanist General Raspeng has arranged for a special and *very* classified mission for the Wraiths to undertake. He needs the team to portal drop onto what looks like a derelict ocean vessel and sink it before it reaches the waters of Salt Bay. The most important complication for the mission is the fact that several hatchling dragons have been placed in the hold of the ship and the livestock placed aboard to feed them has now all been

consumed. The eruption of ravenous young dragonets into northern Dardarrick would be a disaster, especially if the port of Pierceling was attacked first.

Red Hand of Profit

A solidly criminal element present in Pierceling, the Red Hand is a secret guild of gangs, muggers, slavers and pirates who have infiltrated from the Lornish ports they previously controlled, taking their trade to the alleys and streets of this otherwise fair town. At first a minor issue, the group was started by a crafty young hobgoblin stowaway on one of trade vessels. He soon butted heads with local thugs and was forced to carve his way into the local thieves' guild, making a name for himself – Bloody Handed Rorn. The hobgoblin quickly earned a following amongst similar-minded folk and his gang turned to the glitter of gold as their single reason for existence. Since then they have grown in numbers causing concern to more honest residents.

The Red Hand is named partly for the bloodshed that Rorn expects from his subordinates and partly due to the initiation rite of becoming a member. Every member is commanded to take a disrespectful citizen from the streets and beat them bloody, not stopping or pausing in this pugilism no matter how bad the prisoner looks or how pained their fist. When the initiation is over, red tattoo ink is poured over the cut and torn fist to forever mark the dedication the member has.

The Red Hand is not politically active, or in truth, *aware* of the larger picture. They thrive on their petty crimes and how to blend their nefarious business in with the copious amount of legitimate traffic in the port. It is said that the local harbour master pays a small fee to the Red Hand each month to save his ships the trouble of defending their cargoes but no proof of this has ever been discovered.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- An important member of a noble family has been kidnapped on her way back to Graenwich from overseas. It is surely the work of the Red Hand but no ransom has been demanded as of yet. This has the woman's family *more* worried of her fate and they have called a few favours in with a Brotherhood official – who has called in a few favours to get the Wraiths on the job.
- King Archiveldt is planning to go to visit the docks, against the advice of the Pillars of Dardarrick and they want to make sure that the Red Hand has something else to worry about while the king is in town. It is not often that Wraith Recon is used as a diversion but they are more than capable of causing enough grief to the unruly criminals to keep them fully and completely occupied for three days' time.

The Twilight Society

Even though they have some unofficial connections with the Black Circle of Mortessal, the Twilight Society is a gentleman's club of assassins, thieves and freelance spies. Manipulated by a few dark

elf refugees from Lorn, the Twilight Society have wormed their way into the rakish high society of young, disaffected Dardarrian nobility, offering thrills and perversions to sate their jaded appetites.

As part of proving their dedication, members of the gentleman's club are offered initiation into the thinly veiled Cult of Mortessal, ostensibly to learn secrets methods of untraceably slaying foes and keeping them dead. Only the higher ranks are fully aware of the teachings of Mortessal and the influence of her undying lords of the Black Circle, often accepting commissions from them without question, all in the pursuit of excitement and material advancement.

Every member of the Society must shed the blood of a family member, usually a remote relative who has caused them personal slight in the past, in order to prove their loyalty to the cult before they are allowed entry. Once proven, they still have to singlehandedly kill an enemy or steal a valuable article in order to win the respect of their companions. The targets of such crimes are chosen by committee, generally a drunken discussion amongst the other members. Each depraved act further ties the member to his fellow brothers, leading to a gradual loss of all sense of morality as individuals attempt to outdo each other's deeds.

The Twilight Society has been active in Dardarrick ever since the Fourth Lornish War, when members of the nobility were forced to perform dreadful crimes in order to survive the siege of Graenwich. Its gradual transformation into a society of gentleman assassins has been a direct result of increasingly indolent lifestyles and lack of any responsibility amongst the minor noble sons, who used to be sent off to war as officers. The club offers both distraction and a sense of loyalty, in addition to providing welcome gold to pay off tailors or wine merchant's bills.

Although the Black Circle normally allows the Twilight Society to run its own course, disdainful of its immature nature and unwilling to stain its own reputation, the cult does occasionally place a bit of business their way if it wants a quiet neutralisation or the recovery of an artefact of importance. Otherwise the depraved society members drum up their own contracts, usually from citizens who lack access to targets in higher social strata or sometimes even funded by foreign ambassadors.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- A corrupt magistrate blatantly allows several close personal friends to escape punishment after grave robbing and tinkering with the eternal rest of local deceased. Such was his gross misconduct that the Twilight Society have been requested to make an example out of him – a grisly example that will take weeks to clean off of his bed chamber floor. The magistrate is already under surveillance by the Wraith Recon organisation for potentially being a Tomarsson supporter, which will make for a very busy evening when the assassins come for him!
- Archmage Arcos has been targeted by the Twilight Society for uncovering a powerful anti-undead ritual that could threaten the existence of ancient lichs if enacted properly. The Black Circle cannot risk this knowledge being distributed, so they have aimed the Society at him. Until inscribes the ritual to a permanent grimoire, both he and it are in danger – which is

exactly why a Wraith Recon strike team have been placed on escort duty for him until he has it finished and tucked away in the vault. Unfortunately his other duties take him away from the safety of Fort Brazen for extended periods of time before the spell can be transcribed. This gives the assassins an opportunity to strike...

Wyhlder Tribe Minions

A powerful collection of servants worshipping the King of Beasts, the cult-like Wyhlder Tribe are ancient priests and primal shamans of disparate races who subscribe wholeheartedly to the tenets of their god's faith. They dominate the complex politics of savage Wildlands tribes, through brutal challenges and strength of magic, influencing a major portion of the mountain goblinoids and scorpionmen in the arid savannas. Formed from the aged and elderly normally cast out or killed from most clans, they journey into the central desert of the Wildlands where they locate the Wyhlder Tribe. If they prove themselves skilled in thaumaturgy they are welcomed into the council of the wise.

Due to this unique recruitment, the Wyhlder Tribe maintains many links across the continent with the other savage clans and the many khans of the Wildlands and western Dardarrick pay homage to them. Some are not aware that they pay allegiance to an ancient cult but they respect the power and might found in the elder shamans and priests.

Most of the savage tribe warlords who rise up in the Wildlands are only following the portents and auguries the Wyhlder elders give to them, reading their future successes in the entrails and blood flow of slain foes. Through these auguries and sending messengers to particular tribesman in a specific order, the Wyhlder Tribe carefully controls the ebb and flow of how the disparate tribes work toward the eventual goal of storming Dardarrick and claiming the mighty Lion's pelt as the trophy of the King of Beasts.

Plot and Mission Hooks

- The Cynocephales of Fort Vigilant have received a visitor – an elder in the simple pelts of shamanic tradition – and they did not seek to tear her apart. Instead, they opened the gates and let her in without issue. Knowing that she can only be trusted to manipulate those cynocs into more violence against Dardarrian border settlements, SpellCom needs the Wraiths to go and take her out as quickly as possible without enraging an entire fort full of cynoc raiders.
- Several small tribes are camped throughout the Dardarrian lands surrounding Tradeston. They are peaceful for the most part, for being primitive savages, but they are making several local families very nervous. Productivity has fallen and many settlers have abandoned their farms and headed eastwards, something that the overstressed heartlands cannot tolerate, faced as they are by an impending famine. A team of Wraiths have to escort a crafty Wolf agent dressed as a Wyhlder Tribe oracle to each of these tribes to convince them to move back home into the Wildlands. However, failure to pull off the subterfuge could result in an uprising and disaster.



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