



MONTE COOK PRESENTS

THE Year's Best D20

VOLUME ONE



MALHAVOC PRESS



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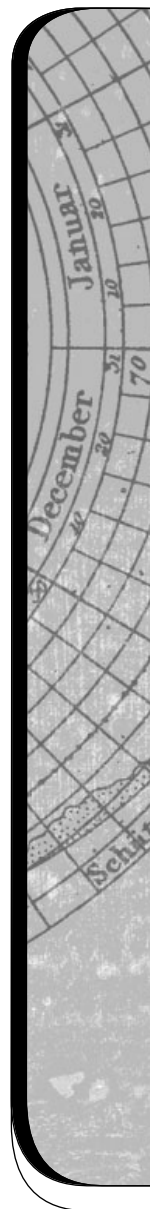
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d20 in 2004

Monte Cook looks back at the year 2004 for the d20 System, covering the highlights, the lowlights, and the direction the industry's heading. This introduction discusses the factors that shaped the products you bought—and didn't buy.



In 2000, Wizards of the Coast released 3rd Edition *Dungeons & Dragons*®, designed primarily by Jonathan Tweet, Skip Williams and myself, with additional design by Rich Baker, Peter Adkison, and a host of others. Along with the release of this new edition of D&D, Wizards did something rather unprecedented: They made the majority of the new rules system “open content.” This suddenly allowed so-called “third-party” developers to use the new rules—dubbed the d20 System—to create adventures and products. The d20 System license, spearheaded by Ryan Dancey, was nothing short of genius, allowing smaller companies to create products that would make them money but whose profit margins would be inadequate for the much larger Wizards of the Coast, which in turn supported Wizards and helped drive the sales of their core books and major releases.

The d20 System was a phenomenon right out of the gate. Those early products, some coming out just as the 3rd Edition *Player's Handbook* was released at the Gen Con game fair in 2000, sold extremely well. It became clear to many in the industry that d20 was where it was at. And it stayed that way for quite a while.

Fast forward to 2004. By the beginning of that year, I myself had been earning my living for three years because of the d20 System license, creating products mainly through my own design house, Malhavoc Press, a partner under White Wolf Publishing's *Sword & Sorcery* label. (And one could base a good argument for d20's overall success solely on the fact that even a major player like White Wolf stood up and took notice when d20 was released, producing some of the earliest d20 System products.) By 2004, hundreds of d20 products were on the market, and a small handful of factors had set up the “d20 industry” for a downturn in sales.

A ROCKY START

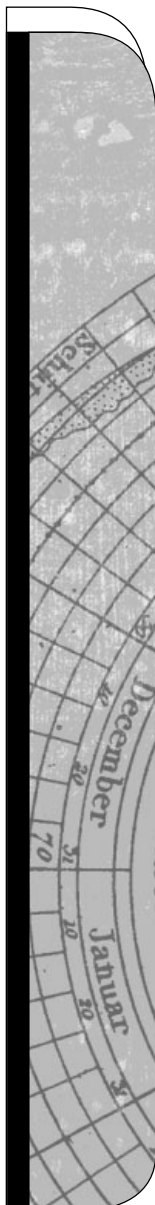
To be frank, when d20 products started coming out in 2000 and into 2001, many of them—most of them—were absolutely terrible. Sadly, the low quality of these initial products burned many of the early adapter consumers, and gave the impression that “d20” meant “crap.” It took years, the involvement of some of the industry's major players and recognized name designers, and the release of a lot of good products to undo this stigma. And, truth be told, in many players' eyes, it was never undone.

SOURCEBOOKS . . . AND LOTS OF THEM

While the first entries into the d20 field were adventures, by 2004 this was no longer true. Sourcebooks and campaign settings were the main releases that year, with only a small handful of adventures. By this time most publishers had come to the same conclusions that Wizards had long ago—that the bestselling products were the ones that appealed to all players. Better to put out a sourcebook about fighters than an adventure or something else that only DMs would buy.

Arguably, this probably wasn't the best result for the game as a whole. Putting aside the business aspects of the issue, rather than offering gamers a gamut of different kinds of products—one of the chief benefits of being a consumer under the d20 license—the industry gave them a lot of the same. Frankly, the game needs DM-focused products on the shelves to perpetuate itself. Multiple general interest, player-focused products were released covering similar topics. (Just in compiling this book, I reviewed not one but two d20 versions of *Cerberus*, two different d20 versions of the sword *Excalibur*, two different takes on true-to-history medieval knights, and more.) Worse, these d20 general topic sourcebooks competed not only with each other, but with Wizards of the Coast. While in the short term it may have been financially sound from an individual publisher's point of view to release such products, it set up the industry as a whole to crash in the long run. Players just didn't need all these books, and if forced to make a choice, will almost always go with an “official” Wizards product rather than a third-party d20 System title covering similar topics.

Of course, some products went too far the other way. Wisely avoiding the general topics, some publishers went far afield to come up with sourcebook topics that no one else had done yet. Topics that—in 1984, or even 1994—would have been submitted for articles in *Dragon*® magazine, became entire sourcebooks in 2004. We saw products focused on a single d20 monster, or a single d20 school of magic. While such topics are of interest, and the potential audience for d20 products is large, it's simply not large enough to support entire products covering such niche topics.



NEW RULES

Another factor that shaped d20 products in 2004 was the release of D&D's v. 3.5 edition the previous year. The new core rulebooks updated the rules and revised the system across the board, not in major ways—it was still the same game—but with pervasive small changes. Many of the changes fixed truly problematic issues and were much needed. Overall, however, the rules to the game changed just enough that customers perceived v. 3.5 to be virtually a new edition of the game. Calls for publishers to release v. 3.5 editions of popular titles already in print (or to release online conversion notes) became common. Designers across the board saw that the v. 3.5 changes, while simple for players to grasp and for DMs to convert “on the fly,” were somewhat painstaking to implement in written conversions. In other words, the changes affected game play far less than they affected rules writing. A “3.5 DM” could easily use most v. 3.0 products with little work, but actually creating a v. 3.5 conversion of the same books was a time-consuming process. (And it also proved to be a waste, because the audience rejected conversion products in favor of the constant stream of new titles.)

So, d20 publishers spent a lot of resources to convert old products and get their new products “up to speed” with the new rules, but for their efforts they saw little or no benefit. Online rules conversions earned no profit and did not help to drive sales. If anything, d20 sales fell across the board after the release of v. 3.5. Backlist sales of all v. 3.0 compatible products (both d20 System and core products) certainly plummeted. Although almost all d20 publishers greeted v. 3.5 enthusiastically, it is difficult to use hindsight to see that the revision did anything but hurt them (it was likely an economic success for Wizards, at least in the short term).

FEWER, BETTER PRODUCTS

Thus, in 2004, the slowdown in the number of print releases and the decrease in print publishers that started in the second half of 2003 continued. While by the end of 2000, and certainly throughout 2001, literally dozens of new d20 products appeared on store shelves every month, by 2003 these numbers had fallen by half, and in 2004 by half again.

From the point of view of the game, however, this is almost certainly a good thing, not a bad one. While lots of choice is good, it's far better to choose between three good products rather than 10 mediocre ones. So despite my earlier negative remarks, it's actually the case that some of my favorite d20 products were released in 2004. I love *Hamanuptra*, the Egypt-themed boxed set from Green Ronin Publishing. *Sword & Sorcery's Relics and Rituals: Excalibur* book is an excellent example of how to apply the d20 rules to a specific genre (or, perhaps more appropriately, how to apply a specific genre to the d20 rules). Necromancer Games' *Tome of Horrors II* and The Inner

Circle's *Denizens of Avadnu* added a lot more cool new monsters to the mix, as did Wizards' own *Monster Manual III*. And speaking of Wizards, *Unearthed Arcana*, probably the best book the company's released since 3rd Edition began, also came out in 2004. Goodman Games and Necromancer Games both put out cool adventures that harkened back to “old school” modules released in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

It was, in fact, a very good year for d20.

Despite claims that d20 is dying (which have been around for as long as d20 has), the facts don't appear to bear out that prognosis. On the contrary, while sales can no longer support the vast number of publishers that originally entered the field, many of those that remain continue to see successes. More importantly from the point of view of the game, after years spent experimenting with the system, a good number of designers have an excellent grasp of the ins and outs of what is, in fact, a fairly complex and robust rules set. The system, intentionally created to be easy to understand but challenging to master, proved difficult for designers to handle at first. In other words, most of the products released right after the game came out, in late 2000 and into 2001, just weren't very good. But just as the players and DMs have mastered the mechanics, so too have the most talented game designers risen to the fore. Many of them are represented by the material selected for this book.

WHAT'S THIS BOOK

ALL ABOUT?

Late in 2004, we at Malhavoc Press put out a call to all d20 publishers, announcing that we were compiling this book and inviting them to submit what they felt was their best material from 2004. Response was very good, and the best of what they submitted lies between these covers.

But before discussing the selection process, let's look at the context a little more closely. First of all, I was the sole judge of the selections. Like anyone else, I have my own preferences for certain kinds of material. For example, I like prestige classes that make good NPCs as well as good PCs—they need to have a solid story hook for a character as well as good mechanics. Further, at this point in d20 System development, all material not only needs to be solid and accurate, it really needs to offer something new. Monsters, no matter how cool, that have nothing but a claw/claw/bite routine and improved grab aren't going to make it into this book. There's nothing wrong with those kinds of monsters and, in fact, you need them in the game, but at this point it's impossible to judge such a monster as being among the best when there are so many more creative choices out there.

Since this is a “best of d20” book, and not a “best of background material” book, I focused first on the d20

mechanics. Flavor and story elements were very important, but they were always the second thing I looked at.

And of course, I could only review the material that was submitted.

Unlike awards such as the Origins Awards or the EN World/Gen Con d20 System Awards (the ENnies), I didn't look at products, but at the individual rules content within them. While some of the submitted books were wonderful as cohesive products, I was interested only in portable rules "bits." Often that meant feats, monsters, spells, items and so on, although this book contains plenty of examples of material that isn't nearly so easily classified. This means that certain aspects of making a wonderful book (layout, art, organization, and so on) played no part in my selection. It also means that if some bit of material was terrific, but not usable outside of its original context, I didn't select it.

In other words, this book needed to be, well, a book. While one point of the *Year's Best* d20 project was to recognize excellence, another was to present a usable product of great d20 material—a distillation of the vast amount of content out there. This collection presents it in a way that makes it easy to use, but also allows you to rest assured that it is of good quality. Even the best feat or spell didn't make the cut if it required the reader to see the entirety of the book it appeared in for a reader to appreciate its greatness. On the other hand, a couple bits of material were included only because something I selected required them to appear (great feats with other feats as prerequisites, for example).

Note that, in the selection process, I didn't take care to ensure that the material in the book was comprehensive. For example, I spent no time or effort to make sure that spells for every level and class were represented, or that all the classes ran the gamut of various character choices. If this balance occurred in any way, it was coincidence.

If we'd had the room, I would have liked to include an encounters chapter in this book. This certainly would have featured sections of Goodman Games' very cool *Crypt of the Devil Lich*, Vanishing Goblin's *Rooms With a View*, and a few choice encounters from Necromancer's *Trouble of Durbenford*, *Caverns of Thracia*, and *Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia*.

SO, WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

If you're like me, you like to comb through sourcebooks and adventures and raid them for things to use in your campaign. You recognize that only rarely does a book come along that you'll be able to use in its entirety, so you grab bits and pieces here and there.

If you are just such a "game product raider," this book is for you—and all the raiding has already been done for you, to boot. For a raider, this product is all loot.

It's also for you if you're a harried DM who sometimes feels lost in the morass of material out there, or a player whose DM is leery of allowing you to use material from various sources. Here, all in one place, is the good stuff. Again, the work's all been done for you. Gems have been pulled from the rough.

USING THIS BOOK

Throughout *The Year's Best* d20, all references to spells, feats, and other rules that are not presented in this book come from the v. 3.5 revision of the three Core Rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, DMG, and MM—unless otherwise noted. Sidebars and introductory sections explain why a particular item was selected or suggest how it could be used in a game.

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About the Presenter

Since 1988, when **Monte Cook** started working professionally in the game industry, he has created games for Iron Crown Enterprises, TSR, Inc., Wizards of the Coast, and WizKids Games. Highlights of his career include codesigning the 3rd edition of *Dungeons & Dragons* and creating the HeroClix system of superhero combat. Industry recognition of his work includes the Origins Award, EN World d20 System Award, InQuest Gamer's Choice Award, and the Pen & Paper Fan Award. A graduate of the Clarion West writer's workshop, Monte also has published short stories and two novels. In his spare time he runs games, paints miniatures, and reads a lot of comics.

About the Illustrators

Toren "MacBin" Atkinson is known by night as the lead singer in the Cthulhu rock band, *The Darkest of the Hillside Thickets*, but by day he collects Saturday morning cartoons and is a voice-over actor. You've seen his work in *Green Ronin Publishing* and *Malhavoc Press* titles, as well as in his own pulp sci-fi roleplaying game *Spaceship Zero*.

With an MFA in *Theatrical Design*, California artist **Caleb Cleveland** has worked "in the wings" in both theatre and film. Recently he has illustrated mostly for fantasy book and game publishers. View samples of his artwork at his website <www.calebcleveland.com>.

Eric Lofgren's early influences included comic book art, the oils of Frazetta, and the inks of Berni Wrightson. Upon discovering roleplaying games, he schooled himself in fantasy art and now illustrates for *Malhavoc Press*, among other publishers. Visit his website at <www.ericlofgren.com>.

Scott Purdy, a UK-based illustrator, has a great love of horror, evil, and all things tentacular. He wills clients his way if they have need of nasty critters to bring to life. You can see more of Scott's work at <www.scottpurdy.net>.

Malhavoc Press

Malhavoc Press is game designer Monte Cook's d20 System imprint devoted to the publication of evocative game elements that go beyond traditional fantasy. *Malhavoc Press* products such as *The Complete Book of Eldritch Might* exhibit a mastery of the d20 System rules that only one of its original designers can offer. Current titles are available to purchase in either print or electronic (PDF) format at <www.montecook.com>. Look for Monte Cook Presents: *Iron Heroes*, available now.

Character Classes

This chapter presents interesting new character options, from unusual spellcasters to warriors with a twist.

Character classes, whether prestige classes or alternate core classes, can be a real design challenge. Not only must they walk the line between generality and specificity, they should be equally well suited to nonplayer characters and player characters. When selecting the classes for this book, I was looking for choices that offered a different type of option than the ones that already existed in the game. And in the final cut, the selections also needed a nice flavorful story element that I could adapt to my own campaign.

ARCANE WARRIOR

Prestige class by Bruce Graw; originally published in the Advanced Player's Guide by Sword & Sorcery.

In a world filled with magic, warriors often find it difficult to survive. A single well-timed spell can bring down the mightiest fighter—or worse, bring him under the control of an enemy. The only defense against such opponents is often

to have magic of one's own—or to be so skilled in melee that enemy spellcasters can't stand up to your power.

To protect themselves, fighters either adorn themselves with magical items and defenses or ally with wizards capable of dealing with opposing spellcasters.

Sometimes this isn't enough, however.

Friendly mages are not always available, magic items can be stolen or disenchanting, and the fighter might be on his own. Small wonder then that some fighters turn to the magical arts to improve their own abilities.

The arcane warrior appeals to characters

who are skilled in combat but who also wish to gain some benefit of magic. Through their own abilities and practice, they have learned special ways to employ arcane power for their own betterment in combat.

Although the arcane warrior does not gain spells *per se*, the class does provide a number of spell-like and supernatural powers that duplicate certain spell effects. The primary advantage of these abilities is that they are not affected by arcane spell failure ratings, thereby allowing the arcane warrior to fight more effectively in any situation.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To become an arcane warrior, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +12.

Abilities: Constitution 15, Intelligence 15.

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks.

Feats: Any one metamagic feat, plus at least five feats chosen from the list of those available as fighter bonus feats.

Spells: Able to cast arcane spells, and cannot be restricted from the transmutation school.

CLASS SKILLS

The arcane warrior class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int) and Swim (Str). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the arcane warrior prestige class.

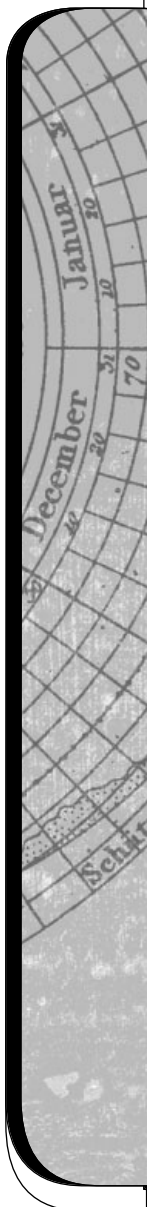
Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Arcane warriors are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields (except tower shields).

Spell-Like/Supernatural Abilities: The arcane warrior can employ his spell-like abilities without having to make arcane spell failure rolls. To determine the effective caster level of any such ability, add the character's arcane warrior level to that of any arcane spellcasting class levels, unless noted otherwise. For example, a Wiz1/Bbn13/Arw5 is treated as a 6th-level arcane spellcaster for his arcane warrior class abilities.

A Warrior-Wizard

The arcane warrior is a prestige class that fuses warrior and wizard. It was one of three similar classes I reviewed for this book—and of course there's the eldritch knight in the DMG, the eldritch warrior in The Complete Book of Eldritch Might, the warrior of darkness in the Book of Vile Darkness, the mage blade in Arcana Evolved, and a number of others.

So why bother with another one? I liked that it sidestepped the issue of marrying spellcasting with combat ability and gave the character inherent magical abilities instead. It appeals to my sense of what a "magical warrior" would be like—her inherent magic just makes her better. It protects her, makes her weapons (more) magical, and enhances her. There's a lot of flexibility with this class, particularly with its weapon enhancement abilities. You might say that a character of that high a level would already have a good magical weapon, but I'd counter that arcane warriors don't need a powerful magic weapon—they can focus more on other kinds of magical gear, which ends up being a real boon. Mechanically, this would be a cool class to layer on top of a character that already has levels in eldritch knight.



Aura of Protection (Su): The arcane warrior can use his understanding of magical defenses to erect a deflection aura similar to that a *ring of protection* provides. He can raise an aura of protection as a standard action once per day per level. The aura lasts for one minute and offers a deflection bonus to Armor Class as follows: +1 at 1st level, +2 at 2nd level, +3 at 4th level, +4 at 6th level, +5 at 8th level, and +6 at 10th level.

Inherent Spell (Sp): Beginning at 1st level, the arcane warrior selects one spell per level from the list below (he may not choose a spell from a school he is prohibited from using in another arcane spellcasting class). The arcane warrior may employ one inherent spell once per day as a spell-like ability. All inherent spells have a range of personal and a target of the arcane warrior himself.

Available inherent spells: *detect magic, disguise self, endure elements, enlarge person, expeditious retreat, feather fall, jump, mage armor, reduce person, resistance, shield.*

Magical Resistance (Ex): Starting at 1st level, the arcane warrior's study of magic provides him with an inherent ability to avoid mystic attacks. The arcane warrior receives a +1 bonus to his saving throws against one magical attack type of your choice: acid, cold, death, electricity, fear, fire, mind-affecting, polymorph, sonic. Increase this bonus by an additional +1 for each arcane warrior level, to a maximum of +10 at 10th level. This bonus stacks with any other saving throw bonuses the character has.

Weapon Alteration (Sp): Starting at 2nd level, the arcane warrior can change the very nature of his weapon. He may infuse it with an alignment, apply an enchantment, or even change the weapon's physical composition. The weapon must be of masterwork quality and the arcane warrior cannot change any existing magical features—he cannot change the alignment of a *holy sword* or change a +2 *warhammer* to a +3 *warhammer*. An intelligent weapon that is not willing to be altered is permitted a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid the effects.

The character can use weapon alteration on a single weapon he holds or up to 50 rounds of missile ammunition. He may use his weapon once per day for every two arcane warrior levels (i.e., once at 2nd level, twice at 4th level, etc.); each application lasts up to one minute per arcane warrior level. The alteration ends automatically if the weapon is sheathed or put away, or if someone other than the arcane warrior wields it (but not if the character is disarmed in combat). The degree of change depends on the arcane warrior's level, as follows:

Infuse Alignment: At 2nd level, the arcane warrior can align the weapon to good, evil, law, or chaos.

Enchant +1: At 3rd level, the arcane warrior can give the weapon a +1 enhancement bonus.

Enchant +2: At 5th level, the arcane warrior can give the weapon a +2 enhancement bonus.



Transmute: At 6th level, the arcane warrior may transform the weapon's composition to any substance with which he is familiar (wood, crystal, silver, cold iron, adamantite, etc.).

Enchant +3: At 8th level, the arcane warrior can give the weapon a +3 enhancement bonus.

Enchant +4: At 9th level, the arcane warrior can give the weapon a +4 enhancement bonus.

Instead of an enhancement bonus, the arcane warrior may enchant a weapon with a special ability of equivalent power, as long as the weapon retains a minimum +1 enhancement bonus. He must have used a weapon with a similar power in combat at some point as an arcane warrior. He may not create an intelligent weapon, nor may he add powers that are naturally incompatible or conflicting. See "Magic Weapon Special Ability Descriptions" in the DMG for a list of special abilities.

For example, a 9th-level arcane warrior could make a nonmagical longsword into a +4 *longsword*, a +3 *keen longsword* or a +2 *flaming burst longsword*, but he could not make it a +0 *holy thundering longsword*. He could, however, create a +1 *holy thundering longsword* if he used weapon alteration on a +1 *longsword*.

Body Alteration (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, the arcane warrior may use any one of the following spells as a supernatural ability upon himself once per day: *bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace, eagle's splendor, fox's cunning, or owl's wisdom*. At higher levels, the arcane warrior may use body

alteration more frequently and with any combination of listed spells: two times per day at 5th level, three times per day at 7th level, and four times per day at 9th level.

Advanced Inherent Spell (Sp): At 4th level, and at every level thereafter, the arcane warrior selects one spell per level from the list below. The same options and restrictions apply as with the inherent spell class ability.

Available advanced inherent spells: *alter self, blur, dark-vision, invisibility, levitate, mirror image, resist energy, see invisibility, spider climb.*

Weapon Touch (Ex): At 5th level, the arcane warrior may use any held weapon for any spell he casts that requires a successful touch attack. Thus, he could cast *shocking grasp* and then strike a foe with his weapon, treating a successful hit as a successful touch attack. As with any touch attack, the spell is held until a successful melee hit is made.

Superior Inherent Spell (Sp): At 8th level, and at every level thereafter, the arcane warrior selects one spell per level from the list below. The same options and restrictions apply as with the inherent spell class ability.

Available superior inherent spells: *blink, fly, haste, heroism, protection from energy, water breathing.*

Ranged Weapon Touch (Ex): At 10th level, the arcane warrior may use a ranged weapon as the focus for any spell he casts that requires a successful touch attack. He uses his next ranged weapon shot after casting the spell as the spell's delivery mechanism. The spell is lost if the shot misses.

COSMOSOPHER

Prestige class by Robert J. Schwab; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

The cosmosopher is a divine spellcaster who, through reason, snatches divine power from the gods themselves rather than abide the tenets of a particular theology, god, or ethical philosophy. Cosmosophers believe the gods to be personifications of the natural forces at work in the universe. Despite the gods' power and their anthropomorphic natures, they are still containable forces, ripe for the cosmosopher's manipulation.

Cosmosophers channel the latent divine energy of the planes into usable and functional magic, exploiting it as they desire. These intellectuals see no wrong in what they do, as they approach the task with a scientific curiosity. They view clerics as superstitious fools, disdaining the strictures upheld in particular faiths, even though many cosmosophers once served as clerics.

Scholars, philosophers, and disillusioned priests are all viable candidates for the cosmosopher. Their lack of focus on martial matters makes this class a poor choice for fighters and rangers. Clerics and paladins who advance in the cosmosopher prestige class violate the tenets of their faith and immediately become ex-members of their former class. Wizards and sorcerers sometimes become cosmosophers, seeking to expand their assortment of spells.

There is no particular race especially drawn to this prestige class. Humans, half-elves, and half-orcs are the most

THE ARCANE WARRIOR

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Aura of protection +1, inherent spell, magical resistance +1
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Aura of protection +2, inherent spell, magical resistance +2, weapon alteration (infuse alignment)
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Body alteration (1/day), inherent spell, magical resistance +3, weapon alteration (enchant +1)
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Advanced inherent spell, aura of protection +3, inherent spell, magical resistance +4
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Advanced inherent spell, body alteration (2/day), inherent spell, magical resistance +5, weapon alteration (enchant +2), weapon touch
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Advanced inherent spell, aura of protection +4, inherent spell, magical resistance +6, weapon alteration (transmute)
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Advanced inherent spell, body alteration (3/day), inherent spell, magical resistance +7
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Advanced inherent spell, aura of protection +5, inherent spell, magical resistance +8, superior inherent spell
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Advanced inherent spell, body alteration (4/day), inherent spell, magical resistance +9, superior inherent spell, weapon alteration (enchant +4)
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Advanced inherent spell, aura of protection +6, inherent spell, magical resistance +10, ranged weapon touch, superior inherent spell

likely. In the case of the first, they are open to new ideas and may readily adapt to new methods of thinking. In the case of the latter two races, the nature of their heritage makes them rebellious and disdainful of their ancestors' faiths, and doubt often follows. Many planetouched characters have a unique perspective in regard to planar matters and may very well exploit the features of this class to advance their own position in your campaign's cosmology.

Hit Dice: d4

REQUIREMENTS

To become a cosmopher, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any neutral.

Skills: Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 4 ranks, Spellcraft 8 ranks.

Feats: Magical Aptitude, Skill Focus (Knowledge [the planes]).

Special: Ability to cast unprepared arcane spells of at least 3rd-level. Must have cast *contact other plane* and received a lie as an answer or have encountered a great cosmological secret or problem (problem of evil) in their studies that has caused them to question the nature of reality.

CLASS SKILLS

The cosmopher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Speak Language (n/a), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the cosmopher prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Cosmophers gain no new proficiency in arms or armor. Armor of any type interferes with a cosmopher's arcane gestures, which can cause his spells with somatic components to fail.

Filch Spell (Su): Cosmophers believe divine magic is just another force in the universe, an exploitable tool to be used. Beginning at 1st-level, the cosmopher gains the ability to filch divine spells, in effect gaining the ability to twist free divine energies into arcane magic. To filch a spell, a cosmopher must have seen the divine spell cast or have the spell on a divine scroll. The cosmopher then must succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 10 + the spell level). If the cosmopher succeeds, he filches the spell and may swap it for another arcane spell he already knows, as in the case of the assassin, bard, or sorcerer. Should the cosmopher fail this check, he may not attempt to filch the spell until the next



instance of this class ability. Cosmophers are still limited by spell levels and must have the requisite ability to cast the stolen spells. Filching spells from scrolls activates those spells from the scroll. Finally, a cosmopher can have a total number of divine spells equal to his prestige class level + Wisdom modifier. Naturally, a cosmopher need not make all of his filch

attempts at once. He may save them for when he encounters divine spellcasters using divine spells, or from scrolls, and so on.

Spells Per Day: For every level advanced in the cosmopher prestige class, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in whatever spellcasting class he belonged to prior to adding levels in this prestige class. He does not gain any other benefits advancing in that class normally would confer such as an extra Hit Die, skill points,

Focus on Story

The cosmopher appears in the book as much for its story elements as its mechanics. The mechanics, in fact, are very simple. If you're interested in potent character builds, you can easily end up with a wizard or sorcerer that can cast a fair selection of healing spells, basically at the cost of a feat, since the Skill Focus requirement is the only really harsh one. But I like it because this is the kind of class that results from an interesting character choice—skepticism of the gods. I'd use this class to create an NPC that tried to be a cleric, but failed and decided to become a wizard/cosmopher.

feats or anything aside from the additional spellcasting ability. Essentially, the character adds one level to his spellcasting class to determine spells per day, spells known, and caster level. If the caster had more than one spellcasting class prior to advancing in cosmosopher, he must decide to which class he adds the level.

Assimilate Divinity (Ex): At 4th level, the cosmosopher expands his control over other divine energies by appropriating the domains granted by the gods for his own use. The cosmosopher gains access to a domain, including all the bonus spells of levels he can ordinarily cast and the domain's granted power. A second domain is gained at 7th level.

Atheistic Resolve (Ex): Doubt and disbelief form the cornerstone of the cosmosopher's philosophy. Whenever the cosmosopher is in the area of a divine spell or is the target of one, he may attempt to disbelieve the spell. Cosmosophers are entitled to a Will save (DC 15 + the level of the spell + twice the caster's associated ability modifier). If the cosmosopher succeeds, the spell does not affect him. If he fails to disbelieve, he may still make the saving throw if the spell normally allows one, but at a –2 circumstance penalty. If the cosmosopher has spell resistance, he makes his atheistic resolve check first. Atheistic resolve is gained at 10th level.

EX-COSMOSOPHER

If a cosmosopher is ever the target of *atonement*, he immediately becomes an ex-cosmosopher, losing access to all special features of the class.

THE EPIC COSMOSOPHER

An epic cosmosopher can rival the greatest clerics through his staunch denial of the sovereignty of the gods.

Hit Dice: d4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

Filch Spell: Every two levels beyond 9th (11th, 13th and so on), the cosmosopher may select five spell levels of cleric spells to add to his spell list.

Assimilate Divinity: The epic cosmosopher continues to snare domain spells as he advances. Every four levels beyond 10th (14th, 18th, and so on), the epic cosmosopher gains another set of domain spells to add to his retinue.

Bonus Spells: The epic cosmosopher does not gain bonus spells per day beyond 10th level, though the caster level continues to increase as normal.

Bonus Feats: The epic cosmosopher still gains a bonus feat every five levels higher than 10th (15th, 20th, and so on).

GEMCASTER

Prestige class by Bruce Graw; originally published in the Advanced Player's Guide by Sword & Sorcery.

Masters of the arcane arts have long been aware of the utility of gems in spellcasting, either as spell components or in the creation of magical items and formulas. Rarely are such baubles treated as anything else, however. Those who truly understand gems know these “tears of the earth” are capable of so much more.

Among the races who dwell under the ground—chiefly dwarves, but to a lesser extent gnomes—exists a rare breed of arcane masters who utilize gems to enhance their own spellcasting. Schooled from an early age to recognize, understand, and work with jewels of all kinds, these gemcasters soon discover that their magic can be greatly improved by using what others dismiss as simple rocks—pretty and valuable, yes, but still nothing more than polished stones. Gemcasters rarely bother arguing with such people; instead they simply nod and keep their secrets to themselves.

Gemcasters must be dwarves or gnomes—no other race possesses the interest, training, or understanding required to employ their special breed of magic. In addition to their ability to create beautiful articles of jewelry with their inherent craft skills, gemcasters can also utilize gems as spell foci, enabling them frequently to avoid the requirements of spell components that can be expensive to find and/or bulky to haul around. Higher-level gemcasters can store spells in

THE COSMOSOPHER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Filch spell	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	—	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	—	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Assimilate divinity	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+2	+2	+4	—	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Assimilate divinity	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+3	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Atheistic resolve	+1 level of existing class

jewels, employ gems as impromptu metamagic feats, and increase their spellcasting abilities across the board. Not bad for just a few faceted baubles!

The primary disadvantage of this prestige class is its expense. Gemcasters must be fairly wealthy, as many of their abilities result in the destruction of the gems they use. In addition, they tend to walk around virtually encrusted in jewels and as such they attract the attention of thieves. Any would-be robber must, of course, contend with a mage's powers, but even so, members of this class are definitely going to draw attention wherever they travel.

Hit Die: d4.

REQUIREMENTS

To become a gemcaster, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Race: Dwarf or gnome.

Skills: Appraise 6 ranks, Craft (gemcutting) 8 ranks.

Feats: Eschew Materials, Scribe Scroll.

Spells: Able to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

CLASS SKILLS

The gemcaster's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (gemcutting) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

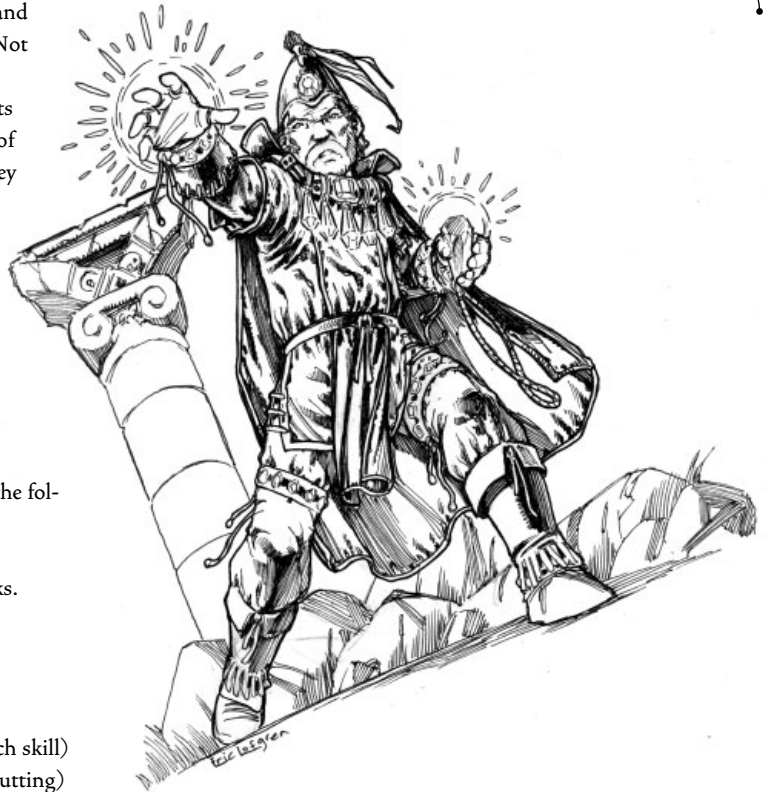
All the following are class features of the gemcaster prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Gemcasters gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells Per Day: The gemcaster is an arcane spellcaster. When the character gains a new level in the gemcaster prestige class, he gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in whatever spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, for example).

Create Gemscroll: Gemcasters can employ gems in lieu of scrolls. A gem used in this manner can hold but a single spell. It must be of the appropriate type as related to the school of magic involved (see Gem Foci, below) and of a value at least as high as the cost to scribe a scroll of the spell's level. Scribing a spell into a gem requires the same procedure and time as scribing a scroll but uses no writing implements or special inks—instead, the gemcaster discharges the spell into the gem and locks it there using unique arcane methods.

Invoking the spell within the gemscroll is handled as with a scroll, except that a character with no levels in gemcaster



must make a successful Use Magic Device check to use it; *read magic* still discloses what kind of spell is locked within the gem. The gem crumbles to powder when the spell is triggered.

A gemscroll may be used as a gem focus (see below) as long as the spell contained within is not used. If a failed Spellcraft check destroys the gemscroll being used as a focus, however, the spell within is discharged. This is harmless, affecting nothing, unless the spell has an area of effect (the gem acts as ground zero).

Gem Foci (Ex):

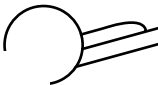
A gemcaster can use various jewels as the focus for certain magical abilities. To do so, he must have a jewel of the appropriate type in hand or on some piece of jewelry he is wearing.

A gem focus worn as a ring, amulet, or similar item does not count as "using" that magic item slot—

unless, of course, it actually *is* a magic item in its own regard. Gems must be unaltered and uncovered to serve as gem foci—the

Flavorful Mechanics

The gemcaster prestige class takes a cool fantasy concept (the magic of gems) and turns it into an interesting character option. I like that its mechanics simply make the spells you already cast better. This is a spellcasting prestige class that only enhances and does not dilute. What sold me on it were the different schools of magic equated to the different kinds of gems. Very flavorful for a dwarf or gnome mage. And the idea of gemscrolls is just cool. DMs should make an NPC opponent using this class—the visuals alone will make it clear to the PCs that they face no ordinary wizard or sorcerer.



gemcaster could not conceal them with paint or by using *reduce item*, for example.

Each of the schools of magic is represented by a specific type of gem (see below). If the gem involved comes in several types (e.g., sapphire, star sapphire, etc.), any variant will do. The value of the gem is important for certain class abilities, so it is useful for the character to have a well-developed Appraise skill.

To use a special ability that involves a jewel, the gemcaster must be able to touch the gem, and if it is used as the focus for any spell that affects anyone other than the gemcaster himself, it must be aimed or pointed at the target. For a spell that requires touch, the character need not touch the jewel to the target—he only needs to be in contact with it himself while he touches the recipient.

School of Magic	Gem Focus
Abjuration	Topaz
Conjuration	Emerald
Divination	Ruby
Enchantment	Jacinth
Evocation	Diamond
Illusion	Moonstone
Necromancy	Opal
Transmutation	Sapphire

Gem Identification (Ex): A gemcaster is familiar with gems and jewels of all types. When using the Appraise skill on a gem or piece of jewelry that includes gems, he earns a +1 bonus per class level to determine the value of the gems themselves. If this check succeeds, he can also identify the exact type of gem by name (opal, ruby, garnet, etc.). This bonus does not extend to Appraise checks for nongem precious metals such as gold or platinum, nor does it include similar objects of value—such as pearls—that are not actually gems.

Gem Components (Ex): At 2nd level, a gemcaster learns the art of using gems as an arcane spell focus instead of material components. This is an extension of the abilities learned when he received the Eschew Materials feat.

When any spell requires a material component or spell focus costing up to 25 gp, the gemcaster may substitute a gem of the appropriate type worth 25 gp. The gemcaster may substitute more valuable gems for the same amount in material components as he gains levels: up to 100 gp value at 3rd level, up to 250 gp value at 5th level, up to 500 gp value at 7th level, and up to 1,000 gp value at 10th level.

If the gemcaster employs a gem instead of the normal components or focus, the gem may shatter in the casting. On a successful Spellcraft check (DC based on the component value), the gem substitutes for the component. On a failed check, the gem shatters and is destroyed (a roll of 1 on this check is always a failure). For example, a 7th-level gemcaster casting *stoneskin* while employing a 250 gp topaz to take the place of the required diamond dust makes a Spellcraft check (DC 19; component value of 15 gp + 4th level spell). The gold piece value is that of the required component, not the gem itself; so a 1,000 gp topaz has the same Difficulty Class as the 250 gp one.

Component Value	Spellcraft DC
Up to 25 gp	10 + spell level
Up to 50 gp	11 + spell level
Up to 100 gp	12 + spell level
Up to 150 gp	13 + spell level
Up to 200 gp	14 + spell level
Up to 250 gp	15 + spell level
Up to 1,000 gp	30

Power Gem (Sp): At 5th level, a gemcaster can concentrate arcane energies into a gem focus of at least 500 gp

THE GEMCASTER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Create gemscroll, gem foci, gem identification	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Gem components 25 gp	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Gem components 100 gp	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	—	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Power gem, gem components 250 gp	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Gem components 500 gp	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Greater power gem	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Gem components 1,000 gp	+1 level of existing class

value, granting it certain powers. By discharging a single 1st-level spell of the appropriate school into a gem, he grants the resulting *power gem* certain special abilities. These effects last for one minute per gemcaster level regardless of which spell was actually used up. A gemcaster may discharge as many 1st-level spells as he has available into different gems, but no more than one spell into any particular gem. A gem focus used for this purpose must be nonmagical, and if it is being used as a gemscroll, any spell it contains is lost when the jewel is used as a *power gem*.

A *power gem* provides certain benefits to a gemcaster when he uses it as the arcane focus for any spell he casts (he may use such a gem regardless of whether or not the spell requires components or a spell focus). Using a gem in this manner does not affect the *power gem*'s status, but it may be destroyed on a failed Spellcraft check (DC and effect as described for the gem component ability). The character may use only one *power gem* as the arcane focus for any single spell.

Abjuration, Enchantment: The spell's duration increases by 50 percent. This does not stack with the Extend Spell feat.

Illusion, Necromancy: The spell's saving throw Difficulty Class increases by 1. This stacks with the Spell Focus feat, but does not stack with Greater Spell Focus.

Transmutation, Evocation: The caster gains a +1 bonus to his check to defeat spell resistance. This stacks with the Spell Penetration feat.

Divination, Conjunction: The spell's variable numeric effects increase by 15 percent in the same manner as with the Empower Spell feat. This does not stack with Empower Spell. If a conjunction spell is used to summon a creature, the 15 percent bonus applies to the creature's hit points (up to its normal maximum).

Greater Power Gem (Sp): At 9th level, the gemcaster can create more potent *power gems*. The jewel must be of at least 1,000 gp value, and a 2nd-level spell must be discharged into it to enjoy the advanced abilities (a gem from 500–999 gp in value manifests only the standard *power gem* effect even if a 2nd-level spell is cast—thus, it is important to be accurate with Appraisal). Improved abilities are as follows:

Abjuration, Enchantment: The spell is cast as if the full Extend Spell feat was employed; this does not stack with Extend Spell.

Illusion, Necromancy: The spell's saving throw Difficulty Class increases by 2. This stacks with the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats.

Transmutation, Evocation: The caster gains a +2 bonus to his check to defeat spell resistance. This stacks with the Spell Penetration and Greater Spell Penetration feats.

Divination, Conjunction: The variable numeric effects increase by 30 percent, with restrictions as with *power gem*.

KNIGHT OF TEARS

Prestige class by Mike Gill; originally published in the Player's Guide to Monks and Paladins by Sword & Sorcery.

Even in the necromancer city of Hollowfaust, a small order of paladins pursues justice and the ideals of the divine. The elite knights of the Order of Tears offer protection, succor and respite to the people of Hollowfaust—both living and dead. The knights consider it their primary duty to lay to rest the spirits of the damned who remain trapped in the Scarred Lands. Possessed of the mystic ability to communicate with these often troubled spirits, the knights of tears ease the passage of the dead by finishing the tasks the departed have left undone, resolving their regrets and absolving ghosts of the sins of the past. While most of these spirits are rather benign, the knights must still frequently deal with malevolent specters; for there are many ghosts too consumed by the sorrows of life and the pain of death to be redeemed.

Knights of tears are often surrounded by ghostly manifestations known as fetches. These fetches have been adjudged by the Guilds of Hollowfaust to not be actual undead themselves (as they cannot be turned or otherwise affected by necromancy). Rather, they are believed to be the remnants of those spirits whom the knights of tears



THE KNIGHT OF TEARS

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Spirit medium, sanctity	+1 paladin level
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Shield of tears +2	+1 paladin level
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Improved turning	+1 paladin level
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Shield of tears +4	+1 paladin level
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Ghost blade	+1 paladin level
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Shield of tears +6	+1 paladin level
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Visions of the lost	+1 paladin level
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Shield of tears +8	+1 paladin level
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Exorcism	+1 paladin level
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Shield of tears +10	+1 paladin level

have aided in passing over. The Chorus of the Banshee has determined that the fetches are the lingering good will and blessings given by the now-departed ghosts to their benefactors.

The Order of Tears is highly respected in Hollowfaust, both as protectors against unseen horrors and as compassionate advocates for the dead. These knights, closely allied with the Chorus of the Banshee, are more forgiving of the necromantic arts than are typical paladins, though they swiftly and violently deal with practitioners of the blacker magics. Especially despised by the knights are the dark necromancers of Glivid-Autel, who would bind and twist the dead to their own perverse goals. It is said that the knights have long sought the destruction of Lucian Daine, the so-called Black Messiah, for his horrid practice of transforming the living into bitter wraiths.

The knights are most active in the Ghost Quarter of Hollowfaust, rarely traveling beyond the city unless to complete some task for a lost spirit. In addition to laying the dead to rest, the Order of Tears works to enforce justice and ease suffering throughout the city—with the hope of forestalling the creation of new wraiths. The knights believe the high concentration of negative energy, from the destruction of old Sumara, and the decades-long practice of necromancy strengthen evil spirits and fuel the creation of lost souls, but they are unsure how to confront the problem.

Becoming a knight of tears is an option primarily open to paladins, although multiclassing clerics can also join the order. Paladins who take this class focus their ability to confront undead and dispatch malevolent spirits. Paladins who take this prestige class can multiclass freely with the paladin class.

Use in Other Campaigns: As written, the knight of tears has a connection to Hollowfaust, a city in Ghelspad where necromancy is the order of the day. However, the notion of a paladin dedicated to putting the dead to rest and who has a

special relationship to spirits can fit easily in many worlds. Indeed, some settings include good-aligned deities of the dead, some of whom might sponsor knights of tears. Alternately, any good faith might consider it a sacred duty to eliminate the scourge of the undead and create a knightly order with that purpose.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a knight of tears, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Lawful good.

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feats: Ghostspeaker (see below), Iron Will.

Skill: Diplomacy 9 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 9 ranks.

Special: Aura of courage ability, ability to turn undead.

GHOSTSPEAKER (GENERAL FEAT)

Those who develop the talent of speaking with ghosts attract cadres of those who yearn to communicate with the living.

Prerequisites: Charisma 13, Wisdom 13

Benefit: A character with this feat receives a +2 competence bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with intelligent incorporeal undead. In addition, he can understand and communicate with such undead, regardless of what language they spoke in life.

CLASS SKILLS

The knight of tears' class skills are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the knight of tears prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A knight of tears is proficient with simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Spells Per Day: When a new knight of tears level is gained, the character enjoys new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in the paladin class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have earned (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of knight of tears to his paladin class level, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Levels in this class do stack with the paladin class for the purposes of turning undead, laying on hands, and smiting evil.

Spirit Medium (Su): The knight of tears possesses the ability to *speak with dead*, as per the cleric spell of the same name. This ability may be attempted once per day per level in the knight of tears prestige class, but each entity may only be contacted once per week.

Sanctity (Su): The knight of tears' holy aura protects his soul from the dark taint of the undead. He thus gains a +2 sacred bonus against all saves concerning energy drain, ability damage, or death attacks made by undead.

Shield of Tears (Su): The fetches of the dead, whom the knight has aided, encircle and protect him from the foul touch of their malevolent brethren. The knight of tears gains a deflection bonus to AC against incorporeal opponents, based on his class level (see table). The fetches are not actual creatures, but rather an incorporeal manifestation of the good will and gratitude of those spirits who have passed beyond. They can be perceived only by those capable of seeing ethereal creatures, and even then they appear as wispy, indistinct humanoid forms who huddle close to the character.

Improved Turning: At 3rd level, the knight of tears greatly increases his command of the undead. The character's effective level, for the purposes of turning undead, now equals his levels in this prestige class plus those levels in any other classes that grant the turning ability (without subtracting two levels for the paladin class). In addition, he receives the Extra Turning feat as a bonus feat.

Ghost Blade (Su): At 5th level, the knight of tears has learned to use his holy energy and the fetches that surround him to affect even spiritual undead. By expending a daily turn undead attempt as a standard action, the knight of tears may temporarily bind one of his fetches into a weapon, treating it as though it had the *ghost touch* enhancement. This ability only applies for weapons the knight of tears himself wields. It lasts for one minute per his level in the knight of tears prestige class.

Visions of the Lost (Su): At 7th level, the fetches of the knight of tears continually whisper to him the secrets of death and the true nature of life. He can thus glean insight as per the *true seeing* spell, for a number of minutes per day equal to his level in the knight of tears prestige class. This time allotment may be broken up and utilized throughout the day, as long as the total does not surpass the allocated number of minutes.

Exorcism (Su): At 9th level, the knight of tears has so mastered his holy energies that he can permanently banish ghostly presences from either a person or a location. Any and all effects related to possession, domination, haunting, or necromantic corruption are destroyed, and spirits bound to the place or person are released (if benign) or destroyed (if malevolent). This ability eliminates lingering corruptive spell effects such as *unhallow* or *desecrate* and eliminates any undead within a 60-foot radius who fail a Will save (DC 10 + class level + Wisdom modifier). The energies unleashed by this ability drain the knight of all but 3 Strength points, which heal as normal ability damage; furthermore, exorcism may be used only once per month. Because of this ability's heavy cost, it is usually reserved as a last resort against evil.

A Cool Take on Undead-Hunters

The knight of tears is an interesting alternate take on undead-hunting paladins. Interesting because it effectively fights fire with fire—the knight can speak with the dead and uses spiritual quasi-creatures called fetches to make himself more potent against undead. It's also interesting because, though it's got some offensive capabilities, its real focus is in defense. While the knight of tears is an easy class for paladins to qualify for, its abilities are so focused that it balances out well.

RELIQUARIAN

Prestige class by Christopher Kennedy; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Excalibur by Sword & Sorcery.

There is power in the bones of saints, and in the stones blessed by a high priest, and in the weapons that have fallen to earth from the hands of angels. The pious have such faith in the incarnate power of holy relics that a mere sliver of bone can inspire men to charge into the teeth of Death itself. It is therefore the duty of the men and women of the church to identify, guard and use these relics as best they can. The reliquarian is an ordained priest of the church who has been charged with this holy task. It falls to him to recover lost relics of the faith, to care for them such that their holy power is strengthened, and to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of the wicked.

Clerics and paladins are the most likely candidates for the reliquarian class. Druidic reliquarians are much more rarely seen, but a few druids have been known to assign great importance to certain artifacts of their faith. Wizards may undertake the religious mantle of the reliquarian if their faith is deep, or their love for antiquities and apocrypha great

enough. The class sacrifices some combat ability to focus on the lore that surrounds holy relics, but is still more active and combat-worthy than the usual scholar of antiquities.

Some reliquarians spend most of their time in the strongholds of their faith, never straying far from the vaults where

A Marriage of Setting and Rules

Reliquarians are just cool. This class is from Relics & Rituals: Excalibur and, while its requirements are very easy for a cleric (or possibly a paladin) to attain, it's balanced by the loss of two levels of spellcasting. The benefits you gain aren't overwhelming but are certainly good enough to make the class worth taking.

It's the concept that I really like, however, and all the abilities feed into the concept very nicely. I like the idea of these guys carrying around holy relics, safeguarding them and wielding them to fight their enemies. It's this kind of thing that ties world design and game mechanics together nicely.

the sacred objects are kept. However, many more actively ride the land, seeking out those relics that have been lost. A reliquarian may call on a group of knights to recover a particular relic for the faith, or he may ask them to assist him as he sets out on the quest. If the need is great enough, a reliquarian may even offer a faithful worshipper or sub-priest the use of

one of the church's sacred objects to ensure that the supplicant's quest is blessed with the deity's full favor.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a reliquarian, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (history) 5 ranks and Knowledge (religion) 10 ranks.

Spells: Able to cast 1st-level divine spells.

Special: The reliquarian must be chosen by unanimous consent of his order's leadership and invested in a weeklong ceremony attuning him to a specific holy relic. The nature of the relic is left to the GM (bones of saints are particularly appropriate), and while the reliquarian may quest for other

relics of the church, he is considered bonded to the relic named at the time of his investiture and may not change that bond. The relic is not a magical item. However, it is a source of potential positive or negative energy. Good reliquarians carry relics that channel positive energy and evil reliquarians carry negatively attuned relics. Neutral reliquarians may choose a relic tied to either positive or negative energy; this decision cannot be changed later. If the reliquarian had levels in cleric, the choice of a positive or negative energy relic must match his choice of turning or rebuking undead.

CLASS SKILLS

The reliquarian's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Speak Language (none), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are features of the reliquarian prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The reliquarian is proficient with simple weapons and with all forms of armor and shields.

Spells Per Day: At 2nd and 4th level, and every level thereafter, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained.

If the character possessed levels in multiple spellcasting classes before becoming a reliquarian, he must decide to which class he adds each level of reliquarian for the purpose of determining spells per day (and spells known, if applicable).

THE RELIQUARIAN

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Divine lore, attunement, draw upon relic, turn/rebuke undead	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Sacred protector	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Guiding star I, divine armor 1	—
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Faith upholds me	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Touch of the saint	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	Relic lore, divine armor 2	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Find the path	+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+2	+2	+6	Guiding star II	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+3	+3	+6	Sense magic, divine armor 3	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+3	+3	+7	Perfected bond	+1 level of existing class

Divine Lore: At his investiture, the reliquarian is initiated into the secret mysteries of his order. This knowledge grants him a +2 competence bonus to all Intelligence-based skill checks and Intelligence checks.

Attunement (Su): The reliquarian is aware of the relative distance and general direction of his bonded relic at all times. Should his relic fall into the hands of enemies or be otherwise lost (not simply set aside), the reliquarian loses all class special abilities save for this one (but not spells per day, saves, or attack bonuses) until the relic is restored to its rightful place.

Draw Upon Relic (Su): The holy relic given to the reliquarian upon investiture grants him a source of spiritual power in times of need. Once per day, as long as the reliquarian is in contact with his bonded relic, he may recall one 1st-level spell that had already been cast, as if using a *pearl of power*.

Turn/Rebuke Undead (Su): By brandishing the relic bonded to him, the reliquarian can turn or rebuke undead as a cleric of his reliquarian level. A reliquarian with previous levels of cleric can add his reliquarian prestige class levels to his cleric levels for purposes of turning undead, but only when using his bonded relic. In all other respects, this is identical to the cleric ability.

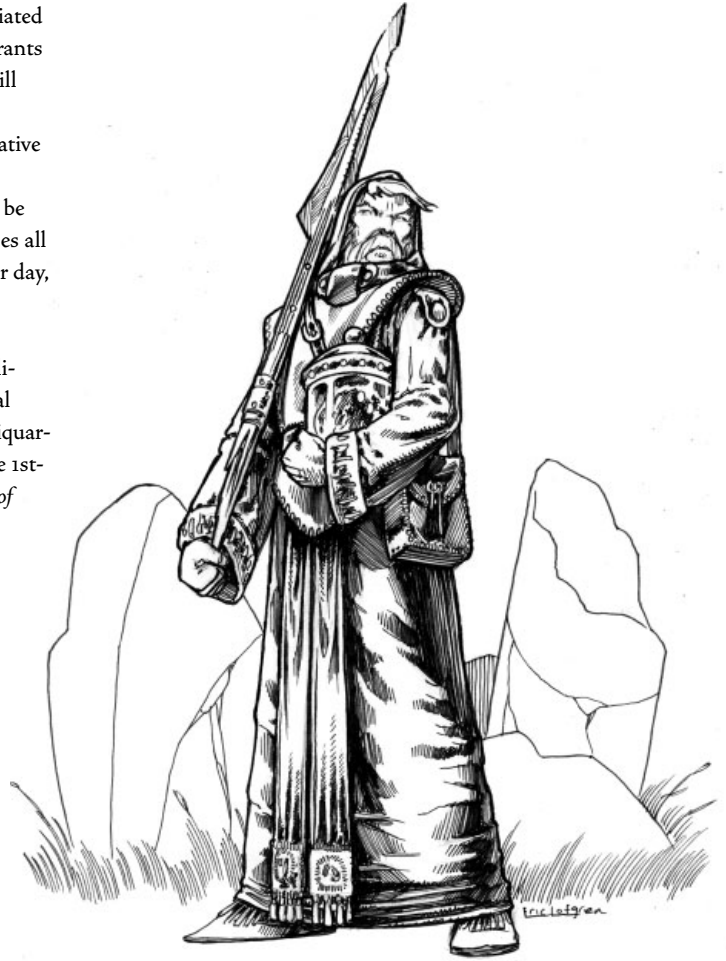
Sacred Protector (Su): The reliquarian's force of will empowers his desire to keep the artifacts of his faith safe. Beginning at 2nd level, all objects carried by the reliquarian receive a +4 bonus to any saving throws they must make (such as when targeted by a spell).

Guiding Star I (Su): At 3rd level, the reliquarian may never be lost, and gains a divine immunity to confusion spells and spell-like effects.

Divine Armor (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, the reliquarian gains a +1 natural armor bonus as long as he bears his bonded relic on his person. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and +3 at 9th level.

Faith Upholds Me (Ex): At 4th level, the reliquarian gains the ability to handle magical objects that would ordinarily curse or damage him due to alignment without suffering any harm. A good-aligned reliquarian could handle an unholy weapon without suffering a negative level, while an evil-aligned reliquarian could peruse a book of exalted deeds without losing XP. This ability does not protect the reliquarian against curses or damaging effects that are not based on alignment.

Touch of the Saint (Su): At 5th level, the reliquarian can further focus the power of the relic he carries. The reliquarian may make a touch attack once per day that focuses either positive or negative energy. A positive energy touch heals 1d8 points of damage per point of the reliquarian's Wisdom modifier and inflicts that much damage to undead. A negative



energy touch inflicts a like amount of damage to living creatures, and heals an equal amount to undead.

Relic Lore (Sp): At 6th level, the reliquarian can use *legend lore* as a spell-like ability. This ability can only be used on relics of the reliquarian's faith, or of a directly opposing faith. Thus, a reliquarian of Daeos could use *legend lore* to determine lore about an important Daeosian relic or a relic of the Adversary, but not about a Druenite object or a relic of a fae god. This ability can only be used once per week at most. The reliquarian does not need to expend XP to use this spell-like ability. In all other respects, this ability functions as the spell.

Find the Path (Sp): Starting at 7th level, a reliquarian may cast *find the path* once per day as a standard action.

Guiding Star II (Su): At 8th level, the reliquarian becomes immune to the *lesser geas*, *geas*, and *quest* spells.

Sense Magic (Sp): At 9th level, the reliquarian becomes able to sense the presence or absence of magic. He can *detect magic* at will as a spell-like ability.

Perfected Bond (Su): At 10th level, the reliquarian's bond with the relic he carries is a constant source of strength. As long as the relic is on his person, the reliquarian gains

damage reduction 5/unholy (if the relic is charged with positive energy) or damage reduction 5/holy (if the relic is negatively charged). In addition, the reliquarian gains a +4 divine bonus on all saves against divine magic.

URBAN RANGER

Core class variant designed and developed by Andy Collins; originally published in Unearthed Arcana by Wizards of the Coast.

Just a Few Tweaks

The urban ranger shows how just a few minor tweaks can change the focus of an existing class and give it a whole new spin. I have a player in my own campaign playing an urban ranger.

The urban ranger stalks the treacherous streets of the city, relying on his knowledge of alleyways and underworld contacts to keep him alive.

Class Skills:

Eliminate Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (dungeoneering), and Survival from the ranger's class skill list. Add Gather Information, Knowledge (local), and Sense Motive to the class skill list.

CLASS FEATURES

The urban ranger has all the standard ranger class features, except as noted below.

Animal Companion: An urban ranger cannot have an animal larger than Medium as his animal companion.

Urban Tracking: An urban ranger does not gain the Track feat at 1st level. Instead, he gains the Urban Tracking feat (see below), which allows him to use Gather Information to track down a missing person, suspect, or other individual within a community.

Wild Empathy: An urban ranger adds only one-half his class level to wild empathy checks, reflecting his limited connection with the natural world.

Favored Enemy: At the DM's discretion, an urban ranger may select an organization instead of a creature type as his favored enemy. For example, a character might select a particular thieves' guild, merchant house, or even the city guard. The favored enemy bonuses would apply to all members of the chosen organization, regardless of their creature type or subtype.

Spellcasting: The urban ranger's spell list differs from the standard ranger's list. The following spells are eliminated from the urban ranger's spell list: *animal messenger, charm animal, detect animals or plants, speak with animals, bear's endurance, hold animal, snare, speak with plants, command plants, diminish plants, plant growth, reduce animal, tree shape, water walk, commune with nature, and tree stride.*

In exchange, the urban ranger adds the following spells to his class spell list: 1st—*comprehend languages, detect chaos/good/evil/law, detect secret doors, message*; 2nd—*detect thoughts, knock, locate object, eagle's splendor*; 3rd—*discern lies, invisibility, speak with dead, tongues*; 4th—*dimensional anchor, locate creature, Mord's faithful hound, true seeing.*

Woodland Stride: An urban ranger does not gain this ability.

Swift Tracker (Ex): Beginning at 8th level, an urban ranger may make a Gather Information check for his Urban Tracking feat every half hour without taking the normal –5 penalty.

Camouflage: An urban ranger does not gain this ability.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): An urban ranger can use this ability in any area, whether natural terrain or not.

URBAN TRACKING (GENERAL FEAT)

You can track down the location of missing persons or wanted individuals within communities.

Benefit: To find the trail of an individual or to follow it for one hour requires a Gather Information check. You must make another Gather Information check every hour of the search, as well as each time the trail becomes difficult to follow, such as when it moves to a different area of town.

The Difficulty Class of the check, and the number of checks required to track down your quarry, depends upon the community size and the conditions.

If you fail a Gather Information check, you can retry after one hour of questioning; the DM should roll the number of checks required secretly, so the player doesn't know exactly how long the task will require.

Normal: A character without this feat can use Gather Information to find out information about a particular individual, but each check takes 1d4+1 hours and doesn't allow effective trailing.

Special: A character with 5 ranks in Knowledge (local) gains a +2 bonus on the Gather Information check to use this feat.

You can cut the time between Gather Information checks in half (to 30 minutes rather than one hour), but you take a –5 penalty on the check.

Community Size*	DC	Checks Required
Thorp, hamlet or village	5	1d3
Small or large town	10	1d4+1
Small or large city	15	2d4
Metropolis	20	2d4+2

* See Chapter Five: Campaigns in the DMG.

DC Mod. Conditions

–1	Every three creatures in the group being sought
+1	Every 24 hours party has been missing/sought
+5	Tracked party "lies low"
+2	Tracked party matches community's primary racial demographic*
–2	Tracked party does not match community's primary or secondary racial demographic*

* See "Racial Demographics" in Chapter Five: Campaigns of the DMG.

YOGI

Core class and austerity feats by Matt Sprengeler; originally published in the Complete Guide to Rakshasas by Goodman Games.

In ages past, rakshasa sages mastered many strange arts. Honing their concentration and performing grueling austerities, they imbued themselves with power beyond the rest of their kind. As more mortals fell under their sway, these secrets began to leak out. By the time of Ravana, small sects of mortals existed who passed these powers from generation to generation, becoming known as yogis. Rakshasas have never managed to rid the world of these upstarts who know their timeless techniques, and even today they are found across the civilized lands.

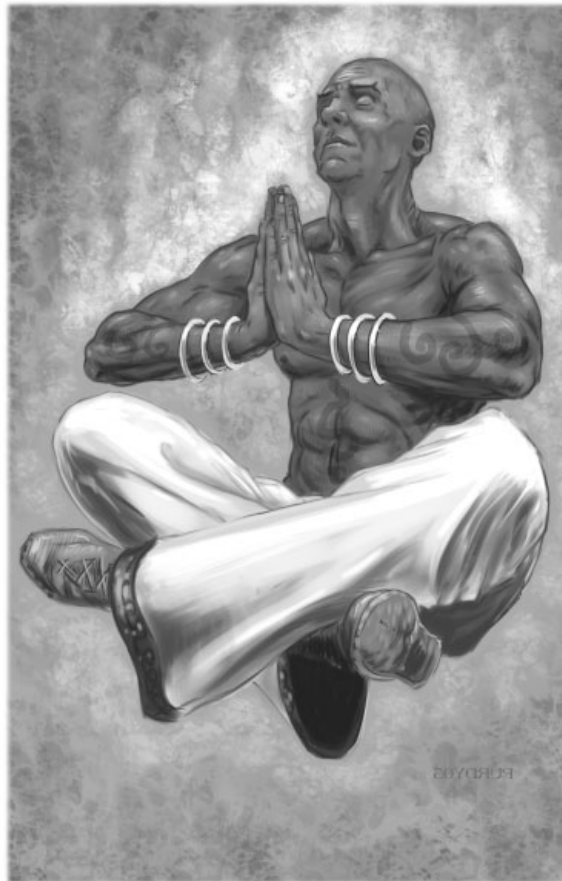
The yogi has two strengths: self-discipline and the detachment to see things as they truly are. The former allows the yogi to push the limits of what a mortal body can normally do, while the latter helps the yogi pierce illusions and misdirections. The two strands twine together in such a fashion that the yogi can cast spells after a period of deep meditation. In time, the yogi sees the whole material world as an illusion of sorts, one that can be reshaped or even left behind entirely.

On a surface level, yogis are similar to monks. Both train their bodies to perform far beyond the level of others, and both gain powers that seem magical to outsiders. But the monk's physical abilities are flashier and more combat oriented, while her powers largely augment that fighting ability. A yogi is more concerned with the internal than the external, and as a result is not as obviously dangerous. However, the yogi receives enough combat training to take care of himself, and his spells excel at gathering information and protecting the target, making him a surprisingly resourceful combatant. The yogi also has some of the most flexible spontaneous casting available to divine spellcasters.

These abilities allow the yogi to excel in a support position, much as monks (and bards) do. Each yogi sees himself as a student of the universe, continually striving to become as enlightened and free as possible. It therefore falls on him to teach others that freedom, both by sharing knowledge and by example.

Adventures: To a yogi, adventuring is one step in the quest for personal understanding. By facing dangers, he learns what his capabilities are. It also brings him into contact with a variety of thinking beings who can act as either mentors or obstacles. Some yogis are driven by a zeal for doing good, hoping to help their less fortunate fellows, while others wish to master the power of the yogi in hopes that the knowledge and discipline gained will help them rule over weaker beings.

Characteristics: The yogi's key features are his ability to withstand hardship, his selection of divinations and protective magics, and his ability to see through layers of deceit and misunderstanding. Coupled with the yogi's decent combat skill, this makes him an excellent scout or second-tier spellcaster. Yogic abilities are unusual and may seem less dynamic than those of some other classes, but a yogi can almost always support the rest of his group in accomplishing their goals. He is also well equipped for life as a solo adventurer.



Alignment: As discipline and detachment are the two pillars of a yogi's abilities, chaotic characters are not able to follow this path. Lawful individuals often excel at the former, and neutral ones the latter. A yogi can have any alignment along the good-evil axis; their techniques were developed for evil purposes by rakshasas, but many of the firstborn's most devoted enemies are yogis themselves.

Religion: Most yogis consider the entire cosmos to be an object of worship, and many of the remaining ones fancy themselves supreme beings. Neither group produces many churchgoers. That said, yogis are well aware of the existence of higher powers and will often pay them some kind of homage. Some yogis believe that in time, with enough dedication and concentration, they too will ascend to the level of the gods, or even beyond it.

That belief goes hand in hand with the notion of reincarnation. No yogi is required to believe in it, but many do. The discipline practiced in this life is, to them, a sacrifice made in hopes that the next incarnation will be even closer to whatever their ideal happens to be.

Background: The knowledge of a yogi's ways is imparted by a teacher of some kind. Usually this teacher is an older yogi, often one who takes on a handful of young pupils in hopes of furthering their enlightenment (and perhaps his own). If enough yogis dwell in the same area, they might run

THE YOGI

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fortitude Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Yogic focus, breath control, centered strike, spells
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Endurance
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Austerity, see false face
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Hardihood, spontaneous casting
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Diehard, supreme concentration
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	—
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Insight
8th	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	Know falsehood
9th	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	Unravel magic
10th	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Austerity
11th	+8/+3	+7	+3	+7	—
12th	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	Find weakness
13th	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	Improved hardihood
14th	+10/+5	+9	+4	+9	Inviolable body
15th	+11/+6/+1	+9	+5	+9	—
16th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Unfettered sight
17th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Levitation
18th	+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	—
19th	+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	See ethereal
20th	+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	—

an academy devoted to maintaining and expanding their art, taking on students of all ages who have the right dedication.

A handful of yogis claim to have developed their abilities in a different way. They say that spirits of the cosmos, be they gods or monsters, imparted the knowledge of a yogi's ways to them. Such wild yogis are shunned by their more conventional brethren, for fear that this knowledge is somehow tainted.

Races: The first yogis were rumored to be human, and humankind produces most members of this class. Dwarves have a small but solid yogic tradition, as it plays well into both their disciplined natures and their hardy frames. Some half-elves and half-orcs take up the yogi's path, seeking greater knowledge of themselves through introspection, and a handful of gnomes have adopted the practices as well. Elves and halflings are generally too free-spirited and impulsive to stick with the yogi's ways.

Few of the nonhuman races have the discipline to follow a yogi's teaching, either. Hobgoblins, coming from a more structured society, have been known to become yogis. Such individuals often concentrate on the defensive aspects of their power and act as second-line troops, supporting fighters in combat. A handful of the githzerai are rumored to have broken away from their culture's strong monastic tradition and established a small yogic academy somewhere on the outer planes.

Other Classes: A yogi usually gets along with others, understanding that everyone must find their own path to enlightenment. They especially enjoy the company of monks, clerics, and druids, all of whom have interesting insights on the nature of existence. The paladin's crusading zeal is dra-

matically different from the yogi's pursuit of awareness, and often the yogi will be frustrated by what he sees as the paladin's insistence on forcing others to follow a particular code. Bards, with their flashy style and love of attention, have a much different style of problem-solving than yogis do, which can lead to clashes. But the biggest contrast is between a yogi and a barbarian. To a yogi, the barbarian's wild rage and impulsive behavior is the farthest thing possible from ideal, and the two classes often have cool relations. Yogis have no particular response to other classes.

Role: A yogi makes a tenacious combatant, and his durability is an asset when combined with his unusual powers. His spell selection is heavy on abjuration and divination, so he is also good at scouting out an encounter and setting other characters up to carry the day. However, his understanding of the nature of reality also gives him access to a handful of powerful offensive spells. The yogi makes an excellent adviser and coordinator, and often has obscure knowledge that turns out to be useful.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Yogis have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Constitution is vital for a yogi, as it supports the Concentration skill, which is necessary for many of a yogi's abilities to function. Intelligence and Wisdom are helpful for many of the yogi's other skills, and Wisdom also influences the yogi's spellcasting ability.

Alignment: Any nonchaotic.

Hit Die: d8.

CLASS SKILLS

The yogi's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter Four: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Intelligence modifier) × 4

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Intelligence modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the yogi.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A yogi is proficient with all simple weapons, along with several weapons that have become a traditional part of yogic training. These include the battleaxe, discus, flail (light and heavy), handaxe, longbow, shortbow, and trident. Yogis are proficient with light and medium armor.

Spells: A yogi can cast divine spells, which are drawn from the yogi spell list on the next page. However, his alignment may restrict him from casting certain spells opposed to his moral or ethical beliefs, as with other divine spellcasters. A yogi's divine focus must be part of his daily meditation ritual, usually as something he focuses on to clear his mind.

To prepare or cast a spell, a yogi must have a Wisdom score equal to at least 10 + the spell level. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a yogi's spell is 10 + the spell level + the yogi's Wisdom modifier.

A yogi must choose and prepare his spells in advance. This requires an hour of meditation and exercise every day. One component alone is not enough; for a yogi to harness his inner power, he must be physically alert as well as mentally prepared. Time spent resting has no effect on whether a yogi can prepare spells. If a yogi fails to get his required daily meditation and exercise, he can cast the spells he has already prepared, but cannot get new ones that day.

When the yogi's spell table indicates that a yogi receives 0 spells per day, he gains only the bonus spells he would be entitled to based on his Wisdom score.

Spontaneous Casting: A yogi's remarkable self-control is reflected in his spontaneous casting ability. When desired, a yogi can "lose" a stored spell to cast a spell of a lower level from the yogic spell list, with certain restrictions. First, the spontaneous spell must be at least two levels lower than the spell being sacrificed, and it must belong to the same school (and subschool, if any). Second, the yogi must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15 + level of the desired spell). If the check fails, the sacrificed spell is gone from the yogi's mind but the spontaneous spell is not cast.

Yogic Focus: Many of a yogi's abilities come from his blend of concentration and detachment. Once per day per yogi level, he can draw on this inner well of power to perform marvelous deeds. A yogi who is denied his chance to meditate and exercise may use yogic focus only once per two yogi levels

(minimum 1) until he resumes his normal regimen. Each yogic ability requires both a minimum yogi level and a minimum number of ranks in the Concentration skill. If the yogi lacks the required number of Concentration ranks, he cannot use that ability until he gains the needed ranks.

Centered Strike (Su): A yogi with 3 or more ranks in Concentration can hit his target without being misled by feinting and dodging. As a standard action, a yogi may use this ability to make a single attack, which treats the target as if flat footed—it loses the benefits of Dexterity and dodge bonuses to Armor Class. Note that the target is not flat-footed to other characters.

See False Face (Su): A yogi of 3rd level or higher with at least 6 ranks in Concentration can tell when others are disguising their appearance. While this ability is in effect, the yogi can study individuals for signs of disguise. Each round, the yogi can use a standard action to designate one person or creature he can see and make a Concentration check (DC 15 + target's Charisma bonus). If the yogi succeeds, he is aware of any disguises, spells, or shape-shifting powers the target is using, although he does not automatically know what the target really looks like. A yogi also can use this ability to hear when someone is mimicking a voice or animal call. This ability is active for a number of rounds equal to the character's yogi level.

Supreme Concentration (Su): A yogi of 5th level or higher with at least 8 ranks in Concentration can use his intense focus to help him perform a skill. This ability allows the yogi to make a Concentration check instead of a regular check for any one physical skill (i.e. one based on Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution) that requires 1 round or less to execute. Thus a yogi could use Concentration in place of

YOGIC SPELLS PER DAY

Char. Level	0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	3	0	—	—	—	—	—
3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
4	3	2	0	—	—	—	—
5	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
6	3	3	2	—	—	—	—
7	3	3	2	0	—	—	—
8	3	3	3	1	—	—	—
9	3	3	3	2	—	—	—
10	3	3	3	2	0	—	—
11	3	3	3	3	1	—	—
12	3	3	3	3	2	—	—
13	3	3	3	3	2	0	—
14	4	3	3	3	3	1	—
15	4	4	3	3	3	2	—
16	4	4	4	3	3	2	0
17	4	4	4	4	3	3	1
18	4	4	4	4	4	3	2
19	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
20	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Jump, or could substitute it for Move Silently over a short patch of ground.

Know Falsehood (Sp): A yogi of 8th level or higher with at least 11 ranks in Concentration can sense lies. When activated, this ability allows the yogi to *discern lies* as the spell for a number of rounds equal to double his yogi level.

Unravel Magic: A yogi of 9th level or higher with at least 12 ranks in Concentration can fortify himself against all magic. When used, this ability grants the yogi spell resistance equal to his yogi level + his ranks in Concentration for a number of minutes equal to his yogi level. This does not stack with other forms of spell resistance; use the one that confers the greatest benefit.

Find Weakness (Su): A yogi of 12th level or higher with at least 15 ranks in Concentration has mastered the art of striking an opponent. As a full-round action, the yogi may make a single attack as if it were a touch attack, ignoring his tar-

get's natural armor bonus and the like. To activate this ability, the yogi must first make a Concentration check (DC 10 + target's total AC). If the check fails, this use of find weakness does not work, but it still counts against the

A Potent Eastern Archetype

The yogi draws on a nice non-Western character concept. Mechanically, the character is much like a cleric, sacrificing some spellcasting ability for better skills and some special abilities. Of particular interest are the unravel magic and find weakness abilities. Those are potent, as is supreme concentration.

total number of yogic focus abilities allowed per day.

Unfettered Sight (Sp): A yogi of 16th level or higher with at least 19 ranks in Concentration can see reality as it is. When activated, this ability grants the yogi *true seeing* as the spell for a number of minutes equal to double his yogi level.

Levitation (Sp): A yogi of 17th level or higher with at least 20 ranks in Concentration is able to lift himself from the ground with a mere thought. The yogi may *levitate* himself as the spell as a move action, but with a base speed of 60 feet. This ability lasts for a number of minutes equal to his yogi level. Once activated, the yogi may use it or not as he sees fit, but the duration passes whether he floats or not.

See Ethereal (Su): A yogi of 19th level or higher with at least 21 ranks in Concentration has achieved one of the greatest marks of detachment—he can see into the ethereal plane. As a standard action, the yogi can make a Concentration check (DC 30). If successful, he can now see the ethereal plane, just as ethereal creatures can see into the material plane. The yogi's vision extends 60 feet into the ethereal, making it look like a gauzy overlay on top of the normal world. All ethereal creatures and activities are obvious to him. This effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to his yogi level. If the initial Concentration check fails, this use of see ethereal does not work but it still counts against the total number of yogic focus abilities allowed per day.

Breath Control (Ex): The first lesson every yogi learns is to control his breathing. A yogi can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to four times his Constitution score (twice as

long as a normal character). He also gains a +4 bonus to any Fortitude save involving gases, vapors, or odors.

Endurance: A yogi gains Endurance as a bonus feat at 2nd level.

Austerity: At 3rd level, a yogi gains an Austerity feat as a bonus feat. The yogi may choose the Austerity of Cold, Austerity of Fire, Austerity of Lies, or Austerity of Pain, even if he does not meet the prerequisites of the chosen feat (see next page). At 10th level, he gains any Austerity feat he wishes as a bonus feat, as long as he has any Austerity feats that are among its prerequisites; he does not need to meet any other prerequisites.

Hardihood (Ex): Starting at 4th level, the yogi has an uncanny degree of control over his body. If he makes a successful Fortitude save against a Fortitude-based attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage.

Diehard: At 5th level, a yogi gains Diehard as a bonus feat.

Insight (Ex): The greater a yogi's understanding of reality, the stronger his discipline. Starting at 7th level, the yogi adds his Wisdom modifier to every Concentration check he makes. This ability can only be used if the yogi has a positive Wisdom bonus. He continues to add his Constitution modifier as well.

Improved Hardihood (Ex): At 13th level, a yogi's self-discipline results in an improved ability to endure pain and mistreatment. In addition to the effects of the hardihood ability, he now only takes half damage on a failed Fortitude saving throw. This ability only functions against attacks with a numeric value, like poison; it is no use against powers like a gorgon's petrifying breath weapon.

Inviolable Body (Ex): In time, a yogi's control of his body grants him enhanced control of his mind and reflexes. At 14th level, he gains a bonus equal to his Constitution modifier (if any) on all saving throws, not just Fortitude.

YOGIC SPELL LIST

0 Level: *Detect magic, guidance, know direction, mage hand, mending, message, read magic, resistance.*

1st Level: *Bane, bless, cause fear, comprehend languages, deathwatch, disguise self, divine favor, endure elements, entropic shield, feather fall, identify, protection from chaos/evil/law/good, remove fear, sanctuary.*

2nd Level: *Align weapon, bear's endurance, calm emotions, detect thoughts, find traps, make whole, owl's wisdom, protection from arrows, resist energy, rope trick, see invisibility, shield other, status, zone of truth.*

3rd Level: *Arcane sight, bestow curse, dispel magic, fly, haste, keen edge, locate object, protection from energy, remove curse, suggestion.*

4th Level: *Discern lies, divination, fire shield, freedom of movement, imbue with spell ability, lesser planar ally, locate creature, shadow conjuration, spell immunity, tongues.*

5th Level: *Break enchantment, commune, dismissal, mark of justice, righteous might, scrying, sending, shadow evocation, spell resistance, telekinesis.*

6th Level: *Greater dispel magic, find the path, forbiddance, legend lore, mislead, planar ally, true seeing, wind walk, word of recall.*

AUSTERITY FEATS

These feats apply to yogis who have the Austerity ability.

AUSTERITY OF ACID (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist acids and corrosives.

Prerequisites: Constitution 15, either Austerity of Cold or Austerity of Fire. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand acid.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from acid and corrosives. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 25). If successful, ignore the first 5 points of damage. This stacks with other forms of protection from acid.

AUSTERITY OF COLD (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist cold and ice damage.

Prerequisites: Constitution 12, Concentration 1 rank. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand cold.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from cold-based attacks. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 20). If successful, ignore the first 5 points of damage. This stacks with other forms of protection from cold.

AUSTERITY OF ELECTRICITY (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist the effects of electricity.

Prerequisites: Constitution 15, either Austerity of Cold or Austerity of Fire. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand electricity.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from all forms of electricity. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 25). If successful, ignore the first 5 points of damage. This stacks with other forms of protection from electricity.

AUSTERITY OF FIRE (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist fire and heat damage.

Prerequisites: Constitution 12, Concentration 1 rank. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand fire.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from flame and heat. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 20). If successful, ignore the first 5 points of damage. This stacks with other forms of protection from fire.

AUSTERITY OF ILLUSION (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to see through illusions.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 18, Listen 5 ranks, Spot 5 ranks, Austerity of Lies. You must also have spent at least 12 months training all of your senses.

Benefit: When confronted by something you suspect to be an illusion, you may make a Concentration check (DC 20) to gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against it. Your connection to reality also grants you an automatic +4 bonus to saving throws against illusions with the shadow subtype.

AUSTERITY OF LIES (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to detect lies.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 14, Concentration 1 rank. You must also have spent at least six months speaking only the truth.

Benefit: You can make a Concentration check when interacting with someone else (DC 15). If successful, you gain a +4 bonus on all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks against that individual during this encounter. Your target also has a –2 penalty to any attempt to use Intimidate or Sleight of Hand against you for this time. However, if you tell a lie during the encounter at any point after making the Concentration attempt, you lose this bonus immediately. Only one use of this feat is permitted during an encounter, regardless of how many other characters are involved.

AUSTERITY OF PAIN (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist mild pain and injury.

Prerequisites: Constitution 14, Concentration 4 ranks. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand all forms of physical injury.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from physical attacks, such as weapons. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 20). If successful, treat the attack as if you had damage reduction 2/–. This stacks with other forms of damage reduction.

AUSTERITY OF SONICS (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist the effects of powerful sonics.

Prerequisites: Constitution 15, either Austerity of Cold or Austerity of Fire. You must also have spent at least six months learning to withstand sonic damage.

Benefit: You gain limited resistance to damage from sonics. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 25). If successful, ignore the first 5 points of damage. This stacks with other forms of protection from sonic, but it does not provide a benefit against attacks like the harpy's song.

AUSTERITY OF SUFFERING (AUSTERITY)

You have trained to resist great pain and injury.

Prerequisites: Constitution 18, Austerity of Pain. You must also have spent at least 12 months learning to withstand all forms of physical injury.

Benefit: You gain enhanced resistance to damage from physical attacks. When injured by such an attack, make a Concentration check (DC 30). If successful, treat the attack as if you had damage reduction 5/–. This replaces the effects of the Austerity of Pain and stacks with other forms of damage reduction.

Feats and Skills

Feats are one of the basic “building blocks” of the d20 System. It’s not at all surprising that there are now hundreds and hundreds of good feats available.

A good feat, in my opinion, offers a character a way to do something that otherwise would be impossible or difficult—a brand new option, in other words. For example, from among the selections in this chapter, Throwback is cool because it turns the tables on fear spells and makes it likely that you’ll ask your spellcasting friends to cast one on you in times of need. Ravid’s Blessing offers an ability that is not only useful but interesting as well.

I liked Coward’s Bane because it took an interesting concept (that certain types of fighting are cowardly) and applies it to a useful mechanic. It’s one thing to simply prohibit a kind of action inappropriate to a character, but it’s another to give him an advantage based on that same principle—the advantage will end up defining the character much more dramatically.

Though very powerful, Dying Blow and Warrior’s Path are interesting applications of what would normally be simply creative license—you can easily see someone using these feats in a movie or a book. I like it when someone provides a way for us to put scenes like that in a game. Might of Courage is included for use with Dying Blow.

Spell Cleave and Spell of Opportunity offer standard d20 System combat options for spellcasters. They are powerful, but both limited by potentially drawing attacks of opportunity from foes (or at least requiring Concentration checks).

It’s probably worth noting that a few of the feats in this chapter appear here not because they are so great—although none are bad—but because they are prerequisites of other feats.

The one skill I chose for this chapter, Prophecy, fits the bill of a good new skill—it offers interesting mechanics for something that isn’t easily covered by another skill or sub-skill (this is more than just Knowledge [Prophecy], for example.)

AWAKEN ANCESTRY (GENERAL)

By Robert J. Schwab; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiesling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched* by Green Ronin Publishing.

You have unlocked a hidden magical reserve, revealing additional qualities attributed to an unknown planar ancestor.

Prerequisites: Planetouched.

Benefit: When you select this feat, you unlock the planar traits of one or more outsiders whose blood runs through

your veins, thereby allowing you to access ancestry feats. Each ancestry feat selected unlocks the blood of a former and possibly unrealized ancestor. In addition, you gain a +2 insight bonus to all Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against outsiders.

Special: This feat is the prerequisite for all ancestry feats.

COUNTERSTRIKE (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

You are unusually capable when fighting opponents who pose a real threat to you.

Benefit: During your action, you designate one of your opponents. This opponent must have already done one or more hit points of damage to you in the battle. You now get a +1 bonus to all attacks on this opponent. You may designate a new opponent at any time, but the new opponent must also have wounded you in this battle. Foes who wounded you in a previous encounter but lived to fight you again can’t be targeted by this feat until they have wounded you in this encounter.

Special: A fighter may take this feat as one of her bonus feats.

COWARD’S BANE (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

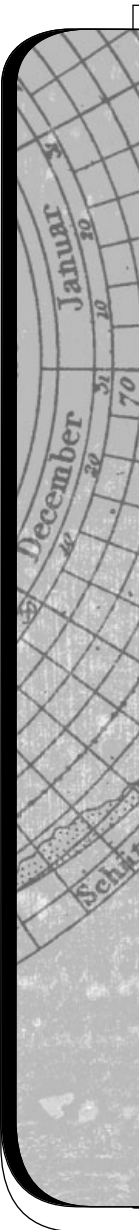
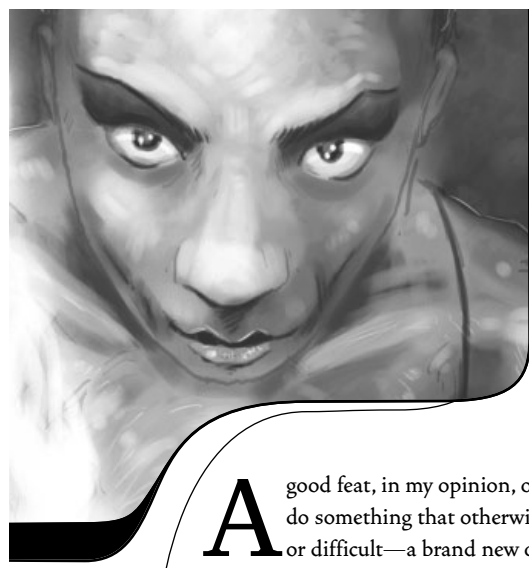
You can strike hard against anyone who attacks you in a cowardly fashion.

Prerequisite: Counterstrike.

Benefit: During your action, you designate one of your opponents. This opponent must, in the current battle, have dealt you 1 or more hit points of damage with a cowardly strike. Cowardly strikes include all ranged attacks, sneak attacks, ambushes, poison, subtle magical attacks, and damage inflicted while you are helpless, surprised, or massively and obviously outclassed (encounter level four or more levels higher than your character level). You gain a +2 bonus to damage on any melee attacks made against that opponent.

You may change the opponent on any action, but anyone designated must have wounded you in a cowardly fashion in this battle. The bonus from this feat stacks with the bonuses from Counterstrike and Might of Courage, but overlaps (does not stack) with the bonuses from Dying Blow.

Special: A fighter may take this feat as one of her bonus feats.



DAMAGING SPELL (METAMAGIC)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

You may cast or prepare a spell so that it's easier to avoid, but does more damage if it takes effect.

Benefit: For every two points by which you reduce the save Difficulty Class of the spell, it deals damage as if you were one level higher. This bonus damage may increase the damage of the spell above its normal maximum amount. For example, a 10th-level caster prepares a *fireball* spell with -4 to its save Difficulty Class. As a result, spell inflicts 12d6 points of damage. This feat can be used only on spells that allow a save to reduce or ignore the damage, and which deal damage depending on the caster's level.

Spellcasters who prepare spells must choose the reduction to the save DC at the time of preparation. A spell modified by this feat occupies a slot of its normal level.

DIVINE PERSEVERANCE (MIRACLE)

By Ari Marmell; originally published in *Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands* by *Sword & Sorcery*.

The power of the divine infuses its servants, allowing them to overcome hardships that would impede most mortal beings. Clerics who understand this may use the energies they channel to fuel their own bodies.

Prerequisites: Cleric class levels, ability to channel positive energy (turn undead) or negative energy (rebuke undead).

Benefit: By expending a turn undead attempt, the cleric renders herself immune to thirst, hunger, and exhaustion for 24 hours. She may do this for no more than a number of days in a row equal to her Charisma bonus (minimum 1), after which she *must* allow it to lapse. Once the power lapses, the character must eat a full meal, drink a substantial amount of water and let herself fall asleep within an hour. If she does not, or if she is awakened before 12 hours have passed, the cumulative effects of the past day's (or days') worth of deprivation immediately catch up with her, and she suffers them fully, as though she had never invoked this power.

DRETCH SPAWN (ANCESTRY)

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiesling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched* by *Green Ronin Publishing*.

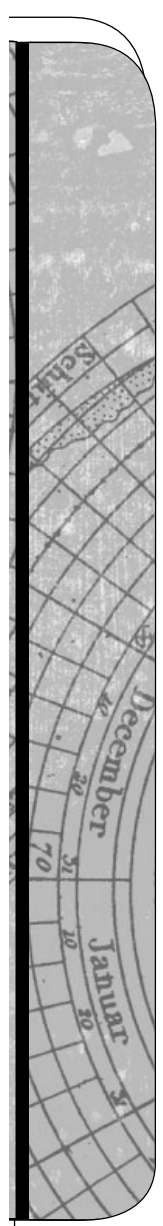
When you rage, you undergo a horrific transformation into something akin to a dretch.

Prerequisites: Awaken Ancestry, ability to rage

Benefit: Whenever you voluntarily enter a rage, you gain additional effects. Your body takes on the aspects of a dretch: your skin becomes flabby and wet, your nails extend into blackened claws, and your mind warps into idiocy. While in a rage, you gain a +2 natural armor bonus and may make two claw attacks at your highest attack bonus, dealing 1d6 points of damage. You gain an extra

NEW FEATS

Feat	Type	Prerequisites	Benefit
Awaken Ancestry	General	Planetouched	Gain a +2 insight bonus to Diplomacy and Intimidate against outsiders; can take ancestry feats.
Counterstrike	General	—	Enjoy a +1 bonus to attacks on designated foe who hit you.
Coward's Bane	General	Counterstrike	Gain a +2 bonus to damage on any melee attacks made against a foe who made a cowardly attack against you.
Damaging Spell	Metamagic	—	Inflict extra damage by reducing spell's save DC.
Divine Perseverance	Miracle	Cleric class levels, ability to turn/rebuke undead	Spend a turn undead attempt to become immune to thirst, hunger, and exhaustion.
Dretch Spawn	Ancestry	Awaken Ancestry, ability to rage	Gain additional effects when you enter a rage.
Dying Blow	General	Might of Courage, base attack bonus +4	Enjoy a +8 bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution when at 0 hp or less in combat; additional benefits.
Infernal Insight	Ancestry	Awaken Ancestry, evil alignment	Contact a powerful fiend to answer a yes or no question.
Might of Courage	General	Counterstrike	Gain a +2 bonus to attacks on designated foe who hit you (but whom you missed) and a +2 AC bonus against the foe.
Planar Awareness	Ancestry	Awaken Ancestry, Combat Reflexes	You are aware of the thoughts and emotions of others.
Ravid's Blessing	Ancestry	Awaken Ancestry, Wisdom 19	You can animate a Tiny object as <i>animate object</i> .
Spell Cleave	General	Damaging Spell	Cast a Touch spell on a foe as a free action immediately after dropping a foe with a Touch spell.
Spell of Opportunity	General	Combat Casting	Make attack of opportunity with a spell rather than a melee strike.
Throwback	Ancestry	Awaken Ancestry	When targeted by a fear spell, you gain a +4 Strength bonus and immunity to mind-affecting effects.
Warrior's Path	General	Great Cleave, base attack bonus +6	Move at double speed toward worthy foe.



+4 profane bonus to all saves against mind-affecting spells and effects.

Special: Instead of becoming fatigued at the end of a rage, you become exhausted. Whenever you enter this state, the rage deals 6 points of Intelligence damage to you.

DYING BLOW (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in Love and War by Atlas Games.

You are able to surge back from the brink of death and often take your opponent with you into the shadows.

Prerequisites: Might of Courage, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: You may invoke this feat when you are reduced to 0 or fewer hit points in a combat. You gain a +8 bonus to each of your Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores, so that you gain a +4 bonus to attack and damage rolls in melee combat, a +4 bonus to Armor Class, and +4 hit points per level. Your critical threat range with any melee weapon triples, and nonmagical attacks are treated as +1 magical attacks for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

However, the only actions you may take are full attack actions against the opponent who dropped you to 0 hit points or fewer, and any move actions required to pursue him if he flees. The effects of the feat expire when the opponent dies, or when you fall to 0 or fewer hit points again.

When the feat expires, you lose the extra hit points and your current state is determined by your hit points remaining. If you took any damage while under the influence of this feat, you'll have fewer hit points than you did when you invoked it, and it's likely that you'll be dead. If you're raised from the dead, and the level loss means you must lose a feat, you must lose this feat. You can regain it once you regain a level.

Special: A fighter may take this feat as one of her bonus feats.

INFERNAL INSIGHT (ANCESTRY)

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiesling:

A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

You can call upon your foul masters for the occasional tip or guidance.

Prerequisites: Awaken Ancestry, evil alignment.

Benefit: Once per week, you may contact a powerful fiend to answer a yes or no question as if you had cast *commune*. Unlike the spell, you may ask only one question for each use. Otherwise, it functions as the spell.

Special: Each use of this feat costs 100 XP. You cannot reduce your actual character level using this feat. If you do not have enough experience points available, Infernal Insight fails.

MIGHT OF COURAGE (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in Love and War by Atlas Games.

You have reserves of strength to call upon when facing an opponent who is better than you, which might tip the balance in your favor.

Prerequisite: Counterstrike.

Benefit: During your action, designate an opponent. This opponent must have dealt damage to you with at least three separate attacks, and you must have failed to deal damage to him with at least three separate attacks. All these attacks must have taken place in the current combat. For the rest of the combat, you get a +2 bonus to all attacks on this opponent and a +2 bonus to Armor Class against this opponent only. You may not change the target of this feat.

The bonuses from this feat overlap (do not stack) with those from Counterstrike.

Special: You can use this feat only once per day. You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you do so, you may use it one additional time per day. A fighter may take this feat as one of her bonus feats.

PLANAR AWARENESS (ANCESTRY)

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiesling:

A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Your inherited ability to sense others' thoughts allows you special advantage in combat, but at the cost of your sanity.

Prerequisites: Awaken Ancestry, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You are aware of the thoughts and emotions of others, their voices forming a constant barrage. Normally you can shut out the voices of others that echo in your mind, minimizing the noise and keeping you from slipping into madness. As a free action, you can drop your mind's protections and allow the torrent of thoughts to fill your head.

The thoughts are generally incoherent, being little more than jumbled snippets of ideas, providing a +2 insight bonus to Sense Motive checks, but in combat, listening to them provides an advantage. Each round you allow the thoughts to invade your mind, you gain a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls and a +4 insight bonus to your Armor Class, as you anticipate your opponents' actions. Shutting out the voices requires a full-round Concentration check (DC 10 + the number of rounds you access Planar Awareness).

For example, Jogan, an aasimar paladin, uses Planar Awareness for 6 rounds of combat. At the end of this time, he tries to shut out the voices. By expending a full-round action, he attempts a Concentration check against DC 17 (10 + 6 rounds of combat + 1 round of Concentration).

Special: Using this feat is very taxing on the mind. It deals 1 point of Wisdom damage every round you use it. If you fall to 0 Wisdom, you collapse into a nightmare-filled coma until you can be healed enough to attempt again to stop the voices. This feat is extremely dangerous if used without caution, as



the number of rounds that pass could forever condemn the character to a horrific sleep. The only way the character can externally halt the tide of information is through a *heal* spell, which renders the feat unusable for 24 hours, but stops the Wisdom damage.

RAVID'S BLESSING (ANCESTRY)

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched* by Green Ronin Publishing.

You have the ability to bring tiny inanimate objects to life.

Prerequisites: Awaken Ancestry, Wisdom 19.

Benefit: Once per day, you can animate a tiny object, granting it some semblance of life. Effectively, this feat functions as *animate object* cast as a caster equivalent to your total levels, except it restricts the size of the object to Tiny, has a range of only 30 feet, and requires you to concentrate on the object's movement. Concentrating in this manner is a full-round action, requiring you to succeed at a Concentration check (DC 10 + 1 for every 5 feet of distance between you and the object). In effect, you become a puppeteer.

This is a spell-like ability, and it is subject to anything affecting magic, such as *dispel magic*, counterspells, and

antimagic fields. See the *Player's Handbook* and MM for more details on this spell.

Special: Each use of this feat causes 1d6 points of non-lethal damage to you.

SPELL CLEAVE (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

You can follow through on powerful spells.

Prerequisite: Damaging Spell.

Benefit: If you reduce an opponent to 0 hit points or kill him by using a touch-range spell, you may immediately cast a touch-range spell as a free action against another creature in the area that you threaten. You may not take a 5-foot step before casting this extra spell. You may use this ability once per round, and the spell you cast using this feat may not have a casting time of more than one standard action. This feat does not grant extra spells per day, but rather allows you to cast the spells you have more quickly.

SPELL OF OPPORTUNITY (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

You can cast spells at characters who leave themselves open to you.

Prerequisite: Combat Casting.

Benefit: If a creature provokes an attack of opportunity from you, you may choose to cast a spell at that creature instead of making the attack of opportunity. The spell must target the creature provoking the attack of opportunity, although it may affect other creatures as well. The spell comes from your normal daily allowance, but does not prevent you from casting other spells in the same round. The spell of opportunity may not have a casting time greater than one standard action.

THROWBACK (ANCESTRY)

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiefling:*

A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

The essence of a lemure hides within you.

Prerequisites: Awaken Ancestry.

Benefit: Any time you are the target of a spell with the fear descriptor, your latent lemure blood asserts itself. You become a mindless killing machine, gaining a +4 inherent bonus to your Strength score and immunity to all mind-affecting spells. You choose your path randomly, attacking any living thing that gets in your way. You respond only to telepathic commands and, even then, only to simple instructions (no more than five words). The effects of this feat last for 6 rounds. Once you come out from under the influence of Throwback, you retain no memory of the events that took place while you were in this state.

WARRIOR'S PATH (GENERAL)

By David Chart; originally published in *Love and War* by Atlas Games.

When you wish to face a worthy opponent, no lesser foes can stand in your way.

Prerequisites: Great Cleave, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: Designate a worthy foe. You may move toward that foe at double your normal speed every round, even if there are other opponents in the way. If your movement would normally provoke an attack of opportunity against you, you may attack that opponent instead. If you drop him to 0 or fewer hit points with a single blow, your movement is not interrupted. If you fail to drop him, you must come to a stop, and that opponent gets his attack of opportunity against you.

A worthy foe is one whose Challenge Rating is no lower than one less than your character level. If the foe is not powerful enough, this feat will not work.

Special: A fighter may take this feat as one of her bonus feats.

NEW SKILL: PROPHECY

(WISDOM; TRAINED ONLY)

By W. Jason Peck; originally published in *Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery*.

Use this skill to peer beyond the veil of time to witness future events and to interpret signs, omens and the fates of people.

DC Prophecy Task

- N/A Earn a living wage for a week's dedicated work serving as an oracle (as per the Profession skill).
- 10 Identify an omen sent by the gods that you witness.
- 13 Identify an omen sent by the gods that is related to you by others.
- 15 Add 2 percent per caster level (to a maximum of 90 percent), instead of the typical 1 percent, to your base chance of receiving a meaningful reply when using the spells *augury* or *divination*. A separate roll is required each time such a spell is cast.
- 15 Interpret an omen or sign. Note that you always believe you have correctly interpreted the omen or sign, so the GM must make this check secretly. If the check fails, the GM should feel free to provide you with false or misleading information.
- 20 Add half your Prophecy ranks (rounded down) to the Difficulty Class of any divination spell you cast (if a save is allowed).
- 25 Use Prophecy to "Reveal the Future" once each day. "Revealing the Future" requires you to perform a ritual of some kind, such as consulting the innards of a sacrificed animal or inspecting burnt offerings upon an altar, and takes a minimum of 10 minutes. If this check succeeds, you gain a possible insight

into the near future. This manifests as a single +2 circumstance bonus on any one initiative check, Spellcraft check, or saving throw that you need to make in the next 24 hours (your choice, but you need to declare your intent to use the bonus before the die is rolled). If the Prophecy check fails, you have misinterpreted the signs and you gain no insight. In extreme circumstances, your probing of the fabric of destiny can irritate the gods, causing them to punish you. If you roll a natural 1 when making your Prophecy check to "Reveal the Future" you are cursed by the gods and for the next 24 hours you suffer a -2 penalty on all initiative rolls, Spellcraft checks, and saving throws that you are required to make.

If you do not use the +2 bonus granted by successfully "Revealing the Future" within 24 hours, it is lost.

- 30 Beseech the gods to send you a revelation concerning a specific topic through a dream. The GM decides what exactly is related to you if you succeed. You may attempt this task only once a month and never more than once concerning a specific topic.

Further attempts anger the gods and often result in divine retribution. You may not take 10 or 20 when attempting this task.

Check: You can glimpse the future and attempt to unravel its mysteries. The Difficulty Classes for Prophecy checks relating to various tasks are summarized in the table above.

Action: Varies, as noted above.

Try Again: See above.

Special: You may take ranks in this skill only if you start doing so at 1st level (i.e. you take at least 1 rank of Prophecy when you choose your initial skills at 1st level).

Synergy: If you have 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (mythology)*, you get a +2 bonus on Prophecy checks to identify and interpret omens or signs.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Perform (act, oratory, or sing), you gain a +2 bonus on Prophecy checks to earn a living wage as an oracle.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Sleight of Hand, you gain a +2 bonus on Prophecy checks to earn a living wage as an oracle.

* Feel free to substitute another Knowledge skill here, such as Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (arcana), if your game does not include the Knowledge (mythology) skill.

Magic

If you've paid any attention to the work I've done myself on the d20 System, it will come as no surprise that I like spells.

If a game session is a movie, spells are the special effects. One thing that ties together most of the spells in this chapter is that they all have great visuals. *Blood protectors* and *escape the bonds of flesh* will freak players out the first time they see either, and *borrow limb* and *shadow stitch* are just weird—in a good way.

But what makes for a good spell? For me, it's much more than just a spell that's balanced for its level. I want a new spell that I can include in my game to really add something new. A spell that blasts foes with fire isn't bad, necessarily, but we've mostly got that covered already in the system. *Object to ink* is a good example, as is *know thy master*.

Alternatively, if the end result of a spell is somewhat conventional, it should accomplish this effect in a new and interesting way. *Scoundrel's guidance* is just such a spell. The *mortal cloak* spells are as well. I'd put *liquid form* in that category as well—in the end, its end result is not all that different from that of *gaseous form*, but the flavor of the spell is cool (again, we go back to that concept of really cool visuals).

The *scapegoat* spells are worth calling out, as they are fairly original in their application. It's interesting enough to be able to reroll a failure, but then to be able to transfer the failure is another. One reason this is so interesting mechanically is that a wizard or sorcerer can use this spell, which allows a Will save, to force someone to likely fail a save later that they would have made. For example, a wizard casts *scapegoat* on a fire giant, who probably does not have great Will save bonuses. The giant fails. Now the wizard waits until he botches a roll and then casts a spell that allows a Fortitude save (like *disintegrate*). Normally, the giant would make such a save, but when the wizard transfers the terrible roll, it's a lot less likely—but still not certain, unless the player's got fire giant save bonuses memorized, so that's interesting. (It's also interesting that a character could cast this spell, with its relatively short duration, and not really blow any rolls.) It's a very "gamey" spell, but the concept of transferring luck provides enough of a story reason why it's happening, I think.

Sometimes, spells are story related. In other words, a creative DM or designer came up with something cool that made for an interesting encounter, location, character, or so on. Fantasy is full of wonderful ideas, particularly in a

backstory involving some ancient wizard's power or a lasting magical effect. Sometimes it's rewarding to actually come up with the mechanics for "story" magic. *Sleep of power* is just such a spell. No PC is ever going to prepare and cast it, but it makes for an interesting encounter in a dungeon or ancient ruin. *Halting the wayward tongue* is another such spell.

SPELL LISTS

The descriptions for these spells start on page 31.

ASSASSIN SPELL

1ST-LEVEL ASSASSIN SPELL

Shadow Stitch: Single shadow-casting target is entangled and cannot move.

BARD SPELLS

0-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Song of Serenity: Subject is cured of fatigue.

2ND-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Halting the Wayward Tongue: Target cannot speak of designated topic.

4TH-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Belsameth's Vengeance: Upon caster's death, scream curses killer, inflicting 1d4 points of Charisma damage/day.

5TH-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Forbidden Script: Writing poisons anyone who reads it, except the designated creature.

6TH-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Impede Magic: Spells of a school of your choosing are harder to cast in the area of effect.

CLERIC SPELLS

0-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Summarize: Quickly summarize a text of up to 250 pages.

4TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Borrow Limb. Attach a severed arm.

Escape the Bonds of Flesh: Target suffers 2d8 points of damage +1 point/caster level; if below 0 hp, target's skeleton tears out of body and animates.

Mortal Cloak: One person takes on the other's likeness; the other falls asleep.

5TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Scoundrel's Guidance. Gain weapon prowess and sneak attack ability of a rogue.

6TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Mortal Cloak, Forced: One person takes on likeness of unwilling target.

7TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Impede Magic: Spells of a school of your choosing are harder to cast in the area of effect.

8TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Burn Out: You create an area of dead magic.

9TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Blood Protectors: Create a number of warriors made of blood to defend you.

Despoil: You ruin a stretch of land.

DRUID SPELLS

3RD-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Liquid Form: Willing subject becomes living liquid.

4TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Armor of Thorns: +4 natural armor, 7 points of damage to enemies per melee strike on you.

8TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Burn Out: You create an area of dead magic.

9TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Despoil: You ruin a stretch of land.

RANGER SPELL

3RD-LEVEL RANGER SPELL

Armor of Thorns: +4 natural armor, 7 points of damage to enemies per melee strike on you.

SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

0-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Conj **Elemental Sample:** You create a 1-foot cubic block of an elemental substance.

Div **Summarize:** Quickly summarize a text of up to 250 pages.

1ST-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Ench **Shadow Stitch:** Single shadow-casting target is entangled and cannot move.

2ND-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Abjur **Scapegoat:** Transfer your poor die roll to another creature.

3RD-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Ench **Halting the Wayward Tongue:** Target cannot speak of designated topic.

Trans **Liquid Form:** Willing subject becomes living liquid.

Object to Ink: Transform one nonmagical object into a tattoo (reversible).

4TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Abjur **Know Thy Master:** Item functions properly only for designated owner.

Scapegoat, Greater: Transfer multiple poor die rolls to another creature.

Trans **Mortal Cloak:** One person takes on the other's likeness; the other falls asleep.

5TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Abjur **Impede Magic:** Spells of a school of your choosing are harder to cast in the area of effect.

Necro **Escape the Bonds of Flesh:** Target suffers 2d8 points of damage +1 point/caster level; if below 0 hp, target's skeleton tears out of body and animates.

Forbidden Script: Writing poisons anyone who reads it, except for the designated creature.

Trans **Awaken Tome:** Grant sentience to spellbook.

6TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Trans **Mortal Cloak, Forced:** One person takes on likeness of unwilling target.

7TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Trans **Sleep of Power:** You fall into a long comalike sleep; current ongoing spell remains active throughout the duration.

8TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Trans **Burn Out:** You create an area of dead magic.

SPELL

DESCRIPTIONS

This section offers a collection of two dozen new spells for casters of all types.

ARMOR OF THORNS

By Mystic Eye Games staff; originally published in The Pantheon and Pagan Faiths by Mystic Eye Games.

Conjuration (Creation)

Level: Drd 4, Rgr 3

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None (see text)

Spell Resistance: No

For the duration of the spell, your torso grows a weave of green, writhing thorns. Creatures striking you with natural weapons or hand-held weapons take 7 points of piercing damage each time they hit you. In addition, the thorns grant the caster a +4 natural armor bonus. The caster may will the thorns to move out of the way so he can safely receive beneficial touch-

based spells and spell-like effects. As a full-round action (does not provoke attacks of opportunity), the caster can have the vines strike out from his body, dealing 4d4 points of damage to all creatures within a 5-foot-long 180-degree arc in front of him, or to all creatures within 5 feet of him (Reflex save for half damage).

AWAKENED TOME

By Dana Lynn Driscoll; originally published in Libem Liborium: Complete Guide to d20 Books by Silven Publishing.

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 24 hours

Range: Touch

Target: Personal spellbook

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

You awaken your spellbook to humanlike sentience. To succeed, you must make a Will save (DC 10 + your current level). The awakened spellbook is friendly toward you. You have no spe-

cial empathy or connection with the spellbook you awaken, although it serves you in specific tasks or endeavors if you communicate your desires to it.

An awakened spellbook has characteristics as if it were an intelligent item. It also gains the ability to move its pages and propel itself across the ground at a base movement speed of 5 feet. It possesses language and senses similar to a human's senses. An awakened spellbook can speak one language you know plus one additional language that you know per point of Intelligence (if any).

An awakened spellbook gains 3d6 Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores as well as an additional 2d6 hit points.

Awakened spellbooks have distinctive personalities of their own. These personalities can reflect the personality of the caster, spells contained within, or be completely random. Some example personalities include: cautious, crazy, curious, helpful, ornery, passionate, philosophical, or sarcastic.

XP Cost: 250 XP

BELSAMETH'S VENGEANCE

By Mike Gill; originally published in Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands by Sword & Sorcery.

Transmutation

Level: Brd 4

Components: V, XP

Casting Time: Special (see below)

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One individual (see text)

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell may be cast as a free action whenever the caster is killed (reduced to -10 or fewer hit points or the target of a successful death spell), even if it is not yet the caster's initiative. Immediately, the bard chooses one target (who must be directly responsible for her death) and expends the necessary experience points. The bard releases an unearthly and terrible scream that tears at the murderer's soul and may eventually kill him.



The target must make a Will save or contract a curse dealing 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain per day on a failed Will save. Only a successful *break enchantment* or *remove curse* spell will remove this wasting. If the target's Charisma falls to zero, he immediately dies and his soul is forever consigned to the Slayer. This prevents any *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell, although a *miracle* or *wish* has a 5 percent chance per caster level of returning the victim to life.

XP Cost: 2,000 XP.

BLOOD PROTECTORS

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Conjuration [Creation]

Level: Clr 9

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: One or more summoned creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You channel divine energy into your own shed blood, transforming and expanding the drops of blood into a group of warriors. You can create one creature for every four levels (so, a 20th-level cleric could spawn five of these creatures). Each blood protector created costs one hit point's worth of shed blood.

Blood protectors appear human but have no distinct features; their bodies are clearly composed of fresh blood, somehow held together in largely solid form. The warriors appear to have armor molded to them, and each one wields a shield and either a spear or short sword (your choice). These warriors count as constructs—they are immune to critical hits and mind-affecting spells, and so on. They do not have names, personalities, or any sense of self, and are just intelligent enough to follow orders. After the spell fades, or if they are destroyed, they revert to drops of blood.

Material Component: The caster's fresh blood.

Blood Protector: Medium Construct; hp 50 +2/caster level; Initiative +8; Speed 30 ft.; Armor Class 26 (+4 Dex, +12 natural); Base Attack/Grapple +9/+14; weapon +14/+9 (2d6+5); SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.

BORROW LIMB

By Nevin Flanagan; originally published in Metalblades (Expanded Edition) by Genjitsu Games.

Necromancy [Evil]

Level: Clr 4*, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M (XP)

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

You attach the severed forelimb of another creature to your torso, using it as an additional off-hand. You can use it to make an additional attack in a full attack action, albeit at a –6 off-hand penalty (reduced to –3 if you have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat). You can also use it to wield a shield at no penalty (you can wield only one shield at a time). Additionally, you can hold objects or weapons in two hands and still cast spells with somatic components.

When the spell ends, the limb falls off painfully, dealing 1d3 points of damage and impeding your concentration.

You also can use this spell to attach a limb to the stump of one of your limbs that has been severed. In this case, the spell's duration changes to Instantaneous, it has an XP component of 500 XP, and you may gain some special property of the limb if it has any (a troll's arm might regenerate, for instance, or a gargoyle's stony arm might function as a shield). The GM may increase the XP component if the limb has numerous or potent special properties.

Material Component: The limb to be attached.

**Originally published as a death domain spell.*

BURN OUT

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Transmutation

Level: Clr 8, Drd 8, Sor/Wiz 8

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 day

Range: Touch

Effect: 10-ft. spread/level

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

With this spell, you create a permanent zone of dead magic, an area where no magic can be cast, just as if the area had been affected by an *antimagic field*. Divination spells cannot detect subjects within dead-magic areas, nor can a spellcaster use *teleport* or another spell to move into or out of the zone. The only exception to the “no magic” rule is permanent planar portals, which still function normally.

Dead-magic zones created by this spell can be repaired, but only by a *heightened limited wish* (8th level or higher), *miracle*, or *wish* spell.

XP Cost: 5,000 XP

DESPOIL

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Necromancy [Evil]

Level: Clr 9, Drd 9

Components: XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 60 ft.

Area: 60-ft. burst, centered on you

Duration: Permanent and Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None and Fortitude half

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell releases a burst of foul, life-destroying energy from the negative energy plane. All land in the area of effect blackens and is forever ruined. The spell reduces all plants to cinders. Against plant creatures, the spell deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum of 20d6). *Despoil* is equally effective against other opponents. Against living creatures (except vermin, which are immune), the spell deals 1d8 points of damage per caster level (maximum of 10d8). Those killed by this blast rise up as uncontrolled zombies 1d4 rounds later.

All water on the despoiled land turns poisonous as if tainted with lich dust (see Chapter Eight: Glossary in the DMG for details). Finally, necromancy spells cast in area affected by *despoil* are cast at +1 caster level and the DCs to save against their affects are at +1

A *wish* or *miracle* spell is needed to repair land ruined by this spell.

Undead caught in the *despoil* spell's burst heal all damage and gain maximum hit points based on their Hit Dice. For example, a Medium zombie who has 2d12+3 Hit Dice and 16 hp increases its hit point total to 27 because of this spell.

XP Cost: 5,000 XP

ELEMENTAL SAMPLE

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Conjuration (Creation)

[Air, Earth, Fire or Water]

Level: Sor/Wiz 0

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Create 1-foot cubic block of elemental substance

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex (negates) fire only

Spell Resistance: Yes

Elemental sample creates a small block of elemental matter (air, earth, fire, or water). The effects of this conjuration vary depending on the type of elemental matter created.

Air: The conjured air disperses into air or fire. However, if used underwater or underground, it creates a bubble of breathable air, allowing a character to breathe for 1d6 rounds before it is spent.

Earth: The conjured earth forms into a block of stone, crumbling into dust after a 1d3 rounds. You can drop it on an opponent, given the right conditions (see "Falling Damage" in the DMG; treat the stone as weighing 15 lbs.), or you could use it as a stepping stone or for any number of other possible uses.

Fire: The conjured fire snuffs out in 1 round. If used against an opponent and the opponent fails a Reflex save, the fire deals 1d3 points of damage. Conjured

fire can ignite combustibles, which burn for 1d2 rounds before extinguishing.

Water: Conjured water can snuff small fires (fireplace or smaller) or provide drinking water. If not used immediately, the conjured water evaporates in 1d6 rounds.

ESCAPE THE BONDS OF FLESH*

Design by Anthony Pryor, development by Ari Marmell; originally published in Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands by Sword & Sorcery.

Necromancy [Death, Evil]

Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude half

Spell Resistance: Yes

The victim's skeleton writhes and twists within his body, tearing muscles and rupturing flesh. The victim suffers 2d8 points of damage, +1 point per caster level (maximum +20). If the damage dealt by this spell brings the target below zero hit points, his skeleton tears from its body and becomes an animated skeleton. (See "skeleton" in the MM.) This skeleton is under the caster's control, in all respects as if it had been created by the *animate dead* spell. Should the skeleton possess too many Hit Dice for the caster to control, it remains independent and immediately attacks the nearest creature.

Material Components: A fragment of bone with flesh still attached to it and a piece of iron.

** This spell originally appeared in v. 3.0 format and was updated in 2004 to v. 3.5.*

FORBIDDEN SCRIPT

By Justin D. Jacobson; originally published in Poisoncraft: The Dark Art by Blue Devil Games.

Necromancy

[Poison, Language-Dependent]

Level: Brd 5, Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: 1 oz. vial of ink

Duration: 1 hour/level; see text

Saving Throw: None; see text

Spell Resistance: No

You imbue the target ink with powerfully poisonous energy. If used during the duration, the ink produces writing permeated with the energy. This effect becomes permanent once the ink of the writing has dried. At the time of casting, you may designate up to one unique creature per level as immune to the script's effects. Any-thing written with the ink after the duration expires is normal script.

Once the ink dries, anyone reading the text other than you or a designated creature is immediately exposed to a magically created ingestion poison. The poison has a Fortitude save DC equal to 10 + your caster level + your key ability modifier. The initial and secondary damages of the poison are death. Merely looking at the text does not trigger the effect. It is only triggered if the creature actually reads the writing.

Some shady spellcasters have been known to write their spellbooks entirely in *forbidden script*.

Material Component: Crushed lotus petals and wyvern blood worth 250 gp, mixed with the ink at casting.

HALTING THE WAYWARD TONGUE

By Mike Gill; originally published in Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands by Sword & Sorcery.

Enchantment (Compulsion)

[Mind-Affecting]

Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One individual

Duration: 1 day/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You name one subject, truth, or secret that the target is unable to talk about for the spell's duration. Whenever the target attempts to reveal, answer questions about, or speak about the forbidden subject, she will stutter helplessly and become completely unable to communicate.

This spell also prevents the target from revealing the secret in other ways, such as nodding, gesturing or writing it down.

IMPEDE MAGIC

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiesling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched* by Green Ronin Publishing.

Abjuration

Level: Brd 6, Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30-ft.-radius emanation, centered on you

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

An invisible harmonic vibration emanates from you when you cast this spell. The emanation protects you from a spell school of your choice, impeding all spells and spell-like abilities of the selected school. To target you (or the area in which you reside) with a spell from the impeded school, the caster must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level). If the check fails, the spell does not function but is lost as a prepared spell or spell slot. If the check succeeds, the spell functions normally.

Against pre-existing continuous spells in the area of effect, *impede magic* functions like *dispel magic*. For each creature within the area that is the subject of one or more spells, you make a dispel check (1d20 + your caster level, maximum +10) against each ongoing spell currently in the area of effect. The DC for this dispel check is 11 + the spell's caster level. Regardless of whether you fail a check or not, make dispel checks against every ongoing spell in the area of *impede magic*. Magic items are not affected. If you selected conjuration as the impeded school, pre-existing summoned monsters are subject to the dispel check. You may choose to succeed automatically on dispel checks against a spell you cast.

Material Component: A small golden bell worth 100 gp.

KNOW THY MASTER

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in *Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery*.

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: One item

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless, object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless, object)

You mystically mark a given item as "claimed" by a person of your choice. The spell causes the item to accept only the designated person as its owner, and to buck and twist in the hands of anyone else.

Anyone save the designated person who attempts to use the item suffers a –5 penalty on any relevant attack rolls or skill checks, and in their hands the item feels as if it weighs twice as much as normal. This spell is most often cast upon weapons, but it can also be applied to other objects like chariots or clothing.

Material Component: A drop of the designated owner's blood.

LIQUID FORM

By Christina Stiles; originally published in *Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery*.

Transmutation

Level: Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Willing corporeal creature touched

Duration: 2 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The subject and all its gear become translucent liquid. Its material armor (including natural armor) becomes worthless, though its size, Dexterity, deflection bonuses, and armor bonuses from force effects still apply. The subject gains damage reduction 10/magic and becomes immune to poison and critical hits. It can't attack or cast spells with verbal, somatic, material, or focus components while in liquid form. (This does not rule out the use of certain spells that the subject may have prepared using the feats Silent Spell, Still Spell, and



Eschew Materials.) The subject also loses supernatural abilities while in liquid form. If it has a touch spell ready to use, that spell is discharged harmlessly when the *liquid form* spell takes effect.

A liquid creature can't run, but it can move or swim at a speed of 10 feet. It can pass through small holes or narrow openings, even mere cracks, with all it was wearing or holding in its hands, as long as the spell persists. The creature is subject to the effects of heat, which can cause the creature to start to evaporate. Fire (heat) directed in an area of effect (not directly into the water, which would drench nonmagical fire) causes half damage. If any required Reflex save is made, the liquid creature suffers no damage.

A liquid creature can't manipulate objects or activate items, even those carried along with its liquid form. Continuously active items remain active, though in some cases their effects may be moot.

Arcane Material Component: A drop of water.

MORTAL CLOAK

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Transmutation

Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Targets: Two willing humanoid creatures

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell requires two people, one designated as a provider and one as a recipient. The provider is used as a mask for the recipient, who is polymorphed into the provider's form as if by the *polymorph* spell. The recipient gains the provider's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores, and all the provider's extraordinary special attacks. In addition, a portion of the provider's personality is imbued in the recipient. The recipient gains a +1 competence bonus to all skill checks for skills that the provider also has ranks in. The recipient also gains a +5 bonus to all

Bluff checks and a +15 bonus to all Disguise checks made to convince others that he is in fact the provider.

The provider falls into a deep, coma-like sleep for the duration of the spell. If he is somehow awakened, the spell ends.

Material Component: A bit of the provider's hair or flesh.

MORTAL CLOAK, FORCED

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Transmutation

Level: Clr 6, Sor/Wiz 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 ft./2 levels)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

As *mortal cloak*, save that the provider is not a willing participant (though he must be within range of the spell).

The provider does not fall into a coma, but suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks. This spell is most frequently used when the provider has been restrained or even rendered unconscious.

Material Component: A bit of the provider's hair or flesh.

OBJECT TO INK

By Mat Smith; originally published in Modern Magic by The Game Mechanics.

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 3*

Components: V, S, M, F

Casting Time: 30 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: One touched creature and one touched object (of up to same size)

Duration: One day/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You are able to magically transform one nonmagical object into a tattoo that resembles the object, which you inscribe on the skin of the subject. Only objects that are the same size category as the subject, or smaller, may be turned into *object to ink* tattoos. Because items affected by *object to ink* are held in stasis, even a ticking time bomb can be turned into a tattoo using this spell.

The subject may return the object to its original form by touching the tattoo with the intent of activating it, and chooses whether the object appears in his hand or at his feet. If the magical effect of the *object to ink* tattoo is suppressed or dispelled, or the spell's duration expires before the tattoo is activated, the object instantly appears at the subject's feet.

A single person can have only three *object to ink* tattoos at a time. Once a subject has three of them, any further attempt to inscribe additional *object to ink* tattoos automatically fails, and the additional object is lost. Note that other magic tattoos have no bearing on the total number of *object to ink* tattoos one may have.

Material Component: 1 oz. of ink.

Focus: A silver needle.

*Originally published as a d20 Modern arcane spell.

SCAPEGOAT

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell transfers your bad luck to another. You nominate a creature within range to be the scapegoat, or recipient. If the target fails its saving throw, the two of you are linked. While the spell is in effect, if you fail an attack roll, saving throw, or skill check, you may transfer that failed roll to the scapegoat and roll again. You cannot transfer more than one roll and must accept the results of your second roll. Once you have successfully transferred a bad roll to the scapegoat, the next attack roll, saving throw, or skill check the scapegoat makes uses the result of your die roll before your own modifiers.

For instance, let's say Phaeagos the sorcerer casts *scapegoat* in a battle with

minotaurs, targeting a minotaur archer. The minotaur fails its save, and the link is established. Two rounds later, the priest of Ares leading the minotaurs casts *hold person* on Phaegros, who rolls a 4 on his saving throw before modifiers.

Phaegros chooses to transfer that “4” to the minotaur archer, and rolls again on his saving throw; this time he gets a 15 and succeeds. On the minotaur archer’s next action, it fires another arrow at Phaegros. Instead of making an attack roll as usual, its attack is treated as if it rolled a 4 before modifiers. The minotaur archer misses, and the spell effect ends.

Note that the scapegoat must be within range when the spell is cast, but after it has taken effect the spell will last out its duration no matter how far away the scapegoat is.

Material Component: A scrap of goatskin.

SCAPEGOAT, GREATER

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

As *scapegoat*, except that you may transfer multiple poor rolls to the target. The target may have only one transferred roll “in the wings” at a time; if the scapegoat has yet to take an action that would use the transferred roll (for instance, if the scapegoat chooses to move instead of attacking), you cannot transfer another poor roll to him. If the scapegoat is paralyzed, knocked unconscious, killed, or otherwise rendered incapable of action, you cannot choose a second target. You may transfer a maximum of one poor roll per three caster levels to the scapegoat by use of this spell.

SCOUNDREL’S GUIDANCE

By Nevin Flanagan; originally published in Metablades (Expanded Edition) by Genjitsu Games.

Necromancy

Level: Clr 5, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Will partial

You open a portion of your spirit to possession by the soul of a dead rogue. You gain proficiency with all simple weapons and deal +1d6 points of sneak attack damage per three caster levels when striking a target which you flank, or which is denied dodge bonuses to Armor Class. You remain lucid and able to choose your actions, but the strain of sharing your mind with another spirit is taxing; you suffer 1d4+1 points of temporary ability damage to your spellcasting key ability score (Intelligence for wizards, Charisma for sorcerers, etc.). A Will save reduces this to half.

Material Component: At least three teeth from a fallen rogue.

SHADOW STITCH

By Nevin Flanagan; originally published in Metablades (Expanded Edition) by Genjitsu Games.

Enchantment (Compulsion)

Level: Asn 1, Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: As focus weapon used

Target: One creature that casts a shadow

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will dispels (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You make a touch attack with a piercing weapon against the target’s shadow as part of the spellcasting action. If the attack succeeds, the target creature is effectively entangled (–2 to attack rolls and –4 to effective Dexterity score), and cannot move from the current spot. Pulling the weapon out of the target’s shadow ends the spell, but the enchantment prevents the target from removing it easily.

If the target attempts to pull the weapon from his shadow himself, he must make a Will save against the spell and suffers nonlethal damage equal to the weapon’s normal damage; this damage is halved if he fails his Will save and does not remove the weapon.

Focus: The weapon used to make the attack roll.



SLEEP OF POWER

By Morten Braten; originally published in Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia by Necromancer Games.

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 7

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Special (see text)

Saving Throw: None (harmless)

Spell Resistance: None (harmless)

This spell must be cast in the round directly after you have cast another spell with a non-permanent and noninstantaneous duration. At the completion of the spell, you fall into a deep comalike sleep. Your body functions cease and you do not grow older. You are unaware of your surroundings and devoid of your senses. You are considered helpless while under the effects of this spell.

The purpose of this sleep is to extend the duration of the spell cast directly before *sleep of power*. The first spell lasts as long as you remain in the coma. You set the conditions for when you want to wake up; the first spell then ends.

The conditions you set must be clear, although they can be general. If you describe complicated or convoluted conditions, you may miscast the spell and never wake up again. The first spell is empowered by the slow leeching of your own life force (represented by an XP loss).

For example, you cast a *prismatic wall*, which normally lasts for 10 minutes per caster level. In the following round, you cast *sleep of power* with the condition to wake up when the seventh wall of the *prismatic wall* is destroyed. You fall into a coma for days, years or even centuries. When the seventh *prismatic wall* is destroyed, you wake up.

If you are successfully attacked, you wake up, and the associated spell ends immediately.

XP Cost: 1 XP per day you spend in your comalike state. If you fall to 0 XP as a result of this spell, you die, and the associated spell ends. Note that this XP drain is an exception to the rule prohibiting a caster from casting a spell that would reduce his level.

SONG OF SERENITY

By Christina Stiles; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Olympus by Sword & Sorcery.

Conjuration (Healing)

Level: Brd 0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You channel positive energy through your song, rejuvenating a fatigued target.

You must sing for 1 round and touch the target while singing for the spell to take effect. The fatigued subject is immediately rejuvenated. This spell counters *touch of fatigue*.

SUMMARIZE

By Dana Lynn Driscoll; originally published in Libem Liborium: Complete Guide to d20 Books by Silven Publishing.

Divination

Level: Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

This spell allows you to quickly summarize a text of up to 250 pages. If a text is over 250 pages, two or more castings of the spell are needed to summarize the entire text. The caster chooses the form of the summary at the time of casting: mental or audible. The summary, in the form of a short paragraph, is either mentally understood at the end of casting or audibly spoken at the end of the spell's casting.

MAGIC ITEMS

Good magic items are like good spells, but the really interesting ones are often the kinds of items you expect to get only limited use in the game. For instance, the *demon hooks*, below, are quite cool but won't be used every session.

Prerequisite spells from the original source material are included for the sake

of completeness. Their names suggest their function, if that becomes important, but it's the items that matter here, not the spells used to create them.

WEAPON QUALITY

Toxifying: Any poison applied to a toxifying weapon enjoys a +4 enhancement bonus to its Fortitude save DC. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted bestow the enhancement bonus upon any poison applied to their ammunition.

Faint transmutation; caster level 3rd; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *augment poison*; Price +2 bonus.

By Justin D. Jacobson; originally published in Poisoncraft: The Dark Art by Blue Devil Games.

WONDRIOUS ITEMS

Candle of Life: This strange candle is a thick, heavy, white wax cylinder nearly 4 inches in diameter and 1 foot in height. When the candle is prepared for lighting and its wick is first trimmed, the person performing the preparations names a particular person, then imbeds a nail clipping or lock of hair from the subject in the base of the candle. The candle is now mystically linked to that person. Once lit, the candle stays lit as long as that person is still alive. It flickers when he is in doubt, flares when he is in trouble, and burns straight and clear when he is prospering. Whenever the person is hurt, the candle's flame lowers, and by its height someone watching can tell how grievous the wound is. The candle goes out the instant the person dies, and cannot be relit by any means—after 1d4 hours the entire candle crumbles as if it were ancient. Noble parents often light these candles for their children, and ladies light them for their lords, so that they can be sure of how their loved ones fare while away.

Strong divination; caster level 13th; Craft Wondrous Item; *sensory bond*; Price 5,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in Relics & Rituals: Excalibur by Sword & Sorcery.

Demon Hooks: These fearsome hooks come in sets of six. While not effective weapons in combat, they are exceptionally useful against helpless

opponents. When the user carefully installs all six just under the skin, dealing 1 point of damage per hook, they wrack the victim with horrific pain, causing him to writhe in agony. You can ask up to six questions of the victim, and he must answer earnestly and to the best of his ability. Alternatively, you can use the hooks in place of the focus normally required for such spells as *augury* or *commune*. If used as the focus of a spell, you must still install them in a helpless victim, but the answers sought from the spells come from the victim's mouth.

Faint divination and enchantment; caster level 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *zone of truth*, and caster must forge them in the Abyss or another chaotic evil plane; Price 40,000 gp.

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiefling*:

A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Scabbard of Restoration: This impressive item keeps whatever blade it holds from being damaged. For an entire day after being drawn, the blade cannot be broken, chipped, dented, or otherwise harmed, and it retains its edge. Dirt and liquid slide off the blade easily, so that a simple shake of the wrist restores the sword to gleaming purity. Even spells like *rusting grasp* do not affect the blade—treat the sword as if it were a magic weapon itself, with a save of 20 against direct magical attack. Most of these scabbards appear as plain but well-made leather scabbards, with simple steel rings at the top and clasps along the side. Some are more ornamental, however.

Faint transmutation; caster level 5th; Craft Wondrous Item; *dirtwall*, *reinforcement*, *sharpen*; Price 5,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

By Aaron Rosenberg; originally published in *Relics & Rituals: Excalibur by Sword & Sorcery*.

Spare Hand: This is a preserved severed arm from a generally humanoid creature. If the command word is spoken while the arm is held to a creature's torso or the stump of an arm, it bonds to the creature, acting as an additional off-hand (see *borrow limb*). The arm can be removed by repeating the command word; note that anyone who knows the command word and holds the arm can remove it—a grapple check is needed to maintain a hold on the arm long enough to detach it.

If the arm is ever left in place for 24 hours, the user must make a Fortitude save (DC 16). Success means the arm drops off but still functions and can be reused immediately. Failure means the arm bonds permanently to the user (the command word will not detach it any more until it has been removed—generally with a slashing weapon). The arm permanently drains 2 points of the user's Constitution. Restoring these points by any means (such as a *restoration* spell) also detaches the arm. Cutting the arm off makes the Constitution loss unrestorable.

Certain unusual *spare hands* exist, taken from creatures with special properties. A few ideas are listed below.

Choker: The user gains a +2 racial bonus to Climb checks and can use a successful unarmed strike to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity in addition to damage. A choker arm drains 2 points of Dexterity in addition to Constitution when it bonds permanently.



Doppelganger: The arm's wielder may use *alter self* as a sorcerer of his character level once per day as a spell-like ability. The arm drains 2 points of Charisma in addition to Constitution when it bonds permanently.

Ethereal Filcher: Any weapon wielded in the spare hand gains the ghost touch special quality. The arm drains 2 points of Intelligence in addition to Constitution when it bonds permanently.

Ravid: The wielder can use *cure moderate wounds* once per day as a spell-like ability, but suffers a -2 penalty to Fortitude saves to overcome negative levels.

Salamander: The user gains fire resistance 5 and can *produce flame* at will (damage is 1d4+2) as a supernatural ability, but suffers a -4 racial penalty to saving throws against cold effects.

Troll: The user gains fast healing 3. He must save to keep the arm from bonding after one hour, and the arm drains 6 points of Constitution instead of 2 points when it bonds. If the arm is severed after a permanent bond, the severed arm dies and decays and the severed stump grows back over the course of a day.

Moderate necromancy; caster level 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *borrow limb*, *gentle repose*; Price 64,000 gp; Cost 32,000 gp + 2,560 XP.

By Nevin Flanagan; originally published in *Metablades* (Expanded Edition) by Genjitsu Games.

Monsters

Good monsters come in all shapes, sizes, and Challenge Ratings.

To select the creatures for this book, I basically came at each choice by breaking down what a monster really is: A monster is an encounter. So I looked for creatures that provided a different encounter experience than your typical claw/claw/bite monster. There's nothing wrong with an owlbear, but since we already have an owlbear in the game, you've got to do better than that to make the cut. These 20 creatures certainly did.

ARCANOPLASM

By Scott Greene; originally published in The Tome of Horrors II by Necromancer Games.

Large Aberration

Hit Dice: 7d8+42 (73 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 10 ft.

Armor Class: 16 (−1 size, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+11

Attack: Slam +7 melee (2d4+3 plus 1d6 acid)

Full Attack: Slam +7 melee (2d4+3 plus 1d6 acid)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Constrict 2d4+3 plus 1d6 acid, improved grab, arcane spell mimicry

Special Qualities: Absorb arcane magic, amorphous, arcane-sense 100 ft., blindsight 60 ft., immunities

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +7

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +18*, Hide +2, Move Silently +6

Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (slam)

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 8–15 HD (Large); 16–21 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature resembles a giant pale amoeba shot through with stripes of dark gray. Caught within its protoplasmic form are half-digested creatures of various types and sizes.

Wizards and sorcerers alike have tried for years to gather information on this alien creature, thought to be the result of a failed magic experiment. Thus far such information has eluded even the most resourceful of casters.

Arcanoplasms are found in areas where the residual energies of arcane magic linger. Such areas include ruined wizard towers, keeps, dungeons, and so forth. Here they feed and remain until disturbed. Most encounters with these monsters take place in such locations, as the arcanoplasm rarely travels far from its lair. And since it lairs in ruins and other such adventurer-attracting places, it rarely has to wait long between meals.

COMBAT

Arcanoplasms always target arcane spellcasting creatures first. Their innate ability to detect such creatures allows them to do so with precision and accuracy. Because of its ability to replicate spells cast near it, the arcanoplasm always tries to stay within 30 feet of an arcane caster. Mimicked spells are cast at the foe deemed most threatening.

Acid (Ex): An arcanoplasm secretes a highly corrosive acid that dissolves only flesh. Any melee hit deals acid damage.

Constrict (Ex): An arcanoplasm deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check.

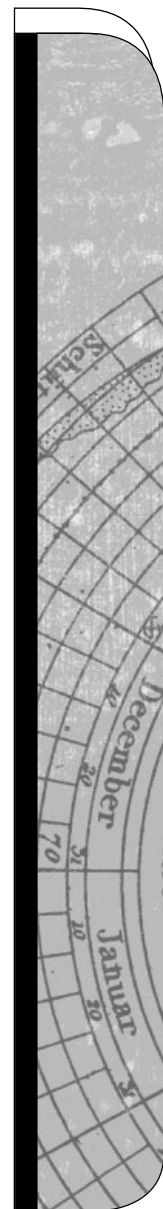
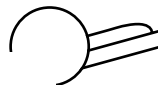
Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an arcanoplasm must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Arcane Spell Mimicry (Ex): An arcanoplasm can mimic any arcane spell of 4th level or lower that is cast within 30 feet of it. The spell takes effect on the arcanoplasm's next action, has a caster level of 7th, and does not require any components. The save against a mimicked spell has a Difficulty Class of 12 + the level of the spell. The save DC is Charisma based.

Step up, Spellcasters!

I chose the arcanoplasm because it makes for an interesting encounter for a party heavy with arcane casters. It's going to force players with arcanist characters to come up with some interesting alternate means of coping with the creature.

I like the fact that, while it's not an ooze, it's rather oozelike, and in fights against most oozes, the melee combatants all have to back up and let the casters deal with the creature (or risk losing their weapons, usually). When you see this thing in a dungeon, it doesn't look like the right thing to do is to run up and smack it, but in the end, it probably is.





Absorb Arcane Magic (Ex): Any arcane spell cast at an arcanoplasm is automatically absorbed. This cures 1 point of damage per 3 points of damage the spell would otherwise deal (nondamaging spells cure 1 point of damage per level of the spell). Spells that affect an area are not absorbed, but neither do they affect an arcanoplasm. An arcanoplasm cannot absorb divine magic and is affected by it normally.

Amorphous (Ex): Arcanoplasms have no discernable front or back and are not subject to critical hits. They cannot be flanked.

Arcanesense (Su): An arcanoplasm can automatically detect the location of any arcane spellcaster within 100 feet. This functions as a *detect evil* spell but there is no chance the arcanoplasm is stunned and it is not blocked by stone, lead, or other material.

Blindsight (Ex): An arcanoplasm's entire body is a primitive sensory organ that can ascertain prey by scent and vibration within 60 feet.

Immunities (Ex): Arcanoplasms are immune to poison, *sleep* effects, paralysis, *polymorph*, and stunning.

* **Skills:** An arcanoplasm has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

AMALGAM TEMPLATE

By Matthew Sernett; originally published in *The Advanced Bestiary* by Green Ronin Publishing.

An amalgam is two different monsters brought together into one being by either magic or selective breeding. The amalgam template can be used to create a new race to replace a standard one, new creatures resulting from a crossbreeding experiment, a series of monsters influenced by a god or demon, or even a unique creature brought about by a magical accident.

CREATING AN AMALGAM

CREATURE

"Amalgam" is an acquired or inherited template (your choice) that combines two creatures (referred to hereafter as base creatures).

An amalgam uses all the statistics and special abilities of the two base creatures except as noted here.

Size and Type: Find the amalgam's type by cross referencing the two base creatures' types on the Amalgam Size and Type table on page 43. The creature retains the subtypes of both base creatures unless those subtypes directly conflict (fire and cold, for example). In case of such a conflict, the creature loses both subtypes. The amalgam is the same size as the larger of the two base creatures.

Shape: The amalgam's appearance is determined by several factors.

Body Form: The amalgam has the general body form of whichever base creature has a higher character level (racial and class Hit Dice). In case of a tie, the DM may choose which base creature's form the amalgam has.

Limbs: The amalgam has the same kinds of limbs and attacking appendages as both base creatures. If both base creatures have a particular kind of limb, the amalgam has the same number of such limbs as does the base creature with the higher character level or Hit Dice. If both base creatures have the same character level or Hit Dice, the amalgam has the greater number of limbs. The amalgam can attack with any appendage that either base creature can, even if the other base creature has no attack with that limb. All limbs are sized appropriately for the amalgam.

For example, a Huge monstrous scorpion combined with a stirge has the general body form, legs, claws, and tail of the scorpion, plus stirgelike wings and a stirge's proboscis—both sized to fit its new body. A hill giant combined with a heavy warhorse has the body form, legs, and arms of a hill giant, plus a horselike face and hooflike feet to deliver the warhorse's hoof and bite attacks.

Appearance: The amalgam looks like a combination of both base creatures, even if its features do not retain the same functions. The GM may freely assign any appropriate physical characteristics to the creature within those parameters. In the example of the hill giant and horse amalgam above, the resulting creature might be hairy like a horse.

Hit Dice: The amalgam has the same number of racial Hit Dice as the base creature with the greatest number of racial Hit Dice. If the two base creatures have the same number of racial Hit Dice, the amalgam also has that number. Hit Dice gained through class levels do not count for this purpose. The amalgam's racial Hit Dice are of a size appropriate to its new type, as given on the following table.

Amalgam Type	Hit Die Type
Aberration	d8
Animal	d8
Construct	d10*
Dragon	d12
Elemental	d8
Fey	d6
Giant	d8
Humanoid	d8
Magical Beast	d10
Monstrous Humanoid	d8
Ooze	d10
Outsider	d8
Plant	d8
Undead	d12**
Vermin	d8

* Constructs receive bonus hit points based on size; see the MM for details. Constructs do not have Constitution scores, so they do not gain bonus hit points for each Hit Die based on high Constitution.

** Undead do not have Constitution scores, so they do not gain bonus hit points for each Hit Die based on high Constitution.

Speed: The amalgam possesses the speeds and movement modes of both base creatures. If both have a particular mode of movement, the amalgam's speed for that mode is the higher of the two. If both base creatures have fly speeds, the amalgam has the better maneuverability rating. For example, combining a centaur and a cloaker, the resulting amalgam would have the land speed of the centaur (50 ft.) and the fly speed of the cloaker (40 ft. with average maneuverability).

Armor Class: If the base creatures are the same size, simply average their natural armor bonuses and round down to determine the natural armor bonus of the amalgam. (A creature with no natural armor bonus has an effective natural armor bonus of +0.) Otherwise, adjust the natural armor bonus of the smaller creature according to the following table before averaging. Apply the modifiers stepwise to account for the size difference between the smaller base creature and the amalgam.

Size Change	Natural Armor Bonus Increase for Averaging
Fine to Diminutive	+0
Diminutive to Tiny	+0
Tiny to Small	+0
Small to Medium	+0
Medium to Large	+2
Large to Huge	+3
Huge to Gargantuan	+4
Gargantuan to Colossal	+5

For example, if the amalgam is Huge and the smaller of the two base creatures is Small, you would add +0 (for Small to Medium), +2 (for Medium to Large), and +3 (for Large to Huge), for a total of +5, to the smaller creature's natural armor bonus before averaging it with that of the larger creature.



The amalgam's size also determines its size modifier to Armor Class, as normal.

Base Attack Bonus: Recalculate the amalgam's base attack bonus for its racial Hit Dice based on its creature type and number of racial HD, according to the following table. Add to this value the base attack bonus for any class Hit Dice it has.

Base Attack Bonus	Creature Type
HD × 3/4 (as cleric)	Aberration, animal, construct, elemental, giant, humanoid, ooze, plant, vermin
HD (as fighter)	Dragon, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, outsider
HD × 1/2 (as wizard)	Fey, undead

Grapple: The amalgam's size modifier for grapple checks appears on the following table.

Amalgam Size	Size Mod. for Grapple Checks
Fine	-16
Diminutive	-12
Tiny	-8
Small	-4
Medium	+0
Large	+4
Huge	+8
Gargantuan	+12
Colossal	+16

Attack: The amalgam retains all the attacks of the base creature with the greater racial Hit Dice. It also gains any attacks the other base creature has that are associated with limbs it gained from that creature, and it retains the weapon and armor proficiencies of both base creatures. Weapon attacks are always primary attacks, and natural attacks gained from the creature with fewer racial HD are always secondary attacks. Natural attacks gained from the base creature with more racial Hit Dice are either primary or secondary, as they were for that creature. If the base creatures have the same number of racial HD, the amalgam gains all the attacks of both, subject to the number of appropriate limbs it actually has. The GM chooses one kind of natural attack to be the primary one if more than one option exists.

For example, a naga combined with a goblin would possess the goblin's arms, so it could wield weapons and make attacks with those limbs. The standard size modifier applies to the amalgam's attack rolls, according to the following table.

Amalgam Size	Size Modifier for Attacks
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	+0
Large	-1
Huge	-2
Gargantuan	-4
Colossal	-8

Damage: If the base creatures are both the same size as the amalgam, the base damage for its attacks remains the same as it was for the base creatures. Otherwise, keep the damage for the larger base creature's attacks the same and adjust the base damage for each of the smaller creature's attacks according to the following table. Scale the damage once for each size category of difference between the smaller base creature and the amalgam. Ability score damage or drain and energy damage also scale up in the same manner, but negative levels bestowed via attacks do not increase.

Old Damage	New Damage
1	1d2
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	1d8
1d8	2d6
1d10	2d8
2d6	3d6
2d8	3d8
4d6	6d6
4d8	6d8

For example, if the amalgam is Huge and the smaller of the two base creatures is Small, an attack from the smaller one that originally dealt 1d4 points of damage would scale up three times. Thus, 1d4 becomes 1d6 (for Small to Medium), 1d6 becomes 1d8 (for Medium to Large), and 1d8 becomes 2d6 (for Large to Huge).

Space/Reach: The amalgam has a space and reach appropriate for its size, as given in the following table. If the reach for a natural attack that the amalgam receives from one of the base creatures is greater than indicated for its size in the chart below, extend the reach of that attack by the same amount that it is extended from the original creature. For instance, an amalgam formed from a choker and an ogre mage would possess tentacle attacks with a reach of 15 feet.

Size	Space/Reach (Tall)	Space/Reach (Long)
Fine	1/2 ft./0 ft.	—
Diminutive	1 ft./0 ft.	—
Tiny	2 1/2 ft./0 ft.	—
Small	5 ft./5 ft.	—
Medium	5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.
Large	10 ft./10 ft.	10 ft./5 ft.
Huge	15 ft./15 ft.	15 ft./10 ft.
Gargantuan	20 ft./20 ft.	20 ft./15 ft.
Colossal	30 ft./30 ft.	30 ft./20 ft.

Special Attacks: An amalgam retains all the special attacks of both base creatures that do not depend on a limb or body form the amalgam does not possess. If two special attacks are similar, the amalgam has the better of the two. For example, if both base creatures deal extra fire damage with their melee attacks, but one deals +1 point and the other deals +1d6 points, the amalgam deals +1d6 points of fire damage with each of its melee attacks. Recalculate the save DCs for all special attacks based on the amalgam creature's racial Hit Dice or character level, as applicable, and its ability scores.

Now evaluate your monster's special attacks, realizing it may get to use only two or three of them in a single combat. If it seems as if your amalgam has too many special attacks, pare them down until you are satisfied.

Special Qualities: An amalgam retains all the special qualities of both base creatures that do not depend on a limb or body form that the amalgam does not possess. If two special qualities are similar, the amalgam has the better of the two. For example, if one base creature has fire resistance 20 and the other has fire immunity, the amalgam has fire immunity.

Saves: The amalgam's base saves depend on its type, as given on the following table. Any saves not noted as good for a particular type are poor. See Chapter One: Abilities of the *Player's Handbook* for the progression of good and poor saves. Add to each of these values the corresponding base save bonuses for any class Hit Dice the amalgam has.

AMALGAM SIZE AND TYPE

		Base Creature 2														
		Aber	Ani	Con	Drag	Ele	Fey	Gia	Hum	MagB	MonH	Ooze	Out	Pla	Und	Ver
Base Creature 1	Aber	Aber	Aber	Con	Drag	Ele	Aber	Aber	Aber	MagB	Aber	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Aber
	Ani	Aber	Ani	Con	Drag	Ele	Fey	MonH	MonH	MagB	MonH	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Ver
	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con
	Drag	Drag	Drag	Con	Drag	Ele	Drag	Drag	Drag	Drag	Drag	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Drag
	Ele	Ele	Ele	Con	Ele	Ele	Ele	Ele	Ele	MagB	Ele	Aber	Out	Ele	Und	Ele
	Fey	Aber	Fey	Con	Drag	Fey	Fey	Fey	Fey	MagB	Fey	Aber	Out	Fey	Und	Aber
	Gia	Aber	MonH	Con	Drag	Ele	Fey	Gia	Gia	Aber	MonH	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Aber
	Hum	Aber	MonH	Con	Drag	Ele	Fey	Gia	Hum	Aber	MonH	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Aber
	MagB	MagB	MagB	Con	Drag	MagB	MagB	Aber	Aber	MagB	Aber	MagB	Out	Pla	Und	MagB
	MonH	Aber	MonH	Con	Drag	Ele	Fey	MonH	MonH	Aber	MonH	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Aber
	Ooze	Aber	Aber	Con	Aber	Aber	Aber	Aber	Aber	MagB	Aber	Ooze	Aber	Aber	Und	Aber
	Out	Out	Out	Con	Out	Out	Out	Out	Out	Out	Out	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Out
	Pla	Pla	Pla	Con	Pla	Ele	Fey	Pla	Pla	Pla	Pla	Aber	Pla	Pla	Und	Pla
	Und	Und	Und	Con	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und	Und
	Ver	Aber	Ver	Con	Drag	Ele	Aber	Aber	Aber	MagB	Aber	Aber	Out	Pla	Und	Ver

Creature Type	Good Saves	Size Change	Str	Dex	Con
Aberration	Will	Fine to Diminutive	+0	-2 (min. 1)	+0
Animal	Fortitude and Reflex (and sometimes Will)	Diminutive to Tiny	+2	-2 (min. 1)	+0
		Tiny to Small	+4	-2 (min. 1)	+0
		Small to Medium	+4	-2 (min. 1)	+2
Dragon	Fortitude, Reflex, Will	Medium to Large	+8	-2 (min. 1)	+4
Elemental	Fortitude (Earth or Water) or Reflex (Air or Fire)	Large to Huge	+8	-2 (min. 1)	+4
		Huge to Gargantuan	+8	+0	+4
Fey	Reflex and Will	Gargantuan to Colossal	+8	+0	+4
Giant	Fortitude				
Humanoid	Fortitude or Reflex or Will				
Magical beast	Fortitude, Reflex				
Monstrous humanoid	Reflex, Will				
Ooze	—				
Outsider	Fortitude, Reflex, Will				
Plant	Fortitude				
Undead	Will				
Vermin	Fortitude				

Abilities: For each mental ability score, take the average for the two base creatures, rounding down if the result is 10 or higher or up if it is below 10. If the base creatures are the same size, follow the same procedure for each physical ability score. Otherwise, adjust the ability score of the smaller creature according to the table at right before averaging. Apply the modifiers stepwise to account for the size difference between the smaller base creature and the amalgam.

Skills: The amalgam retains the racial skill bonuses described for both base creatures, but it loses all skill ranks the base creatures possessed. Recalculate skill points for the amalgam's racial Hit Dice according to its type, as given on the table at right, then purchase its skills afresh, treating both base creatures' skills as class skills and all others as cross-class skills. The amalgam retains any skill points gained from class levels.

Creature Type	Skill Points
Aberration	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Animal	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Construct	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Dragon	(6 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Elemental	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Fey	(6 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Giant	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Humanoid	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Magical beast	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Monstrous humanoid	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Ooze	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Outsider	(8 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Plant	(2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) × (HD +3)
Undead	(4 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)
Vermin	(2 + Int modifier, min. 1) × (HD +3)

Languages: If the amalgam can speak, it speaks a number of languages appropriate for its Intelligence score, chosen from the languages the base creatures speak.

Feats: The amalgam retains the bonus feats of both base creatures, but it loses all other feats that the base creatures had. Recalculate the number of feat slots the amalgam has

based on its character level (racial and class Hit Dice) and assign feats as desired, giving preference to the feats that the base creatures possessed. The amalgam must still meet any prerequisites for feats chosen to fill vacant feat slots.

Environment: The amalgam can exist in any environment that either base creature could.

Organization: An amalgam is often a wholly new and strange being, so you can assign whatever organization you

wish. A typical amalgam, however, is organized in the same manner as one of its base creatures.

Challenge Rating:

Compare the amalgam to both base creatures and select a challenge rating based on theirs. Then compare the amalgam to creatures with

Challenge Ratings up to 3 higher to determine whether the CR you have assigned is reasonable.

Treasure: Standard if both base creatures have standard treasure, or as the base creature with the most treasure, if both have poorer than standard, or as the base creature with the least treasure if they both have better than standard.

Alignment: The amalgam's alignment includes elements of both base creatures' alignments. For example, an amalgam created from a chaotic neutral and a lawful evil base creature could be chaotic evil or lawful neutral, at your option.

Advancement: By Hit Dice, or by character class if the amalgam has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher. If advancement is by Hit Dice, the amalgam can gain twice its standard Hit Dice and retain the same size category, and up to three times its standard Hit Dice with each additional size category.

Level Adjustment: In general, the level adjustment of an amalgam should be slightly lower than the combined level adjustments of both base creatures.

AMALGAM CHARACTERS

First, choose a favored class for the amalgam based on its abilities and skills. Then use that information to design its culture.

SAMPLE AMALGAM CREATURE:

ARROWTAUR

(MINOTAUR-ADULT ARROWHAWK AMALGAM)

Large Outsider (Air, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 7d8+14 (45 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 17 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+16

Attack: Greataxe +11 melee (3d6+7/X3) or bite +11 melee (2d6+5) or electricity ray +8 ranged touch (4d6)

Full Attack: Greataxe +11/+6 melee (3d6+7/X3) and bite +6 melee (2d6+5) and gore +6 melee (1d8+2) or bite +11 melee (2d6+5) and gore +6 melee (1d8+2) or electricity ray +8 ranged touch (4d6)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Electricity ray, powerful charge 4d6+7

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immune to acid, electricity, and poison, natural cunning, outsider traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, scent

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills: Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +10, Listen +14, Move Silently +12, Search +13, Sense Motive +10, Spot +14, Survival +10 (+12 following tracks)

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Track

Environment: Elemental Plane of Air and underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (3-4)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +8

Here is an example of an amalgam using a minotaur and an adult arrowhawk as the base creatures. Uneducated folk sometimes mistake this cruel, 12-foot-tall, winged humanoid for a vrock. Its long neck is topped by a birdlike head composed mostly of jagged beak and deadly, bull-like horns. The arrowtaur's four black wings give it great maneuverability in flight, and it can lash out at its foes with lightning from its feathered tail. Its two legs end in hooves, and its arms in humanlike hands.

Arrowtaurs inhabit many of the blocks of elemental earth that soar through the elemental plane of air. There they dig out rookeries and build labyrinthine nests in which to raise their young and plan assaults on the strongholds of other air creatures.

Arrowtaurs speak Auran.

COMBAT

Arrowtaurs are fearsome fighters that enjoy melee. With their greataxe, bite, and gore attacks, they can easily devastate most foes.

When confronted by an enemy too dangerous to engage in melee, an arrowtaur relies on its electricity rays and fly-by attacks.

Electricity Ray (Su): An arrowtaur can fire an electricity ray from its tail once per round to a range of 50 feet.

Powerful Charge (Ex): When an arrowtaur charges a foe, it lowers its head for a gore attack. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, it gains a single gore attack (+6 melee) that deals 4d6+7 points of damage.

Natural Cunning (Ex): Arrowtaurs are immune to *maze* spells and never become lost. Furthermore, they are never caught flat-footed.

Skills: An arrowtaur has a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

BEDLAM

By Scott Greene; originally published in *The Tome of Horrors II* by Necromancer Games.

Large Aberration (Chaotic)

Hit Dice: 13d8+26 (84 hp)

Initiative: +12

Speed: Fly 50 ft. (perfect) (10 squares)

Armor Class: 25 (–1 size, +8 Dex, +8 natural), touch 17, flat-footed 17

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+16

Attack: Slam +11 melee (2d4+3)

Full Attack: 2 slams +11 melee (2d4+3)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Chaos burst, chaotic resonance

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/lawful, darkvision 60 ft., detect law, immunity to chaos, immunity to transformation, resistance to law spells

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +10

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 26, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +15*, Listen +14, Move Silently +21, Search +10, Spot +14

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: 14–39 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature has no set form. Before your eyes it seems to shift from a vaguely humanoid form with yellow eyes and no other discernible facial features to a swirling mass of grayish black, crackling matter. In its latter form, blue-gray energy arcs and dances through its form, making it resemble a thundercloud shot through with lightning. It seems to alter its form constantly, as if it has no control over it.

A bedlam has no control over its form, but its ever-shifting form does not hamper its abilities in combat. It is a semi-amorphous, nearly vaporous creature composed of pure chaos that makes its lair in areas overrun or wrought with chaos (such as chaotic temples and churches or areas that were once lawfully aligned but have been poisoned by the effects of chaos). Bedlams are sometimes employed by chaotic wizards or clerics to guard and keep safe a certain location. Being intelligent, the bedlam strikes a deal with said employer so that it benefits from the bargain as well. Such deals



never last long, as the bedlam is an unstable and erratic creature, given to flights of fancy. A bedlam enjoys chaos and seeks to spread it wherever it goes.

COMBAT

Bedlams seek to induce chaos and destroy or weaken law with every move. Since a bedlam *detects law* continuously, it uses this ability to discern whether those it encounters are of a lawful nature or not. Nonlawful creatures are not left unmolested, but are generally just subjected to one or two chaotic bursts before the creature moves on. If lawful creatures are present, the bedlam unleashes a chaotic burst and moves to melee, forming two limbs from its chaotic mass which it uses to pound its opponents.

Chaos Burst (Su): Once per round as a standard action, a bedlam can release a burst of crackling gray energy in a 20-foot radius around itself. Lawful creatures caught in the area take 5d8 points of damage and are staggered for 1d6 rounds. Nonlawful and nonchaotic creatures take 3d8 points of damage, but are not staggered. A Will save (DC 18) halves the damage. Chaotic-aligned creatures are immune to this effect. The save DC is Constitution based.

Chaotic Resonance (Su): A bedlam emanates an aura of pure chaos: an invisible and ever-changing ring of chaotic matter. This aura disrupts spells and magic items (except those of a

chaotic nature) used within 20 feet of the bedlam. Spellcasters in the area must make a successful caster level check (DC 18) each time they attempt to cast a spell. If the check fails, the spell fizzles away just as if it had been cast. Any magic item used within this area must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 18) or lose its magical properties for that round. A new save must be made each round the item remains within the area. The check and save DCs are Constitution based.

Spells with the “chaotic” descriptor that are cast within this area function as if they were empowered (as by the Empower Spell feat). Chaotically aligned weapons (*anarchic* weapons) deal an extra 1d6 points of damage while in this area (i.e., an *anarchic* weapon deals an extra 3d6 points of chaotic damage against lawful-aligned foes). Lawful-aligned

weapons are unaffected by this aura.

Not Your Typical Creature

Again, here's a creature that's going to give you a very different, challenging encounter than your run-of-the-mill creature. With its 50-foot fly speed, the bedlam is likely to always maneuver close enough to enemy casters to muck with their spellcasting and items. Mostly, though, I think the bedlam would be a wonderful companion to a chaotic-aligned cleric with a lot of chaos spells prepared who uses the chaotic resonance to empower his own spells while it messes with his foes.

Detect Law (Su): A bedlam can continuously *detect law* as the spell (caster level 10th), though there is no chance of it becoming stunned by overwhelming lawful auras. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

Immunity to Chaos (Ex): The bedlam cannot be affected by any spell, spell-like ability, weapon, magic item, or supernatural effect that has the chaotic descriptor.

Creatures with the chaotic subtype are unaffected by this immunity and can attack the bedlam normally.

Immunity to Transformation (Ex): No mortal magic can affect or fix a bedlam's ever-shifting chaotic form. Effects such as polymorphing or petrification force the creature into its new shape for a moment, but it immediately returns to its mutable form as a free action at the start of its next turn.

Resistance to Law Spells (Ex): The bedlam has SR 20 against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects with the law descriptor. This spell resistance also applies to spells of the law domain.

* **Skills:** A bedlam's grayish coloration grants it a +8 racial bonus to Hide checks when in areas of thick fog or smoke.

BIPEDAL CREATURE TEMPLATE

By Matthew Sernett; originally published in The Advanced Bestiary by Green Ronin Publishing.

A bipedal creature possesses the body of a humanoid and the features of some other creature. It has two legs and at least two arms that are capable of wielding weapons and manipulating tools, and it stands either erect or hunched

like an ape. Bipedal races often form stable societies, cultures, and nations, even if the multilegged or legless creatures they resemble are solitary beings or simple hunter-gatherers.

CREATING A BIPEDAL CREATURE

“Bipedal creature” is an inherited or created template that you can add to any living creature that does not have a generally humanoid form (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A bipedal creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Shape: Two of the base creature's limbs (usually the last pair) become legs, and any other limb except a head that has a natural attack becomes an arm capable of either wielding a weapon or making a natural attack, as the creature chooses. Arms need not be jointed limbs in the typical sense; tentacles or other limbs could also be capable of wielding weapons and objects. If these transformations do not grant the bipedal creature at least two arms and two legs, it either converts limbs that do not have natural attacks or grows limbs until it meets these minimum numbers.

If the base creature has wings or a tail that do not make natural attacks, these limbs remain as they were, adjusting in size to fit the bipedal creature's body without dragging. Any



of the base creature's limbs not accounted for in this process become vestigial.

Speed: If the base creature has a land speed, it changes to the speed given on the following table. If the base creature lacks a land speed, the resulting bipedal creature's land speed becomes one-half the speed indicated on the table (minimum 5 feet).

Size	Land Speed
Fine	5 ft.
Diminutive	10 ft.
Tiny	20 ft.
Small	20 ft.
Medium	30 ft.
Large	40 ft.
Huge	50 ft.
Gargantuan	60 ft.
Colossal	60 ft.

Attack: The bipedal creature retains all the base creature's natural attacks except those employing limbs that have become legs. If its Intelligence score is 3 or higher, it can also wield weapons normally with its arms, and it retains all the base creature's weapon and armor proficiencies. Any natural attacks it has retain the same primary or secondary status they had for the base creature.

Space/Reach: The base creature's space and reach change according to the following table. If the base creature has a longer reach than normal for its size, however, the bipedal creature retains that reach.

Size	Space/Reach
Fine	1/2 ft./0 ft.
Diminutive	1 ft./0 ft.
Tiny	2-1/2 ft./0 ft.
Small	5 ft./5 ft.
Medium	5 ft./5 ft.
Large	10 ft./10 ft.
Huge	15 ft./15 ft.
Gargantuan	20 ft./20 ft.
Colossal	30 ft./30 ft.

Special Attacks: A bipedal creature retains all of the base creature's special attacks except rake.

Advancement: Same as the base creature, or by class if it has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher.

BIPEDAL CHARACTERS

Though the bipedal creature template has no level adjustment, it can be used to make normally unplayable monsters more feasible as characters. A bipedal creature favors whichever class the base creature does.

SAMPLE CREATURE: BIPEDAL

NIGHTMARE

Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 6d8+18 (45 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft. in chainmail armor (6 squares); base speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Armor Class: 29 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +13 natural, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 27

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+14

Attack: Greataxe +9 melee (3d6+6/×3) or hoof +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire)

Full Attack: Greataxe +9/+4 melee (3d6+6/×3) and bite +4 melee (1d8+2) or 2 hooves +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire) and bite +4 melee (1d8+2)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Flaming hooves, smoke

Special Qualities: Astral projection, darkvision 60 ft., *etherealness*

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 12

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10 (+12 on other planes and following tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run

Environment: Gray Waste of Hades

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +4

Bipedal nightmares can strike terror into the ranks of the most stalwart army and the hearts of the greatest heroes. Although they present no greater threat in melee than trolls do, their ability to slip through the defenses of foes and seemingly return from the dead time and time again are legendary.

With the body of a midnight-black giant and the head of a demonic horse, a bipedal nightmare would be worthy of its name for its appearance alone. Its flaring nostrils spew sparks and smoke, and its huge, hooklike hands strike fire with each blow.

COMBAT

A bipedal nightmare prefers to attack foes while astrally projecting itself from another plane. Whenever possible, it first uses *etherealness* to slip through defenses and perform reconnaissance so it can concentrate its attacks on the most vulnerable foes. A bipedal nightmare prefers to attack spellcasters first to minimize the chances of having its astral form dispelled. While projecting an astral form, the creature fights fearlessly, knowing

that it cannot truly be killed. But it does not take danger to its true form lightly. When it encounters a foe in its real form, it most often flees by flying away or becoming ethereal, even if the foe seems to present little threat.

A bipedal nightmare's natural weapons, and any weapons it wields, are treated as evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Cool Combinations

The bipedal creature is a useful template for when you need some abomination created by a mad wizard or some mysterious new race. It's tempting to limit it to animals (crocodile man! owl man!), but don't overlook the strange-but-cool combinations like the bipedal basilisk, or the bipedal hell hound.

rage, filling a 15-foot cone with hot, sulfurous smoke that chokes and blinds opponents. Anyone in this area must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 16) or take a –2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls until 1d6 minutes after leaving the cone. The bipedal nightmare can use this attack once per round as a free action during its turn, and the smoke lasts for 1 round. The smoke does not obscure the bipedal nightmare's vision at all, but it does grant the creature concealment against opponents 5 feet away and total concealment against opponents 10 feet or farther away.

The save DC is Constitution based.

Astral Projection (Su): A bipedal nightmare can produce an *astral projection* effect as the spell (caster level 20th) at will.

Etherealness (Su): A bipedal nightmare can produce an *etherealness* effect as the spell (caster level 20th) at will.

CARCAETAN

By Alex Freed and Robert J. Gallagher; originally published in Denizens of Avadnu by The Inner Circle.

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 3d12+3 (22 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 15 (+5 natural); touch 10; flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+4

Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d6+3/19–20)

Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d6+3/19–20) and 2 claws +2 melee (1d4+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Feed

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., rejuvenation, graft, undead traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +6

Feats: Improved Critical (bite)^B, Multiattack, Toughness

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary or pack (3–7)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 4–10 HD (Medium); 11–17 HD (Large)

Separated from the natural world, not quite alive and unable to die, carcaetans maintain their existence through a diet of mortal flesh.

Carcaetans vary dramatically in appearance. Some look almost exactly as they did before their transformation, with only a slight pallor and lack of scent to differentiate them from the living. Others are clearly unnatural, shambling about with open scars, blackened limbs, and wounds that should be lethal. A few, who maintain some degree of sanity and adapt to their new existence, learn to replace destroyed extremities with parts from other creatures, rebuilding their bodies piece by piece.

A carcaetan is created by magic designed to remove a creature from the cycle of life. The ritual is sometimes used as a punishment or a powerful curse, but some evil individuals undergo it intentionally. The carcaetan loses its ability to grow, heal, reproduce, and die, and must steal energy from the living to gain the strength to act. The blood and flesh of animals and humanoids provide the greatest amount of nourishment, but carcaetans can survive off grass and leaves for days. A rat can keep a carcaetan energetic for hours, while



a human can satiate one for a week. Without nourishment, carcaetans lose the capacity to exert themselves, becoming thinking lumps of inanimate flesh.

An injured carcaetan's wounds never close, but even burned or mutilated ones eventually pull themselves back together. Carcaetans who suffer grave injuries often lose the ability to think clearly, becoming mindless, flesh-eating monsters.

Carcaetans speak the languages they spoke in life (usually Common).

COMBAT

Carcaetans tend to be fearless in combat, tearing wildly with their mouths and claws. However, only the most degenerate or powerful do not flee from creatures wielding positive energy.

Feed (Ex): Upon striking a successful critical hit against a living, corporeal creature with a bite or claw attack, a carcaetan can feed on the creature's torn flesh and blood. If the carcaetan hits with a claw attack, it must take a move action to feed, or the meat and blood loses potency and is wasted. A carcaetan that feeds gains 1d4+1 points of Strength for one hour.

Rejuvenation (Su): Unless destroyed by some form of positive energy (such as turning or cure spells), a destroyed carcaetan rises again with maximum hit points after 1d4 hours. If its body is mutilated, the rejuvenation usually takes 1d4 days instead, unless the body parts are actively prevented from gathering in one place. (In this case, the rejuvenation can be prevented indefinitely.) Cremated, frozen, or similarly treated carcaetan bodies take 1d4 weeks to reassemble. Dealing damage from a positive energy source to a carcaetan corpse permanently destroys it, regardless of what kind of damage reduced the carcaetan to 0 hit points or less.

Graft: A carcaetan can gain some of the abilities of living, corporeal foes by replacing its limbs with theirs, drinking their blood, or ornamenting itself with their bones, skin, or internal organs. This process takes several hours under the best of circumstances, and the carcaetan must succeed at a Will save (DC 15) or gain no benefit. No foe can grant a carcaetan more than one ability, and some creatures simply do not have compatible physiologies that a carcaetan can use. Guidelines for granting carcaetans new abilities are as follows.

Attacks: A carcaetan can replace its bite attack and either of its claw attacks with the bite or claw attack of a Small to Large creature. This grants the carcaetan the damage and threat range of the grafted natural weapon, but does not change the carcaetan's attack bonus or grant it any supernatural abilities. Extraordinary abilities carried over with natural weapons include poison and disease effects and extra energy damage, but not improved grab, swallow whole, or rend.

Breath Weapon: By wearing the head or skull (as a helm or mantle, or by replacing the carcaetan's head) of a Small to Large creature, a carcaetan can gain the creature's breath weapon. The effect is identical to the creature's, but the save DC is 10 + half the carcaetan's Hit Dice.

Fast Healing: A carcaetan who grafts on part of the anatomy of a creature with fast healing gains fast healing 1, or adds 1 to its current level of fast healing.

Gaze Attack: By wearing the eyes of a Small to Large creature, a carcaetan can gain the creature's gaze attack. The effect is identical to the creature's, but the save DC is 10 + half the carcaetan's Hit Dice + carcaetan's Charisma modifier.

It's in the Abilities

I really like the carcaetan's graft ability. You could have multiple encounters with these monsters and each one would seem very different. I also really like that the creature comes with a table for giving it some random additional abilities.

RANDOM ADVANCED CARCAETANS

A carcaetan that gains Hit Dice or advances by character class is likely to gain abilities from other creatures along the way. To randomly determine these abilities and their sources, use the following table. Roll once per added Hit Die or level. A roll indicating a feature that already exists (a second head, or a third claw) means that the carcaetan gains no ability.

d%	Effect	Source*
01	Claw 1d3 plus 1d4 fire	Fire mephit claw
02-07	Bite 2d6	Skum head
08-09	Breath weapon, 15-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 4d6 cold	Winter wolf skull
10-16	Claw 2d6/19-20	Haklaa claw
17-19	Bite 1d4 plus filth fever	Teo-seleraj jaws
20-25	Claw 1d4 plus vylar fever	Lesser vylar arm
26-27	Spell resistance 11	Necromerger skin
28	Dimension door 1/day	Barghest blood
29-30	Resistance to fire 5	Vrock feathers
31	Detect good 1/day	Imp blood
32-42	Fast healing 1	Adithari blood
43-46	Spell resistance 7	Sea hag skin
47-50	Dancing lights 1/day	Gnome heart
51	Petrifying gaze, turn to stone, 30 feet	Medusa eyes
52-54	Resistance to cold 20	Ice mephit blood
55-59	Bite 2d6 plus poison (DC 18, initial and secondary damage 1d8 Con)	Spirit naga head
60-62	Terrifying gaze, paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds, 30 feet	Nightbeast skull
63-67	Resistance to electricity 2	Aasimar blood
68-70	Remove disease 1/week	6th-level paladin heart
71	Bite 2d8	Adult tojanida jaws
72-74	Breath weapon, 60-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds (but no more than 5/day), turn to stone	Gorgon skull
75-79	Resistance to acid 7	Abjuraton zha'lari scales
80-84	Hideous laughter 1/day	Albino darnu pelt
85-89	Claw 1d6	Vanthiir arm
90-92	Ray of frost 1/day	Winterbrood fury blood
93-95	Breath weapon, 10-foot cone, once every 2d4 rounds, damage 2d6 fire	Hell hound skull
96-00	Roll twice	—

* Note that some of these sources are monsters from Denizens of Avadnu not reprinted here. Feel free to substitute MM creatures appropriate to the effect.

Resistance to Energy: A carcaetan can gain one-half (maximum 20) of an energy-resistant creature's resistance to one type of energy. If the creature is immune to the type of energy instead, the carcaetan gains a resistance of 20.

Spell-Like Abilities: Drinking a creature's blood can give a carcaetan access to one of its spell-like abilities. The carcaetan can choose the ability from those available to the creature, but the ability must emulate a spell of a level no higher than one-half the carcaetan's HD. The carcaetan can use the ability once per day, or at the same frequency as the creature, whichever is less frequent. The ability operates at a caster level equal to the carcaetan's Hit Dice, and the save DC is Charisma based.

Spell Resistance: As resistance to energy.

Carcaetans may also be able to gain other abilities.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

Residents of a town have been turning up dead near a ruined tower. The player characters discover a trio of mad carcaetans in a vault below the tower, but tracks suggest that a fourth recently escaped. The carcaetans were apprentices to a wizard decades ago, and were transformed and buried alive as part of a plot by the wizard. The fourth carcaetan retains his sanity, and now that he is free seeks to learn why the wizard betrayed him.

CLOCKWORK CREATURE TEMPLATE

By Matthew Sernett; originally published in The Advanced Bestiary by Green Ronin Publishing.

The clockwork creature whirs to life at the whim of its master. Made of various metals and granted the soul of a monster, this intelligent construct is designed to resemble a living creature in both form and function. A clockwork creature serves as an intelligent aide, guardian, or even friend to its creator, or to anyone its creator designates.

A clockwork creature's body is a complicated construction of gears, wires, chains, and struts, often covered with riveted metal plating to give it the form of the living creature it mimics. Magic and engineering give a clockwork creature access to the powers of the creature it resembles, thus enabling its creator to effectively gain the aid of any being desired.

CREATING A CLOCKWORK CREATURE

"Clockwork creature" is a created template that you can add to any living, corporeal creature that is not an ooze (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A clockwork creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to construct with the appropriate augmented subtype. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses or saves. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Change all racial Hit Dice to d10s. The creature gains bonus hit points as a construct of its size category. Since it has no Constitution score, it does not gain bonus hit points based on high Constitution.

Armor Class: The clockwork creature's natural armor bonus improves by +5 over that of the base creature.

Special Qualities: The clockwork creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described here.

Created Mind (Ex): Clockwork creatures know nothing when first created, but many are intelligent. On its first day, a clockwork creature functions like any mindless construct, but thereafter its native intelligence comes to the fore, allowing it to reason and improvise. Creators can thus give their clockwork constructs somewhat vague commands and allow them to interpret and act on them, secure in the knowledge that their servants will not act in a way contrary to their desires.

Despite a reasoning intelligence, the clockwork creature remains wholly under the control of its creator and does nothing against that individual's will. Because of a special bond formed during its first day, the clockwork creature can instinctively detect the location of its creator, regardless of magical and natural barriers, so long as the latter remains within 100 feet. This ability prevents anyone from successfully impersonating the creator within that range. If someone resembling its creator issues an order from more than 100 feet away, the clockwork creature might or might not obey, depending on how suspicious it is of the command.

The creator can designate another creature or group of creatures for the clockwork creature to obey, but the creator's commands always take precedence over those of other designated commanders. If the clockwork creature has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, it continuously watches designated commanders for signs that they are commanding it against its creator's intent. Should such a situation occur, the clockwork creature acts loyally instead.

A clockwork creature with an Intelligence of 12 or higher automatically knows when its creator is being forced to act against his own wishes through mental control or other coercion, physical or mental. In such a case, the clockwork creature improvises a way to attain its creator's true goals without allowing harm to come to him. In the absence of any commands from its creator, a clockwork creature follows the last commands it received. If it knows its creator is dead, it attempts to achieve her goals to the best of its ability.

Hardness (Ex): A clockwork creature has a hardness of 10. This quality functions like object hardness, even though a clockwork creature is not an object.

Metal Body (Ex): Beneath its skin, a clockwork creature is largely composed of metal. It counts as a ferrous creature for the purpose of *rusting grasp* and other spells that have special effects on metal.

Resistances (Ex): A clockwork creature has resistance 10 to acid, cold, and fire.

Vulnerability to Electricity (Ex): Because the delicate interior mechanisms of a clockwork creature are particularly vulnerable to electricity damage, it takes double damage from electricity on a failed save and half damage on a successful save. If the base creature is immune to electricity, it takes no damage from electricity attacks but is dazed for 1 round on a failed save.

Windup Key (Ex): A clockwork creature must be wound up each day by placing a small key into a special orifice and turning it—an action that provokes attacks of opportunity. For each full round that the key is turned, the clockwork creature can remain active for four hours (maximum 24 hours). In most cases, the creator either retains her construct's key or gives it to the clockwork creature so that it can keep itself running.

When the clockwork creature runs down, it becomes immobile, helpless, and unconscious, and it remains so until wound up again. Anyone can wind up a clockwork creature without the key by making a successful Open Lock check as a full-round action (DC based on the quality of lock the creator built into the clockwork creature). This technique allows the clockwork creature four hours of activity (maximum 24 hours) for each such successful check.

Abilities: Change from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Dex +4, Int -4 (minimum 0), Wis -4 (minimum 1), Cha -4 (minimum 1). As a construct, a clockwork creature does not have a Constitution score.

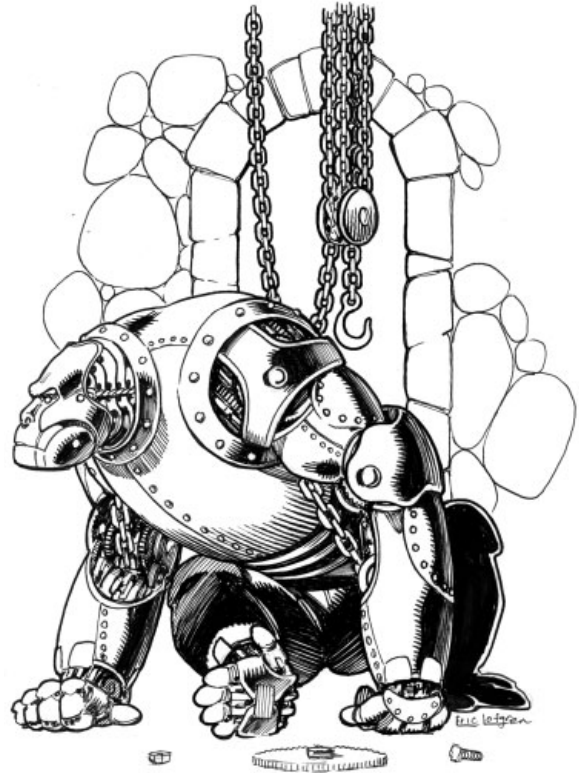
Skills: A clockwork creature gains skill points for its racial Hit Dice as a construct $(2 + \text{Intelligence modifier}) \times (\text{HD} + 3)$, or 0 if its Intelligence score is 0. Recalculate its available skill points, then purchase its skills afresh, treating the base creature's skills and any skills in which the creator has 5 or more ranks as class skills and all others as cross-class skills. The clockwork creature retains any skill points gained from class levels and any racial bonuses the base creature has.

Due to its innate understanding of its own being, a clockwork creature gains a +5 racial bonus on Craft (armorsmithing), Craft (weaponsmithing), and Disable Device checks. It can use these skills as though trained, even if it has no ranks in them. However, the clockwork creature takes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks because its internal mechanisms constantly click and whir while it functions.

Languages: A clockwork creature that is intelligent enough to speak languages speaks those that its creator teaches it. Orders from its creator are heeded regardless of language, but a clockwork creature must understand the language of another commander to follow his orders. If it does not, it simply obeys the last orders of its creator.

Environment: Same as creator.

Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (3-4).



Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

Alignment: Always neutral.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +4.

CREATING A CLOCKWORK CREATURE

Clockwork creatures are created like golems. Because it is composed of various metals and composite materials, a clockwork creature weighs nearly twice what the base creature does. Creating a clockwork creature costs 800 times its CR in gold pieces. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (armorsmithing) and Craft (weaponsmithing) check (DC 20 for both), the Craft Construct feat, and the ability to cast arcane or divine spells.

The level of the clockwork creature's creator must be at least 4 higher than the clockwork creature's Challenge Rating. Completing the ritual drains a number of experience points equal to the clockwork creature's creation cost divided by 25, and it requires the spells *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, and *resist elements*.

CLOCKWORK CHARACTERS

A clockwork character favors whichever class the base creature does. One can introduce such a character into a campaign in a number of ways. For instance, a character might create a clockwork creature as a cohort under another player's control.

SAMPLE CREATURE:

CLOCKWORK CHOKER

Small Construct (Augmented Aberration)**Hit Dice:** 3d10+10 (26 hp)**Initiative:** +8**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 10 ft.**Armor Class:** 24 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +9 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 20**Base Attack/Grapple:** +2/+12**Attack:** Tentacle +8 melee (1d3+5)**Full Attack:** 2 tentacles +8 melee (1d3+5)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./10 ft.**Special Attacks:** Constrict 1d3+7, improved grab**Special Qualities:** Created mind, construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., hardness 10, metal body, quickness, resistances (acid 10, cold 10, fire 10), vulnerability to electricity, wind-up key**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +2**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 9, Cha 3**Skills:** Climb +13*, Craft (armorsmithing) +5, Craft (weaponsmithing) +5, Disable Device +5, Hide +10, Move Silently +4**Feats:** Improved Initiative^b, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy**Environment:** Any**Organization:** Solitary**Challenge Rating:** 4**Treasure:** 1/10 coins; 50% goods; 50% items**Alignment:** Always neutral**Advancement:** 4–6 HD (Small); 7–12 HD (Medium)**Level Adjustment:** —

Here is an example of a clockwork creature using a choker as the base creature.

A clockwork choker's lack of intelligence makes it a poor guardian, since it must be supervised constantly or specifically told not to move.

However, its ability to capture or kill foes with equal ease makes it a valuable bodyguard.

Creators of clockwork chokers often bring the funny-looking con-

structs with them to social occasions or diplomatic meetings at which a more threatening creature would be unwelcome.

A clockwork choker resembles a normal choker except that its body is made of jointed metal and gears, and its arms are long springs.

COMBAT

A clockwork choker lacks the intelligence to interpret commands, so it follows the orders of its designated commander to the letter.

Constrict (Ex): A clockwork choker deals 1d3+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check against a Large or

smaller creature. A creature in the clockwork choker's grasp cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components because its neck is being squeezed.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a clockwork choker must hit a Large or smaller opponent with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict. A clockwork choker receives a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks (already included in the statistics above).

Construct Traits: A clockwork choker has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage, but can be repaired. It has darkvision 60 feet and low-light vision.

Created Mind (Ex): See the clockwork template.

Hardness (Ex): See the clockwork template.

Metal Body (Ex): See the clockwork template.

Quickness (Su): A clockwork choker is amazingly quick. It can take an extra standard action or move action during its turn each round.

Resistances (Ex): See the clockwork template.

Vulnerability to Electricity (Ex): See the clockwork template.

Windup Key (Ex): See the clockwork template.

* **Skills:** A clockwork choker has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

CORPSESPINNER

By Scott Greene; originally published in *The Tome of Horrors II*

by Necromancer Games.

Huge Magical Beast**Hit Dice:** 15d10+45 (127 hp)**Initiative:** +3**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.**Armor Class:** 25 (–2 size, +3 Dex, +14 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22**Base Attack/Grapple:** +15/+28**Attack:** Bite +19 melee (2d8+7 plus poison)**Full Attack:** Bite +19 melee (2d8+7 plus poison)**Space/Reach:** 15 ft./15 ft.**Special Attacks:** Create corpsespun, poison, web**Special Qualities:** Astral jaunt, astralsense, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +7**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 15, Cha 10**Skills:** Climb +13, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Spot +10

Feats: Ability Focus (poison), Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Move Silently)

Environment: Astral Plane

Organization: Solitary or troupe (1 plus 4–9 corpsespun)

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 16–25 HD (Huge); 26–45 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: —

A massive, bone-white tarantula is the only way to describe this monster. Bands of gray and silver ring its abdomen and legs, and its body is covered in short, bristly hairs of white and silver. A large skull-like marking appears on the creature's thorax. Its eight eyes are stark white.

Corpsespinner are highly aggressive extraplanar spiders originating on the astral plane. Only rarely do they enter the material plane in search of prey, choosing to hunt on the astral plane searching for and devouring astral sharks (see the *Tome of Horrors*) and other native creatures. On the material plane, they often hunt other giant spiders or humanoids.

On the astral plane, corpsespinners spend their time constructing elaborate webs. The webs use many different things as anchor points, such as rare naturally occurring materials on the astral plane, corpses of deceased astral travelers, and just about anything else the corpsespinner can incorporate into its webbing.

When not constructing its webs, the corpsespinner is usually hunting. And this sometimes leads it to the material plane. If encountered on the material plane, there is a good chance the corpsespinner has a group of corpsespun with it, the victims of its most recent kills.

Corpsespinner are primarily solitary creatures in regard to associating with others of their kind. Their ecology and reproduction cycles are unknown at this point, though intrepid interplanar adventurers have talked of huge webbed lairs on the astral plane containing young corpsespinners.

COMBAT

Corpsespinner hunt their prey on the astral plane, only occasionally entering the material plane to look for food. Once prey is sighted, the corpsespinner moves quickly to encase it in its sticky webbing before attacking repeatedly with its poisonous bite.

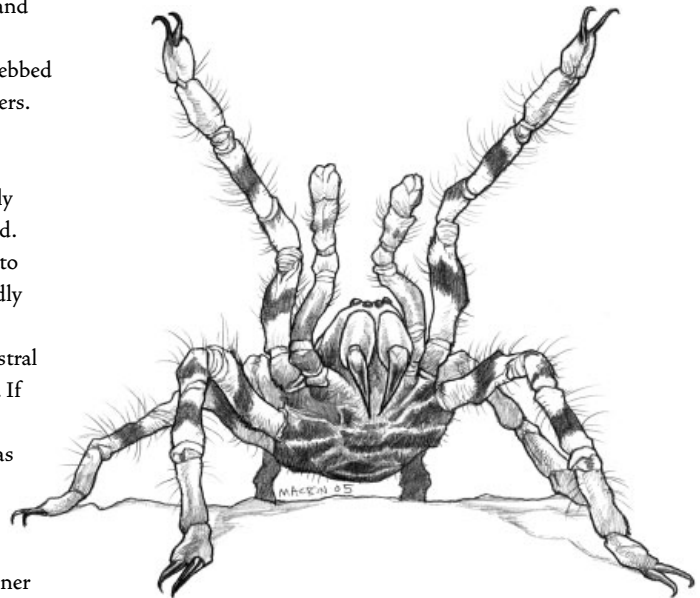
On the material plane it attacks a foe, shifts to the astral plane, and shifts back again to finish the opponent off. If forced to retreat, the corpsespinner shifts to the astral plane and returns to its lair. A corpsespinner usually has a gang of corpsespun with it (see the corpsespun template on the next page for details). In such a case, the corpsespinner attempts to web its foes and let the corpsespun move in to soften them up. The corpsespinner then charges in and bites its targets to finish them off.

Create Corpsespun (Su): Creatures slain (and not devoured) by a corpsespinner rise in one hour as creatures known as corpsespun (see the corpsespun template, next page).

Poison (Ex): The bite of a corpsespinner delivers a highly toxic poison. The save DC is Constitution based and includes a +2 bonus from the corpsespinner's Ability Focus feat.

Corpsespinner Poison: Injury, Fortitude DC 22 negates, initial and secondary 2d6 points of Intelligence damage. A victim whose Intelligence drops to 0 dies in one hour unless the poison is neutralized (such as with a *neutralize poison* spell). Slain creatures rise as corpsespun (see its create corpsespun ability, above).

Web (Ex): A corpsespinner can fire sticky strands of web constructed of astral material to a maximum range of 80 feet (range increment 20 feet) up to 10 times per day. This webbing is effective against targets up to one size smaller than the corpsespinner and is similar to a net attack. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 24) or burst it with a Strength check (DC 28). Both are standard actions. The check DCs are Constitution based and include a +4 bonus because the webs are constructed of astral material. The Strength check DC also includes a +4 racial bonus. A corpsespinner can also create sheets of webbing that cover a 40-foot area. Approaching creatures must make a successful Spot check (DC 20) to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape gain a +5 bonus if the trapped victim has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section of web has 16 hit points and damage reduction 5/–.



Astral Jaunt (Ex): A corpsespinner can shift from the astral plane to the material plane as a free action, and then shift back again as a move action (or during a move

Creep Out Your Players

I used the corpsespinner in a game, mostly to give the players the creeps. I played up the unnerving nature of this thing, which mostly involved its movement capabilities. It never stuck around for more than a round in one place. After reading the corpsespun template, I also described the effects of the Intelligence damaging poison to the players as feeling as though the corpsespinner was literally injecting them with spiders that went into their skulls and ate at their brains. Throw in some previous corpsespun victims oozing spiders from their mouths and you've got a memorable encounter.

action). This special ability is otherwise identical to the *astral projection* spell, except that it transports only the corpsespinner.

Astralsense (Su): A corpsespinner can automatically detect the location of anything within 200 feet of it on the astral plane.

Skills: A corpsespinner can always take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Armor Class: A corpsespun has a +4 natural armor bonus or the base creature's natural armor bonus, whichever is higher.

Base Attack: A corpsespun has a base attack bonus equal to one-half its Hit Dice.

Attack: The corpsespun retains all the natural attacks and weapon proficiencies of the base creature. A corpsespun also gains a slam attack if it didn't already have one.

Full Attack: Corpsespun creatures attack with weapons and natural attacks, using all at their disposal.

Damage: A slam attack deals damage depending on the corpsespun creature's size. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage rating or use the values below, whichever is better.

Slam		Slam	
Size	Damage	Size	Damage
Fine	1	Large	1d6
Diminutive	1d2	Huge	2d6
Tiny	1d3	Gargantuan	2d8
Small	1d4	Colossal	4d6
Medium	1d6		

Special Attacks: A corpsespun loses any supernatural or spell-like abilities of the base creature but retains all extraordinary special attacks. Additionally, it gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of 10 + half the corpsespun's HD + its Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Special attacks that use the base creature's Constitution score now use its Charisma (it's undead and has no Constitution score now).

Spider Spray (Ex): Once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, a corpsespun can send a hail of spiders from its mouth in a cone 20 feet long. Each creature in the area must make a Reflex save (DC of 10 + half the corpsespun's HD + its Charisma modifier) or be hit by 2d6 spiders. A successful save reduces the number of spiders that hit by half.

The spiders quickly spread across the foe's body in the same round they contact it. An foe can easily dispatch a number of spiders equal to its Dexterity bonus (to a minimum of 1) on its turn as a full-round action. On the corpsespun's next action, all spiders automatically bite, delivering a highly debilitating poison that deals 1d4 points of Strength damage if the opponent fails a Fortitude save (DC of 10 + half the corpsespun's HD + its Charisma modifier, +1 for every three spiders that bite). One minute later another Fortitude save (same DC) must be made to avoid another 1d4 points of Strength damage. (Only one attack roll is made, and a creature can take initial and secondary damage only once per round, regardless of the number of spiders a creature actually has on it.)

Spider Transfer (Ex): Whenever a corpsespun successfully hits an opponent with a natural attack, 1d4 spiders are automatically transferred to the opponent. The spiders quickly spread and bite a foe (as detailed in the spider spray ability above). They are dispatched as above.

CORPSESPUN CREATURE

TEMPLATE

By Scott Greene; originally published in The Tome of Horrors II by Necromancer Games.

Corpsespun are undead creatures formed when a living creature is slain by a corpsespinner (see the corpsespinner entry in this book). The poison of the corpsespinner interacts with the slain creature's body and animates it as a corpsespun creature: a zombielike automaton sheathed in webs whose insides have been replaced with thousands of tiny spiders. The creature retains no memories of its former life and, while free willed, the corpsespun rarely wanders far from the corpsespinner that created it.

The creature appears as a zombie shrouded in thick webs with hundreds of spiders (of all sizes, shapes, and colors) crawling over its body and into and out of its ears, eyes, and mouth. Corpsespun creatures do not understand or speak any languages they knew in life.

CREATING A CORPSESPUN

"Corpsespun" is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal creature slain by a corpsespinner (see the corpsespinner's entry in this book) and is hereafter referred to as the base creature. It uses all the base creature's statistics except as noted here.

Size and Type: The base creature's type changes to undead. It retains any elemental type modifiers except "fire," but loses any alignment or racial type modifiers. It also gains the augmented subtype.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future HD to d12s.

Speed: If the base creature can fly, reduce its maneuverability to clumsy.

Special Qualities: A corpsespun loses all supernatural and spell-like abilities but retains all extraordinary special qualities of the base creature and gains the undead type. In addition, it gains the following special qualities.

Damage Reduction (Ex): A corpsespun with 1–3 HD has no damage reduction. A corpsespun with 4–9 HD has damage reduction 5/magic. One with 10 HD or more has damage reduction 10/magic. A base creature that already has damage reduction uses its original value or this one, whichever is better.

Darkvision (Ex): Corpsespun have darkvision to a range of 60 feet.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A corpsespun has turn resistance +2.

Abilities: Modify from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex –2 (minimum 10), Int 1, and Cha +2. Being undead, the corpsespun has no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature and modified by any increase or decrease in ability scores.

Feats: Same as the base creature. The base creature also gains Toughness as a bonus feat. If the base creature already has Toughness, the effects stack.

Environment: Same as the base creature.

Organization: Gang (2–5) or troupe (1 corpsespinner plus 6–11 corpsespun).

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Treasure: Same as the base creature.

Alignment: Always evil.

Advancement: None.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature.

Corpsespun are undead creatures formed when a living creature is slain by a corpsespinner (see the corpsespinner entry in this book). The poison of the corpsespinner interacts with the slain creature's body and animates it as a corpsespun creature: a zombielike automaton sheathed in webs whose insides have been replaced with thousands of tiny spiders. The creature retains no memories of its former life, and while free willed, the corpsespun rarely wanders far from the corpsespinner that created it.

The creature appears as a zombie shrouded in thick webs with hundreds of spiders (of all sizes, shapes, and colors) crawling over its body and into and out of its ears, eyes, and mouth. Corpsespun creatures do not understand or speak any languages they knew in life.

SAMPLE CREATURE: 10TH-LEVEL

CORPSESPUN FIGHTER

Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)

Hit Dice: 10d12+3 (68 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 19 (+4 natural, +5 chainmail), touch 10, flat-footed 19

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+10



Attack: Slam +10 melee (1d6+5); or longsword +12 melee (1d8+5, 19–20/X2)

Full Attack: Slam +10 melee (1d6+5); or longsword +12 melee (1d8+5, 19–20/X2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spider spray (Ref DC 17, Fort DC 17), spider transfer

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., +2 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +6

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 10, Con —, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 15

Skills: Climb +13, Intimidate +15, Jump +13

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Environment: Any land and underground

Organization: Gang (2–5) or troupe (1 corpsespinner plus 3–6 corpsespun)

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: —

Level Adjustment: —

COMBAT

Undead Traits (Ex): Immune to mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects. Not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, death from massive damage, exhaustion, fatigue, or any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect works on objects). Cannot heal damage on its own if it has no Intelligence score; can be healed by negative energy. Cannot be raised or reincarnated, resurrection works if the creature is willing.

CRUCIFIXION SPIRIT

By Scott Greene; originally published in *The Tome of Horrors II* by Necromancer Games.

Medium Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 15d12 (97 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 deflection), touch 18, flat footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/—

Attack: Incorporeal touch +10 melee (1d8 plus paralysis); or crucify soul +10 ranged touch (crucify soul)

Full Attack: Incorporeal touch +10 melee (1d8 plus paralysis); or crucify soul +10 ranged touch (crucify soul)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Crucify soul, paralysis

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to turning, incorporeal traits, SR 22, undead traits

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +15

Abilities: Str —, Dex 17, Con —, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 20

Skills: Escape Artist +19, Hide +19, Intimidate +20, Listen +21, Search +17, Sense Motive +20, Spot +21

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Standard

A Tough Challenge

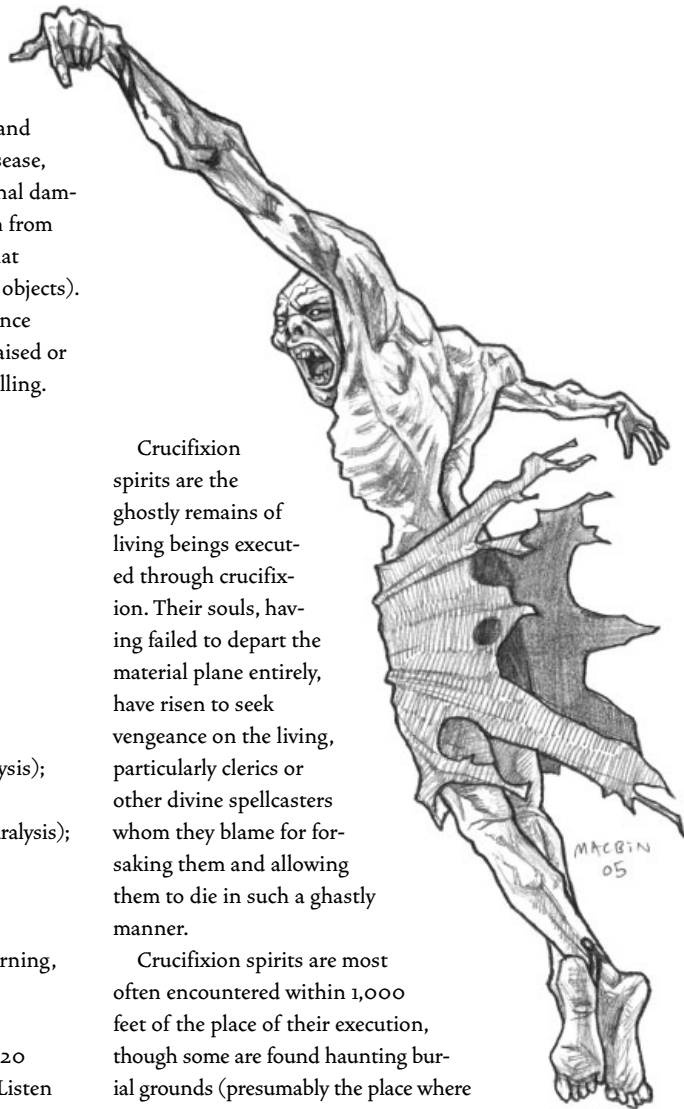
What I like about the crucifixion spirit is that its ability works automatically if it hits with a ranged touch attack rather than leaving it up to a PC saving throw. The ability takes foes out slowly. I imagine a tense encounter with this creature where at any given time, half the party is having their soul crucified and is trying to escape, while the others are fighting the monster. As one PC frees himself, another is crucified—a very tough challenge. The fact that the PC can try to escape makes the ability far more interesting than the creature's paralysis attack.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 16–45 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment: —

This entity appears as a gaunt and translucent humanoid with puncture injuries to both wrists and both feet. Its face is twisted in eternal pain and its eyes flicker with a reddish glow.



Crucifixion spirits are the ghostly remains of living beings executed through crucifixion. Their souls, having failed to depart the material plane entirely, have risen to seek vengeance on the living, particularly clerics or other divine spellcasters whom they blame for forsaking them and allowing them to die in such a ghastly manner.

Crucifixion spirits are most often encountered within 1,000 feet of the place of their execution, though some are found haunting burial grounds (presumably the place where their fleshly body was laid to rest). Their only purpose seems to be to torment and kill any that cross their path. They hold no memories of their former life, save the pain and suffering they endured at their time of execution, and they want all those they encounter to share in this pain.

COMBAT

A crucifixion spirit engages any living creature that enters its territory. In combat, the crucifixion spirit's hatred for clerics and divine spellcasters becomes readily apparent as they are usually the first ones targeted by its crucify soul ability. A crucified soul is left to die and the crucifixion spirit turns its attention to another opponent. A crucifixion spirit attacks until it is destroyed or its foes are slain or driven off.

Crucify Soul (Su): Once per round, a crucifixion spirit can point at a single target within 60 feet and crucify its soul. The crucifixion spirit must succeed on a ranged touch attack. If successful, the target's soul leaves its body, which collapses in a heap on the ground. The target's soul appears as a translucent copy of the victim and hangs suspended above the spot

where its body collapsed, crucified in midair to a translucent “X”-shaped structure. The soul is held in place by translucent spikes or nails driven through the soul’s wrists and feet.

The victim is not dead and is visible to all within line of sight. Furthermore, a crucified soul cannot be attacked or affected by anything, cannot take any actions (other than trying to escape, see below), and experiences excruciating pain that deals two negative levels to it in the round it is crucified, and one negative level each round thereafter.

A creature slain in this manner cannot be returned to life except through the casting of a *wish*, *miracle*, or *true resurrection* spell. Even then, there is a 50 percent chance that such magic fails. If the check fails, the creature cannot be restored to life by mortal magic. A crucifixion spirit does not need to concentrate on this ability for it to continue to affect a target. It can direct attacks against a different opponent.

A crucified creature can attempt to escape each round by succeeding on a Will save (DC 22). If successful, the creature’s soul is freed and returns to its body in the same round. The target is stunned for 1 round, but afterward can act normally.

The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a Difficulty Class of 22. The save DCs are Charisma based. A crucifixion spirit can use this ability five times per day.

Paralysis (Su): A living creature hit by a crucifixion spirit’s incorporeal touch must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 22) or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. *Remove paralysis* or any other spell that can remove a curse cures the paralysis. The effect cannot be dispelled. The save DC is Charisma based.

Immunity to Turning (Ex): A crucifixion spirit cannot be turned, rebuked, or commanded.

DEATH WEAVER

By Morten Braten; originally published in Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia by Necromancer Games.

Small Aberration

Hit Dice: 4d8+3 (21 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: Fly 20 ft. (4 squares)
(perfect)

Armor Class: 18 (+1 size, +3
Dex, +4 natural), touch
14, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/−3

Attack: Tentacle +7 melee
(1d2−2)

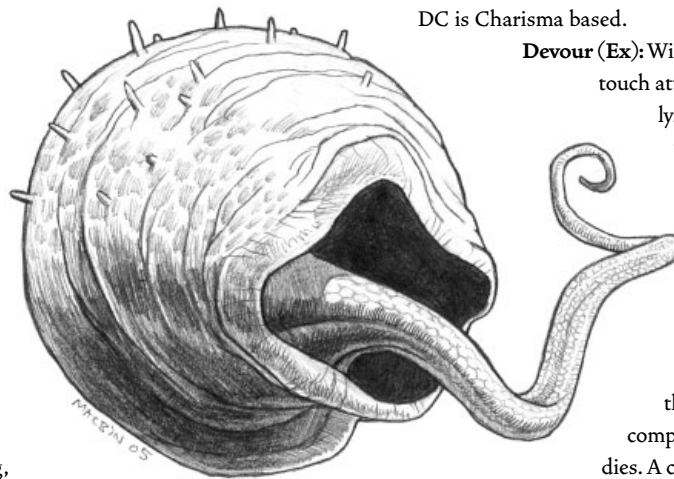
Full Attack: Tentacle +7 melee
(1d2−2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Paralyzing song,
devour

Special Qualities: Radiance, web, SR 20, darkvision
60 ft.

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6



Abilities: Str 7, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Hide +14, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Spot +11

Feats: Alertness, Toughness (b), Weapon Finesse

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 5–8 HD (Large); 9–12 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

The death weaver is an orblike, levitating creature that lives underground and feeds by devouring creatures that fall prey to its paralyzing song. It appears as a small, fleshy, eyeless orb surrounded by a weirdly hued halo of light.

COMBAT

Opponents are usually warned of the death weaver’s approach by the halo of light that constantly surrounds the creature. This is seldom of any help, however, as the death weaver’s paralyzing song accompanies the illumination.

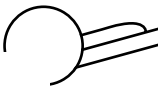
Paralyzing Song (Ex): The weird humming and oscillations of the death weaver can paralyze victims. Any creature within a 30-foot radius of a death weaver must succeed at a Will save (DC 15) or be paralyzed. This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm that lasts as long as the death weaver continues to sing. If the creature successfully saves, it is immune to the death weaver’s song for one day. Paralyzed victims are subject to the death weaver’s devouring attack. The save DC is Charisma based.

Devour (Ex): With a successful touch attack against a paralyzed foe, the death weaver can devour its victim. The attack deals 1d6 points of Constitution damage each round. At Constitution 0, the creature has been completely devoured and dies. A creature slain by this attack can only be raised by the

casting of a *miracle*, *true resurrection*, or *wish*. After a death weaver has devoured a victim, it swells to Medium (−1 penalty to attack rolls and Armor Class, +4 bonus to Strength and

Gross ... and Clever

The death weaver’s strength lies mostly in its overall concept: The idea that it devours creatures quickly and then just as quickly excretes them as sticky, weblike strands is gross and horrific—just what you want with an aberration like this. I also like the use of Constitution damage to reflect the devouring ability, and the fact that the creature grows larger after it devours something.



Constitution). The increased size lasts for one hour, as the death weaver digests the victim.

Radiance (Su): The death weaver is always surrounded by a cold halo of weirdly hued light. This is similar to the illumination provided by a *continual flame* spell.

Web (Sp): After the death weaver devours a victim and increases in size, it can form a number of thick strands and attempt to ensnare other victims. This ability is otherwise identical to a *web* spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 15), usable up to three times within an hour.

ETHEREAL ADDER

By Alex Freed and Jeffrey J. Visgaitis; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by *The Inner Circle*.

Huge Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 7d10+35 (73 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 16 (–2 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural); touch 11; flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+22

Attack: Bite +12 melee (2d6+10 plus ethereal bite)

Full Attack: Bite +12 melee (2d6+10 plus ethereal bite)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Ethereal bite, confusion, constrict 2d8+10

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see invisibility

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +2

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 3, Wis 6, Cha 8

Skills: Balance +5, Listen +8*, Spot +8*

Feats: Ability Focus (confusion), Alertness, Iron Will

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods (gems only); no items

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 8–12 HD (Huge)

Ethereal adders are serpents with poisonous bites that make their victims fade.

Commonly (and wrongly) believed to be natives of the ethereal plane, ethereal adders are beautiful, shimmering creatures. Capable of growing longer than 25 feet, they are slow to move but highly nimble. Their scales glisten with natural luminescence, shining with a dazzling array of colors. Their heads are wide and flat with tiny black eyes, and

their large fangs are kept retracted against the roofs of their mouths until needed.

Ethereal adders are used by nagas as pets and guards. In the wild, they are found in underground



lair atop massive piles of gems and coins. No one knows what they eat, or if they produce offspring. Scholars hypothesize that an adder's collection of gems may somehow keep it nourished, but this is only speculation. Ethereal adders spend most of their time sleeping and awaiting potential victims.

COMBAT

Ethereal adders often toy with their prey, first confusing then constricting their opponents. Once bored or seriously threatened, they bite their enemies. While an adder's disease works on a creature, the creature fades into the ethereal plane, away from food, supplies, and allies.

Ethereal Bite (Su): A creature struck by an ethereal adder's bite must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 18) or become ethereal after 1d4 rounds. A *dimensional anchor* used on the creature during this time prevents this; otherwise, the creature remains ethereal for 1d3 days before returning to the material plane. If the creature returns to the material plane for even a brief period during this time (such as by using a *blink* or *plane shift* spell), the *ethereality* effect of the ethereal bite is negated.

A creature that fails its Fortitude save is also infected with the supernatural disease fading fever—Fortitude save, DC 18, incubation period one day, damage 2d6 Constitution. A creature reduced to Constitution 0 fades from existence, leaving no corpse. All save DCs are Constitution based.

Where'd He Go?

I myself thought it would be cool to have a character turned ethereal against his will—so I was very happy to see the ethereal adder. It's just what I wanted. I like the idea of having to mount an expedition to rescue a victim lost in the ethereal after an encounter with this creature.

Confusion (Su): Three times per day, an ethereal adder can confuse creatures within 15 feet by swaying its head. Each creature in the area must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or be confused for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma based and includes the adder's Ability Focus feat.

Constrict (Ex): On a successful grapple check, an ethereal adder deals 2d8+10 points of damage.

See Invisibility (Su): Ethereal adders constantly *see invisibility* with a range of 60 feet.

* **Skills:** Ethereal adders have a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

PHYSIOLOGICAL USES

Ethereal adder fangs can be used to create *potions of blink* for three-quarters of the normal base price. All other creation requirements remain the same. The fangs can be extracted on a Survival or Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 16). Failing the check by 5 or more means the fangs become damaged and unusable. A single adder has enough fangs for use in 1d4 potions.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

A barbarian warlord's son has been bitten by an ethereal adder and is dying on the ethereal plane. His only hope is a spellcaster who can return him to the material plane, or cure him so he can survive until he returns naturally. Unfortunately, the barbarians distrust magic. A third party asks the PCs to save the boy, but they may face opposition from the barbarians themselves.

GOLDENCREST

By Alex Freed and C.D. Bennett; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by The Inner Circle.

Large Ooze

Hit Dice: 8d10+32 (76 hp)

Initiative: +5 (Dex)

Speed: 60 ft. (12 squares), swim 70 ft.

Armor Class: 14 (–1 size, +5 Dex); touch 14; flat-footed 9

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+11

Attack: Slam +6 melee (2d4+1 plus 2d6 positive energy)

Full Attack: Slam +6 melee (2d4+1 plus 2d6 positive energy)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Positive energy, trample 2d4+1 plus 10d6 positive energy

Special Qualities: Blindsight 100 ft., glare, ooze traits, regeneration 8, turning

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will –3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 20, Con 19, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Skills: Swim +9

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 9–14 HD (Large); 15–25 HD (Huge)

Beautiful and deadly, goldencrests have been said to be born of the tears of celestials, the blood of the sun, and lakes struck by lightning. Any of these stories might be true, but none fully explains the strange, positive energy-infused creatures.

Goldencrests are most commonly seen on the sea surface, often mistaken for the reflection of the sun. A goldencrest is a fluid wave that shines a fiery, golden orange. In the sections where it is thinnest (such as where it tapers off), the liquid composing it is transparent, but most of its body is too bright to see through. Goldencrests skim quickly across water and move only slightly slower on land. As they travel, a golden mist rises from their backs, accompanied by a loud hiss.

Goldencrests stay on water whenever possible, and most spend their lives at sea following winds and currents without need for food or rest. On land, goldencrests follow the path of least resistance, moving wherever they can easily flow. They generally ignore other creatures, but attack sources of negative energy (such as undead) and any creatures with whom they come into physical contact. While their attacks against undead seem genuinely vicious, some scholars speculate that their attacks on other creatures are a form of play. The difference is best appreciated from a distance, as the positive energy coursing through a goldencrest is enough to burn living beings. When a goldencrest suffers enough damage to make it lose cohesion, its energy leaks away and its body turns into water.



Powerful spellcasters sometimes capture goldencrests and use them as sentries to patrol moats, hallways, and other enclosed spaces from which a goldencrest cannot escape. Others keep goldencrests trapped in magically warded globes or pools, finding them valuable for arcane experimentation.

COMBAT

Goldencrests race back and forth in combat, splashing over their opponents and moving away before turning and charging forward again.

Positive Energy (Ex): The positive energy infusing a goldencrest is raw and unfocused, too much for living beings to endure. Creatures who take damage from a goldencrest's positive energy suffer a feeling of internal burning. Undead creatures take double damage from a goldencrest's positive energy.

Trample (Ex): Reflex save, DC 15 for half. The save DC is Strength based. A goldencrest can trample creatures for 2d4+1 points of bludgeoning damage and 10d6 points of positive energy damage (20d6 to undead).

Blindsight (Ex): A goldencrest's entire body is a primitive sensory organ that can ascertain

creatures by vibration within 100 feet.

Glare (Ex): The glare from a goldencrest's body makes it difficult to look at directly, giving it concealment (20 percent miss chance).

Regeneration (Ex): Spells, magic, and energy attacks deal normal damage to a goldencrest. A goldencrest that loses part of its body mass regrows it in 1d6 minutes.

Turning (Ex): By making a turning attempt, characters who channel positive energy can rebuke, command, or bolster goldencrests as evil clerics rebuke, command, or bolster undead. Characters who channel negative energy can turn or destroy goldencrests as good clerics turn or destroy undead.

PHYSIOLOGICAL USES

A melee weapon which has soaked for one hour in the positive energy-infused fluid of a living goldencrest can be imbued with the powers of a *sun blade* for three-quarters the normal base price. If the weapon is not a bastard sword, its changed weight allows one to wield it as if it were intended for a user one size category smaller than normal. All other creation requirements remain the same.

Other uses for a goldencrest are likely to exist as well.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

A village where the PCs are staying has arranged a celebration to watch a goldencrest's journey down a nearby stream. A powerful undead being who lives in a forest nearby fears the goldencrest, however, and is arranging to divert the creature into the crowd, causing tragedy. The undead is aware of the PCs' presence and hopes that they will destroy the goldencrest once it endangers the townspeople.

Disguised as a peasant, a vampire asks the PCs to investigate the disappearance of his "cousin" in a small town. The "cousin" was a previous employee of the vampire, who had gone to the town to discover why its residents could not be turned into undead. Within the town, a secret practice exists of baptizing youths in an underground pool filled with a captive goldencrest. Although many of those baptized are badly injured, the practice prevents residents from ever being filled with the negative energy required for becoming undead.

GOLEM, FURNACE

By Scott Greene; originally published in *The Tome of Horrors II* by Necromancer Games.

Huge Construct

Hit Dice: 24d10+40 (172 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 32 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +25 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 32

Base Attack/Grapple: +18/+41

Attack: Slam +31 melee (4d8+15 plus 2d6 fire)

Full Attack: 2 slams +31 melee (4d8+15 plus 2d6 fire)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, heat, improved grab, furnace-interior

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, immunity to magic, low-light vision, resistance to cold 20, rustproof

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +8

Abilities: Str 41, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Skills: —

Feats: —

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 22-26 HD (Huge); 27-63 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: —

Furnace golems are 20-foot-tall constructs that look like humanoids clad in black iron armor. A large grate-covered opening in its abdomen houses a roaring fire in its innards. The fires powering a furnace golem are magical in nature; i.e., it needs no source of natural fuel to power it and they cannot be extinguished, though if a furnace golem is destroyed, the fires in its innards burn out.

Furnace golems are most often used to guard arcane secrets or treasures, though some are programmed to seek out objects or individuals. Those used as guards stand motionless, appearing as nothing more than giant black iron statues, until activated.

Furnace golems, like other constructs, obey their creator's commands to the best of their ability. Should the creator die, or should the golem's commands be unattainable, the furnace golem becomes rogue. That is, it is still completely functional but follows no commands or orders from anyone.

COMBAT

Furnace golems open combat using their breath weapon before moving to pulverize their opponents with their massive fists. Grabbed opponents are shoved into the golem's burning interior where they are trapped until they break free or die.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once every 1d4 rounds, a furnace golem can belch forth a line of fire 5 feet wide, 5 feet high, and 50 feet long; 10d6 points of fire damage, Reflex save, DC 22 for half. The save DC is Constitution based.

Heat (Ex): A furnace golem's entire form is extremely hot. Any slam attack deals fire damage. Creatures attacking a furnace golem unarmed or with natural weapons take this same fire damage each time one of their attacks hits.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the furnace golem must hit an opponent at least one size category smaller than itself with a slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it can conduct the grapple normally or shove an opponent up to two sizes smaller into its furnace-interior the following round.

Furnace-Interior (Ex): A furnace golem can try to shove a grabbed opponent up to two sizes smaller than itself into its interior by making a successful grapple check. An opponent thrown into the furnace golem's interior is trapped as a metal grating closes over the opening in the same round. A trapped creature automatically takes 2d6 points of fire damage each round. Escaping the creature's interior requires a successful Strength check (DC 30) to bend the bars of the grate. Alternately a trapped creature can escape by dealing at least 25 points of damage to the bars (AC 22). Note that the golem's damage reduction applies to all attacks against the bars. A Huge furnace golem's interior can hold 2 Medium, 8 Small, or 16 Tiny or smaller creatures.

Construct Traits (Ex): Immune to mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, death effects, necromancy effects, and polymorph. Immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless it works on objects, or is harmless). Not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage; cannot be healed, raised or resurrected, though it can be repaired.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A furnace golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below. A magical attack that bypasses its cold resistance slows a furnace golem (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw.

A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any *slow* effect on the furnace golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points.

Rustproof (Ex): Though constructed of iron, a furnace golem, unlike an iron golem, is not affected by rust attacks.

If You Can't Take the Heat ...

Here's another interesting encounter. A fight with a furnace golem differs from a standard golem encounter because of the fact that this one can trap foes inside itself, inflicting damage on them. Those not trapped have to decide whether or not to attack the golem or try to help their trapped friend(s).



CONSTRUCTION

A furnace golem's body is constructed from 8,000 lbs. of iron mixed with rare ingredients and chemicals totaling 12,000 gp. Creating the body requires a Craft (armor-smithing or weaponsmithing) check (DC 20).

Caster level 16th; Craft Construct (see MM), *fireball*, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, *wall of fire*, caster must be at least 16th level; Price 180,000 gp; Cost 102,000 gp + 6,720 XP.

HANGED MAN

By Scott Greene; originally published in *The Tome of Horrors II* by Necromancer Games.

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+4

Attack: Rope +4 ranged touch (drag) or claw +4 melee (1d4+2)

Full Attack: Rope +4 ranged touch (drag) or 2 claws +4 melee (1d4+2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (20 ft. with rope)

Special Attacks: Drag, rope

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., undead traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 13, Con —, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13

Skills: Climb +7* (+2 when climbing ropes), Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Use Rope +13*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (rope)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: 50% standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5–12 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment: —



one wrongfully accused of a crime and hanged. It is a malevolent and vengeful creature that attacks living creatures on sight.

Hanged men are usually encountered near the area where they were killed or in cemeteries, mausoleums, or graveyards where their body was laid to rest. They prey on the living and are found near civilized areas where their food supply is plentiful. Their lairs are either their final resting places or secluded and overgrown areas near the place of their death. The lairs are always scattered with the remains of its victims, including any treasure a former meal happened to be carrying.

Hanged men do not speak, but they can utter choked gurgles, gasps, and strangled moans.

COMBAT

A hanged man attacks primarily with its rope, which has become imbued with negative energy and now acts as an extension of the hanged man itself. It uses its rope to capture victims and draw them in, at which point it rips and tears them to shreds with its filthy claws.

Drag (Ex): If a hanged man hits with its rope attack, the rope latches onto the opponent's body. This deals no damage but drags the opponent 10 feet closer each subsequent round (provoking no attack of opportunity) unless that

Not Your Average Encounter

The hanged man provides a different kind of encounter experience than a standard, straight-up fight. The hanged man's rope draws a foe closer to it, and puts the PCs in a quandary unlike the standard monster encounter, where the best thing is to just attack. I like the dynamic of a PC being dragged across the battlefield while everyone else is fighting or casting spells. The rope is really hard to sever (and rightfully so). I'd recommend using this creature as the final encounter in an adventure for 1st- or 2nd-level characters. It would be extremely challenging.

This creature has pale skin pulled tight over its bones. Its head hangs at an odd angle, seemingly unsupported by a broken neck. A rotted noose and several feet of rope hang from its neck and trail off behind it. Its eyes have no pupils.

A hanged man is the restless corpse of an evil humanoid that was hanged or the spirit of

creature breaks free, which requires an Escape Artist check (DC 18) or a Strength check (DC 14). The check DCs are Strength based, and the Escape Artist Difficulty Class includes a +4 racial bonus. A hanged man can draw a creature to within 5 feet of itself and attack with both claws with a +4 attack bonus in the same round.

Rope (Su): The rope of a hanged man is about 30 feet long and can lash forward 20 feet or upward 10 feet to grab a victim and drag it closer to the hanged man (see its drag ability, above). The rope has AC 22, hardness 10, and 10 hit points, and it has damage reduction 5/slashing. If the hanged man's rope is severed (by reducing it to 0 or less hit points), both the rope and the hanged man are destroyed. Upon the hanged man's destruction, the rope crumbles to dust.

* **Skills:** Using its animated rope, a hanged man has a +10 racial bonus on Climb checks. Hanged men have a +6 racial bonus on Use Rope checks.

INSCRIBER

By Alex Freed and Jeffrey J. Viscgaitis; originally published in Denizens of Avadnu by The Inner Circle.

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 14 (+4 natural); touch 10; flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+3

Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d4+1 plus mnemonic exchange)

Full Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d4+1 plus mnemonic exchange)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Confusion aura, mnemonic exchange

Special Qualities: Absorb text, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 1, spell-like abilities, undead traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +5

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 15

Skills: Concentration +7, Craft or Knowledge (any two) +14,

Decipher Script +11, Listen +5, Move Silently +2, Profes-

sion (any one) +8, Search +11, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5

Feats: Skill Focus (any Craft or Knowledge) (2)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 5–12 HD (Medium)

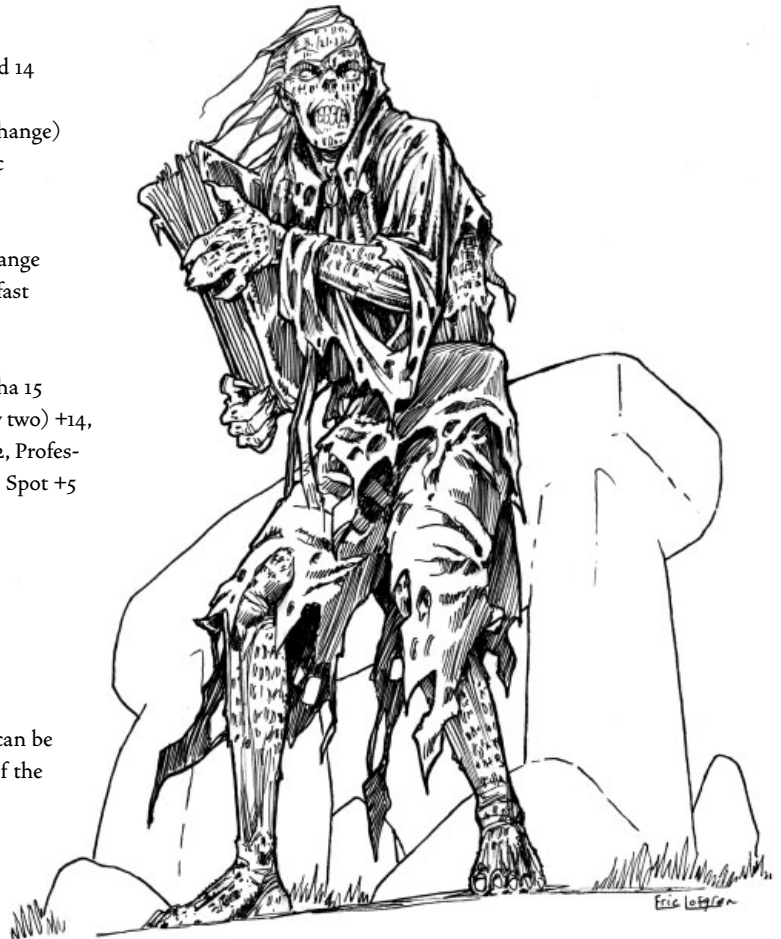
It has been said that the search for knowledge can be a soul-consuming pursuit. The unfortunate case of the inscribers proves the saying's literal truth.

Every inscriber was once a living scholar who obsessed over a certain field of study. Some inscribers devoted their lives to particulars of occult lore, while others strove to catalog every

species of plant in existence, or to learn the secrets of creating perfect wine. Regardless of their missions, they shared the same end: After death, their lust for knowledge overcame the laws of nature, driving them to search the world for further information. But with their minds shattered and their self-identities subsumed by their missions, inscribers are unable to learn from experience. Instead, they rob the memories of the living and drink the text of books.

Inscribers look like corpses on the verge of decomposition, wearing whatever garb they were buried in. Their eyes glow a soft yellow, and their skin is covered with black writing. Many inscribers have a gray cast to their skin, due to the bleeding of the magical ink. The writing is an inscriber's summary and analysis of absorbed texts and memories, and is constantly scrawled over blank flesh as if by an invisible pen. When inscribers run out of room on their bodies, they tear off strips of skin, and press the "pages" into enormous tomes they carry at all times. The skin soon regrows and is filled with writing once again.

Inscribers use their absorbed information to determine where to search for more. They travel to libraries, monasteries, the homes of experts in their fields, and wherever else they might acquire knowledge. Although they rarely cause



harm intentionally, inscribers can bring great misfortune to populated areas due to the auras of confusion that surround them.

Inscribers do not speak, but they understand Common and any languages they knew in life. An inscriber is exceedingly difficult to communicate with, but a creature who gets an inscriber's attention by displaying knowledge of the inscriber's chosen field has a chance of getting through to what remains of the scholar's mind. When this happens, the inscriber's writing slows as it lets its focus slip. There are stories of inscribers who, reminded of their lives, chose to assist those who approached them by giving away some of their knowledge.

COMBAT

Inscribers generally pursue their own tasks, ignoring others and protected by their confusion auras. Inscribers who are attacked or who have their tomes stolen will use any appropriate

spell-like abilities they have absorbed on their opponents, and then, if brought into melee, daze and drain their enemies.

Confusion Aura (Su): All intelligent creatures who come within 40 feet of an inscriber have their

minds flooded with images and words related to the inscriber's area of study. An affected creature must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or be overwhelmed by the torrent of information and confused for 2d4 rounds. Creatures who make successful saves cannot be affected again by that inscriber's aura for 24 hours. An inscriber's confusion aura is a mind-affecting phantasm effect. The save DC is Charisma based.

Mnemonic Exchange (Su): Intelligent creatures hit by an inscriber's slam attack are affected by one of two possible effects (inscriber's choice). The inscriber can either cause 1d6 points of Intelligence damage to the creature, learning all the creature knows about the inscriber's area of study in the process, or infuse the creature with a portion of the inscriber's own knowledge. In the latter case, the creature gains a +6 competence bonus on a Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill possessed by the inscriber for a number of days equal to the creature's Intelligence modifier. It must immediately succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be dazed for 2d12 rounds. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Intelligence based.

Absorb Text (Su): An inscriber can absorb the text of all written materials within 15 feet as a standard action. By concentrating, the inscriber lifts all writing off nearby

surfaces, and the text swirls through the air into the inscriber's mouth. Affected objects are left blank, and the inscriber gains full knowledge of all the absorbed text. Only text written with some form of liquid (whether ink, dye, or blood) is affected. Objects the inscriber is unaware of (such as hidden objects and items inside containers) are unharmed, and attended or magical items can make Will saves (DC 14) to resist. The save DC is Charisma based. If the inscriber absorbs the text of a scroll, the inscriber gains the ability to cast the scroll's spells once each as a spell-like ability.

Spell-Like Abilities: At the start of any encounter, a given inscriber is assumed to have absorbed 1d4–1 scrolls. The inscriber can cast each spell from a scroll once as a spell-like ability, at the scroll's caster level. The contents of absorbed scrolls can be determined as if they were medium magic items found in treasure. The inscriber can also convert (as a good cleric converts prepared spells to cure spells) spell-like abilities gained from scrolls into any of the following: *discern location*, *find the path*, *illusory script* (DC 15), *legend lore*, *secret page*, *sepia snake sigil* (DC 15). Caster level 7th. The save DCs are Charisma based.

Inscribers activate their spell-like abilities by tearing off skin where mystic text is written and holding the scraps aloft. The skin cannot be used by creatures other than the inscriber.

INSCRIBERS' TOMES

A typical inscriber's tome weighs about 4 lbs. and is slightly smaller than a human torso. It has no inherent magical qualities, but may be warded with *illusory script* and *sepia snake sigil*. The text is written in the inscriber's native language, and its style is confusing and opaque. Nonetheless, an inscriber's tome is an extremely comprehensive and valuable resource on a given subject. A creature using an inscriber's tome for research must make an appropriate Craft, Knowledge, or Profession check in the inscriber's area of study to understand enough of the text to find useful information. The Difficulty Class for this check ranges from 15 for relatively common information to 30 for extremely complicated or obscure topics.

Inscribers will fight to the death to protect their tomes and abandon their quests to recover them.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

Centuries ago, an immortal trickster convinced a young man to devote his life to researching the gods. Now that young man is an ancient inscriber and has uncovered a terrible secret. The PCs must keep the trickster from finding and capturing the inscriber, while trying to learn where the former scholar is traveling to, and possibly gain his allegiance.

KEI-EHRI

By Alex Freed and C.D. Bennett; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by The Inner Circle.

Large Magical Beast (Psionic)

Hit Dice: 7d10+21 (59 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 16 (–1 size, +7 natural); touch 9; flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+16

Attack: Claw +11 melee (1d6+5)

Full Attack: 2 claws +11 melee (1d6+5) and tail slam +6
melee (2d4+2) and bite +6 melee (1d8+2)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Electricity aura, mind switch, psi-like abilities

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity, low-light vision, telepathy 100 ft.

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 12

Skills: Concentration +5, Listen +2, Perfect Recall +6
(see page 69), Psicraft^P (Spellcraft) +8, Spot +2

Feats: Ability Focus (mind switch), Combat Manifestation^P
(Combat Casting), Iron Will

Environment: Any forests

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Often neutral

Advancement: 8–12 HD (Large); 13–14 HD (Huge)

Kei-ehri are psionic, forest-dwelling lithovores that have enormous power over thought and electricity.

Loosely resembling a reptile, an average kei-ehri is 15 feet long from nose to tail and weighs over half a ton. Its smooth, scaly skin is bright blue, and occasionally flares and glows with bursts of electricity. Its legs end in long talons, and its spine and tail are lightly armored with bone plating. Its head is topped with a three-pronged bone crest and small tendrils fall around its muzzle. A kei-ehri carries a faintly burnt odor, crossed with the scent of a natural spring.

Kei-ehri make their forest nests from toppled trees, leaves, and other foliage, and spend their days searching for the stones and crystals that compose their diet. They rarely interact with creatures, including their own kind. Despite this fact, kei-ehri are never strictly alone: from before birth, they can hear “loose thoughts” around them—mental impressions, ideas, and words that escape creatures’ minds and float through the atmosphere as electrical signals. When a kei-ehri lays its eggs, it purposefully embeds its thoughts in the air, educating its unborn children long after it abandons them. Adult kei-ehri can have their personalities shaped by the thoughts of nearby creatures over a period of months—a kei-ehri who forages near an assassin’s hideout might be cruel and violent, whereas a kei-ehri who



nests near a dryad’s grove might be calm and peaceful. Kei-ehri can even gain intelligence from long-term exposure to particularly intelligent creatures, but are ordinarily content to live animalistic lives.

Some theories claim that kei-ehri, merely by existing and maintaining their diet of crystals, somehow regulate the flow of thought through electricity. Conversations held with kei-ehri intelligent enough to speak on the subject suggest they believe that without kei-ehri, living material beings could not think. This would explain the kei-ehri hatred of undead and constructs, which they consider offensive imitations of life.

Kei-ehri cannot speak, and while they can communicate telepathically, most are not smart enough to care to do so.

COMBAT

Violent kei-ehri strike at their opponents with powers such as *energy current* first, using physical attacks as a last resort. More peaceful kei-ehri try to disable their enemies without doing harm, with *brain lock* and by switching creatures’ minds.

Electricity Aura (Su): A kei-ehri can increase the violence and size of the electrical arcs that cross its body as a free action, striking at creatures nearby. Creatures take 2d4 points of electricity damage per round while within 5 feet of the kei-ehri (Reflex save, DC 16, negates). The save DC is Constitution based.

Mind Switch (Su): Twice per day, a kei-ehri can swap the minds of any two living corporeal creatures (possibly including itself) within 30 feet. This is similar to the power *true mind switch*^P (or the spell *magic jar*), but neither creature can

voluntarily switch back and there is no Hit Dice limit. Each creature must fail a Will save (DC 16) for the switch to occur. The effect is accompanied by a lightning bolt that travels between the creatures at the

A Compelling Creature

The kei-ehri's mind switch ability is going to really throw its foes for a loop and make for a memorable encounter. Plus, its thoughts-as-electricity theme is compelling.

moment of transfer. The death of the kei-ehri's original body returns all switched minds to their proper places without harm, but also kills both the kei-ehri and any creature in the kei-ehri's body. The save DC is Charisma based and includes the kei-ehri's Ability Focus feat.

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—*brain lock* (affects aberrations, animals, dragons, elementals, fey, giants, magical beasts, monstrous humanoids, and outsiders, DC 13^{*})^P (*hold person* [DC 14]), *ego whip* (2d4, DC 15^{*})^P (*touch of idiocy*), *energy stun* (electricity, manifester level 7th, 5d6, DC 17^{*})^P (*shocking grasp*), *hypercognition*^P (*legend lore*), *mind probe* (DC 16)^P (*detect thoughts* [DC 13]), *thought shield* (8 rounds, power resistance 20^{*})^P (*non-detection*); 3/day—*energy current* (electricity, manifester level 13th, two secondary targets, DC 18^{*})^P (*chain lightning* [DC 17]). Manifester level 10th. The save DCs are Charisma based.

Telepathy (Su): A kei-ehri can communicate telepathically with any intelligent creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Kei-ehri have a +8 racial bonus on Perfect Recall and Psicraft^P checks.

^{*} Includes augmentation for the kei-ehri's manifester level.

^P Abilities marked with ^P are from the Psionics Handbook. Suggested replacements appear in parentheses.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

A psion studying the kei-ehri comes to the player characters and begs for their help. He recently discovered a kei-ehri that has gone mad and turned evil due to the presence of an aboleth in a nearby lake. He asks the player characters to help restrain the kei-ehri and bring it to a monastery where it can recover. But the psion does not know the full story—the kei-ehri gained the aboleth's intelligence and switched minds with the creature. It hopes to use its new power to turn its old body into a "lightning rod" for thought, controlling minds worldwide.

KULUMAR

By Alex Freed, C.D. Bennett, Jason Rosenstock and Jeffrey J. Visgaitis; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by *The Inner Circle*.

Large Aberration (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 7d8+21 (52 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 30 ft.

Armor Class: 17 (−1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural); touch 12, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+12

Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d6+3)

Full Attack: 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+3) and bite +5 melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Shadow rend

Special Qualities: Shadow slave, blindsight 90 ft., hide in plain sight, shadow jump

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +11, Hide +14^{*}, Intimidate +9, Jump +10, Listen +2, Move Silently +14^{*}, Tumble +10

Feats: Improved Grapple, Multiattack, Persuasive

Environment: Plane of Shadow

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: By character class

Kulumars are eyeless predators with a mystical affinity for shadow.

Fast, muscular, and agile, kulumars stand 8 to 10 feet tall and weigh an average of 400 lbs. Their hairless skin is an almost reflective blue, and their long limbs end in black claws useful for clinging to walls and ceilings. From the bottom of kulumars' wormlike heads grow stalks that allow them to sense their surroundings. Kulumars naturally cast no shadows but can steal shadows from other creatures.

Kulumars lurk in the deepest parts of the earth, wandering alone through tunnels and caverns. Some collect arcana, while others seem intent on destroying all intelligent creatures they find. They never associate with each other, but readily talk to those who question them—even during combat. They are polite and articulate, occasionally helpful, but often difficult to understand. Questions about their nature, habits, and purpose are answered with talk of penumbras, the "low world," and the "blue shadow." Kulumars seem unable to define these terms without relating them to one another. But kulumars can discuss most other issues rationally and occasionally ally with aboleths and dark elves, or perform services in return for knowledge or magic. They are treacherous and deceitful, but generally twist words instead of lying outright. If kulumars were slightly less belligerent and enigmatic, they would easily find friends among the underworld races.

It is unknown whether kulumars reproduce, as there exists no documentation of kulumar young. It is believed that kulumars are sexless, and that only a set number exist. A leading theory holds that kulumars are shadows cast on the material plane by some extraplanar monster, but kulumars respond to this notion with politely amused descriptions of indecipherable esoterica.

Kulumars speak Undercommon.

COMBAT

Kulumars use hit-and-run tactics: striking, shadow jumping to safety, hiding, and repeating the cycle as many times as they can. If possible, they grapple lone opponents and shadow jump with them. A kulumar who manages to steal an opponent's shadow usually flees; kulumars are generally willing to wait a few days if it means they can kill their enemies with minimal risk.

Shadow Rend (Su): A living creature hit by both of a kulumar's claw attacks or who is transported with the kulumar during a shadow jump risks having its shadow stolen. The creature must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or have its shadow pulled through its body and ripped out by the kulumar. The save DC is Charisma based. The kulumar then casts the creature's shadow, and the creature casts none. A kulumar can cast any number of shadows at different angles.

For every day the creature goes without a shadow, it partly fades into nonexistence, taking 1d4 points of Constitution drain. When its Constitution reaches 0, it dies and disappears, along with its shadow. If the creature rejoins with its shadow by touching it (an unarmed melee touch attack against the kulumar, if the kulumar is casting the shadow, or against the shadow if it is detached from and controlled by the kulumar), it regains any Constitution lost. Only a *miracle* or *wish* spell can replace a living creature's shadow, and this does not restore lost Constitution. Returning from the dead rejoins a creature with its shadow and restores all lost Constitution.

Shadow Slave (Su): A kulumar can detach from its body any shadows it has stolen as a free action. A shadow so detached lifts off the ground and resembles a dark, transparent version of the creature it was originally connected to. Treat the shadow as an *unseen servant* with an Armor Class of 13 that follows the kulumar's verbal commands while within 120 feet. If the shadow leaves this range, or if the kulumar is killed (which automatically detaches all the kulumar's shadows), it immediately heads toward where it last saw its rightful owner, willingly rejoining if possible. If the shadow is destroyed, it cannot be rejoined with its owner.

Kulumars treat their shadows as slaves, sending them to open doors, carry their belongings, and fulfill the requests of guests.

Blindsight (Ex): A kulumar can sense all foes within 90 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range, it is con-



sidered blinded. Kulumars are invulnerable to gaze attacks, visual effects of spells such as illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Kulumars can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are within 10 feet of some sort of shadow, kulumars can hide themselves from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind. Kulumars cannot hide in their own shadows.

Shadow Jump (Su): A kulumar can travel between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell. Even unwilling creatures be can transported with the kulumar if they are restrained or grappled.

The limitation is that the magical transport must begin and end in an area with at least some shadow. The kulumar can jump up to a total of 200 feet each day in this way. This amount can be split among many jumps, but each one, no matter how small, counts as at least a 10-foot increment.

* **Skills:** Kulumars have a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Master of Shadows

The kulumar is cool for its shadow rend and shadow slave abilities. DMs may want to consider utilizing this creature along with the shadow stitch spell in Chapter Three.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

A shadowdancer asks the player characters to travel with him underground to stop a dark elf priestess from cementing an alliance with a kulumar. Although the shadowdancer claims (truthfully) that this will give the priestess a dangerous amount of power, the shadowdancer's real goal is to have the PCs help him find the kulumar. He hopes to convince the kulumar to teach him its powers. When the PCs do find the kulumar, however, it might have its own offer to make.

MADRIR

By Alex Freed, C.D. Bennett and Michael A. Mumich; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by *The Inner Circle*.

Medium Outsider (Evil, Native)

Hit Dice: 10d8+20 (65 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 14 (+4 natural); touch 10; flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+10

Attack: Claw +10 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: 2 claws +10 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, steal spell

Special Qualities: Absorb spell, damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., spell magnetism, spell resistance 25

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +9

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 18

Skills: Appraise +13, Concentration +15, Craft (alchemy) +15, Decipher Script +18, Hide +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (any two) +15, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Listen +14, Move Silently +10, Perfect Recall +18 (see page 69), Search +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +14, Survival +8

Feats: Ability Focus (steal spell), Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improve Spell-Like Abilities (Empower^B, Enlarge^B, Extend^B, Heighten^B, Maximize^B, Quicken^B, Widen^B)*, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*dispel magic*)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary or circle (3–7)

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 11–14 HD (Medium)

* The feats *Improve Spell-Like Abilities* (Empower, Enlarge, Extend, Heighten, Maximize, Quicken, Widen) all work like the metamagic feats of similar names in the *Player's Handbook* except that instead of increasing the spell's level, they increase the time required to use the spell-like ability by 1, 2, or 3 rounds.

Turn the Tables!

I guess I just like foes that mess up spellcasters, and that's all there is to it. The madrir's steal spell ability is going to turn the tables on the player characters, using their favorite spells against them. Spell magnetism is really interesting as well.

Madrir are evil spellcasters who bend and absorb magic.

Madrir stand roughly 7 feet tall, but weigh less than 120 lbs. They have wiry humanoid



bodies, chalky, blue-tinted skin, and flat, androgynous faces. Their eye sockets are empty, save for flickering violet flames where their pupils should be, and their mouths are small slits. Madrir usually clothe themselves in long robes tattered and faded from centuries of use, and wear necklaces with crystal pendants.

The term “madrir” originally referred to members of a secret society of arcane spellcasters. Long ago, the society was made up of humans seeking to better their skills and expand their knowledge. Their search brought them to a powerful sorcerer who promised them power beyond anything they had achieved. She gave each spellcaster a crystal, explaining that it was through the crystals that they would gain their power. She then withdrew into a hidden valley, performing a dark ritual which warped the spellcasters' bodies and minds. Their crystals did grant them power, however, and in return, they declared the sorcerer their god.

Over the centuries, the madrir became little more than the sorcerer's mindless slaves. Their only desire appears to be to serve her, and her motives are unknown. Madrir have been encountered guarding areas of magical power, gathering artifacts, and murdering powerful spellcasters, but they have

also been seen traveling roads in the wilderness, wandering without obvious purpose. They are uncommunicative but pay close attention to individuals who offer information that intrigues them and occasionally reward assistance.

Madrir understand Common, Draconic, Celestial, Abyssal, and Infernal, but virtually never speak.

COMBAT

Madrir prefer to attack intelligent creatures on sight, but often lack the energy required to fight non-spellcasters. In these situations, they use their low-level abilities such as *cause fear*, *hold person*, *enervation*, and *vampiric touch*, magically escaping if necessary. Except for when their opponents present a clear threat to their goals, they do not pursue fleeing enemies.

If arcane spellcasters are among their opponents, madrir use considerably different tactics. They begin combat by using their spell magnetism to absorb as much magic as practical. During this time, they steal any particularly powerful spells their enemies possess, either to absorb themselves or to devastate their opponents. Only once they have exhausted their opponents' resources do they use their own spell-like abilities. Physically dangerous creatures are isolated with *wall* or *forcecage* spells, and madrir readily augment themselves with protective spells. They willingly fight until almost dead, but usually try to flee with their last opportunities.

Spell-Like Abilities: A madrir can use stored spell charges to power spell-like abilities. Each spell-like ability a madrir uses requires it to spend a number of charges equal to the spell's level. 0-level spells can be cast at will by the madrir. At the start of a given encounter, an average madrir has 3d4 stored spell charges.

0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st—*cause fear*, *charm person*, *mage armor*, *shield*; 2nd—*ghoul touch*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*; 3rd—*deep slumber*, *dispel magic*, *gaseous form*, *hold person*, *nondetection*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*dimension door*, *enervation*, *wall of fire*, *wall of ice*; 5th—*overland flight*, *prying eyes*, *teleport*, *waves of fatigue*; 6th—*antimagic field*, *eyebite*, *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*; 7th—*control undead*, *ethereal jaunt*, *forcecage*, *phase door*, *plane shift*; 8th—*maze*; 9th—*energy drain*.

Caster level 15th. The save DCs are Charisma based (DC 14 + spell level).

Steal Spell (Su): A madrir can attempt to cast arcane spells through other creatures within 60 feet. The madrir chooses a creature, who must make a Will save (DC 21). If the creature succeeds, the madrir fails to access its magic that round. If it fails, the madrir chooses one arcane spell the creature can cast (either prepared, or available through an open spell slot). The save DC is Charisma based and includes the madrir's Ability Focus feat.

The madrir immediately proceeds to cast the spell (drawing attacks of opportunity as normal), providing any components, and taking the spell's normal casting time. If the

madrir casts successfully, the spell functions as if it had always belonged to the madrir, but its caster level is the same as its original owner's. Regardless of whether or not the madrir completes the casting, the creature whose spell was stolen can no longer use that spell or spell slot, as if it had cast the spell itself.

Absorb Spell (Su):

A spell that targets a madrir but fails to overcome its spell resistance is absorbed by the madrir, and adds a number of charges equal to its spell level to the madrir's total stored charges.

Spell Magnetism

(Su): For a total of 4 rounds per day, a madrir can use its spell magnetism ability. While this ability is in use, each creature within 60 feet of the madrir with available arcane spells or spell slots must, on its turn, choose an arcane spell that does not have an XP or costly material component from its highest-level available slot. Before the creature acts, the spell is drawn forth from it, and targets the madrir as if the creature had cast it normally (regardless of its normal casting time). A spell that cannot target the madrir (such as a spell with a short range or a spell that targets objects) is absorbed by the madrir automatically, and grants the madrir a number of charges equal to its spell level. Other spells affect the madrir normally (and can be absorbed if they fail to penetrate its spell resistance). In all cases, the spell or spell slot used ceases to be available to the affected creature, as if it had cast the spell normally.

The madrir can begin or cease using this ability as a free action, but each round during which the madrir uses its spell magnetism adds 1 round to the total used that day.

New Skill: Perfect Recall

For creatures who live thousands of years, like the kei-ehri and madrir, it is essential that they learn how to remember things clearly and how to sort through a lifetime of memories.

Check: A creature can make a Perfect Recall check to remember an event from long ago in vivid detail, with incredible accuracy.

Remember an Event From	DC
1 year ago	10
4 years ago	15
20 years ago	20
100 years ago	25
500 years ago	30
2,500 years ago	35

The importance of the memory can make it easier or harder to recall.

Perfect Recall Importance	DC
Trivial; the food at a particular but uneventful breakfast.	+10

Minor; the name of an acquaintance or coworker. +5

Somewhat; the name of a casual friend or the layout of a previous home. +0

Very; the name of a lover or close friend or the circumstances of a life-altering battle. -5

Extreme; the exact words of a mortal enemy's dying curse, or the hiding place of an artifact. -10

Action: Usually none. Like Knowledge checks, remembering doesn't take an action.

Try Again: Not for one month, unless the creature is presented with something to remind it of the memory.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

An order of mages has recently claimed a relic of great power. However, a madrir has been killing the order's members, apparently seeking out the item. A high-ranking member of the order comes to the PCs for help and asks them to go to the ruins from which the relic was recovered, and look for clues as to what's going on. Somewhere within the ruins are inscriptions that detail the purpose of the madrir's search.

NIGHTMARE COLLECTOR

By Alex Freed; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by *The Inner Circle*.

Huge Construct

Hit Dice: 21d10+40 (155 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft. (can't run) (8 squares)

Armor Class: 27 (−2 size, +1 Dex, +18 natural); touch 9; flat-footed 26

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+33

Attack: Claw +23 melee (2d6+10)

Full Attack: 2 claws +23 melee (2d6+10)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Animate objects, dark duplicate, death throes, weird

Special Qualities: Construct traits, courage vulnerability, damage reduction 15/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., *dimension door*, low-light vision, nightmare siphon, resistance to cold 30, electricity 30, and fire 30

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 12

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 16

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 22–31 HD (Huge); 32–40 HD (Gargantuan)

Originally built to siphon away nightmares and grant serene rest, nightmare collectors are constructs that have gained power and life from sleepers' fears.

Nightmare collectors are huge, polished stone statues. Their designs vary, but most have several thick legs ending in sharp points and attaching to a hollow cylinder of a body. Both legs and body are often etched or paneled with strange designs or meaningless characters, and stone heads of humanoids, beasts, or monsters line the cylinder's side or hang from its lower edge. Above the cylinder boil over colored fumes that form images from the collector's stored nightmares. Most nightmare collectors easily fill square rooms 20 feet wide and 20 feet high, and many stand in chambers designed to house them, filled with ornate arches and pools.

The first nightmare collectors were built in densely populated communities. Their magical endowments and horrific



designs attracted the nightmares of dreamers, trapping the nightmares inside them and ensuring peaceful sleep for anyone nearby. But the nightmares never disappeared, and the devices became saturated in them. Combined with the devices' magic, the collected thoughts gave the constructs a semblance of life. Since then, evil spellcasters have created animate nightmare collectors knowingly to suit their own designs.

Nightmare collectors are mindless; the nightmares inside them urge them to destroy living creatures, and their magic attracts them to dreamers, but they have no real sentience. Left alone, most settle on the outskirts of cities, absorbing nightmares and killing those who find them. More problematic is when a nightmare collector falls into the hands of a creature powerful enough to control it—some beings can feed on or learn from the captured nightmares, while others relish a collector's sheer destructive force.

COMBAT

Nightmare collectors, despite their violence, are poor tacticians. They readily use their supernatural abilities, but not always efficiently; while nightmare collectors know to use their *weird* cones on groups rather than individuals, differentiating between spellcasters and melee combatants is more than they can handle. Therefore, most nightmare collectors cycle through their abilities, occasionally striking with their claws at combatants who resist their magic, and using *dimension door* to chase fleeing opponents. Nightmare collectors never retreat.

A nightmare collector's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Animate Objects (Su): Three times per day as the spell (caster level 10th), but animated objects return to normal if the nightmare collector is destroyed.

Dark Duplicate (Su): A nightmare collector can create a duplicate of any living creature with fewer than 30 HD within 60 feet. Only one duplicate can be created per creature per day, and creatures that do not sleep (including elves) cannot be duplicated. A duplicate forms anywhere within 60 feet that the collector chooses, and ceases to exist after 2d4 rounds or if the collector is destroyed.

Treat a duplicate as if it were conjured by a *shades* spell, including granting Will saves (DC 21) to disbelieve. The save DC is Charisma based. Duplicates have all the levels, abilities, equipment, and spells of the original creatures, but attacks, spells, and magical equipment used against creatures who recognize the duplicates as illusory cause four-fifths normal damage or (if an effect does not cause damage in hit points) are only 80 percent likely to work. Creatures gain a +2 bonus on their saves to disbelieve for every 24 hours they have gone without sleep before encountering the nightmare collector. Creatures that do not sleep automatically recognize the duplicates as illusory.

Duplicates resemble their original counterparts, but are obviously fakes. Many have glowing eyes, fangs, or other sinister features. They can speak, and have all the knowledge of their counterparts, but are obsessed with destroying all living creatures around them.

Death Throes (Su): When destroyed, a nightmare collector releases its energy in a wave. Any creature within a 90-foot spread must succeed at a Will save (DC 21) or be affected as by a *sleep* spell with no Hit Dice limit, with a duration of 1d4 hours. The save DC is Charisma based.

Weird (Su): A nightmare collector can affect all creatures in a 30-foot cone as with a *weird* spell (caster level 20th; save DC 21). The save DC is Charisma based. Creatures gain a +2 bonus on their saves for every 24 hours they have gone without sleep before encountering the nightmare collector. Creatures that do not sleep are immune to the effect.

Courage Vulnerability (Ex): A creature that is the recipient of any morale bonus applies the morale bonus to damage rolls against nightmare collectors and dark duplicates. Creatures immune to fear gain a +6 morale bonus on damage rolls against nightmare collectors and dark duplicates. As always, multiple morale bonuses do not stack.

Dimension Door (Su): As the spell (caster level 10th), but a nightmare collector can only use this ability when unseen by living creatures.

Nightmare Siphon (Su): Any creature that rests within 1,000 feet of a nightmare collector sleeps peacefully, without disturbing dreams of any sort, and is immune to the spell *nightmare*. For every creature within range that sleeps eight hours or more, the nightmare collector is cured of 1 point of damage.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The nightmares of a madman hold secrets the player characters must learn, but the madman has disappeared. A night hag comes to the PCs and tells them that the madman once traveled through a town where

locals claim no one ever has nightmares. The hag believes that a nightmare collector is near the town, and suggests that if the PCs

can find and destroy it, she can enter the freed nightmares and learn what the PCs need. The offer seems genuine, but the night hag refuses to say what she wants from the collected dreams.

Nightmare Collector

This is a creature I wish I'd created. The dark duplicate power is the kind of thing that's fun to throw against PCs. The courage vulnerability is a nice touch, as is the nightmare siphon.

TIME FLAYER

By Scott Greene; originally published in The Tome of Horrors II by Necromancer Games.

Medium Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 27 (+2 Dex, +10 natural, +5 insight), touch 17, flat-footed — (foresight ability, see below)

Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+17

Attack: +1 greatsword +19 melee (1d10+7, 19-20/x2)

Full Attack: +1 greatsword +19/+14/+9 melee (1d10+7, 19-20/x2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Temporal displacement, unmaking

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/cold iron, darkvision 60 ft., foresight, outsider traits, reality bend, time immunity, time jaunt

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +13

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 18

Skills: Balance +9, Bluff +14, Climb +9, Diplomacy +18, Escape Artist +14, Hide +18, Intimidate +20, Jump +14, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +21, Move Silently +18, Search +21, Sense Motive +21, Spot +21, Survival +21 (+23 on other planes, +23 following tracks)

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Environment: Plane of time

Organization: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: Standard plus +1 greatsword

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 14-39 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature appears as a shimmering white humanoid in robes of black and silver, and with eyes of sparkling fire. Its long, thin arms end in relatively humanoid hands. No other discernable features can be ascertained. The creature moves with elegant grace,

almost as if it were floating a few inches from the ground. It carries a greatsword in its hand.

Time flayers are natives to the plane of time and are most often encountered on that plane, the astral plane, or the ethereal plane. Occasionally a time flayer slips into the material plane, but most such encounters occur when a hole is torn in the time continuum and it pulls a time flayer through, depositing it on the material plane. Such a time flayer usually looks for a way back to its native plane (which often consists of a place on the material plane where the time fabric has been weakened). Some time flayers purposefully journey to the material plane as if they are searching for something—sages and scholars are unsure what it is they are looking for.

Time flayers coexist on their native plane with time elementals, whom they detest. Why this animosity exists is unknown, but neither creature likes the other and they always attack each other on sight. Note that time flayers often gain the upper hand in this battle as they are unaffected by the aging attack of a time elemental (see the *Tome of Horrors*).

COMBAT

Time flayers fight with their greatswords in battle all the while attempting to discern the most powerful foe in a group. Once it has targeted such a foe, a time flayer uses its temporal displacement ability to effectively remove that creature from combat for a few rounds. If faced with certain extinction, a time flayer rips a hole in the time continuum and slips away using its time jaunt ability.

Temporal Displacement (Su): By making a melee touch attack against a foe, a time flayer can send a creature into the future if it fails a Fortitude save (DC 18). The save is Constitution based. On a failed save, the creature disappears in a flash of white energy. For the next minute (10 rounds),

the displaced creature is effectively nonexistent. No form of magic, effect, or force can detect or aid such a creature. A displaced creature can attempt a Wisdom check (DC 22) on its turn to break the effects and end the displacement. The save is Constitution based and includes a +4 racial bonus.

After one minute, the creature reappears in the same space it occupied before being displaced. If the space is occupied when the creature returns, it is

shunted aside to the first open space and takes no damage. A time flayer can use this ability three times per day.

Unmaking (Su): A foe slain by a time flayer is unmade—erased from the very fabric of time. No memories or recollec-



tions of the unmade creature exist anywhere in reality. Past events the creature was responsible for are now attributed to an unknown—even if they recently took place. For example, say a great hero saved a kingdom from certain doom and then suffers the unmaking. The kingdom is still safe, but no one can quite recall who saved it. A creature that suffers the unmaking cannot be raised, resurrected, or restored to life by any means—not even a *wish* can restore an unmade creature. Only the direct intervention of a deity can restore one who suffers this fate.

Foresight (Su): A time flayer can see a few seconds into the future. This ability prevents a time flayer from being surprised, caught flat footed, or flanked. It also grants the time flayer an insight bonus on its Armor Class equal to its Wisdom bonus. This ability can be negated, but the time flayer can restart it as a free action on its next turn.

Reality Bend (Su): As a free action, a time flayer can fold the dimensional space surrounding it, to make its true location hard to discern. Attackers have a 20 percent miss chance each time they attack with melee or ranged weapons. This is similar to the miss chance granted by a *displacement* spell. See *invisibility* does not reveal the creature's location, but *true seeing* does.

Time Immunity (Ex): Time flayers are immune to all time-related spells and effects (including *time stop*, *temporal stasis*, and the like). Time flayers do not age and are not affected by any aging attack (such as that of a time elemental [see the *Tome of Horrors* for information on time elementals]).

Time for a Challenge

I like the time flayer's suite of time-related powers, but mainly I selected it for its temporal displacement ability. It's the kind of power that is going to be a real threat even to higher-level characters because it is so absolute, but at the same time a character affected by it can still make attempts to struggle back to his proper time—the player can't go off and play video games while everyone else finishes the fight. Only the creature's relatively low hit point total and moderate offensive capabilities suggest that it's appropriate for its Challenge Rating. I suspect that even a 13th- or 14th-level group would find a time flayer encounter to be tough.

Time Jaunt (Su): As a standard action, a time flayer can slip through the time stream and appear anywhere on the same plane of existence as if by *greater teleport*. This ability transports the time flayer and up to four other creatures within a 30-foot radius that the time flayer designates. Unwilling creatures must succeed at a Will save (DC 18) to avoid being carried away. This ability is otherwise similar to the *greater teleport* spell. The save DC is Constitution based.

UNHOLY CHORUS

By Lysle Kapp; originally published in Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands by Sword & Sorcery.

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 30d12 (195 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 24 (+2 Dex, +12 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 22

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+19

Attack: Claw +20 melee (1d6+4) or heads +20 melee (1d6+4 to 3d6+4)

Full Attack: Claw +20 melee (1d6+4) and heads +17 melee (1d6+4 to 3d6+4), or 2 heads +20 (1d6+4 to 3d6+4), or two claws +20 melee (1d6+4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Bardic music, haunting melody, vorpal claw

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +17

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 16

Skills: Decipher Script +15, Gather Information +33, Hide +17, Move Silently +17, Listen +15, Perform +36*, Sense Motive +12

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perform), Weapon Focus (claws), Weapon Focus (heads)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 31–60 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature appears to be a walking corpse, a near-skeletal form clad in tattered grave-wrappings. Lacking a head of its own, it clutches several writhing, severed heads in its bony claws.

An unholy chorus is a tormented soul that seeks to add heads to its collection and increase its haunting musical abilities.

These creatures relentlessly hunt for victims, discarding older decaying heads in order to make room for fresh kills. The unholy chorus prefers individuals with some musical gift or magical talent. Some claim unholy choruses burn with a deep hatred of the arts. Others believe they retain some twisted drive that inspires them to compose a final, triumphant masterpiece.

COMBAT

Unholy choruses employ their haunting melody ability to disable their opponents so they can draw near enough to use their vorpal claws.

Head Collection

(Su): An unholy chorus carries a collection of heads that gives it voice and purpose. When it decapitates a victim, it can add its

new victim's head to its collection. Adding a head to its collection is a standard action. For each additional head in its collection, the unholy chorus deals an additional 1d6 points of damage (maximum +3d6 per arm) when attacking with its heads. Each such head also increases the effect of its haunting melody ability. An unholy chorus can hold up to three heads in each claw. Therefore, an unholy chorus that has collected more than four heads cannot make a claw attack, but may make two head attacks.

These heads can be sundered (hardness 10, 2 hit points). If all its heads are destroyed, the unholy chorus can no longer make head attacks or use its haunting melody ability, but may make two vorpal claw attacks.

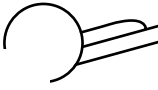
Haunting Melody (Su): An unholy chorus with at least one head may sing a dread song that functions as the *doomwail*† spell, as cast by a 13th-level bard.

Bardic Music (Su/Sp): An unholy chorus can produce bardic music effects as a 13th-level bard.

Vorpal Claw (Ex): An unholy chorus claw severs the head of a Medium or smaller creature on a confirmed critical hit.

* **Skills:** The unholy chorus gains a +1 competence bonus to Perform checks for each head in its collection.

† *If you don't have this Relics & Rituals spell, treat this as a paralysis effect.*



VACUOUS ENGULFER

By Alex Freed and C.D. Bennett; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by *The Inner Circle*.

Large Aberration

Hit Dice: 5d8+15 (37 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 10 ft.

Armor Class: 16 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural); touch 10, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+9

Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d6+3)

Full Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Vacuum pull

Special Qualities: All-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., pocket dimension

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 7

Skills: Climb +3, Listen +1, Search +2, Spot +6, Swim +10

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 6–9 HD (Large); 10–12 HD (Huge)

Vacuous engulfers are creatures created by the growth of life around pinprick holes to pocket dimensions. These symmetrical, four-sided creatures stand about 8 feet tall. Four spiderlike legs tipped with sharp claws lead to a stalk of a torso, which in turn leads to the engulfer's four mouths. Each mouth pro-

trudes from the torso in a 2-foot-long tube, ending with a diamond-shaped opening which is usually tightly closed. These openings are incredibly flexible, allowing the engulfer to ingest creatures far larger than would appear possible.

The torso-stalk ends 1 foot above the mouths, topped with four bulging yellow eyes. The skin of a vacuous engulfer is colored a light green, splashed with yellow and speckled with black. Its texture is tough and slimy, and it tends to absorb the smells of the environment around it.

Vacuous engulfers live out their lives wandering and devouring prey. They receive nourishment from the decomposition of their victims' bodies inside their pocket dimensions. They have no discernible food preferences, migratory patterns, or relationships with other species. Equally at home on land and at sea, they show no need for sleep.

Occasionally, vacuous engulfers are captured and placed as guardians over tombs and other abandoned places.



COMBAT

Vacuous engulfers attack any Medium or smaller moving creatures that catch their attention, though creatures that stay perfectly still likely go unnoticed. Vacuous engulfers normally devour opponents with their vacuum attack before they are close enough to use their claws; even then, they only use one claw at a time in order to keep their balance.

Vacuum Pull (Su): As a move action, a vacuous engulfer can open any number of its mouths, creating a powerful suction that draws nearby objects and creatures inside. Each mouth generates a 60-foot cone of suction equivalent to hurricane-force winds. Any Medium or smaller creature blown far enough to reach the engulfer's space is pulled through a mouth into the pocket dimension beyond. Due to the suction, a vacuous engulfer's mouths are pulled closed as part of the action in which they open, immediately ending the winds.

All-Around Vision (Ex): Vacuous engulfers' four eyes allow them to look in any direction, bestowing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Vacuous engulfers cannot be flanked.

Pocket Dimension: Objects and creatures pulled through a vacuous engulfer's mouths are transported to an endless black void without air or gravity. All newly arrived creatures and objects appear at the same point, but there is no exit. Teleporting out is impossible, but *plane shift* and other methods of planar travel function normally. Creatures who need air risk suffocation immediately. When a vacuous engulfer dies, the contents of the pocket dimension appear inside its torso-stalk.

A New Adventure

The vacuous engulfer makes for an interesting encounter. I particularly like its use of the wind force rules and the fact that engulfed creatures aren't destroyed forever—in fact, their disappearances could lead to a new adventure.

This does no damage to the creatures and objects appearing (they burst free), but usually destroys the engulfer's corpse.

If a *portable hole* is brought inside a vacuous engulfer, the hole, the engulfer, the contents of the hole and the pocket dimension, and any creatures within a 10-foot radius of the engulfer are drawn into the astral plane, destroying the *portable hole* and vacuous engulfer in the process.

PHYSIOLOGICAL USES

Each mouth of a vacuous engulfer can be magically altered to act as a *bag of holding* (of any type) at three-quarters the normal base price. All other creation requirements remain the same.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

If the PCs are in search of a particular item, a vacuous engulfer that has devoured it can make matters more difficult. The engulfer may still be in the vicinity—or it may have wandered off, been captured and brought to guard the crypts of an underwater city, or become the subject of a wizard's experiments.

A wizard has captured a vacuous engulfer in an attempt to discover the secret of its alien physiology. During his experiments, he has somehow loosed the inner energy of the creature, opening a portal to a pocket dimension that has engulfed not only the wizard, but his laboratory and the surrounding village. In order to help, it may be necessary for the PCs to capture a vacuous engulfer and replicate the experiment, entering the pocket dimension themselves. Once there, they must rescue the trapped wizard and villagers, fight off whatever forces are native to the strange place, and return home.

WARDING VISAGE

By Alex Freed and C.D. Bennett; originally published in *Denizens of Avadnu* by The Inner Circle.

Medium Construct

Hit Dice: 15d10+20 (102 hp)

Initiative: -5 (Dex)

Speed: 0 ft.

Armor Class: 5 (-5 Dex); touch 5; flat-footed 5

Base Attack/Grapple: +11/+11

Attack: —

Full Attack: —

Space/Reach: 5 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spell-like abilities, spell storing

Special Qualities: Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., hardness, low-light vision, resistances

Saves: Fort +5, Ref —, Will +5

Abilities: Str 10, Dex —, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: —

Warding visages are magical gatekeepers built into walls, created to protect doors and passages.

A typical warding visage is physically identical to a carved section of wall, crafted to resemble a creature's head. The carving may be detailed, or primitive and crude, and unusual warding visages have been carved from glass, ice, and even paper. When alone, a warding visage is completely inanimate; only when it notices intruders does it stir, stretching forth inches from its wall's surface and opening its mouth to speak.

Built by powerful spellcasters, warding visages are programmed to act in certain ways when approached. A typical warding visage recites a warning, then attacks if not deactivated with the magical key created during its construction. A few, never intended to allow passage to anyone, attack immediately. Warding visages can fulfill complicated instructions given verbally by their creators, but they cannot distinguish creatures besides their creators in any way; a spellcaster who wants his minions to have safe passage through a warding visage's door must create a password the warding visage can recognize or program the warding visage to alert the spellcaster when it notices intruders.

Warding visages speak the languages of their creators.

The above statistics are for a warding visage built from stone. Hit Dice, base attack and grapple bonuses, saves, and Challenge Rating differ for other types.

COMBAT

A warding visage's creator (always magically recognized by the visage) can command the warding visage if the visage is within 60

feet and can hear its creator. Otherwise, the warding visage follows whatever tactics its creator programs into it. While some use their spell storing abilities to great effect (*summoning* other creatures or activating traps), most use straightforward attack spells. A warding visage will focus exclusively on a creature that seems about to enter the area it guards.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot cone of thousands of shards of the warding visage's base material, once every 1d3 rounds, damage 1d6 points of piercing and slashing damage per Hit Die of the warding visage, Reflex DC 10 + half warding visage's Hit Dice.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*hold portal*, *knock*, *open/close*. The caster level equals the warding visage's Hit Dice. The save DCs are Charisma based. Additional abilities are available to each common type of warding visage, all usable three times per day.

Glass: *Color spray* (DC 11), *dancing lights*, *flare* (DC 10).

Ice: *Fog cloud*, *sleet storm*, *wall of ice* (DC 14).

Stone: *Spike stones* (DC 14), *stone shape* (20-foot range), *transmute mud to rock* (DC 15), *transmute rock to mud* (DC 15).

Not Just Another Door

Doors are so ubiquitous in the game, I really like the idea of a door monster. Plus, the warding visage seems like the kind of guardian construct someone would really create. I like that its powers depend on the material it is made from.



Iron: Blade barrier (DC 16), cloudkill (DC 15), scorching ray (+17 ranged touch).

Spell Storing (Sp): A warding visage can store up to three spells of 5th level or lower that are cast into it by its creator. It “casts” these spells when commanded or when a predetermined situation arises. Once a spell is used, it can store another spell (or the same spell again). Each spell has a caster level equal to the warding visage’s Hit Dice. The save DCs are Charisma based.

Typical spells stored include *lightning bolt, magic missile, persistent image, ray of enfeeblement, sending, shout, stinking cloud, summon monster I-V, and wall of force.*

Hardness (Ex): A warding visage has the same hardness as its base material.

Resistances (Ex): Warding visages take half damage from electricity. Warding visages made of a material other than ice take half damage from fire, and one-quarter damage from cold. All resistances should be applied before hardness.

Cold Subtype: Ice warding visages have the cold subtype. They have immunity to cold, and vulnerability to fire.

Hit Dice: A warding visage has 1 Hit Die per hit point per inch of thickness of its base material.

CONSTRUCTION

A warding visage costs 5,000 gp per Hit Die to create. This cost includes the warding visage’s body (30 gp per Hit Die), but not the additional 100 gp for the key. The spellcaster or another worker must construct the body and key; doing so requires a successful Craft (sculpting) check (DC 15). A Craft (blacksmithing) or Craft (stonemasonry) check can be substituted for iron and stone warding visages, respectively. After the body and key are fashioned, the visage must be animated through an extended magical ritual. If personally constructing the warding visage’s body, the creator can perform the building and ritual together.

The costs to create listed below include the cost of the physical body and all the materials and spell components that are consumed or become a permanent part of the warding visage.

Caster level 10th; Craft Construct, *arcane lock, fabricate, magic mouth, passwall*, caster must be at least 10th level; Price 5,135 gp (glass), 15,135 gp (ice), 75,135 gp (stone), 150,135 gp (iron); Cost 2,650 gp + 198 XP (glass), 7,680 gp + 596 XP (ice), 37,860 gp + 2,982 XP (stone), 75,585 gp + 5,964 XP (iron).

ATTRIBUTES BY CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL

Material	HD	hp	Hardness	Breath Damage	Breath Save DC	CR
Glass	1	25	1	1d6	10	2
Ice	3	36	0	3d6*	11	4
Stone	15	102	8	15d6	17	10
Iron	30	185	10	30d6	25	14

* Half the damage from an ice warding visage’s shards is cold damage.



KEY

A warding visage’s key can be of any design, but it must fit into a slot somewhere on the warding visage’s head—usually in the forehead or in the pupil of one eye. When the key is used (a move action), the warding visage is deactivated for five minutes, or until commanded by its creator to awaken (whichever comes first). A deactivated warding visage takes no actions and cannot react to stimuli. Destroying a warding visage’s key has no effect on the construct.

A creature unfamiliar with a given warding visage must succeed at a Search check (DC 15) to find its keyhole. An Open Lock check (DC 30) allows a creature to deactivate the warding visage without the key.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

An ancient wizard has disappeared, and influential persons are interested in the contents of his tower. The player characters are hired to go inside, where they find hundreds of doors, all protected by different varieties of warding visages. One warding visage was granted true intelligence by its master, and it cautiously offers to advise the PCs if they will help it find the wizard.

Variant Rules

Whether your preferred character type is a burly fighter or a spellcaster, the variant rules in this chapter provide a dash of fresh excitement to enhance your game.

I'm sure it comes as no surprise to anyone that I'm a big fan of the d20 System core mechanics and the way they work. However, every campaign is different, so it's interesting to explore various ways to do similar things. It's okay to create a variant rule that's more complex than the core rule, but the complexity needs to be there for a reason, and there has to be a payoff in gameplay. Conversely, sometimes an alternate subsystem simplifies a rule. In these cases, make sure that in its simplicity the subsystem does not lose the robustness of its core rules counterpart. Lastly, an alternate rule may be merely an addition to the core rule. You'll see examples of each of these styles in this chapter.

COMBAT DEFENSE

By Bruce Graw; originally published in the *Advanced Player's Guide* by *Sword & Sorcery*.

In the d20 System, virtually everything that can be done to an enemy allows him some sort of defense roll. Spells are countered by saving throws, and skill checks are contested by opposed skill rolls. Actual combat swings, however, cannot be defended against. If a character rolls an attack and succeeds, the target can do nothing except take whatever damage he dishes out.

The combat defense system provides a means to avoid being hit. One advantage of this system is that a character still has a chance to damage creatures that normally have an Armor Class far too high to penetrate, if he rolls high on his attack roll and their defense check is low enough. Similarly, it becomes virtually impossible to build a character with an Armor Class so high that he is invulnerable to attack. Even a low-level creature could still hit him on a high roll, if his defense roll is sufficiently bad.

In the combat defense system, a character does not have a single combined defense statistic (Armor Class). Instead, four statistics factor into defense:

Armor Defense (AD): This represents any armor the character wears. Armor Defense equals the armor bonus plus any natural armor or deflection bonuses, but does not include shields, Dexterity bonuses, dodge bonuses, or other modifications. Armor Defense may be used in combat against any blow, even if one of the other defenses listed hereafter is attempted and fails. Armor Defense can be significant at low levels, but since it increases little as the character advances in power, it tends to become little more than a last resort at high levels.

Block Defense (BD): This statistic represents the character's shield bonus, if any. Add the shield's armor bonus to the character's base attack bonus to determine the Block Defense statistic. Block Defense may be used against one attack per round for each attack the character may make, using the base attack bonus as applicable. For example, a character with a +6/+1 base attack bonus and a heavy steel shield (+2 armor bonus) could make two block attempts per round, the first at +8 and the second at +3. Block Defense attempts are separate from the character's normal attacks for that round.

Dodge Defense (DD): This represents the character's ability to avoid blows, as determined by adding the character's Dexterity bonus (less any relevant armor penalty) to his Reflex save and any dodge bonuses provided by magic items or other sources. Dodge Defense represents innate natural reflexes and may be applied at will in combat, even if the character is caught flat footed.

Each DD attempt after the first is at a cumulative -2 penalty, however. In addition, the character cannot add his Dexterity bonus if he is attacked in any circumstance where such bonuses are not allowed.

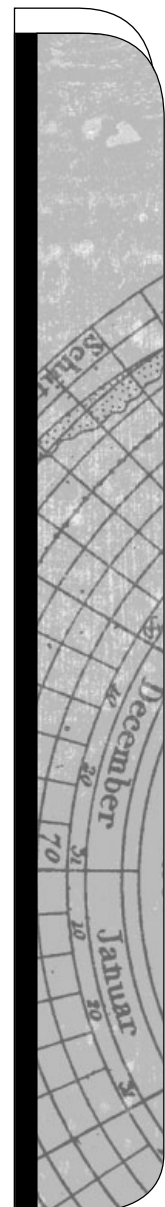
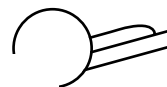
Parry Defense (PD): Parry Defense is determined by the character's basic (maximum) attack bonus with a given weapon. A character may parry with any weapon he is wielding, including off-hand weapons. If the character has the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, he has no penalty to the Parry Defense if using an off-hand weapon; otherwise, he suffers a -2 penalty to Parry Defense for all weapons if dual-wielding. Parrying takes up one of the character's attacks with that weapon. Typically, off-hand weapons are used for this purpose, permitting a full attack with a primary weapon while parrying with a secondary one.

APPLYING COMBAT DEFENSE

A character may choose any *one* of the four possible defenses against an attack. The player rolls 1d20 and adds the

Combat Defense

This is an interesting variant, but it's not for everyone. It requires an extra level of involvement on the part of the players, for they have to make decisions not only regarding their offensive actions, but their defensive ones as well. I like it because it's really an original take on the subject. As a warning, though, I'd say this system will mean a lot more work for the DM.





appropriate combat defense value. If the result equals or exceeds the opponent's attack roll, the character avoids or deflects the attack. A failed block, dodge or parry attempt still allows an Armor Defense attempt.

When using this system, the GM must determine the defense values for monsters and other creatures that presently use a single Armor Class. One solution is to employ the standard attack system for such targets. Intelligent monsters should, however, always break up their Armor Class into the four defense values if possible. The GM should take into account the physical structure of each creature when determining defense values. For example, a giant would not be good at dodging, but could have an impressive parry ability with a very large weapon. Similarly, a fast-flying creature might be exceptional with its dodge but have little or no Armor Defense to speak of.

This system permits a wider range of combat results and provides a much greater effect of randomness on the battle. It also better rewards characters who use shields and gives another option for off-hand weapons not seen in the standard combat system. The primary advantage of this system is that characters take an active role in defending against an attack, instead of simply hoping the opponent rolls poorly.

COMBAT DEFENSE EXAMPLE

An NPC fighter attacks a PC ranger. The ranger is 6th level, with base attack bonus +6/+1, Reflex save +5, Strength 14 and Dexterity 18. He wields a +2 *longsword* in his left hand and a +3 *dagger* in his right, but does not use a shield. He wears a *chain shirt +1* and has an *amulet of natural armor +1*. He has the Weapon Finesse (*dagger*) feat. His defenses are calculated as follows:

Armor Defense: +6 (*Chain shirt +1* [+5 armor bonus] and *amulet of natural armor +1*.)

Block Defense: +0 (He does not use a shield.)

Dodge Defense: +9 (Dexterity bonus +4 and Reflex save +5.)

Parry Defense (longsword): +10 (Base attack bonus +6, Strength bonus +2, +2 magic bonus.)

Parry Defense (dagger): +13 (Base attack bonus +6, Dexterity +4, +3 magic bonus.)

The enemy fighter wins initiative; his first attack roll is a 20 and the second is a 24. The ranger gives up his off-hand attack to parry the first attack with the dagger (PD +13) and rolls a 9, for a total +22—enough to parry the blow. Preferring to save his two longsword attacks, the ranger decides to dodge the second blow (DD +9) and rolls a 15, for a total of 24—just barely dodging the fighter's swing. If the fighter attacks again or if another opponent takes a swing, the ranger's dodge is only +7 due to a cumulative -2 penalty for each dodge attempt after the first. The ranger may make two attacks with his longsword, but cannot attack with the dagger this round since he used it to parry.

If the ranger attacked first and used his dagger to attack, that weapon would not be available for a parry attempt on that round. Also, if the ranger came under attack in a circumstance where he could not use his Dexterity bonus for dodging, he could not include that bonus to his Dodge Defense. Even if he fails to dodge, he may still rely on his armor for a last-ditch defense.

INCANTATIONS

Designed by David Noonan and developed by Andy Collins; originally published in Unearthed Arcana by Wizards of the Coast.

Incantations are like spells, but they can be cast by characters who are not spellcasters. This variant enables characters who know the correct ritual gestures and phrases for an incantation to achieve powerful magical effects. Incantations don't use spell slots, you don't have to prepare them ahead of time, and you can use an incantation an unlimited number of times per day.

Incantations have drawbacks, however: They're time-consuming to cast, and success isn't assured. They are often expensive, and some require additional participants to complete the ritual. Some incantations work only under certain conditions, such as during a full moon.

Most important among the drawbacks, an incantation rarely fades away quietly if the caster fails to perform the ritual correctly. Instead it reverses itself upon the caster, explodes with a cascade of magical energy, or weakens the barrier between worlds, enabling hostile outsiders to emerge onto the material plane.

This variant gives a measure of magical power to non-spellcasters, but the incantations themselves are usually too specific in effect to increase a character's power in the general sense. Because many incantations require academic skills such as Knowledge, the characters best equipped to cast them are often spellcasters anyway.

Incantations provide a useful way to introduce powerful magical effects in a lower-level game under controlled conditions. Player characters will still use spells rather than expensive, risky incantations whenever they can. Incantations are also more specific than spells, so the DM can introduce them into the game without worrying that they'll spread beyond the immediate situation.

If you want characters in your low-level game to take a brief sojourn to Ysgard, you can introduce the incantation *Hrothgar's journey*. Because it requires the construction of a thatched hut in the middle of a forest and works only during the winter solstice, you don't have to worry about the characters exploring the outer planes whenever they get the urge. If you gave low-level PCs easy access to the *plane shift* spell, on the other hand, they could wander the planes until they ran afoul of the first outsider more powerful than they are (which is almost any outsider).

DISCOVERING INCANTATIONS

Obscure tomes and spellbooks filled with mystical ramblings, descriptions of magic theory, ordinary arcane spells, and utterly useless or incomprehensible magical writing often hide the instructions for performing incantations. In those dusty volumes, diligent readers can find incantations with real power—magical recipes that provide step-by-step instructions for achieving a powerful effect.

If the characters have access to a well-stocked library of magical information, finding a set of instructions for a particular incantation requires a successful Knowledge (arcana) check with a Difficulty Class that is 10 lower than the DC for casting the incantation. Just being aware of the existence of a particular incantation requires a Knowledge (arcana) check with a Difficulty Class that is 15 lower than the incantation's casting DC.

CASTING AN INCANTATION

At its simplest, casting an incantation is akin to preparing and cooking something according to a recipe. You must have the ingredients in hand, then use your skill in cooking to perform each step in order. In game terms, this means having the required incantation components, then succeeding at

a number of skill checks—often Knowledge (arcana) checks—during the incantation's casting time.

Each incantation's description tells how many successful skill checks are required to cast the incantation. Unless otherwise specified, the caster makes a skill check every 10 minutes. If checks involving more than one skill are required, the checks may be made in any order, as desired by the caster. Failing one skill check means that 10 minutes have gone by, and the incantation is in danger of failing. If two skill checks in a row are failed, the incantation itself fails. Each incantation has a consequence associated with failure. Even if the incantation fails, the casting still consumes all the components (including expensive material components and experience points).

Because of the unusual outcomes possible on a failure, the DM may choose to make these skill checks in secret. Doing this prevents the player of the caster from knowing whether an incantation has succeeded or failed. If the consequence of failure is immediate and severe (such as death resulting from a failed *fires of Dis* incantation), the effect is obvious, and concealing it serves no purpose.

Many incantations have a backlash component, which is an ill effect suffered by the caster at the conclusion of the casting or upon failure of the incantation (see "Backlash" on the next page).

SAVES AND SPELL RESISTANCE

If an incantation allows a save, the incantation's description includes the formula to calculate the save. For checks to overcome spell resistance, divide the incantation's skill check Difficulty Class in half to get the effective caster level for the spell resistance check. For example, the caster of a *fires of Dis* incantation (DC 23) would add +11 to a d20 roll when attempting to overcome the spell resistance of the target.

INTERRUPTING INCANTATIONS

Incantations take a long time to cast, but they aren't as delicate and exacting as traditional spells. Casting an incantation does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and a caster can even pause the ritual for a short time in order to fight, cast a spell, or take some other action. For each round the incantation is interrupted, the Difficulty Class of all subsequent skill checks to complete the casting increases by 1. Time spent during the interruption of an incantation does not count toward the incantation's casting time.

TAKING 10

As long as the caster of an incantation is not threatened or distracted, he may take 10. Incantations with backlash components or similarly harmful aspects count as threats that prevent the caster from taking 10. A caster may never take 20 when attempting to complete an incantation.

INCANTATION COMPONENTS

Most incantations require components not unlike those of spells, including verbal, somatic, focus, and material components.

In addition, some require secondary casters (abbreviated as “SC” on the Components line of a description), or cause some sort of backlash (abbreviated as “B”), or cost the caster some number of experience points (abbreviated as “XP”).

SECONDARY CASTERS

Some incantations require multiple participants to have any hope of succeeding. These secondary casters are indispensable to the success of the incantation. However, no matter how many people are gathered into the dark room, chanting with candles, only one character—most commonly the one with the highest modifier in the relevant skill—is the primary caster who makes the relevant checks. Secondary casters can't help the primary caster succeed by means of the aid another action, but their presence is required for certain aspects of the ritual nonetheless.

Often, an incantation is hosted with more than the minimum number of casters. If a primary caster or a secondary caster is killed or disabled, one of these bystanders can step into a role.

If an incantation requires a check involving a skill other than Knowledge (arcana), any secondary caster can make that check if he or she has a higher skill modifier than the primary caster. Casters who favor the *Hrothgar's journey* incantation, for example, keep bards on hand if they aren't highly skilled in Perform (oratory) themselves.

BACKLASH

Some incantations damage or drain the caster in some way when they are cast. They have a backlash component: damage, negative levels, or some other effect. The caster experiences the backlash effect regardless of the success or failure of the incantation.

FAILED INCANTATIONS

When two skill checks in a row result in failure (whether or not they're made by the same character), the incantation as a whole fails. The character who failed the second check experiences the effect indicated in the incantation's description. In general, the consequences of failure can be divided into the following categories. (Many of these effects are not mentioned in the sample incantations that follow; they are provided here for use in incantations that could be developed for a campaign.)

Attack: A creature is called from elsewhere to battle the caster (and often any bystanders and secondary casters). The incantation's description tells the DM what Challenge Rating the creature should have, how it behaves, and how long it persists.

Augment: The incantation was supposed to weaken or destroy its target, but it makes the target more powerful instead. An incantation that deals damage might heal its target or cause it to grow in power, for example.

Betrayal: The incantation seemingly succeeds, but the subject of the incantation (or, in rare cases, the caster) undergoes a dramatic alignment change. Over the next 1d6 minutes, the subject's alignment becomes the extreme opposite of what it was previously (for instance, lawful good becomes chaotic evil, or chaotic neutral becomes lawful neutral; a neutral subject randomly becomes lawful good, lawful evil, chaotic good, or chaotic evil). The subject of such a betrayal generally tries to keep its new outlook a secret.

Damage: Either the caster or the target takes damage as the consequence of failure.

Death: Someone—usually the caster or the target—dies. Some incantations allow a saving throw to avoid this consequence of failure.

Delusion: The caster believes the incantation had the desired effect, but in fact it had no effect or a very different one.

Falsehood: The incantation (typically a divination) delivers false results to the caster, but the caster believes the results are true.

Hostile Spell: The caster of the incantation is targeted by a harmful spell. The incantation description gives the specific spell, save DC, and other particulars.

Mirrorcast: The incantation has the opposite effect of what was intended.

Reversal: The incantation affects the caster rather than the intended target.

SAMPLE INCANTATIONS

The following incantations are among the better known incantations in existence—which means that no more than a few eldritch scholars know about them. Characters can learn of their existence during the course of an adventure by making a Knowledge (arcana) check (see “Discovering Incantations,” previous page).

CALL FORTH THE DWELLER

Divination

Effective Level: 6th

Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 20, six successes

Failure: Falsehood

Components: V, S, M, F, XP, B

Casting Time: 60 minutes

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This incantation contacts the enigmatic, extradimensional being known as the Dweller on the Threshold, an entity that imparts knowledge about its specific obsession: doors and other entrances.

To cast *call forth the Dweller*, the caster must inscribe 42 mystic symbols around an open doorway, then begin the chants and supplications required for the incantation.

If the incantation succeeds, an image of the Dweller—an inky mass of tentacles and mouths—appears on the other side of the doorway. The Dweller on the Threshold truthfully answers any question it is asked about a particular door. For example, the Dweller can provide a magical password that unlocks a door, indicate how to disarm a trap on a door, reveal the weaknesses of a door's guardian, or describe the room that lies beyond the door. Its answers are clear and fairly specific, if somewhat terse. The caster may well appreciate such concise answers, because one of the 42 symbols inscribed around the doorway during the casting of the incantation fades away with each word the Dweller on the Threshold speaks—and when all the symbols are gone, the Dweller disappears.

If the caster asks the Dweller on the Threshold a question that doesn't involve doors, the Dweller responds with a cutting insult, often about something the caster thought was secret. Each word of the insult likewise makes a symbol disappear from the perimeter of the doorway.

The exact nature of the Dweller on the Threshold is shrouded in mystery. Some contend that it is somehow connected to an ancient god of secrets, although no one has ever found conclusive evidence that the Dweller on the Threshold is evil.

Option: If the doorway used as the focus is one that the Dweller has been asked about in the past, the caster gains a +4 bonus on the Knowledge (arcana) checks during the incantation. For example, if a wizard uses *call forth the Dweller* to learn about the Gateway to Despair, then when she reaches the Gateway, she can use the Gateway as the focus and gain a +4 bonus when she uses the incantation to ask about the Arches of Certain Doom.

Failure: If the caster fails two consecutive Knowledge (arcana) checks, the Dweller on the Threshold gleefully lies, employing falsehoods that demonstrate its inclination toward mischief and cruelty.

Material Component: Forty-two mystic symbols inscribed around the perimeter of the focus doorway (requiring materials costing 500 gp). As described above, these symbols gradually disappear during the time the incantation remains in effect.

Focus: An open doorway large enough to allow a Medium creature to pass through it.

XP Component: 400 XP.

Backlash: After speaking with the Dweller on the Threshold, the caster is exhausted.

Campaign Use: This incantation is an obvious solution for characters who are “stuck” by an especially impenetrable door. The exhaustion backlash makes it less likely they immediately try the door after casting the incantation, and the XP cost ensures that they won't try to use *call forth the Dweller* on every door they face. If you introduce this incantation in your game, you're giving player characters occasional access to a powerful divination. But because it's rather specific, it doesn't make the characters more powerful. Typically, getting through a door lands the PCs in trouble more quickly than if they were unable to pass the portal.

FIRES OF DIS

Conjuration (Calling)

Effective Level: 6th

Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 23, six successes;

Knowledge (religion) DC 23, two successes; Knowledge (the planes) DC 23, one success

Failure: Death

Components: V, S, M, XP, SC, B

Casting Time: 90 minutes

Range: Touch

Effect: 80-ft.-radius burst centered on caster

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 19 + caster's Charisma modifier)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This incantation, dreamed up by insane cultists, opens a fell rift between the material plane and hell. This rift brings about a massive conflagration that destroys almost everything in the immediate area, then releases a powerful devil who capers over the smoldering ruins and begins to rampage across the countryside. The *fires of Dis* ignite everything they touch—except the caster, who is transported to Dis as the result of the incantation's backlash.

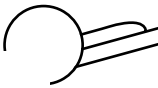
When the incantation is complete, the *fires of Dis* fill an 80-foot-radius spread around the caster's former location, dealing 18d6 points of fire damage (Reflex half) to all creatures and objects. Additionally, everything flammable in that radius is now on fire (as described in “Catching on Fire,” in the Glossary of the DMG).

In the following round, a pit fiend comes through the rift, which then closes. The creature begins to destroy everything in sight.

Failure: Death of the character who failed the second consecutive skill check.

Incantations

There's a real fantasy feel to the idea that anyone can produce certain magical effects if they just follow the directions (preferably found in a musty old tome). Incantations are also the perfect way to define the really awful thing the powerful lich is going to perform to summon a horde of demons or otherwise bring hell on earth.



Material Component: Rare unguents and dark alchemical concoctions worth 5,000 gp.

XP Component: 1,000 XP.

Backlash: The caster is knocked unconscious and transported to Dis (no save).

Extra Casters: Six required; they chant choruses and supplications to various dark deities throughout the incantation.

Campaign Use: Obviously, the backlash component is significant enough that most player characters will not seriously consider casting this incantation. But even a low- to mid-level character has a decent chance of making all the skill checks without failing twice in a row, so the incantation could show up in a campaign in a number of different circumstances. For instance, the PCs may be tipped off that suicidal cultists are trying to bring the *fires of Dis* to their city, and they have to disrupt the incantation. The *fires of Dis* might also have a place in a mystery adventure, where the player characters must discover who stole rare alchemical compounds. A routine investigation takes on new urgency when the player characters find out that the missing vials can be the material component for a *fires of Dis* incantation.

HROTHGAR'S JOURNEY

Conjuration (Teleportation)

Effective Level: 6th

Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 20, two successes;

Perform (oratory) DC 20, four successes

Failure: 5d6 points of fire damage to caster

Components: V, S, M, SC, B

Casting Time: 60 minutes

Range: Touch

Target or Targets: Caster plus 4–12 other creatures

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless) (DC 16 + caster's Charisma modifier)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Hrothgar's journey is an incantation based on the tale of Hrothgar, a powerful barbarian hero from ages past. When the poetic epic of Hrothgar is recited in the stifling heat of a sweat lodge during the winter solstice, the orator and his listeners receive the same final reward that Hrothgar did: a one-way trip to Ysgard's plain of Ida, where they can drink and make merry with the greatest warriors of myth.

To cast the incantation, the caster must construct a small, windowless hut in the middle of the forest, then build a bonfire in the hut's center. At least four and up to 12 others accompany the caster into the hut. Then the flames are lit and the telling of the tale of Hrothgar begins.

Because the bonfire is large and the hut is small, the atmosphere inside quickly gets stiflingly hot. This is the incantation's backlash; unlike most backlash components, it affects the incantation's other targets as well as the caster.

Any creature inside the hut must make a Fortitude save every 10 minutes or suffer the effects of severe heat (as described under "Heat Dangers" in the Glossary of the DMG).

Just as the tale of Hrothgar approaches its conclusion (near the end of the casting time), the bonfire's flames light the hut on fire, which creates a great deal of smoke but no additional heat or damage. If the final skill check succeeds, the flames consume the hut's roof and walls, revealing the plain of Ida on the plane of Ysgard (see Chapter Five: Campaigns in the DMG).

Material Component: A windowless, thatched hut in a forest.

Backlash: Severe heat.

Extra Casters: Four required; they provide the dialogue for other characters in the epic of Hrothgar.

Campaign Use: *Hrothgar's journey* is well within the reach of mid-level player characters, especially bards. Of all the outer planes, Ysgard is perhaps the most hospitable to PCs and the easiest to work into an ongoing campaign, so the incantation may be a good way to whet the players' appetite for planar travel without opening up the entire cosmology. In the hands of NPCs, *Hrothgar's journey* can be an escape route for the barbarian raiders the characters have been chasing for months. Or a mischievous NPC bard can beckon the PCs into a warm hut on a cold winter's night, promising them a wondrous reward if they just listen to a tale....

CREATING NEW INCANTATIONS

Making new incantations for your campaign is a tricky balancing act. Incantations are intentionally constructed to be much more idiosyncratic than spells are. And because incantations hinge on skill checks, it's possible for a player character to get access to powerful magic before she—or the campaign—is ready for it. The following guidelines will help you balance the benefit of an incantation with its negative aspects, and also determine how difficult the incantation is to cast.

- Determine School:** When you design an incantation, first decide which school or schools the incantation would fit into if it were a spell. Each school has a specific Difficulty Class which serves as the base skill check DC for the incantation you're designing. Consult the descriptions of the schools of magic in Chapter Ten of the *Player's Handbook* if you aren't sure which school an incantation should belong to. If you're designing an incantation that could belong to more than one school, choose the most important one to provide the base Difficulty Class. Other schools add one-third their DC to the total. For example, the *fires of Dis* incantation has conjuration as its most important school (because of the pit fiend it calls) and evocation as a second school (because of the fiery burst it creates). Thus, the *fires of Dis* incantation has a base Difficulty Class of 41 (30 + 11) for all skill checks made during its casting.

Each summary below specifies the range, target, duration, and other aspects of an incantation associated with a particular school.

Abjuration: DC 32; Range: Close; Target: One or more creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Conjuration: DC 30; Range: Close; Target: One creature; Duration: Hours (Instantaneous for teleportation subschool); Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless).

Divination: DC 30; Range: Long; Target: Personal; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No.

Enchantment: DC 32; Range: Close; Target: One living creature; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Evocation: DC 34; Range: Medium; Area: 5-ft.-wide bolt or 20-ft.-radius burst; Duration: Instantaneous; Saving Throw: Reflex half; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Illusion: DC 32; Range: Touch; Target: One living creature or 20 cubic feet of matter; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will disbelief; Spell Resistance: No.

Necromancy: DC 34; Range: Close; Target: One or more creatures or corpses; Duration: Instantaneous; Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No.

Transmutation: DC 32; Range: Medium; Target: One creature or 20 cubic feet of matter; Duration: Rounds; Saving Throw: Fortitude half (often harmless); Spell Resistance: Yes.

2. Modify DC: Next, determine modifications to the base Difficulty Class based on the specifics of your ritual; see the table below for a list of general factors and how they change the skill check DC. Increasing the base range of an incantation, for example, is a factor that increases the DC. Reducing the duration of an incantation, on the other hand, is a factor that reduces the Difficulty Class.

3. Set Level: Finally, set the effective level of the incantation. Incantations are like 6th- through 9th-level spells, so you can set the effective level of the incantation by comparing what the incantation does to what spells of that level can accomplish. The effective level determines a number of aspects of the incantation: how many total successes are required, the exact save DC of the incantation, and sometimes the incantation's precise range and duration.

Total Successes: Equal to the incantation's effective level.

Save DC: 10 + incantation's effective level + caster's Charisma modifier.

Duration and Range: Assume a caster level of twice the incantation's level, using the same formula a spell would. For example, an incantation with a duration of "minutes" would

GENERAL FACTORS FOR INCANTATIONS

Casting Time	DC Mod.	Focus/Material Components	DC Mod.
One hour between checks	-1	Expensive material component (500 gp)	-1
Casting time is restricted (only during full moon, for example)	-4	Expensive material component (5,000 gp)	-2
Casting time is extremely restricted (only during lunar eclipse, for example)	-8	Expensive material component (25,000 gp)	-4
		Expensive focus (5,000 gp)	-1
		Expensive focus (25,000 gp)	-2
Range	DC Mod.	XP Component	DC Mod.
Touch to close/close to touch	+2/-2	Per 100 XP (maximum 1,000 XP)	-1
Close to medium/medium to close	+2/-2		
Medium to long/long to medium	+2/-2		
Area	DC Mod.	Skill Checks	DC Mod.
Doubling area/halving area	+3/-3	Requires checks involving more than one skill	-1
		Requires a skill not on wizard class skill list	-1
Target	DC Mod.	Extra Casters	DC Mod.
Unwilling target must be helpless	-2	10 or fewer secondary casters	-2
Limited targets (by HD, creature type, and so on)	-3	11-100 secondary casters	-6
Single target to multiple targets	+4	101 or more secondary casters	-10
Duration	DC Mod.	Backlash	DC Mod.
Rounds to minutes/minutes to rounds	+2/-2	Per 2d6 points of damage	-1
Minutes to hours/hours to minutes	+4/-2	Caster is exhausted	-2
Hours to days/days to hours	+6/-2	Per negative level caster gains	-2
Days to permanent or instantaneous/permanent or instantaneous to days	+10/-4	Caster reduced to -1 hp	-3
		Caster infected with disease	-4
		Backlash affects secondary casters too	-1

last 12 minutes if it's effectively a 6th-level spell. The same incantation with a range of medium can affect a target up to 220 feet away.

PLANETOUCHED ANCESTRY MAGIC

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

As described in Chapter Two: Feats and Skills, many planetouched characters can draw upon their outsider ancestry to fuel very specific feats. If planetouched characters are able to draw upon their own reserves to unleash aspects of their ancestry, by extension, these characters can also enhance their magical prowess through the same sacrifices. As an optional

rule, planetouched characters selecting the Awaken Ancestry feat, but who have not yet selected an Ancestor feat, may draw upon their outsider reserves to fuel metamagic spells.

Essentially, plane-

touched characters who meet the criteria can use their bodies to cover the level increase of metamagic feats. A caster must actually have the metamagic feat to use this option, but does not need to prepare it ahead of time. Characters using this option suffer 2 points of Constitution damage for each level increase they would remove from the metamagic feat. Take Widen Spell, for example. A spell affected by this feat normally uses up a slot three levels higher than the spell's normal one. A widened *fireball* functions as a 6th-level spell. For every 2 points of Constitution damage the character spends, she reduces the slot increase by one. If the spell with a metamagic feat would be higher than the character can ordinarily cast, the planetouched character may still use this option, but at a cost of an additional 2 points of Constitution damage. It is entirely possible for characters to commit suicide with this option if they are not careful.

RACE: CAMBIONS

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched by Green Ronin Publishing.

Cambions are the fiendish offspring of a fiend and a human. Most are born from brutal rapes, which are just as likely to kill the mother as they are to conceive a child. The victims of such rapes generally abort or abandon their offspring; those who keep them come to revile them, for they are reminders of great horror and suffering. Some outsider parents steal the children they produce—sometimes directly from the mother's womb—and bring them to their home plane, where they train them to command their personal legions.

Children produced by a male fiend are always male.

Female cambions, sometimes called alu-demons, are born from a female evil outsider, such as a succubus, and a human male. Unlike other cambions, these children are rarely conceived in violence; the demoness seduces the male to gain his seed. As the male donor loses value after the act, like a black widow, the demoness typically destroys her lover.

For simplicity, all half-fiends henceforward are referred to as cambions.

PERSONALITY

All cambions hate the material plane and its inhabitants. They exploit or destroy everyone they meet. Alliances are for utility, to advance their own position or to achieve some short-term goal. The personality traits of their outsider parentage surface early, such that they define their perspective and social skills. Female cambions are seductive and promiscuous. Balor-created cambions are frighteningly destructive forces, while the osyluth's offspring are sneaky and manipulative. Though the creatures are almost universally evil, the particular motives vary, just as any other race's does.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Cambions have varied appearance, often inheriting the features of their fiendish parent. Female cambions are comely and have small black leathery wings and small horns. Male cambions are large and imposing, often with scaly skin, sleek hair, burning eyes, and a lingering odor of brimstone. Cambions age as humans and have the same range of coloration, height, and build. All cambions have bat wings.

RELATIONS

Cambions view all creatures less powerful than themselves as chattel or tools to be used. Above all, they hate other outsiders, even other fiends. Among the humanoids, they despise elves the most, and some of the more depraved delight in collecting elf scalps or polluting their race through rapine. They see dwarves as nuisances and the dwarves' commitment to honor and loyalty laughable; their derro kin strike cambions as more acceptable, but only as sniveling slaves. Gnomes are only irritating mosquitoes. Halflings taste good. Orcs and goblinoids make good servants, their souls suitably darkened by corruption. Of all the races, cambions find humans the most interesting, perhaps due to their own human heritage, and some even seek human company. Of course, cambions quickly grow frustrated when shunned, and when frustrated, they generally resort to violence.

ALIGNMENT

Almost all cambions are evil. In fact, only a rare few can restrain their fiendish blood. Even in these unique instances, such cambions tend towards neutrality, with virtually none

being good. A cambion's tendency toward law or chaos depends on the fiendish parent's heritage. Demon-spawned cambions are often chaotic, while devil-spawned cambions are normally lawful.

LANDS

Cambions do not have lands of their own. About half live on the plane of their outsider parent. The rest find homes on the material plane, where they live on the fringe of civilization or use magic to hide their true nature, thereby insinuating themselves in urban centers to corrupt and destroy their hated enemies from within.

RELIGION

Cambions, being thoroughly evil, favor evil gods representing slaughter, death, or dark magic. Some cambions worship devils and demons, becoming foul leaders of subversive cults. In these cases, they corrupt mortals and draw them into their vile religions.

LANGUAGE

All cambions speak Common. Additionally, devil-descended cambions speak Infernal, while demon-descended ones speak Abyssal. Cambions of daemon descent may speak either Infernal or Abyssal.

NAMES

If the cambion grows up around humanoids, he assumes a name common to that society. If raised in the lower planes, a fiend of power owns the cambion, and the cambion's name usually reflects this ownership, as well as the plane. The prefix, or a suffix depending on the plane, implies the ownership, while the name itself denotes to whom the cambion calls master. For the Abyss, the name gains -aeum as a suffix, while in Hell, the cambion gains nef- as a prefix. For example, a cambion in service to Iblis in Hell is named Nef'Iblis. Alternatively, a cambion in service to Abaddon in the Abyss would be named Abaddonaeum.

In cases where the demon or devil owns more than one cambion, they gain a ranking prefix: Un- (first), Du- (second), Tre- (third), Qua- (fourth), Qui- (fifth), Sex- (sixth), Sept- (seventh) and so on. Therefore, the second cambion in service to Iblis is named Du'Nef'Iblis, while the third cambion in service to Abaddon is named Tre'Abaddonaeum. In Gehenna, half-daemons take names incorporating a particular sin in the language of the mortal parent. For example, a cambion of human stock born from a daemon of lust might be called Rape, Fetish, or



some other sinful manifestation of the circle. (For more details on the lower planes, consult the *Book of the Fiends* from Green Ronin Publishing.)

ADVENTURERS

Base impulses such as lust, greed, and pride drive the cambion. Cambions plunder tombs, raze temples, and embroil themselves in huge intrigues to fulfill their base impulses. Thus, the adventurer's life appeals to them.

CAMBION RACIAL TRAITS

+4 Strength, +4 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, +4 Intelligence, +2 Charisma: Cambions are powerful outsiders, strong, fast and tough. Complementing their physical prowess are their cunning intelligence and intense personalities.

Cambions start with 2d8 racial Hit Dice in addition to the Hit Dice granted by their class levels.

Medium: As Medium creatures, cambions gain no special bonuses or penalties due to size.

Cambion base speed is 30 feet. All cambions can fly at a speed of 30 feet with an average maneuverability.

Cambions can attack with their natural weapons. They receive two claw attacks and a bite attack. The claws are their primary natural attack. A cambion's claw attacks deal 1d4 points of damage, while its bite attack deals 1d6 points of damage. These attacks are considered magical for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Darkvision: Cambions can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and cambions can function just fine with no light at all.

Resistances: Cambions have resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10.

Damage Reduction: Cambions have damage reduction 5/magic. At 12th level, their damage reduction increases to 10/magic.

Cambions have spell resistance of 10 + their Hit Dice (maximum 35).

Cambions have a +1 natural armor bonus.

All cambions are immune to poison.

Cambions inherit the versatility of their human parent, gaining 4 extra skill points at 1st level and an additional skill point every level thereafter.

Cambions gain a bonus feat. This is in addition to the normal feats gained at 1st level, and they may select any feat for which they qualify.

Native Outsider: As native outsiders, cambions may be raised, reincarnated, or resurrected as any other living creature.

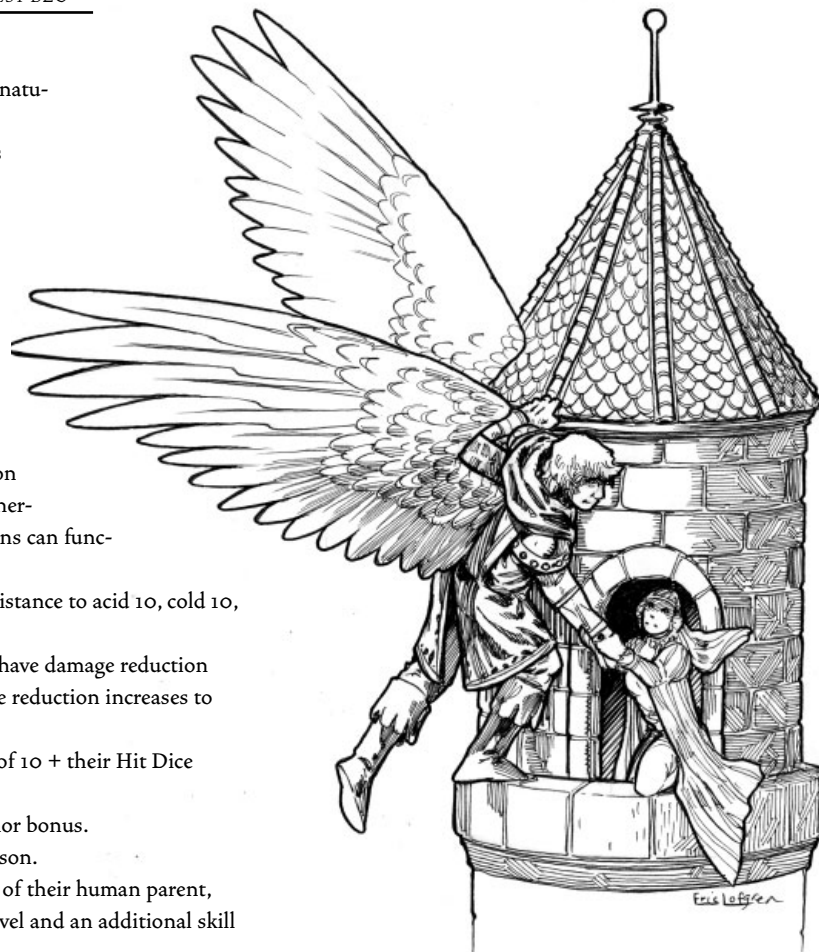
Smite Good (Su): Cambions may attempt a smite attack once per day that deals their total number of Hit Dice (maximum +20) in damage against a good foe. The cambion must declare the smite attack prior to the attack roll.

Cambions gain an impressive number of spell-like abilities as they advance in level. If the cambion has an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher, he gains the spell-like abilities, specified on the cambion spell-like abilities table below, using his actual level as the caster level. Unless otherwise stated in the table, the cambion may use the ability once per day.

Automatic Languages: Common and either Abyssal or Infernal. **Bonus Languages:** Any (other than secret languages, such as Druidic).

Favored Class: Any. When determining whether a multi-class cambion suffers an XP penalty, his highest-level class does not count (for details, see the multiclassing rules in the *Player's Handbook*).

Level Adjustment +4: Cambions are more powerful than the standard races. See Chapter Six: Characters in the DMG



for details on playing level-adjusted characters. For purposes of ECL, remember to count the cambion's two racial Hit Dice.

Cambion

Level	Spell-Like Ability
1–2	<i>Darkness</i> 3/day
3–4	<i>Desecrate</i>
5–6	<i>Unholy blight</i>
7–8	<i>Poison</i> 3/day
9–10	<i>Contagion</i>
11–12	<i>Blasphemy</i>
13–14	<i>Unholy aura</i> 3/day, <i>unhallow</i>
15–16	<i>Horrid wilting</i>
17–18	<i>Summon monster IX</i> (fiends only)
19+	<i>Destruction</i>

RACE: NEPHILIM

By Robert J. Schwalb; originally published in *Aasimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched* by Green Ronin Publishing.

The beautiful nephilim, descended from a celestial and a human, are rare creatures that walk the earth seeking evil to destroy. Born of perfect love, the nephilim express the best of both humans and celestials. As strange as it may seem, it is entirely natural for celestials to fall in love with the mortals, just as it is natural for mortals to share those feelings.

Though these intimate encounters are always brief—the celestials (angels) always return to their battles for good—they never truly abandon their lovers.

If the mortal woman carries the child, celestial servants and creatures of nature are always nearby, aiding and assisting during the pregnancy. The birth is painless. If the celestial bears the child, she returns the half-mortal to the material plane at birth to the sire, for her celestial duties prevent her from taking caring of the child. Children from these unions are readily viewed as blessings, but some people, especially the overzealous, may find the resulting offspring an obscenity and shun, or even persecute, the mother and child.

Regardless of the child's development, upon adolescence, she feels the same compelling urge driving her celestial parent: to combat evil and defend the virtue within others.

PERSONALITY

Nephilim are as beautiful inside as they are outside. They do not understand sin or corruption; they cannot comprehend avarice, jealousy, or any of the other flaws so prevalent in other mortals. Instead, they are charitable, friendly, merciful, and kind. They encompass every virtuous trait, forming a personality that's more than human, without vice or duplicity.

Fallen nephilim are almost unheard of, but when they do occur, they are manifestations of disillusionment, extremism, or the surfacing of human failures.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

All nephilim are beautiful. All nephilim have large feathery angelic wings, which are either white or rainbow colored. All nephilim have attractive, chiseled features and physiques. Their very appearance steals the breath of those who behold them. Nephilim age and have the same physical characteristics as humans, with the same range of hair and eye coloration.

RELATIONS

Nephilim get along well with other creatures. Like their aasimar children, they embrace elves, respect dwarves, and enjoy the company of halflings and gnomes. Nephilim are not as judgmental as aasimar regarding half-orcs, believing some capacity for good exists within them. Goblinoids and other fell races evoke pity and sorrow in the nephilim, for they know these dark races lack compassion and cannot be redeemed.

On the subject of the planetouched, the nephilim vary in outlook. In some cases, they embrace them, chiefly those of the celestial heritage. They are universally suspicious of those with fiendish blood, however.

ALIGNMENT

All nephilim are born good with equal tendencies toward law, neutrality, and chaos. A rare few nephilim are morally neutral; nearly none are evil. Those that do fall must suffer from some mortal tragedy or be affected by foul corrupting magic or some other force, for a fallen celestial is one of the greatest tragedies. The lords of the fiends find fallen nephilim highly valuable as tools for their fell plots.

LANDS

Like any other planetouched or half-outsider character, nephilim do not have cities or nations, mostly due to their rarity. They commingle with other races, favoring those of similar ideals and goals. Nephilim are wanderers who have no climate or geographical preferences.

RELIGION

Nephilim favor good gods whose spheres of influence include virtue, sun, nature, justice, and valor. Those uncommon nephilim who have fallen usually are atheistic, valuing themselves over the gods they disdain. Fallen nephilim often establish cults of humanoids who worship them as gods.

LANGUAGE

All nephilim speak Common and Celestial.

NAMES

Nephilim take their names from their human parent and abide by the customs of their native land. Only in rare instances do nephilim grow up on the plane of their celestial parent, and then only if the mortal parent was unable or unwilling to raise them. Should this unlikely set of circumstances arise, the nephilim takes the name of their celestial parent, prefaced by *il'*, which means "lesser" in the celestial tongue, such as in *il'Mika'il* or *il'Gabriel*. If the child is male, it adopts *-en* as a suffix as well, such that a male child of Gabriel would have the name *il'Gabrielen*.

Cambions and Nephilim

Although they're pretty straightforward, these races make nice additions to the game. There are really three different aspects something like this can take: a monster write-up, a template, or a set of racial abilities and characteristics. The idea of being part mortal and part outsider needed this application, I think.

ADVENTURERS

The destruction of evil motivates nephilim characters. They scour the lands in search of those who would subvert mortals. Thus, slaying an evil dragon, defeating a mad god's cult, or saving the maiden in the tower are things that propel them into adventuring careers.

NEPHILIM RACIAL TRAITS

+4 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +4 Wisdom, +4 Charisma: Nephilim have all the best features of humanity, but are superior in almost every way.

Nephilim start with 2d8 racial Hit Dice in addition to the Hit Dice granted by their class levels.

Medium: As Medium creatures, nephilim gain no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Nephilim base speed is 30 feet. A nephilim has feathered wings and can fly at a speed of 60 feet (good maneuverability).

Darkvision: Nephilim can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and nephilim can function just fine with no light at all.

Nephilim have a +1 natural armor bonus.

Nephilim are immune to disease.

Nephilim have a +4 racial bonus to saves against poison.

Resistances: Acid 10, cold 10, and electricity 10.

Damage Reduction: Nephilim have damage reduction 5/magic. At 12th level, their damage reduction increases to 10/magic.

Nephilim have spell resistance of 10 + their Hit Dice (to a maximum 35).

Nephilim inherit the versatility of their human parent, gaining 4 extra skill points at 1st level and an additional skill point every level thereafter.

Nephilim gain a bonus feat at 1st level. This is in addition to the normal feats gained at 1st level, and they may select any feat for which they qualify.

Outsider: As native outsiders, nephilim may be raised, reincarnated, or resurrected as any other living creature.

Nephilim can use *daylight* at will.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, a nephilim may attempt a normal attack to deal extra damage equal to her Hit Dice (maximum of +20) against an evil foe. The character must declare this attack prior to the roll.

Nephilim gain several spell-like abilities as they advance in level. Provided the nephilim has an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher, she gains the spell-like abilities from the nephilim spell-like abilities table that follows, using her actual

level as the caster level. Unless otherwise specified in the table, the nephilim may use the ability once per day.

Automatic Languages: Common and Celestial. Bonus Languages: Any (other than secret languages, such as Druidic).

Favored Class: Any. When determining whether a multi-class nephilim suffers an XP penalty, her highest-level class does not count (for details, see the multiclassing rules in the *Player's Handbook*).

Level Adjustment +4: Nephilim more powerful than the standard *Player's Handbook* races. See Chapter Six: Characters in the *DMG* for details on playing level-adjusted characters. For purposes of ECL, remember to count the nephilim's two racial Hit Dice.

Nephilim

Level	Spell-Like Ability
1–2	<i>Protection from evil</i> 3/day, <i>bless</i>
3–4	<i>Aid</i> , <i>detect evil</i>
5–6	<i>Cure serious wounds</i> , <i>neutralize poison</i>
7–8	<i>Holy smite</i> , <i>remove disease</i>
9–10	<i>Dispel evil</i>
11–12	<i>Holy word</i>
13–14	<i>Holy aura</i> 3/day, <i>hallow</i>
15–16	<i>Mass charm monster</i>
17–18	<i>Summon monster IX</i> (celestials only)
19+	<i>Resurrection</i>

RESERVE POINTS

Designed by Jonathan Tweet and developed by Andy Collins from Unearthed Arcana by Wizards of the Coast. (Originally published in Dungeon/Polyhedron magazine.)

This variant gives each character a capacity to recover quickly from injury. This capacity, measured as reserve points, replenishes lost hit points quickly after a fight. Thus, characters may be wounded and near death by the end of a fight but then recover to full strength (or nearly full strength) before the next fight begins.

Reserve points work particularly well in low-magic campaigns or in any game where healing is rare, expensive, or otherwise hard to get.

USING RESERVE POINTS

A character's quantity of reserve points equals his full hit point total.

After a character becomes injured (by losing hit points), reserve points begin automatically converting to hit points at a rate of 1 per minute of non-strenuous activity (such as resting or hiking, but not climbing, swimming, or fighting). Thus, for each minute of non-strenuous activity, the character regains 1 hit point and loses 1 reserve point.

For example, say a fighter has 22 hit points, so he also has 22 reserve points. In a battle with orcs, he takes 6 points of damage, dropping his hit points to 16. After the fight, the character's reserve points begin to "convert" to hit points. Over the course of the next six minutes, his reserve point total drops by 6 and his hit point total increases by 6, up to his maximum of 22. During the next fight, this fighter

Reserve Points

This is probably my favorite thing in this book, and certainly falls into the category of "I wish I'd done this." Its brilliance is that it does nothing to make the PCs tougher in any given encounter, but it allows them to have more encounters in a given day (and having encounters is fun). It also makes a party without a cleric pretty viable.

takes 24 points of damage, dropping him to -2 , and is then dying for 5 rounds before stabilizing, leaving him at -7 hit points. Over the next 16 minutes, his remaining 16 reserve points convert to hit points. After seven minutes, he's conscious but disabled (0 hp). After eight minutes he's back on his feet (1 hp), and after all 16 minutes he's up to 9 hit points and 0 reserve points.

NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Reserve points can also reduce a character's nonlethal damage total. For each reserve point that converts to a hit point, a character also subtracts 1 point from his nonlethal damage. In addition, a character can take a standard action to "spend" a number of reserve points equal to or less than his HD to reduce his nonlethal damage an equal amount. (If a character has the Endurance feat, the DM might choose to make this a move action, to reflect the fact that such characters can more easily persevere through exhausting situations.)

REPLENISHING RESERVE POINTS

Characters naturally regain lost reserve points at the same rate that they naturally heal lost hit points (see "Healing" in Chapter Eight: Combat of the *Player's Handbook*). If a character receives any magical healing, that healing is applied first to the character's lost hit points. Any excess healing left over after the character's hit points are restored to full normal is applied to increase the character's reserve point total (up to its normal maximum).

CONSTITUTION CHANGES

If a character's Constitution modifier goes up or down, his reserve points go up or down just as his hit points do. If a decrease in Constitution would drop a character's reserve points below 0, any excess reduction is deducted from his current hit points.

SKILL-BASED SPELLCASTING

By Patrick O'Duffy; originally published in Advanced Player's Guide by Sword & Sorcery.

The skill-based spellcasting system does away with spell slots. Instead, spellcasting characters use a new skill—Spellcasting—to cast their spells. While it possesses some special rules, Spellcasting works much as a normal ability; spellcasters can attempt to cast spells many times over the course of a day, just as rogues can attempt to pick multiple locks and fighters can swing their swords over and over again.

The advantage of this system is its flexibility; it allows spellcasters to cast a wide variety of spells rather than prepare their spells ahead of time. Spells are difficult to cast, however, and spellcasting characters may need to make multiple attempts and take extra time to cast their spells successfully.

NEW SKILL: SPELLCASTING

(VARIES; TRAINED ONLY)

Description: Use this skill to cast spells, whether arcane or divine.

Check: Whenever a character attempts to cast a spell, she must make a Spellcasting check. If her check total is higher than the Difficulty Class, the spell is successfully cast. The time required to make a Spellcasting check is the casting time required for a specific spell, as listed in the spell's description.

Spellcasting is actually *two* different skills, and ranks in one do not count toward the other. Spellcasting (divine) is used to cast divine spells, such as those of clerics and rangers, and has Wisdom as its key ability. Spellcasting (arcane) is used to cast arcane spells, such as those of



sorcerers and wizards. Characters who gain bonus spells from Charisma (such as bards and sorcerers) use Charisma as the key ability for Spellcasting checks; characters who gain bonus spells from Intelligence (such as wizards) use Intelligence as the key ability for Spellcasting checks.

The DC of a Spellcasting check depends on the level of the spell being cast. Divine spells are slightly more difficult to cast than arcane spells, but divine spellcasters have access to

more extensive spell lists than arcane spellcasters.

If the Spellcasting check fails, the character has not managed to cast the spell. She still expends any material components required by the spell in the attempt; similarly, if the spell requires spending experience points, she pays the XP cost even if the check fails.

Skill-Based Spellcasting

Although I like the standard spellcasting system just fine, this is a good, well-thought-out alternative for people who would rather use something different. It's likely that this option will make spellcasters more potent, and certainly provides opportunity for power gamers to create characters that can cast many more spells than the core rules would provide, usually at the cost of being good at other things. Smart DMs will severely limit magic effects that add to a character's spellcasting skill bonus.

Spell Level	Arcane Spellcasting DC	Divine Spellcasting DC
0	10	12
1	15	17
2	18	20
3	20	22
4	23	25
5	25	27
6	28	30
7	30	32
8	33	35
9	35	37

Retry: Yes. If a character fails to cast a spell, she may try to cast it again when she next has an action.

Example: Lelia Kyvinyz is a 4th-level bard. She gains bonus spells based on Charisma, so her Spellcasting skill is likewise based on her Charisma modifier. She has 5 ranks in Spellcasting and a Charisma of 16, for a total bonus of +8. Lelia tries to cast the 1st-level spell hypnotism, which has a DC of 15. On her first attempt, Lelia gets a total of 13 and fails to cast the spell. On the second attempt, Lelia gets a total of 17 and successfully casts hypnotism.

A character can cast only a certain number of spells per day before her magical abilities start to wane; after that point, Spellcasting DCs steadily increase. See "Core Spells," below, for more details.

Special: You may not take 10 or take 20 on Spellcasting checks.

Characters with no knowledge of or access to magic, such as fighters and monks, may still take ranks in Spellcasting as

a cross-class skill. They cannot actually cast spells using the skill until they gain one or more levels in a spellcasting class, however. They must also define whether the skill covers arcane or divine spellcasting.

The Spellcasting skill is available only in campaigns that use the skill-based spellcasting system.

CORE SPELLS

A spellcasting character can attempt to cast any spell that she knows or has access to. Arcane spellcasting is demanding in a way than mundane skills are not, however, and even the most skilled wizard will eventually tire. After a character casts a certain number of spells, it becomes more difficult for her to keep doing so; her control over magical forces begins to weaken, and she must rest to refresh her magical abilities. Divine spellcasters also have limits on their daily spellcasting; once a cleric casts a certain number of spells, her god becomes increasingly reluctant to continue granting divine favor.

Under the standard d20 System, each class has a number of spells per day a character can cast. In the Spellcasting skill system, this number (plus any bonus spells) becomes the number of spells a character can cast per day *easily*. These are referred to as her core spells.

Once a spellcasting character casts her core spells for the day, any Spellcasting checks to cast further spells of that level suffer a cumulative increase to the Difficulty Class. The Spellcasting DC increases by a cumulative +2 each time a character successfully casts a spell beyond her core spell amount.

Such modifiers to the Spellcasting DC go away after the character rests, meditates, or prepares (as in the spell slot system).

Example: As a 4th-level bard with a high Charisma, Lelia Kyvinyz can cast four 0-level spells, three 1st-level spells, and one 2nd-level spell each day without difficulty. In a battle with the prince's ghoulish servants, Lelia casts cure light wounds twice and protection from evil once, using up her core 1st-level spells. If she later wants to cast hypnotism to distract a pair of sentries, she must make a Spellcasting check (DC 17). If she casts hypnotism successfully, the next 1st-level spell she wants to cast is made at DC 19. The Difficulty Classes for casting cantrips and 2nd-level spells are not affected, however. Once Lelia rests for eight hours and spends 15 minutes readying her magical abilities, she can cast 1st-level spells at the normal Difficulty Class again.

OPTIONAL RULE: PHYSICAL FATIGUE

The Spellcasting skill system's main point of game balance is the increasing DC of Spellcasting checks. Characters can cast a lot of spells in this system, but eventually the Difficulty Class to cast a spell will reach the point where it becomes impossible to achieve. Even before that point, DCs can quickly become high enough that casting spells in combat can be dangerously slow and unreliable.

Still, nothing in the system stops characters (and players) from trying to cast spells over and over and over again until they finally work. For low-level spells, this isn't all that unbalancing—but when it's *wish* and *meteor swarm*, it can be a definite problem. To prevent this, GMs might wish to add an extra drawback to the Spellcasting system—the problem of characters becoming physically fatigued and drained by casting spells.

In this optional extra for the Spellcasting system, characters risk suffering nonlethal damage when they cast spells. Whenever a character attempts to cast a spell and *fails*, he suffers nonlethal damage equal to the level of the spell he attempted to cast—so if a sorcerer failed his Spellcasting check to cast *fly*, he'd suffer 3 points of nonlethal damage. This damage must be healed as normal, through rest or with magical healing.

If this sounds too punishing—and it can be, especially for low-level characters—you might vary it so that a character only takes nonlethal damage if he fails the Spellcasting check by 5 or more.

SPONTANEOUS METAMAGIC

Designed and developed by Andy Collins; originally published in Unearthed Arcana by Wizards of the Coast.

One of the more radical concepts introduced in the d20 System is the metamagic feat. These feats allow spellcasters to tinker with their spells' range, area, damage, components required, and even casting time. While such options existed in previous editions of the game, they usually required the caster to use other spells to affect his magic, rather than relying upon pure talent.

However, this new option comes with a significant cost, particularly for those casters who prepare spells (such as clerics, druids, and wizards). Such characters must plan in advance which spells they wish to use their metamagic feats on, and prepare those spells in the appropriate higher-level slot. This requirement forces the character to guess which spells will be needed in which situations. If a caster anticipates being grappled, a stilled spell would be extraordinarily valuable—but which one? If a character expects to be sneaking around, she should consider using Silent Spell on one or more of her spells—but how many? In many cases, these choices are for naught, since the caster ends up using her silent *magic missile* in ordinary combat, or her enlarged *fireball* in a space too small to take advantage of the expanded range.

Characters who don't prepare spells in advance (such as bards and sorcerers) have a distinct advantage in that they can choose to use their metamagic feats “on the fly”; that is, at the time of casting. The cost is an extended casting time (making Quicken Spell a useless option for such characters), but this cost is rarely balanced with that paid by other spellcasters.

The two variant systems described below give more variety and options to the metamagic-using spellcaster. With either of these variants, a spellcaster doesn't have to prepare metamagic versions of her spells in advance (if she normally prepares spells) or spend full-round actions to cast metamagic spells (if she doesn't prepare spells). Nor do metamagic spells take up higher-level spell slots.

Instead, the “cost” for using a metamagic feat is applied in one of two different manners. The first applies the cost as additional spell slots. The second restricts the number of times per day the feat can be used.

For both of these variants, the prerequisites for selecting a metamagic feat and the effects of the feat itself, remain the same as given in the feat's description (except when otherwise noted).

DAILY USES

With this variant, a character who selects a metamagic feat gains three daily uses of that feat that she can opt to use “on the fly” without previous preparation, increased spell level, or extended casting time. The character must decide when casting the spell if she wishes to apply the effect of one of her metamagic feats to the spell.

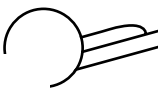
The maximum level of spell to which a caster can apply a metamagic feat is equal to the maximum spell level she is capable of casting (based on her level and ability scores), minus the spell level adjustment of the metamagic feat. If the result of this calculation is less than 0, the character can't apply the metamagic feat to any of her spells.

For instance, a 5th-level wizard is normally capable of casting spells of up to 3rd level. If she chooses to apply her Silent Spell metamagic feat (which uses a spell slot one level higher than normal) to a spell, the maximum level of spell that she can apply it to is equal to 3 minus 1, or 2nd. Thus, she may make any of her 0-, 1st-, or 2nd-level spells silent. If she had the Maximize Spell feat, she could apply it only to 0-level spells (since a maximized spell is normally cast as a spell three levels higher, and 3 minus 3 is 0). Quicken Spell would be of no use to this wizard, since she couldn't even apply it to 0-level spells.

A caster can apply more than one metamagic feat to a spell, or even the same metamagic effect more than once (if allowed by the feat's description). However, to determine the maximum level of spell that can be so affected, add together all the spell adjustments given for the various feats. A 9th-level wizard could enlarge and empower any spell of 2nd-level or lower (since her maximum spell level is 5th, and the

Spontaneous Metamagic

Metamagic is cool, but some people avoid it because they can't be convinced that it's worth it to cast a modified spell at a higher level (sometimes a much higher level). This is a good variant for those people.



total spell level adjustment for Empower Spell and Enlarge Spell is 3). If a feat may be applied more than once to the same spell, each application counts as one of the caster's three daily uses.

Each time a caster selects a metamagic feat, she gains three daily uses of that feat. Multiple selections of the same feat are cumulative. For instance, if a caster selects Empower Spell twice, she may use the feat six times per day rather than three.

In this variant system, the Heighten Spell feat functions slightly differently from other metamagic feats. You may use the Heighten Spell feat to increase a spell's effective level (for purposes of such factors as save DCs and so on) up to the maximum spell level you are capable of casting. For instance, a 3rd-level cleric could heighten a 0- or 1st-level spell to 2nd level, while a 17th-level druid could heighten a 0- through 8th-level spell to 9th level. The spell is treated as a spell of that level for purposes of save DC and similar effects, but doesn't require a higher-level spell slot.

EXTRA SPELL SLOTS

With this variant, a caster must expend extra spell slots in order to apply the effects of a metamagic feat. These spell slots must be of a level equal to or higher than that of the spell being modified by the metamagic feat. In essence, the character pays for the metamagic effect by "using up" other spells of the same or higher level. The caster need not prepare the metamagic version of the spell ahead of time, and the spell's actual level and casting time are unchanged from normal.

The number of extra spell slots required is equal to the spell level adjustment of the feat. For example, a wizard who wants to cast a quickened *magic missile* would expend the *magic missile* spell, plus four additional spells of 1st level or higher.

If the caster has more than one spellcasting class, all extra spell slots expended must come from the same spellcasting

class as the spell to be modified. A 7th-level cleric/4th-level wizard who wants to cast a maximized *cure moderate wounds* can't spend any of her wizard spell slots—they all must be from her cleric spellcasting ability.

A character may expend only bonus spells from school specialization on spells of that school (so an evoker could spend her bonus 3rd-level evocation spell to pay for a metamagic feat applied to another evocation spell, but not to a spell of any other school). She can't expend domain spells to pay for a metamagic feat's added spell slot cost, even if the spell is a domain spell.

In the case of the Heighten Spell feat, a caster expends one additional spell slot for each effective level she wishes to add to the spell. To heighten a *fireball* to the equivalent of a 5th-level spell, a caster must expend two extra spell slots of 3rd level or higher.

A caster can apply more than one metamagic feat to a spell, or even the same metamagic effect more than once (if allowed by the feat's description). She must simply pay the additional cost in spell slots. For instance, a wizard casting a stilled and silent *invisibility* spell would spend two spell slots in addition to the *invisibility* spell: one for Still Spell and a second for Silent Spell.

If a caster doesn't have enough remaining spell slots to cast the metamagic spell, she can't apply that metamagic effect to the spell.

COMBINING THE VARIANTS

You could combine the two metamagic variants presented above. Using a combined system, a metamagic-enhanced spell would cost additional slots (as noted in the second variant), but the caster would have a maximum spell level to which she could apply her metamagic feats (as in the first variant). This combined approach limits the immediate effect of metamagic feats in the game (because of the spell level limit) while simultaneously assigning a very real cost to their use (additional spell slots).

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE YEAR'S BEST!

The material in this collection of *The Year's Best d20* was selected after a thorough examination of all eligible products submitted. Publishers were invited to submit works of fantasy, horror, science fiction, superheroes, modern, and other genres, as long as they were compatible with the d20 System/Open Game License and published in 2004. Malhavoc Press gratefully acknowledges the companies represented here for granting permission to reprint their selections. Material was selected based on the quality of the game design (how well the material adhered to relevant established rules), playability and usability of the material, creativity in taking the rules system in original directions, and presentation of the material (writing and editing quality). Malhavoc Press products were excluded from consideration.

If you liked the material you've read here, check out the represented products in full. Ask for these excellent 2004 titles at your local game store or look for them online at print or PDF sales venues.



Asimar & Tiefling: A Guidebook to the Planetouched (Green Ronin Publishing): Cosmopher, Dretch Spawn, Infernal Insight, Ravid's Blessing, Throwback, Planar Awareness, *burn out*, *despoil*, *elemental sample*, *impede magic*, *demon hooks*, *cambion*, *nephilim*, and *planetouched ancestry magic*.



Advanced Bestiary (Green Ronin Publishing): Amalgam template, bipedal template, and clockwork creature template.



Advanced Player's Guide (Sword & Sorcery): Arcane warrior, gemcaster, combat defense, and skill-based spellcasting.



Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia (Necromancer Games): *Sleep of power* and *death weaver*.



The Complete Guide to Rakshasas (Goodman Games): Yogi.



Denizens of Avadnu (The Inner Circle): Carcaetan, ethereal adder, goldencrest, inscriber, kei-ehri, kulumar, madrir, nightmare collector, vacuous engulfer, and warding visage.



Libem Liborium: Complete Guide to d20 Books (Silven Publishing): *Awaken tome* and *summarize*.



Love and War (Atlas Games): *Counterstrike*, *Coward's Bane*, *Damaging Spell*, *Dying Blow*, *Might of Courage*, *Spell Cleave*, *Spell of Opportunity*, and *Warrior's Path*.



Metablades (Expanded Edition, Genjitsu Games): *Borrow limb*, *scoundrel's guidance*, *shadow stitch*, and *spare hand*.



Modern Magic (The Game Mechanics): *Object to ink*.



The Pantheon and Pagan Faiths (Mystic Eye Games): *Armor of thorns*.



Player's Guide to Monks and Paladins (Sword & Sorcery): *Knight of tears*.



Poisoncraft: The Dark Art (Blue Devil Games): *Forbidden script* and *toxifying weapon quality*.



Relics & Rituals: Excalibur (Sword & Sorcery): *Reliquarian*, *candle of life*, and *scabbard of restoration*.



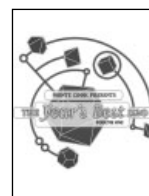
Relics & Rituals: Olympus (Sword & Sorcery): *Prophecy skill*, *blood protectors*, *liquid form*, *know thy master*, *mortal cloak*, *mortal cloak (forced)*, *scapegoat*, *scapegoat (greater)*, and *song of serenity*.



Strange Lands: Lost Tribes of the Scarred Lands (Sword & Sorcery): *Divine Perseverance*, *Belsameth's vengeance*, *escape the bonds of the flesh*, *halting the wayward tongue*, and *Unholy Chorus*.



The Tome of Horrors II (Necromancer Games): *Arcanoplasm*, *bedlam*, *corpsspinner*, *corpsspun template*, *crucifixion spirit*, *golem (furnace)*, *hanged man*, and *time flayer*.



Unearthed Arcana (Wizards of the Coast): *Urban ranger*, *incantations*, *reserve points*, and *spontaneous metamagic*.

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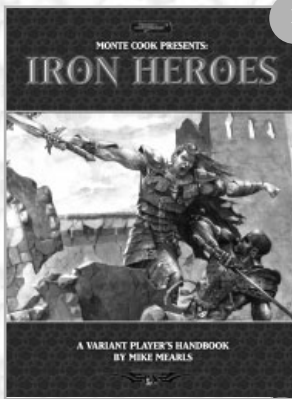


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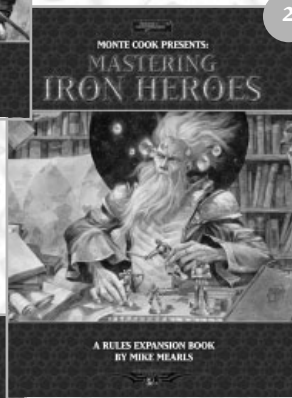


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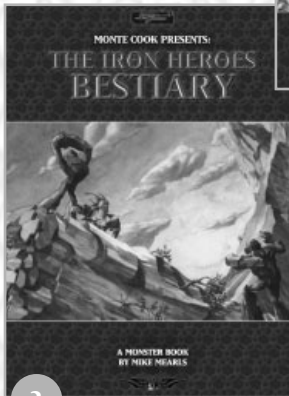


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