

THE BOOK OF CURSES



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THE BOOK OF CURSES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Arcane Curses	7
Bitch Queen's Embrace	7
Cackle of Parrots	9
Evil Eye	11
Forgotten	12
Out of Time	14
Pox	15
Simply Perfect	17
Skein of Circles	18
Timwell's Torturous Time	19
Vermin Kin	21
Divine Curses	23
Bless You	23
Book Worn	24
Chendrai's Seclusion	26
Creeping Blue	28
Devil's Poker	30
Enchanted	31
Guardian of Grey	33
Mark of the Fallen	36
Opuline	37
Treasured	38
Lycanthropy	40
Vampirism	50
The Risen Vampire	51
The Elder	52
The Ancient One	53
The Undying Lord	53
The Sybarist	57
The Sin Eater	61

*Never made it as a wise man
I couldn't cut it as a poor man stealing
Tired of living as a blind man*

...
This is how you remind me of what I really am.

- Nickleback

Curses are magical twists of fate that horrify and enlighten. Unlike a fireball directed purely by will, a curse is backed by the authority of well, *something*. The horsemen of the Qo Sho Nu nation call curses the spears of destiny, cast down by the Horse Mother to avenge. The blind mystics of the walled city of Orin say that it is merely a dreadful symmetry. And if the DM has chosen the right way to bring them in curses should be fun for the players and miserable for the characters. After all, although the DM isn't the enemy of the players it is his job to screw with the characters, frustrate them and occasionally kill them. These spells are not replacements for the Bestow Curse / Remove Curse combination given in Core Rulebook I. These are completely new spells and can be thought of as extended options for flavor and seeds for ideas. These curses are standard spells but oriented towards the brutal and obscure.

Curses share the characteristics of spells but, whether divine or arcane, seem to bend the rules in ways that usually require the intervention of gods. To the common man a curse is anything that harms them, which is very broad. Spell casters distinguish curses by the long term effect they have, their punitive nature, cost in experience, futility of saving throws, and ability to break through spell resistance. Ranges of curses are vast and the duration for casting matches the type of anger needed to bring the spell to fruition more than an actual mechanical limitation. Curses count towards a spell caster's normal limit of spells per day and all other traits of spells except where explicitly noted.

When creating or deciding the effects of a curse everything that has been said can be discarded except for one thing - the style of a curse in how it punishes and teaches takes precedence over all its mechanics.

For all the power curses bring they also come with a price. Curses are of a different magnitude than the common spell and for good reason - rather than used to survive or learn, with a curse the caster takes the role of vindicator. The powers that are called upon when casting a curse do not judge validity and the just as well as unjust are harmed but fate has a way of coming full circle to those that abuse it. Because of how the caster is bending the rules of magic it draws a price from him personally in the form of experience due to the act of damning another takes a little of the caster's soul.

Some curses are unjust but none are random. The greatest trait of a curse is that it is a tool for fate. Sometimes a proud paladin is unjustly cursed but learns a humility that allows them to succeed where they would have failed. A ranger is ridden with a horrible deformity for the same crime that a thousand others were overlooked for but it eventually brings him to his destiny. Some curses teach a lesson to the victim, those they meet, or even the curser. Some are just cruel.

Imagine the enraged gypsy who curses his daughter's rapist with unending life and to feel the pain of those around him. Drawn to the brink of madness he flees to the wilderness.





Maybe he finds some redemption in the isolation or maybe he just dies as a pathetic bastard. Imagine a slighted sorcerer who curses a merchant for an imagined wrong. The merchant is diseased and shunned by his family as a leper, left to die in a poor home. The sorcerer is amused until years later he becomes lost and nearly dies until he is found a kind but blind priest who keeps calling him by the wrong name and to come home. Weak and exhausted, the sorcerer takes advantage of the priest's delusion and collapses inside the missionary. He awakens to a feeble voice, a cold cloth and the realization that for three days he has lain the bed of a leper.

More variations are inspired by folklore and literature. The reason that curses are so popular in these genres is the same reason they are useful to DMs - due to their persistence, curses allow an unreasonable and poetic re-occurrence of plot themes and elements. This book is not about telling you how to be a DM, it is about giving you tools that emphasize a stylistic approach to the game and to facilitating play.

Curses are gruesome and so are the means to dispel them. Curses are not pleasant things and their place in a campaign should be carefully considered by a DM. These curses are meant primarily as a DM's tools and are most likely to be used by NPCs. The DM should prepare for a spellcaster to get his hands on an NPC's spell book however and learn the black rituals. If necessary tweak the amount of experience a curse requires from the caster since, as the DM, only you can determine what will balance out a specific spell in your campaign. For that matter, adjust the level of a spell, make it NPC only, have it require a god's blood or whatever else you need. Do what is right for your group and their game. That's the only game you're playing after all. And remember, if, in the end, the curse is more stylistically correct than mechanically and it doesn't interfere with any other areas of play and it is fun that way - congratulations on passing the litmus test, you can use it. However, unless the campaign world is truly extraordinary, using these curses should be considered an evil act even if it is motivated by righteous intent.

- Rogan R. Hamby

Chapter One:

Arcane Curses

Most arcane spells are learned by both Wizards and Sorcerers. Identical curses, however, are rarely learned by both. Wizards learn ritualistic curses. These curses have long casting times and are very difficult to research. For this reason, finding the spell is often preferable but just as challenging without a great deal of luck. Most casters are loath to allow such a spell to be traded either because they dislike the idea of curses or do not want it turned against them.

Sorcerers learn from their own insights and instincts instead of formulas but curses come no more easily to them than they do to wizards. Sorcerers have to seek out dark secrets to gain the power of a curse. This does not mean they may exceed their normal number of learned spells, rather they must find the secrets that allow access to the curse before they gain their next level and select new spells unless the DM allows them to hold the spell level in reserve. All normal rules restricting spell selection apply and searching out such knowledge puts a caster at risk of damnation, even more so than a wizard. A wizard can choose to ignore what they have learned and burn their tomes but the knowledge becomes a part of the sorcerer. Stylistically the curses a sorcerer can learn are different from a wizard's in that they are powerful bursts of raw magic, reflecting the hatred of their casters and often come from cultures such as the Romany of the old world or al-Hadar of Arabia.

Regardless of how the curse is learned or alignment of the caster or righteousness of the cause, they skirt with damnation. The vengeful and deliberate use of magic to inflict not only justice (at least as they perceive it) but suffering requires a

callousness that some murderers would balk at. While a caster may wish to use such magic in rage, the long studies or efforts needed to become exposed to the knowledge mean that no sane and good person would use them.

Bitch Queen's Embrace

Conjuration

Level: Brd 6, Sor 6

Components: V, S, M 600 experience

Casting Time: Dawn to Dusk (12 hours)

Range: same plane

Area: 1 creature

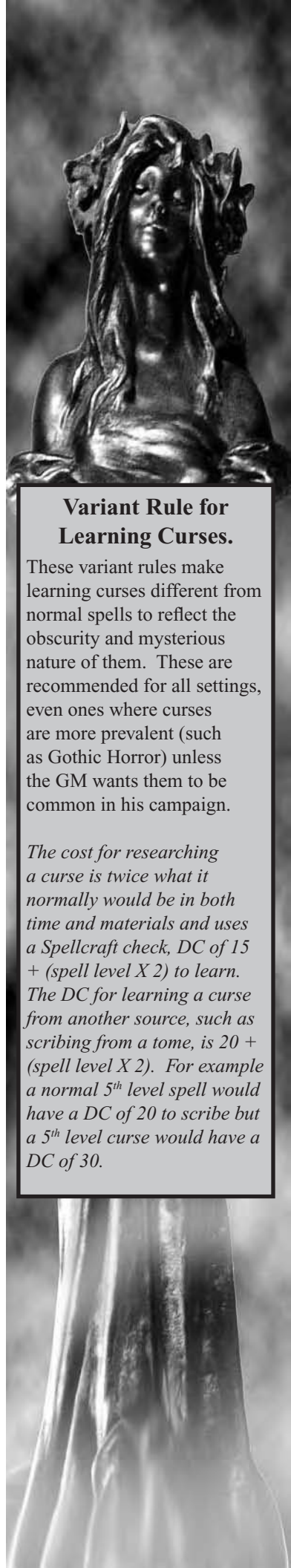
Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: No

The casting of this spell requires three material components - a fragment of the victim such as a strand of hair or drop of blood, a drop of water from a creature native to the elemental plane of water (tear, blood, etc...) and a drop of pure water from the deepest part of the ocean where the edge between it and the elemental plane of water is thin. These three things are brought together in a bowl and concentrated on for the duration of the casting. The caster must know the victim at least well enough to know his name and be able to distinctly visualize him, such as having met him. Then a short song must be composed and sung over the materials, a song of vengeance to move the black tar of Amasepia's heart.

The secret of this casting is gained from the Bitch Queen, the Lady of Cold Waters, Amasepia, an ancient hag who digs her homes in the silt of the far northern oceans in the coldest places. Her daughters are the sirens and hags who drag sailors to their deaths throughout the world. The Bitch Queen has taught the spell to her daughters



Variant Rule for Learning Curses.

These variant rules make learning curses different from normal spells to reflect the obscurity and mysterious nature of them. These are recommended for all settings, even ones where curses are more prevalent (such as Gothic Horror) unless the GM wants them to be common in his campaign.

The cost for researching a curse is twice what it normally would be in both time and materials and uses a Spellcraft check, DC of 15 + (spell level X 2) to learn. The DC for learning a curse from another source, such as scribing from a tome, is 20 + (spell level X 2). For example a normal 5th level spell would have a DC of 20 to scribe but a 5th level curse would have a DC of 30.



who, in turn, can pass on the spell to mortals but most will refuse to do so without their mother's permission. Convincing the Bitch Queen to pass on the spell (or a daughter to betray her) is difficult. Her daughters can be found on islands avoided by sailors for their dangerous lures and, if the caster survives the journey there and the advances of the sirens, he may have a chance. A caster must be charming and entice the evil maidens who are more impressed by tales of hatred and vengeance than any noble cause. Still, the slightest misstep will lead to being eaten alive since they may aid you but only out of amusement. A few tales speak of bards so successful that they did inspire a siren to love them and their fate was far worse than what they had planned for anyone else with this curse.

The curse's victim is surrounded by a variety of tragedies when around water. Whenever the victim comes within 200' of a body of water larger than a few gallons, a portal opens for a small elemental creature to come through from the elemental plane of water. It appears as a humanoid with blue skin, large hands and disproportionately large head. These creatures are known commonly as Wreck Monkeys. They climb like monkeys onto small ships and either steer it into reefs or sabotage it. They take diabolical glee at destruction.

Depending upon the size of the body of water a variable number of Wreck Monkeys will spawn. A large barrel of water or bathtub would spawn 1d2, a stream 1d4, a small lake 1d8, etc... up to a large lake, ocean, etc... which would cause the maximum number of 6d6 Wreck Monkeys to form. Wreck Monkeys can appear from any source within range - even a tankard of ale behind the bar (the source does not have to be pure water). Fortunately they can only appear once a day but, during an ocean journey once a day is enough to guarantee destruction. Wreck Monkeys should be played up as a very dark kind of prankster or gremlin.

These monkeys are as happy humiliating a victim as they are in causing injury or destruction. For example, a person bathing when a Wreck Monkey appears is as likely to have the monkey try to push him under the water as he is have it steal his clothes. However, when attacks do occur they may kill the victim. Many victims of the Bitch Queen have been found drowned in small pools they should have been able to walk out of. Victims must also avoid boats at all costs. Those recipients of the curse that do use boats will either be wrecked or cast off the boat by the sailors once they find out the cause of the attacks. Each time the victim comes within a body of water and the Wreck Monkeys are about to appear, they can feel a small pulling, a connection between themselves and the elemental plane of water and may make a Will save. If the save is successful, only half the number of Wreck Monkeys may appear, rounded down.

Curing the curse is nearly as unlikely as learning it. Only a few souls, including the sirens themselves, know of the cure. Fortunately, one bard named Saville wrote down the lore in his personal diaries though the only copy was the one he penned and it has been lost for nearly twelve score years. The diaries are believed to have been in his home, a small villa on an island called Kartos, in a bay along the western seas with a dozen other small islands but no maps now point to it. If discovered, the actual text reads of a string made from moon silver, an odd mixture of silver and mercury whose smithing is now mostly lost although the Van Ridder dwarven clan is mentioned as having had the knowledge at least in Saville's lifetime. This string must be long enough to be swallowed on one end. A day is spent letting it be pulled through the digestive system of the cursed. Then a very small piece of coral is attached and the coral pulled through the digestive system of the victim. This process itself requires five Fortitude saves versus DC 30 to avoid internal bleeding and permanent digestive track damage that requires a Heal spell to

restore. Before being pulled through the digestive system the coral must have Bless, Remove Curse and Circle of Protection (chaos) cast on it along with the expenditure of 250 experience by the caster. Once this is done, the coral actually pulls the curse into itself as it passes through the body, trapping the elemental pull in the coral. Once done the coral can be cast into the sea where over the course of several months the curse will dissolve.

Wreck Monkey

Small Elemental (Water)

Hit Dice: 2d8+4 (13 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft., swim 80 ft.

AC: 18 (+1 size, +0 Dex, +6 natural, +1 Dodge)

Attacks: Slam +4 melee

Damage: slam 1d6+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Water mastery

Special Qualities: Elemental

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -1

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 11

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2, Climb +4, Balance +2, Jump +2

Feats: Dodge

Climate/Terrain: Wherever summoned

Organization: individual to gang

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral

Advancement: Up to 4 HD (Small)
6 HD (Medium)

Cackle of Parrots

Transmutation

Level: Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M, 400 experience

Casting Time: 3 hours

Range: 5 miles

Area: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will slows effects

Spell Resistance: No

The caster must know the victim, at least having seen them in person and knowing their name. The victim of this curse is slowly alienated from his compatriots by his inability to handle the pressure of interacting with them. Once cursed, the victim slowly finds himself becoming more valued by his compatriots. At first this seems like a very good thing. Who doesn't like to have their opinion matter? Very soon, however, the victim will want nothing more than to be anonymous and un-regarded.

Circumstances conspire to have the victim to be the only one who knows the answers to urgent questions and he gains a reputation. Among others, the victim becomes known as someone who can be gone to when an answer is needed. Whether or not the PC can is another matter - people believe he can and no manner of conversation can convince them otherwise. They will accept that he doesn't know a specific answer but any more than that is just modesty on his part. Soon the victim can not walk down a street without being accosted every ten feet by a question. The result is that even a simple stroll becomes a burden, taking a dozen times as long as it should. The alternative to living with this is to verbally strike out at others, angering them so that they soon refuse to deal with him.

Attempting to avoid this curse by moving to a new town or to not develop a reputation is pointless. Eventually even pointless questions or casual social interaction will





somehow lead to events that develop the victim's status. The magic that draws commoners to regard the victim this way even affects PCs and the situations around them. For example, if the victim was in charge of packing a certain item, an event in the middle of his sleeping shift will dictate that he must be woken to find it. PCs who wish to avoid being used by the curse must make a Will save versus 15 once every hour to avoid the compulsion of having to ask a question.

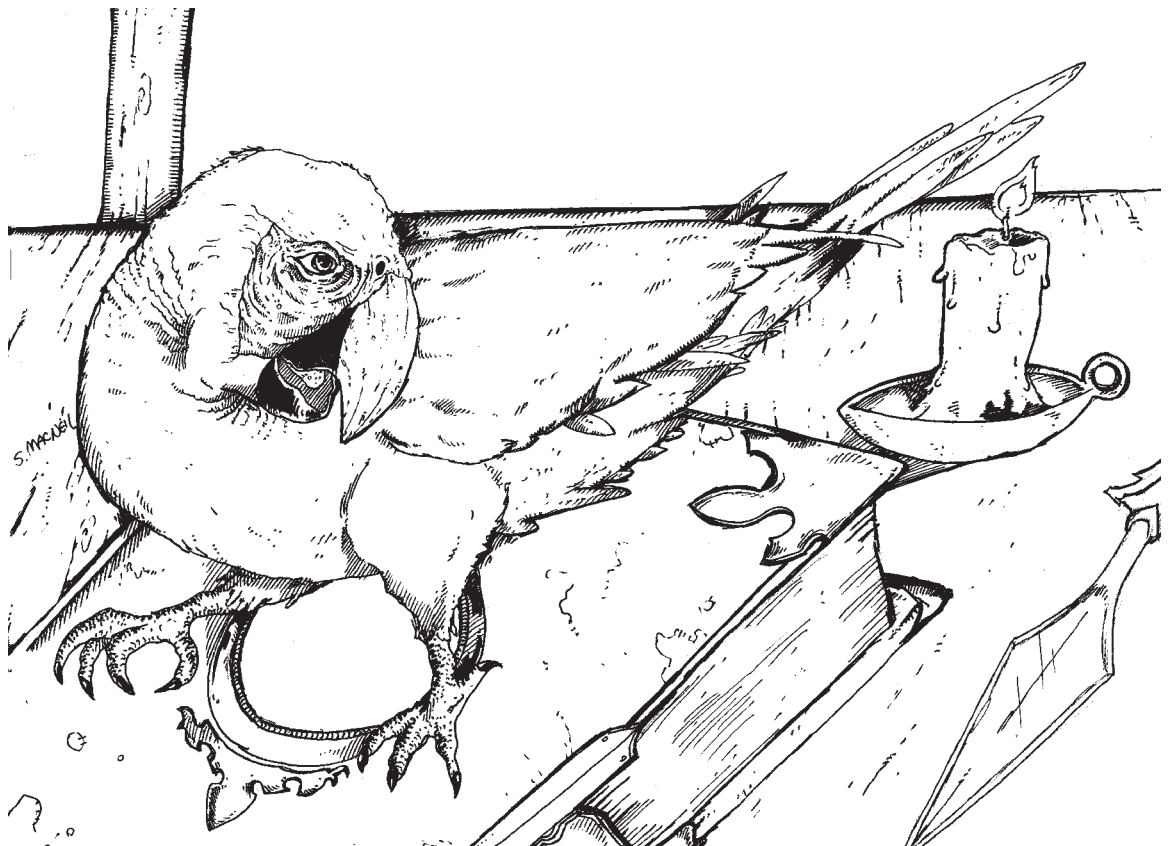
Over time, the pressure and strain it places on the victim can become profound, doing 1 point of permanent wisdom damage during the first month and then a permanent point of charisma damage the month afterward. This pattern continues in alternating months until four points of both attributes have been lost. These can be restored with a Greater Restoration spell. This effect of being barraged by questions, frequently half a dozen at a time, unable to finish one task for being asked about another, has often been described as similar to the cackling of parrots - an annoying sound for those familiar with it. DMs should be creative

with how they make the effects of the curse felt. The feeling should be one of being slowly overwhelmed and the life of the victim becoming unmanageable.

Avoiding the curse is possible. Alienating others or not speaking to anyone will work so long as they make no exceptions. By completely separating themselves from humanity the victim can find some peace (and avoid the attribute drain) but will develop an increasing phobia of interacting with other sentient creatures, causing a -1 to all die rolls for social interaction (Bluff, Sense Motive, Diplomacy, ect...), increasing by -1 each month they live as a hermit, eventually reaching a maximum of -8 after eight months.

A successful Will save allows the victim a month before the spell fully takes effect and the attribute loss requires two months per point instead of one month each.

The material component for this spell is a handful of feathers from an intelligent avian, five hundred gold pieces worth of ground roc egg shells worked into a fine dust and a



small set of masterwork silver wind pipes (150 gold).

This spell was first seen in use by the infamous Parrot King and is a recent bit of history, having originated in known use less than a century ago. The Parrot King was well known for his motley style of dress and huge parrot familiar seen in every civilized seaport. Some reports claim that he employed the services of a druid to enhance the intelligence of a number of trained parrots and gave them abilities himself so that he could use them as servants. Eventually it was discovered that he was seeking out thieves who had stolen his Cloak of Feathers. He claimed to have created this curse and taught it to others who helped him in cursing the thieves. In time, the Parrot King disappeared back to wherever he came from but knowledge of this curse has been passed on in a few tomes. The last known book confirmed to have the knowledge was scribed by the wizard Milka who left it behind when his ship the *False North* was sunk. Milka had other copies of all the spells and let the book stay there. Enterprising adventures could probably recover it since Milka also created spells for permanently waterproofing paper (among various useful sea spells) it is likely that the tome is waterproofed.

Curing the curse requires a ceremony including the expenditure of 300 experience by someone casting Remove Curse. During the hour long ceremony the victim has their ears stuffed with wax while they bite down on a dog's whistle. Symbolically this is the scream leaving their body, caught in an unhearable vessel while they are shielded from sound. The dog's whistle must be of masterwork quality (at least 120 gold). The whistle must then be broken, far away from the victim. Although all of these elements can be gathered from local histories and bardic knowledge, the exact method of using them is not known. The most likely source (other than Milka's log) is the Abbey of Saint Dartange, where at least one known

victim of the Parrot King was cured nearly fifty years ago.

Evil Eye

Transmutation

Level: Brd 2, Sor 2

Components: V, S, 200 experience

Casting Time: 1 full round action

Range: sight

Area: 1 creature

Duration: instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

The secret to this curse is passed down in a few cultures, through bedouin storytellers and gypsy seers. Those who know the Evil Eye know how to bind fate and luck to a single victim and twist them to baneful effect. By tradition, the Evil Eye may only be used on those who have personally harmed the caster, their families or close friends. A few rakes and old hags are known to cast this spell in return for some compensation in the bazaars of the far east but even they obey the traditions. Those seeking their services should approach with a gift for their "uncle" or "aunt."

The Evil Eye has one simple and insidious effect - it makes the mundane challenging. Rather than make any task more difficult, the Evil Eye bends chance to increase chance around the victim. Simple tasks such as walking, talking, eating, even picking up a weapon are normally tasks not worthy of a roll but what if they were? Imagine making a balance roll every time you go for a walk or a strength roll to keep your grip on a book. This does not effect actions that are already determined by chance such as combat or saves.

Its effects are not constant but come and go, striking dozens of times in a single day.





At least one famous poem details the complications of a rogue who is cast with the Evil Eye for acting improperly to a desert princess and then becomes honor bound to an old sorcerer who she also hired to curse the rogue. Now both rogue and princess were honor bound to the same man who sent them on an adventure together where she learned to respect him and he to love her. They married and the old sorcerer was revealed to be the lord of the Jinn. In such complications of honor, duty and justice the Evil Eye has played a part of many great tales.

DMs will find that rolling for every action will slow the game down to a crawl. One option is to roll 3d4 before each game session and that is how many times the curse will become significant during the game. Then, as actions pass the GM can choose that many of the of the simple actions performed to require rolls.

Often the effects of the Evil Eye are comical including many trips, falls, and broken wares. The loss of dignity and comfort are bad enough (particularly mean DMs could check for damaging bruises and broken bones). However, tragic stories abound of Evil Eye victims who stabbed themselves while trying to eat or accidentally killed a friend.

An action affected by the Evil Eye gains a difficulty between 2 and 20 as determined by the DM. Many actions will have difficulties as low as 5 and easily succeeded on, especially if a relevant skill is possessed. The victim can still roll a 1 and automatically fail. Reflexive actions such as the hand eye co-ordination roll to eat (spot check DC 2, Dexterity roll DC 2) are common. More complex tasks such carrying a heavy pot across a floor easily justify a Strength roll DC 12 to 18 depending upon the bulkiness and weight of the object. The character may always choose to take 20 on these actions. True, life will move in slow motion taking 20 on even the most simple tasks but the curse wasn't meant to make life less frustrating. The Evil Eye will otherwise cause a character pulling a knife to accidentally throw it across a room (failing a Dex check) or spilling a potion when they meant to drink it (failing a Spot check to line up the potion's container with their mouth).

The cure for the Evil Eye is caused by another application of the Evil Eye from another caster. If cast by the same person who originally cast the curse on the person they do not have to expend any experience to dispel it. Otherwise, it costs 100 experience to dispel the curse.

A Scry check at DC 14 will reveal the strands around a person that are causing the Evil Eye and a Knowledge (Arcana) roll at DC 16 will reveal their nature.

Forgotten

Transmutation

Level: Wizard 9

Components: V, S, M, 900 exp

Casting Time: 24 hours

Range: unlimited, must know the target personally

Area: 1 creature

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: No

The target of Forgotten is literally erased from history but such magic is not to be trifled with. The actual origin of the spell is ironic because it is believed that it was begun not for vengeance or a weapon but as a final thesis or test of research. The original creator of the spell is forgotten but clues left behind and studied by who must have been their pupil reveals an intensive study of the legends of Kao Ru, the turtle god on whose back is the city of the thoughts of the dead. Kao Ru is said to be a place of great wisdom and knowledge, built by turtles. One tradition among shamans is to cook turtle shells and read knowledge from their cracks but it is a pale echoing of the knowledge that can be read plainly there. Several legends speak of mortals who would disappear for years and then reappear as if they hadn't aged, sleeping and dreaming on the back of a great turtle. Someone thought that this meant that there was a way to Kao Ru and a way back if a means of traversing it could only be engineered. Illustrations left behind show a city with water filled streets and tall buildings with no doors or windows.

The first wizard to use this spell against another person was Yuil Te Suen, a wizard who consorted with insect spirits and demons before being banished from the imperial court. He sought to enact a horrible series of vengeance upon the royal family and it believed that he succeeded. A single room in the royal chambers was found

completely empty and no one remembered it ever being occupied or any plans for it. Today a single empty urn has been placed in the royal sepulchers for the forgotten who might have dwelled there.

When targeted by this spell, a victim feels themselves being pulled out of the world, as if they are being cut out of its substance. They make a contested Will save versus the caster - the individual with the highest result is not effected by the spell. So, the caster himself may actually be affected instead of the target. The victim as well as the caster may choose to spend 100 experience for a +1 bonus to their will save or as many times as that they want for a proportionally higher bonus. For example, if 1,000 experience is spent they receive a +10 bonus. Both individuals automatically knows how much the other has spent. Unlike with normal magic, experience can be spent that would lower an individual's level as they fight for their very right to exist as a part of reality. Ties result in both individuals being forgotten.

Whoever the ultimate victim of the spell is, the effects follow quickly and simply - they are forgotten. All writing that exists in reference to the individual is made anonymous, erased or edited to exclude them. Magical texts with effects equal to caster level 10 or higher receive a saving throw against the effect. All individuals that knew them forget and forget any details that would reference them. Individuals of level 12 or higher may make a Will save DC 15 to remember that they once knew someone but fail to recall anything more than sparse details. Even their attacker (or the defender if they win) will forget the mystic combat that culminated in the forgetting.

These effects occur over several days. A victim who writes down their own name will watch it run away in ink or see stones with their names inscribed crack and make the name illegible. As the victim speaks to others they find that they forget the

individual's name increasingly and forget details of conversations, that they were coming, etc... Soon even close friends have trouble remembering who the victim is. For example, a tutor may remember that she is employed by a household to teach but will forget the victim and that they ever taught such a person. Within a week people will not even recognize the victim's presence, literally forgetting them before they even see them. By this time the victim is also losing coherency, becoming simultaneously present on several planes of existence, observing them all and unable to interact with any. Beyond this point the effects of being Forgotten are unknown and can only be surmised.

There is no known means of reversing the effect but certainly the original designer believed there was before casting it on himself and perhaps in the city of the thoughts of the dead there is but if so no one has made it back to tell it, assuming the forgotten know how to reach it.

Material components include a shell from a black sea turtle at least three feet in diameter and deep enough to burn coals in (10,000 gold from collectors and reusable) and a diary or other text, hand written or otherwise unique (no other copies exist) from someone the caster has never heard of (they must also never read the text themselves) and burn it in the shell.





Out of Time

Enchantment

Level: Wiz 5

Components: V, S, 500 experience

Casting Time: Eight hours

Range: same plane

Area: 1 creature

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: No

Alejandro Corville was an archmage of the 8th City, a society dedicated to discovering the secrets of manipulating time. Although he was responsible for many successes his greatest goal of time travel eluded him. His frustration turned to envy and resentment when his pupil Dienstag Wierhall refuted several of Corville's theories in his acclaimed treatise on the transference of matter and spirit through time. In retaliation Corville launched a deliberate plan of humiliation that destroyed Wierhall's career. Wierhall decided on his own revenge but made it more personal than social.

The curse alters perception and blocks memory but makes it appear that the victim is having their own history manipulated. Whenever a character influenced by the curse attempts to access an actual fact from memory or fact needed to accomplish a task, they have a significantly higher than normal chance of being unable to recall it. Unlike normal memory loss, however, the victim does not merely feel frustrated by their inability to recall but has the distinct impression that they never experienced the event they learned this from though they objectively know they had.

A successful Knowledge Arcana DC 22 roll (which it may take a while to accomplish - see below) will allow the victim to know that such experiences are similar to two phenomena. One is someone who has had memories erased. This possibility should scare and confuse most PCs but the second possibility is what tormented Alejandro

Corville - the victim may be shunting through time as spirit rather than body, his own memories not synchronizing with those of his body in this time. To further obfuscate the truth, Wierhall integrated into the curse a faint exposure of temporal alteration around the body that can be detected with Detect Magic and a Spellcraft check at DC 20.

A Knowledge Arcana roll at DC 35 will reveal the fact that the phenomena is not an actual time displacement or memory alteration one but a variation of the Feeblemind spell. If a copy of Wierhall's Kyros Compendium is available, the DC is reduced to 25. Although a very rare text, it is well known among those interested in time magic. The Kyros Compendium was finished shortly before Wierhall died in seclusion and includes not only his own research but annotated discussions of many great scholars, including Corville. Students of temporal magic are often instructed to read Wierhall's comments after reading another author's original text.

The actual effect of the curse makes it that much more difficult to solve. Any Intelligence based skills are rolled with a -6 competency penalty. Furthermore, anytime a specific piece of information has to be used it is affected. Thus, many non Intelligence skills where specific knowledge is used (Profession, Craft, etc...) suffer -4. At the beginning of each game session if the victim casts spells as a wizard they will have to relearn 1d4+2 of them with Spellcraft checks of DC 10 + spell level. Spellcasters that do not memorize their spells have a 5% chance of failing each spell by forgetting some important part of casting it just as they begin casting. When trying to recall a specific fact there is a 20% chance the character can not remember it (even if the player can).

Today the curse only exists in a few rare tomes that Wierhall penned and seem to guard themselves from being copied.

Diaries of his research that survived Wierhall suggest that he regretted leaving the knowledge of this curse behind and destroyed most of his texts but, ever the consummate man of knowledge, he could not bear to completely lose it. The last known text was sold to a wizard from the far east named al-Amir in the small town of Ferngrove. Urban lore attributes another copy of the spell existing in the collection of the war wizard Keymeth in his fortress in the Reichgard Mountains.

Once the nature of the curse is verified, the dismissal is as simple as a successful Dispel Magic spell and an expenditure of 300 experience.

Pox

Necromancy

Level: Sor, Brd 3

Components: V, M, 350 experience

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: special

Area: 2 HD / level of caster

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: No

The Pox is learned in cultures known for their treachery. The secret to learning Pox is different from most sorcerous curses as it requires little more than a life of suffering to unveil. No one knows for sure why this curse develops in some and not others. The material component of the curse is a recently dead (no more than a fortnight dead) or dying person. Three instances of the Pox have been documented. In all cases, the sorcerer comes from a dark background, illuminated by some hope that is crushed. It has been theorized by bards that the curse is learned early as their hate festers but

lacks the power of meaning until there is an injustice to act against.

In the Kingdom of Alera, the magistrate, Mercer, investigated the disappearance of young children in the crowded farming community of East Leeland. After a week, she discovered a concerted effort by several families to kill infants in order to cheat the tax system. Mercer herself had become a magistrate only after her own husband had left her because of her inability to have children. At the gravesite of the most recent victim, she cast Pox.

More than eight thousand miles and several centuries later, the woodsman Bun returned home from a trip gathering bear fat for the village's winter to find his wife murdered by bandits. Lying in their empty bed, he sent out his own spirit to the body of his wife, laying in the ground outside the house and called forth the Pox. The bandits were found a month later some insane, some dead.

The best information about Pox comes from Badaric of Alera, the son of a minor merchant house who secretly married the young Dorias, a niece of the duke. When the duke discovered the marriage, he personally saw Badaric tied to a horse and had him drug around the city three times before released and declared the marriage dissolved. Badaric's death occurred in the sanctuary of the church where his friend the bard Asturius recorded his final words.

"I lie here dying but it will not be without a price
I give up spirit to send the token
As my body is eaten, so shall theirs
An eye for an eye, worm for worm "

The dead who act as the conduit for the Pox must hold a strong emotional tie to both the victim(s) and the sorcerer. A loved child, a dear wife, a precious friend, or, in the case of Mercer, a painful symmetry can act as bridges for the power. In Badaric's case he was the victim himself. In the case





of Badaric, not only did he curse the duke but the chambermaid who he trusted who sold him out to the duke. Mercer's curse struck not only the murderers but those that capitulated, cooperated and made possible what they did by breeding a culture of greed.

Those that learn the curse are something of nihilists, with feelings of emptiness so strong that they can naturally develop an aptitude for this kind of magic without any prompting or use for it for years or decades.

Any number of targets may be selected to be afflicted by the Pox but the total number of hit dice may not exceed twice that of the caster. All of the targets must be valid as defined by the nature of the curse. The victims develop acne over the first week that fill with puss. During the second week they gain lesions on the arms and face. During the third week, welts develop on the neck and chest along with acne becoming infected and bleeding. Finally, in the fourth week headaches develop with a great deal of sinus leakage. In the fifth week, this culminates in maggots crawling out of the victim's sinus passages. In the sixth week, they become constipated until festering wounds develop in their anuses that spiders hatch from. Many of these traits can be treated and cleaned out but they return. Oils and treatments are expensive, costing over 1,000 gold a week and do nothing more than relieve the pain a little.

Aside from the social impact of such an appearance, the impact on the body and mind is significant. The pain dulls the senses while the body is wracked. Each month of this affliction permanently reduces the victim's Constitution and Intelligence by 1 point to a maximum of losing six from each attribute. A successful saving throw versus the spell effect reduces the maximum loss to four points. Most social interaction rolls have a penalty of -8 due to the repulsiveness of the victim. With constant treatments the penalty is reduced to -4. Victims of the Pox may learn to live

with their condition but it is never easy.

Curing the Pox is no less easy than living with it. Victims must seek out the Aki Scrolls, created by the Aki mystics during the Mungo Dynasty though new ones come into existence as their secrets are rediscovered. The Aki mystics bred silk worms in their monasteries and sold the silk to merchants, eventually becoming a powerful economic and political power in their region of the world. But it was one of their arcanists, a wizard named Yu Li Su'et who was hired by a noble man and created a cure for the Pox. Thanks to his expertise with silk worms, he created a new breed, whose creation is described in the scrolls. If no living worms of this kind can be found, aki silk worms require six years to be bred by one familiar with the raising and care of silk worms in the proper climates. Silk worm larvae must then have a very specific spell cast on them and inserted into the open anal wounds of the Pox victim. The larvae will begin killing other creatures as they mature. The process takes two months of extended agony during which any mental activities take an additional -4 beyond current penalties but at the end most of the body is covered in thin silk.

Every day a gallon of herbal ginseng tea and maldor root is fed through a tube to the victim. Maldor is a common root extract used to increase stamina and enough may be bought for five silver to brew a single gallon. The victim must drink this tea, at least three cups a day for two months. The body must also remain immobile and silk allowed to set. Once it has, the person will fall into a coma for 2d4 days, during which they must make a Fortitude save versus 17 for every day they are in it. Failing for three days in a row requires a new Fortitude save versus 20 or instant death results. Should they survive, they are cured and will long consider what brought them to these measures.

Simply Perfect

Enchantment

Level: Wiz 4

Components: V, M, 500 experience

Casting Time: 3 hours

Range: 1 mile / level of caster

Area: 15 HD / level of caster

Duration: until the next full moon

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: Yes

When the Hellenist senator Pratur's daughter was seduced and heart broken by one of his senate peers, Pratur swore revenge. Enraged, Pratur called on powers he had abandoned and called for Aphrodite to give his enemy everything he wanted and to learn the folly of believing that anything is simple in love or vengeance.

The oldest tales of this curse say that devotees of passion gods created it but it is as an arcane focus that it is best known

now. Records of the curse remain in the hands of dozens of wizards throughout the known world. A few mistakenly still believe this curse to be harmless. Those who understand its ramifications however have a potent weapon. The material component is a written vow of compliance from the victim but that is more easily obtained than one might think. Only the basic effect, not its ramifications, must be explained to the victim. The vow is burned in a pit of coal covered in scented oils and lamb's blood.

Once completed, the curse affects all members of the opposite sex that come into contact with the victim up to 15 HD per level of caster. Walking within sight is enough to constitute contact. Those that succeed in their will saves will still be infatuated but not act irrationally. For example, such a person may go out of their way to please the victim or break up with a casual paramour but not abandon a genuine love. They would approach the infatuation over a course of several days, building





up to their actions. However, those most strongly affected who fail their saves, do act irrationally, often becoming obsessed within a few minutes. These people will act within their basic natures but extremely. Good characters may become smothering and, if rejected, feel a need to correct the victim's behavior. Neutral characters may hurt themselves, feeling isolated if rejected and question their own self worth, perhaps acting out against the person who rejected them. Some entranced paramours have murdered the curse's victim in a rage over being rejected. Evil paramours will act to isolate their "love," manipulating them and harming others. They harm the object of their obsession in order to protect them. In all the chances of surviving one month with dozens of paramours affected by this magical obsession are not good and someone is sure to be hurt.

Curing the curse is simple. A counter curse is prepared, using the same ceremony requiring only 150 experience and a written rejection of the curse by the victim. The blood from at least one of the magically affected paramours must be substituted for the lamb's blood which will require a Fortitude roll versus DC 14. Failure means that too much blood was lost and the person dies.

Regardless, one thing happens - all the paramours affected by the curse know that they were enchanted and can easily recall their obsession with the curse's victim. This is the last joke on why the curse is so easy to lift - even after the magic is dispelled, life is unlikely to be pleasant for the victim in the area. The chances of convincing dozens of people that you were not trying to control their minds for them to love you is small, especially given the kind of person willing to agree to the curse in the first place.

Skein of Circles

Enchantment

Level: Brd 4, Sorc 4

Components: V, S, 400 experience

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: same plane

Area: 1 creature

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: Will special

Spell Resistance: No

The recipient of this curse receives a very special kind of knowledge, one that is meant to drive them mad with frustration and fear. The great scholars know that even the gods of man are but specks in the cosmos. There are powers that whisper beyond the stars and are as ancient to the gods as the earth is to man. Scholars don't worry because the entire lives of worlds pass in the single eye blink of one of those things. Still, sometimes a mortal seeks out the knowledge and tries to draw their attention. At least one purpose for such foolishness is the knowledge that also imparts this curse.

The curse imparts a smidgen of the knowledge gained by the caster on the victim though none of the power the caster gets. This small knowledge is enough for madness. The victim slowly sees how the forces associated with sharp edges can be used by malign forces to gain a foothold on this world and how they siphon precious life out into the darkness beyond the source of worlds. For the first month of the curse they only perceive the danger of squares. In the following months they see the danger of rectangles, triangles and by the fourth month any edge of 120 degrees or less. During this time whenever the character is surrounded by, possesses or is opposed by something that uses one of these shapes they take a -4 circumstance penalty to all attacks, skill checks and saving throws. These penalties are cumulative when environmental, possessed and opposed. For example, a victim in his fourth month of infection in a

square room, wielding a triangular shield and facing an opponent with a long sword (sharp angles) takes -12 to all attacks, skill checks and saving throws.

A successful Will save slows the madness caused by the curse, taking two months for the curse to progress from squares to rectangles and again two months for each succeeding stage.

Hieroglyphics found on the sarcophagus of the king, Urmur Taur, indicated that a court scribe had betrayed his training as a priest and embraced the worship of alien powers. The unnamed priest was said to have determined that the world was made of nothing but edges and curves and these were the fundamental sources of power.

In the centuries since, the Skein of Circles has appeared in many places, always revealed to a spell caster by a dark skinned man who spoke of the preciousness of time and the need to understand how it curved through the lives of men. When last seen, this man was in the great city of Meschk, escaping the cardinal's guards in the company of a circus. What knowledge is endowed that grants any true secret lore is unknown since no recipient has kept their sanity. What is known is that such casters often peer further into the shadows than they should, afterwards gaining an affinity for places devoid of life that are very bright.

The cure to this spell is as dangerous as the curse. The victim must use a small dagger to carve various square geometric shapes into their flesh and do it themselves. This inflicts 1d2 points of damage every hour and takes 24 hours. The shapes do not have to be any specific pattern but will make sense to the victim and slowly cover much of their body. Friends must stay near to keep the person restrained when they become manic. Every hour the victim must make a Will save DC 20 or try to commit suicide. A healer is also recommended during this time. If freed from the mania of trying

to end their torment, the person will go back to the engraving, knowing that it is the only way to save themselves. When ready, Feeblemind is then cast on the victim followed by a Heal, Limited Wish or Wish and the expenditure of 250 experience. The victim requires several weeks of bed rest afterwards.

Timwell's Torturous Time

Necromancy

Level: Wiz 6

Components: V, S, M, 450 experience

Casting Time: 2 hours

Range: 10 miles and personal knowledge of victim

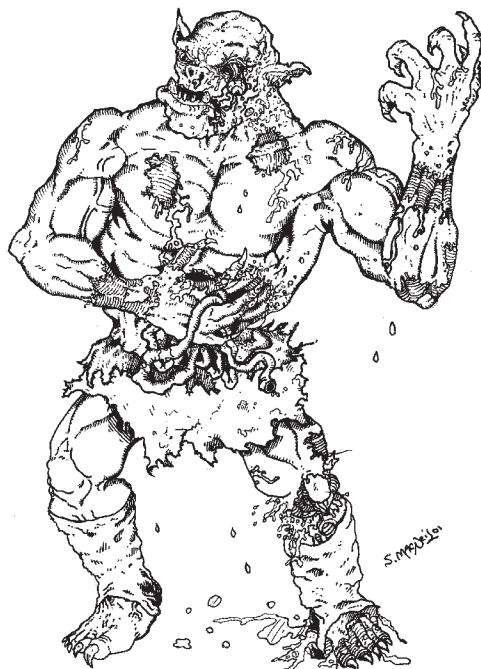
Area: up to three creatures of no more than eight hit dice apiece

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: Fortitude special

Spell Resistance: No

Alexander Timwell was a simple man, not kind but even headed and pleasant. He moved to the small farming community of





Bridgewine during his later years with his wife to raise his two daughters, practicing as a herbalist. He returned from a day trip helping injured hunters to find that trolls had murdered his family. Tidwell went into a state of shock and had a mental breakdown.

In the following months, he shut himself away and was kept alive by gifts of food from well wishers. When he finally left his home after nearly a year, he was dressed in black robes with a golden circlet. While many had known that he was a dabbler of magic, no one had known that he was a war wizard of the Yar Gare, a renowned mercenary company of wizards. He left the village that day to find the trolls that had destroyed his family and make them suffer.

Tidwell's Torturous Time was designed to make trolls suffer. This curse bestows a necrophagic disease upon the victim that eats their flesh while they live. A failure of the saving throw means that the victim will be wholly eaten alive within 2d12 hours. A successful saving throw means that it does not kill them outright but slowly eats away at the flesh, doing 3d6 points of damage a day. This damage can be healed by magic but regeneration is only partially successful, only healing half as quickly from it.

The spell requires a collection of various molds and funguses as its material components that require several months in a large forest to gather with a Wilderness Lore DC 27 check and 72 hours to gather them. Alternatively, they can be purchased for about 3,000 gold since many of them are rarely used enough to be stocked. By combining the molds with a small piece of troll skin, the curse can be cast to give trolls a +5 bonus to their saving throw. This inclusion was made by Tidwell who wanted the trolls to suffer through the curse.

A character who dies of this curse can be raised by Raise Dead or Resurrection but will still be affected by the curse when raised.

Today this curse can be found in a few arcane tomes. The spell was last known to be in use about forty years ago when a necromancer tried to hold a small city in the northern plains hostage through use of it and other spells. When confronted by a cabal of druids who destroyed him, they found the spell book he was using to have been stolen from the grand library at Shieldmeet, where it had been donated by a monster hunter who had known Tidwell personally. Presumably, the book was returned and is at Shieldmeet again, hidden in some room where few have access unless the druids kept it themselves. The book is about eighteen by twelve inches and its covers appear to be some kind of cured hickory bark. A lock decorates the outside made of copper.

The only known way to dispel the Torturous Time involves a horrible ceremony. The victim must cut away segments of their own affected flesh with a knife made of cold silver (hammered into its final shape without fire). The dagger must be of masterwork quality and for purposes of making the item has an equivalent cost of 700 gold because of its unusual method of manufacture. This symbolizes at once the use of silver for vulnerability to magic and the antithesis of fire to seek wholeness rather than merely burning away the disease that would return. The cutting requires three Will saves at DC 23. Then the caster must cast Heal and Remove Curse in succession while paying an experience cost of 400 experience.

Vermin Kin

Alteration

Level: Sor 3

Components: V, S, M, 300 experience

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: touch

Area: up to three creatures of no more than eight hit dice apiece

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: none

Spell Resistance: No

Suyaria was a noblewoman when she was abducted by the wizard, Yuldri, who had seduced many women but had been rejected by Suyaria for his loathsome philosophies. Yuldri believed that she would love him and a when, after a year in captivity, she still refused him, he moved her to a cellar she shared with rats for the next ten years. Coming from a noble life, she was unprepared for this lifestyle and nearly lost her mind. She grew to both hate and admire the rats. They had abilities to persevere no matter how disgusting the means. Suyaria would talk to the rats so that she wouldn't forget her own voice and after years it seemed that they understood her. She had been in the tower six years when one spoke back.

To her amazement, the rat took another shape, vaguely human and drew forth a stick of soot and blackened one wall that fell away to darkness when pressed. Upon entering the darkness, Suyaria, somewhat mad after seven years, walked until the tunnel ended in a wooden door. Remembering childhood tales, she asked a riddle before knocking twice with her fingers crossed and came through to a home of the unseelie. Through the door she found a dusty but elegant room, as if it hadn't been used in years. Placing what appeared to be a dried spider shell into a cabinet was Ruthford, who appeared to be a middle aged man in a double breasted coat nearly grey from age but once bright red.

He grinned a toothless grin and their talks seemed to take days but Suyaria never mistook that for freedom. However much time passed, she would have to return. Suddenly, Ruthford asked her if she would like to know a secret and a new series of talks began. When the secrets came to an end, he asked her if she would like to know something horrible and she did. Upon returning to her dungeon, she carried a little piece of that place of forgotten earth and stone into Yuldri's place of brick to find only a moment had passed. She had eaten of their food and breathed their air though she didn't remember and, though it would fade it would last long enough. When Yuldri next appeared, she grasped the strands of magic and broke his wards, getting close to him with promises of love and leaving a lasting curse. She remained his prisoner, sometimes tortured for the knowledge of how to cure him but she waited. When she walked from the tower, one leg was lame and scars marked her entire body but his tower was home to nothing but rats.

Those who seek the knowledge of making Vermin Kin must seek out the knowledge the way Suyaria did, by speaking with the dark fey even though some have shut themselves off from the mortal world. Only a few among the elder know how to pass this knowledge onto mortal casters. Still, for those willing to take the risk, the knowledge can be gained but the unseelie find such requests unseemly. The applicant must know their customs and be willing to spend a very long time among them to gain their confidence and to not offend their sensibilities.

Casting the spell requires only an hour and culminates with the caster kissing the victim full upon the lips and then spitting on them. The spell may be held ready for up to 12 hours but at the end of that time, if not cast, it is lost along with the experience. The act of kissing and then spitting on the target represents the absolute proximity of the curse and rejection of the victim - soon to be





made manifest by the curse.

The victim of the curse literally becomes kin to vermin. Flies and rats flock to the victim, finding comfort in him. The victim also finds that food spoils quickly in his presence (it only lasts ½ of its normal time and even iron rations spoil within a week). Flies make their home in his hair and skin, laying their eggs on him, becoming a constant nuisance and getting into his nose, mouth and eyes.

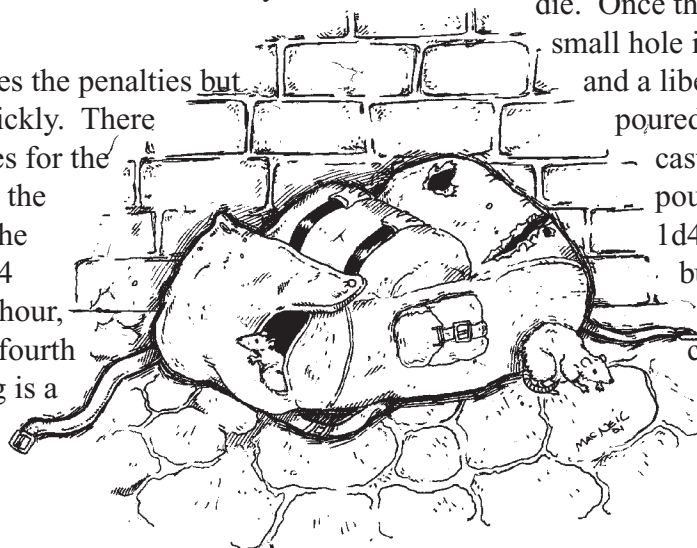
The flies constantly infect the victim, weakening his immune system and causing a -4 to any Fortitude saves to resist diseases. The cloud also attracts attention and makes it difficult to see. Any rolls that depend on visual acuity suffer a -4 penalty including spot, search, disable device, and any ranged attacks. Additionally, 2d4 rats accompany you at all times, often sleeping with you at night and may be found in pockets or in your backpack. There is a 50% chance every night that the rats will chew up any paper materials they can access or eat any accessible food. If they begin starving, they attack the victim. They also make sneaking difficult and any attempts to move silently suffer a -4 penalty. Finally, the victim becomes dirty at a supernatural rate and trash is physically drawn to the victim. Most social interaction rolls are at a -6 penalty assuming that someone is willing to speak to you. Any creature with a sense of smell can smell you within 20 feet and those with delicate sensibilities may feel nauseous.

Bathing reduces the penalties but they return quickly. There are no penalties for the first hour after the bath, -2 after the second hour, -4 after the third hour, -6 during the fourth hour. Bathing is a difficult affair, requiring hot water, soaps,

disposable cloth, forceful scrubbing and perfumes costing at least 3 gold. Assistance is warranted, which is embarrassing at best, and attendants willing to perform those functions cost three times the normal rate for a bath assistant. Dispelling the curse requires knowledge nearly as difficult to acquire as that from the unseelie. The unseelie know the cure though it is rumored that a few clerics of the rat god Iziquri also know the secret though they are even less likely to share it. Impressing the unseelie is purely a matter of triggering the interest of that individual. Iziquri clerics are far more predictable but have agendas to promote that few civilized folk find agreeable.

Curing the curse requires building a casket out of vello pine, an exotic pine wood found in the Leafhelm Forest, guarded by the ultep, boars with a spiked ridge of bone on their backs. Wood from these trees are known for their smoothness and enough for a casket fetches as much as 4,000 gold on the open market and is a masterwork item when made. The wood is then soaked and treated in a poison made from butchi flowers, which in old elvish means rat's bane. These small violet flowers can be found in the spring in many forests. Gathering enough to use requires a full day of gathering with a Wilderness Lore DC check of 15 and preparing the poison is an Alchemy check of 21. Sealed inside the casket the victim is lowered into a pit of rats who chew through the box but sicken and die. Once the last rat is dead a

small hole is made in the casket and a liberal amount of hot wax poured in as Remove Curse is cast. Enough wax is poured in to produce about 1d4 points of burn damage but as the last of the wax seals after an hour the curse is broken and the wax "seals" in their aura, blocking it from the vermin.



Chapter Two:

Divine Curses

Divine curses are similar to those of arcane spellcasters in a few respects - they are ritualistic and must be prepared in advance. However, their origin adds the complication that they are the product of a power that thinks big. If a curse is meant to serve a higher purpose, a divine curse must serve at least two higher purposes. Gods want curses to not only be tools of synchronicity or justice but to advance their own agendas. Thus the casting cleric has little leeway in the intent of the spell - though the cleric may choose the target, they must also satisfy the requirements of their patron as to whom receives it.

Ultimately divine curses are not the best form of revenge. Vengeance is a luxury (if a damning one) of arcane spell casters. Divine curses are meant to teach a lesson. Most divine curses can be cured in a way that leaves an impression upon the transgressor as to what their failures were. A few curses have no cure, however, and are meant to educate others by example of what happens to those that violate the greatest taboos.

Bless You

Enchantment

Level: Cleric 5

Components: V, S, M 400 experience

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: special

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

"A handful of dust carries all the stars of the world in it."

"A handful of dust can cause a sneeze that begins the winds of a storm."

- popular sayings

The Filchme believed that a person's soul was air that never left the lungs. When you died, your soul left by way of the final breath. So, when you sneezed, a little bit of your soul was lost and, since your soul was your strand in the universe's tapestry of fate, so went a little luck. The Filchme built cities on the near eastern seas which contained great necropolises. After their empire fell, these great burials became magnets for grave robbers who discovered that the Filchme knew more of fate than mere superstition.

Today this minor ritual is repeated by clerics who seek to secure the resting places of their honored dead. An enchanted handful of dust is scattered on top of a casket, in a doorway or some other place that a grave robber would have to disturb. Each handful can only affect a single person but especially sacred tombs may have several such wards in the same room to catch multiple violators. The person who becomes cursed will have the threads of their fate altered so that, whenever they disturb dust and sneeze, a little bit of their luck leaves them.

For example, a rogue is afflicted with the curse after robbing a crypt. He enters a tavern months later to meet a contact and buy some goods. Sitting at the corner table, he kicks up a little dust and sneezes. At that moment, he was unlucky enough to have three things happen: one, his contact missed him when he ducked to wipe his nose, two, the noise attracted a large ham fistad man who suddenly remembered someone who looked a lot like the rogue who owed him money and three, with a -10 on his spot





check, the rogue missed both one and two - for the next few seconds anyway. This is an exceptional example but all three types of events are characteristic of how the curse frustrates its victims.

During a sneeze the victim takes a -10 to all actions and is very vulnerable to sneezing at any time. Unless a victim's enemies happen to learn this vulnerability and begin carrying around pouches of dust the -10 penalty is not a large disadvantage simply because of its rare frequency.

The real disadvantage of being afflicted by this curse is that, when things go bad, the DM is obligated to not only make the circumstances bad but painfully severe. In other words, the curse does not kick in frequently but when it does... the DM should listen for the sound of whimpering to know that they have done their job.

The task for the DM is to remember when and where the character is likely to encounter dust. No matter how tempting it is, the character is unlikely to have this triggered while sneaking past the temple guards unless it hasn't been cleaned well. However, pulling a rare tomb from a wizard's bookcase could send off a shower of dust - quickly followed by a balance roll at -10 and a certain wizard having the unlikely opportunity to make a listen check at +10 and, should the balance check fail, the pilferer had best hope that those alchemical vials on the table beneath him aren't anything too nasty.

Curing oneself of this bane is not as hard or strange as one might suspect. You have merely to find a royal tomb of a Filchme house that has been violated and replace all stolen items and reconsecrate it. Unfortunately, all known Filchme royal tombs were raided centuries ago and their goods scattered to the ends of the earth and no one still living practices their faith. This leaves the afflicted with the second option which is both strange and difficult. The afflicted must gather fifteen nails forged

by a grandfather (characters may not get nails simply made by someone who became a grandfather after making the nails - he must be a grandfather when he made the nails) and use those to seal a casket. Within the casket he places all of his worldly goods. Adventurers that have valuable magical items may choose a few at the DM's discretion to keep but these must be consecrated and the character must pay 10 experience apiece during the consecration. Their worldly goods includes property and cash. The casket is then buried for ten weeks and then dug up for strangers to take things. These goods may not be taken and given back to the character - remember, the gods are watching. Finally, neither the afflicted nor his friends may use his name again for a year and a day after the last item is taken from the casket. During this time, the curse will lay inactive and, on the final day, Remove Curse must be cast and 50 experience paid by the victim and they will be absolved and curse lifted.

Book Worn

Necromancy

Level: Cleric 7

Components: V, S, M 800 experience

Casting Time: 6 hours

Range: unlimited

Target: 1 spell caster

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Few traditions are as inscribed in the culture of mages as the clandestine research into lichdom. Even mages that would never pursue such dark arts are fascinated by the history of liches. Apprentices play with the idea of immortality while maintaining their humanity. But for some spell casters

lichdom is a real means to an end - their own immortality. Some say that Jussuk the god of martyrs and humility devised this curse to keep his own clerics in line after a monastic cabal of them completed the transformation in the Spiderhaunt Forests. They crossed over, willing to accept an existence of suffering as undead to spread the word of their lord Jussuk. They gained the opportunity to be martyrs though not quite how they expected. This spell may be cast on any kind of lich whether they were clerics or mages. If psionic liches are available in the campaign they may also be affected and the scrolls described later should also include the theory necessary for psionic liches to create the same effects as their spell casting counterparts.

Often described as lichdom gone wrong, this spell ties a spell caster's life force to a written text of some kind. From then on, their life force exists in direct proportion to how many people are aware of the text and have read it - their awareness either bolstering the lich's existence or strangling it. This curse is less destructive than it is demoralizing to an immortal who must look forward to an eternity tied to lesser creatures.

Casting this spell requires a tome written by the victim. While many liches are prolific writers, few will give up their work. The tome does not have to be written while existing as a lich but must have been written at least within a decade before they crossed over. The book is used as a tie to the intellectual aspect of the lich's life. Once cast the lich is tied to the book and the book becomes virtually invulnerable gaining a hardness of 20, 60 hit points and +12 to all saving throws. The book will also repair itself at a rate of 2 hit points per round.

The nature of the curse is this - for every spell casting class level of the lich one living person must have read and be fully aware of the contents of the book. If at any time the number of people aware of the contents

falls to a number lower than the spell casting levels of the lich, the lich will lose a spell caster level. If the lich regresses to zero levels of caster, he can no longer use magic items that require the user to be a caster but may still attempt to use scrolls. If the lich has more than one spell casting class they will lose it to the higher of the two. The lich loses a number of caster levels equal to the difference between their "real" caster level and the number of mortals aware of the contents of their work. Vassals that count towards this limit must be mortals. When the number of vassals rises, the lich regains those spell casting levels until they equal or exceed his spell casting levels.

It is in the interests of the cleric casting the curse that the book contain information the lich does not want spread such as biographical information that gives others insight into the lich or rare spells. Some liches minimize the damage by taking on apprentices and requiring that they read the text. One odd ability granted to the lich by the spell is the ability to instantly know the text and to write out a new copy so that they can avoid the peril of the curse's damage although it prolongs their own torment.

Curing the curse is difficult and the knowledge hard to win. The secret was last seen in the scrolls of Saint Camius who himself died at the hands of the lich, Churos. Churos was a plague on the priests until Camius himself brought this curse to bear. The priests grew arrogant in believing that they had finally found a weapon that even the most powerful liches could not resist but it is dangerous to use magic against a master of it and Churos has had few equals in all history. Churos left the knowledge of his cure with Saint Camius, knowing that Camius's vows would not allow him to destroy the knowledge that could be a future bane to all lich hunters. Camius made one copy of the knowledge and buried it deep in an unmarked corner of the fabled Toran Library, in a maze of hundreds of false walls and hidden compartments. Although





For more on Churos, his mastering of necromancy and the secret of how he perverted the curse of Book Worn to make himself nearly invincible see the upcoming Heyoka Studios project *The Book of Thralls*.

no known lich has found the documents it is only a matter of time before someone comes looking for them or hires someone to infiltrate the Camian Order.

The lich must manufacture a second phylactery nearly identical to his true phylactery except for a few arcane differences. Next the lich must find a "text that was written twice but exists only once" and the author, of which, died in obscurity. Players may find any interpretation to this they want but the original intent was an edited text where the changes were never made to a final document. Two last components are required - a large vial of holy water and a fragment of bone from a fallen angel. The lich will take the place of this obscure author and transfer his curse to the impotent book. This requires casting a variation of the curse that actually bound him and is described in the scrolls, requiring 400 experience on the casting. Immediately all of the lich's spell casting powers will be lost but if he can protect himself for the next 24 hours and complete the cure he will be safe again. The phylactery must be destroyed next. Then he drinks the holy water with the fragment of fallen angel bone in it - the lich opens himself to the holy magic and dies. The fallen angel fragment is used as a sort of escape hatch. The angel's holiness masks its connection to death which the bone fragment and evil nature make possible. The lich uses the holiness to destroy himself and the curse and when the holy water floats away he can escape to his true phylactery from the bone fragment his essence hid in.

The components of this spell are difficult to obtain - the book for mundane reasons and the fallen angel fragment for validity reasons. Some liches have even corrupted angels personally to ensure their fragments are true. Using this cure without a true fallen angel fragment results in complete and instant destruction and a useless true phylactery. Buying such a fragment will usually cost at least 25,000 gold, if one can

even be found, though such things exist in some of the more exotic planar markets.

All of this nastiness hides a very special secret though. In the Toran Libraries four sets of scrolls actually exist. Three of these sets are in difficult to locate places. These three are meant to throw someone off the scent and keep them from the incredibly well protected fourth set which is both a cure and a blessing to a lich. Saint Camius would rather have all the liches free from the curse of Book Worn than have them discover this.

Chendrai's Seclusion

Enchantment

Level: Cleric 2, Druid 3

Components: V, S, 200 experience

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 1 mile / level

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Among druids this curse was first passed down by the panther goddess, Chikagra, and is known as the Sight of Shadows. The curse is best known among the priests of Chendrai, however, and many tales from the Thrush Empire tell of rogues who incurred their patron's wrath. Chendrai was the goddess of the edge of shadows, the transition between light and dark and thus those who moved through life often called to her for help in dealing with the changes in their lives. She was also the patron of rogues and sister of Marluc, lord of holding the dead in their final halls. Rogues that stole from Marluc's blessed places were cursed with this enchantment.

The effect of this curse is that it makes darkness light to the victim and light dark. Thus, a character with normal vision can see in pitch blackness much as they normally would during broad daylight but would be rendered completely blind by light. In a dark room a lamp would create a spot of darkness and cast shadows to them. Characters with low light vision are not significantly affected in low light situations since they simply see the dark parts of the spectrum as they had the light and their ability to extend sight and distinguish colors works, simply for the dark portions. Characters with Dark Vision apply their ability to see black and white shapes to situations with light since that is their darkness now. Spells or abilities that create magical darkness will still blind them.

Many cursed with this are initially joyous - the ability to see in darkness seems like a great ability to have and many rogues find themselves in situations where it is useful. The appeal will fade over time. Basic social situations become more complicated due to the fact that the cursed is out of sync with the expectations of how other creatures see. Even with the help of other characters to handle situations, it will exclude them. Should this not prove adequately daunting the dangers of the shadow world may alert them.

Characters with this curse are moved partially into the shadow world and after 90 days of being cursed gain the Chendrai's Shunned template.

Chendrai's Shunned

CR +0

Spells or effects that specifically affect or have special effects on creatures with a shadow or dark descriptor affect the Shunned. Additionally the character is blinded by light and given sight by the darkness. Therefore they take no penalties in complete darkness but are treated as completely blind in full light. Finally, as they are progressing further into the world

of shadows than they had before they actually find light uncomfortable and now take 1 point of subdual damage every full minute that they are exposed to sunlight and fail a Fortitude check DC 20.

Reversing Chendrai's Seclusion is a matter of rejecting the darkness that you have been secluded in and finding that edge between light and dark. Whether it is for good or ill, Chendrai only accepts those that walk the edge. An arcane knowledge check DC 25 will reveal that Chendrai is still known and worshiped in a few accessible places. Speak to her priests for the knowledge of the cure. No priest who knows the cure will also tell of what happens to those who do not become cured - it is a test of their nature after all. If you chose to walk in darkness, you do so without the edge of light to guide you.

A species of wasp that lives in dry climates, near the Thrush Empire ruins, called the Kipper Wasp is needed. Thrush ruins are often dangerous places filled with things best forgotten from the elder days of the world. These wasps are not among those dangers but can offer their own challenge. Kipper Wasps live a short life cycle, usually only a few weeks, and are only active during sunrise and sunset. The males are active at sunrise and the females at sunset. During other times, they stay in their hives but, during those hours, they get food and collect materials. Because of their alternate cycle, males and females are never active at the same time. They chew and secrete a pasty material that they make their hives out of and this is the secret to the cure. After obtaining several raw handfuls of this material it must then be stored in a cool, hermetically sealed container before it dries (Alchemy DC 19). The supplicant who wishes to dispel the curse must have remove curse cast on him during sunrise and sunset everyday for one week from sunrise on the first day to sunset on the final day. The supplicant during that week may not see sun or moon light, effectively secluding himself





in a sealed room or blindfolded. During the sunrise and sunset, he must watch shadows move. On the final day, he applies the wax to his face mixed with fine grey ash and lets it dry. At sunset, he pulls it off and must incinerate it immediately, scattering the ashes as far apart as he can before the next sunrise. The victim is then shed of the curse and the Chendrai's Shunned if they have gained it.

It's a simple cure but meant to test the endurance of the victim and is meant to be obtained. Those who never seek the cure, embracing the curse, suffer the worst as they become creatures of darkness. This process begins after three years without searching for the curse. Then, over the course of 5d4 days they will begin fading, becoming unattached from reality, making it difficult to think and slowly beginning to feel pain when exposed to sunlight. Only a full Wish or Miracle can return them to existence and then they are still cursed but gain 120 days to complete the cure before they begin fading again. Once the fading finishes, they gain the Cendrai's Secluded template.

Chendrai's Secluded

CR +0

Spells or effects that specifically affect or have special effects on creatures with a shadow or dark descriptor affect the Shunned. Additionally the character is blinded by light and given sight by the darkness. Therefore they take no penalties in complete darkness but are treated as completely blind in full light. Finally, as they are progressing further into the world of shadows than they had before they actually find light uncomfortable and now take 1 point of subdual damage every full minute that they are exposed to sunlight and fail a Fortitude check DC 20. They gain a +5 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks due to their insubstantial nature. In order to touch a physical object, including making melee attacks they make a Will check DC 15 (once they touch something they may carry it with themselves

indefinitely). Finally, they may never be cured.

Creeping Blue

Transformation

Level: Druid 5

Components: V, S, M 500 experience

Casting Time: 10 rounds

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. / level

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Fort special

Spell Resistance: No

This curse is learned rarely and only by druids who can petition the oldest of naturalist sages, ancient sentient plants or nymphs to share it. Still, a very few shadow druids, those that follow the more violent aspects of nature are said to have obtained it and pass down knowledge of it among their orders. Those who destroy nature wantonly, even in the service of good, are valid targets of this bane.

The curse calls forth the blooming pollen of plants which must either be already present or collected by the druid. The pollen is then drawn through the air into the lungs of the victim - only a single particle is needed. The particle is transformed by the magic and takes roots in the victim's lungs. The growth of the root takes place over the course of 2d4 +4 week incubation period. At the end of the incubation period the plant begins trying to tear free of the body, requiring a Fort DC 30 save every day. A failed save means instant death. At the end of the incubation period the plant begins draining a point of Constitution every hour (no save available) until it breaks out and the host dies. Without a host to further feed

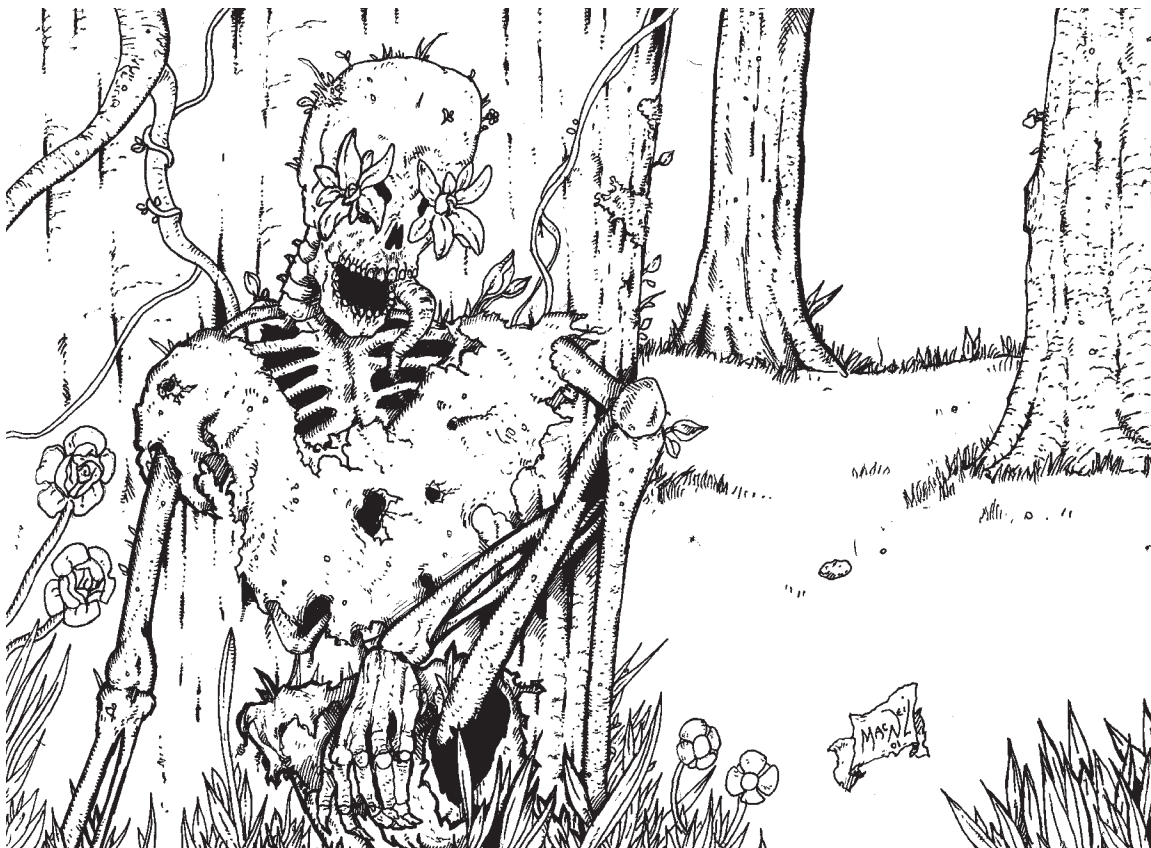
on a small flowering vine plant will last one hour per point of constitution the host had and then die itself though a small common vine will survive behind it. This plant is known by many names, often simply Blue, for its hundreds of delicate shades of blue. Many druids consider it an honor to see one blossom.

During the incubation period the victim slowly feels a pressure in their chest as their ability to breathe becomes labored. After 10-15 days the victim begins coughing up water as the plant produces it as a byproduct and the lungs become heavier. Eventually, the victim seeks out higher ground where the air is thinner since it makes their lungs feel better. More than one corpse has been found on a barren mountain slope or in a tall tree with a thin vine growing out of their throat.

The cure to the curse is to endure it and see the plant grow to maturity though normally the plant will kill a host long before. Finding the cure is difficult - you must first find someone who knows the curse. Alternatively a druid may attempt to

divine the answer with a DC 30 Knowledge: Nature roll (+5 synergy bonus for 10 or more ranks of Knowledge Arcana). First, the onset of the disease must be delayed by the casting of a 2nd level Tree Shape spell and maintain it 24 hours a day. During this time the combination of the curse's magic and the Tree Shape spell will actually allow the victim to survive as a tree sustained on water, soil and sunlight. This process actually strengthens the Creeping Blue vine but prevents it from hurting the victim. This rooting must be done in a place with a great deal of light such as an open field in the summer. In three months the plant will grow through its cycle. Maybe the victim will gain some appreciation for the lives of plants and as they stand motionless amongst nature some appreciation for its intricate mechanisms.

If the Tree Shape spell is not maintained 24 hours a day, the victim immediately begins making Fort checks at DC 30 to avoid instant death every day until they can be placed in Tree Shape again.





Devil's Poker

Enchantment

Level: Cleric 8

Components: V, S, M, 800 experience

Casting Time: 1 mile

Range: same plane of existence

Target: 1 creature

Duration: permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

This spell presents a horrible choice. The victim can fight his way through a dreamworld where experienced decades pass in real seconds. In this world his choices are to defend his sanity and lose it or adapt to an apparently irrational existence. When he returns to the objective reality he shares with others only seconds have passed and he may be mad by the standards of those he left long ago.

Due to the woefully one sided nature of the gamble the victim makes, Chulnese merchants coined the term Devil's Poker. Chulnese merchants have three respectable points of wisdom: 1) they don't like to gamble, 2) they know infernal powers only pay with the odds on their sides and 3) they don't mess with infernal clerics. Most able minded persons can figure out what they thought of the curse when the details of it where revealed to be behind their prince's odd behavior and eventual suicide.

Used by clerics aligned with the powers of order the use of this curse is seen as a last resort. Casting the spell actually enchants some object of luck - a coin, a die, etc... and charges it with the spell designed to afflict one chosen victim. Within 48 hours of having created the object, the victim must take possession of it and use it to determine an outcome by luck. For example, a coin could be handed to a victim to flip to determine by heads or tails a minor dispute. The prompting is not important so long as he does it. When he does, during the time

the coin flips, a die rolls, or whatever form it takes he will live decades while only fractions of a second pass around him.

Remarkably, this experience does not damage their minds, even with the sudden transition back. Instead it is the time that passes that changes them. What exactly happens is difficult even for the one that experiences it to understand. The principle is that the world we experience is at our own pace. Instead, time is slowed and the victim is allowed to see a world of different mathematics where universes die in the spaces between blinks and our steps span over kingdoms. It is uncomfortable enough to know that there are things for whom we are but fragments of thoughts but numbing to know that we are as vast to others.

When a victim is afflicted they find themselves drawn into an alien landscape such as a crater scarred moonscape with floating circles that form stairways to nowhere, an alien jungle with snakes that breathe chocolate mists, an earth made of perfect square blocks or red sanded shores with metal pyramids. The landscapes usually combine the ideas of geometric shapes with organization and chaotic natural environments. Eventually the person comes to understand that this place is an abstraction and is a crossroads between worlds for creatures that only live in two dimensions, for worlds that are born and die in pico seconds and creatures that reversed from us in time. It is one of many crossroads for mathematical realities. The player is given a choice. If he fights to survive by his own standards and reasons he will go mad for his means of logic has no meaning there - order must be embraced on some level for functioning. So, most adapt, they embrace their new world at least enough to survive. The choice is made and decades pass before he suddenly returns, fully aware of what happened though the sharpness of the knowledge is gone - like something that happened long ago.

The effect of returning to a world as odd now as the one they were in when sent there is infuriating. Each time a die roll has to be made that involves a d20, including skills, saving throws and attack rolls roll a 1d6 and consult the chart below.

Result of 1 or 2 - the roll on the d20 is actually subtracted from the other traits, such as skill + attribute modifier. I.e. Wilderness Lore + Wis modifier - d20

3 or 4 - No d20 roll is used, and the straight modifiers are used

5 or 6 - the roll is calculated normally

Additionally, the chaos that effects their decision making infects reality itself around them as they return with that order, manifesting as chaos here. They now suffer a -2 to all saves against spells with the Chaos descriptor. At least once a day make a luck roll as a straight d20. On a 1 - 19 the randomness is completely harmless, affecting something nearby such as changing the color of the ground under your left foot. On a 20 something vital changes. For example, in a fight your sword could change into a mace which you are not proficient with or at a formal dance your suit could suddenly find itself a nice purple and pink color. True, clothing color is not life threatening perhaps, unless your fashion sense offends a particularly testy queen who thinks you are mocking her. The DM will determine either randomly or based on story content when this occurs.

This curse can be cured by only by making it dissipate. The victim must attempt to remove randomness from his life. For chaotic creatures this means that they must attempt to abandon their alignment - genuinely. In any circumstance where the player can, without risking their life, take 20 or take 10 they will even when it offers them no advantage or eats up useful time. They refuse to gamble. This must reflect a genuine appreciation for the merits of order

in this world. Doing this will accelerate the weakening the curse and it will dissipate in one year. Otherwise they can wait for the chaos to naturally dissipate over the next 5 years.

Enchanted

Enchantment

Level: Cleric 4

Components: V, S, M, 520 experience

Casting Time: 10 rounds

Range: same plane of existence

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 1 year

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Smiths toil with steel and fire to forge while artisans lovingly chip away stone or mold clay to reveal a shape. Every art is different but all take dedication and effort to accomplish their craft. For all their virtues, adventurers are rarely artisans. The simple requirements of their lifestyle are not conducive to the grind of the creative process that is more perspiration than inspiration. Additionally, an adventurer's best talents are often oriented towards the destructive rather than constructive. Thus, when some adventurer carelessly begins destroying anything in their path, the gods of creation become annoyed and willingly grant this spell to their servants. For every intricately carved statue of an evil snake god destroyed to block a door or ancient scroll of Elven poetry burned for a campfire, a god is watching and a wee bit pissed off.

Adventurers that are craftsmen or artisans of some sort are rarely struck with this curse. The gods want the wantonly destructive to learn and someone that already appreciates





the toils of a builder have little to learn. However, skill ranks alone do not make one a builder - time and dedicated effort do.

The material component for this spell is some remains of an object of value destroyed by the character. When cast, the object begins to glow brightly and dims as the curse takes effect. At that same moment, the victim is overcome by a sudden lethargy and feels exhausted, losing 10 points of experience. If, for some reason, the loss of experience puts the character below the minimum experience for their current level they will have to re-earn it though they do not lose their level. One week later, it happens again. Then, a week later, it happens again. Each time a thing in the character's possession becomes enchanted. Sometimes it is annoying, sometimes cool, sometimes useful, sometimes dangerous - but never uninteresting. For example, a cloak clasp could become develop sentience and the ability to talk. Whether it can give split second warnings of danger, has a shrill voice, obsessively recites orcish poetry or all of the above is up to the whim of the DM. This continues for one year.

No matter what form of enchantment the effect takes, it should leave a small impression and remind them that magic is not to be taken for granted. If necessary, have the item remind them in a strange accent, preferably when trying to sleep or memorize spells. More mundane options include glowing objects, hats that can levitate their own weight (making them hard to keep on), rings that teleport to random fingers, water skins that make their contents taste like strawberries and far more. Each enchantment lasts one week and fades out just before the next experience drain occurs. Do not worry if the effect of the curse can actually be made beneficial at times but all the experiences should be unpleasant and, if the drained experience isn't bad enough, over time the effects should be. Remember that you do not have to tell the player how long they will lose experience and during

long layovers between adventures they may be losing experience faster than they earn it.

Curing the curse is relatively easy in that you can wait for it to run out. For those unwilling to wait they must prove themselves to the lords of creation. To do this they must commission a piece of masterwork craft. It may be any kind of object but they must work closely with the craftsman in designing it and observe the entire process, helping whenever they can, learning everything of the process. Many master craftsmen refuse to work for a commission in those circumstances, distrusting others to not steal their secrets (Diplomacy DC 24). Even if they trust the character, the danger of having someone know their secrets worries many masters so much that they will suffer a -3 circumstance penalty as they are distracted during the process and will charge twice to four times the normal fee. The crafted item should be something of permanent value such as a durable item or aesthetic piece of art worth at least 1,000 gold (before the above mentioned double to four times price increase) for purposes of determining creation time.

During that time, the character is virtually enslaved to the artisan, living nearby and must constantly assist, even if their skills and abilities limit them to menial tasks. Finally, the work must be sold for as great a value as the character can get for it. The actual character must negotiate the price, learning the value of a good.

That money must then be taken and the character must find four struggling artists and save them from obscurity. However, there is one caveat: they must be true artists so the character must either learn to discern the value of such work himself or be accompanied by someone who can (Knowledge: Art and Appraise, at least 5 ranks of each). This is the final lesson - to appreciate the dedication it takes to appreciate art as well as create it. The

length of time this final task will take depends partially upon the culture and population density the characters are in. In a large metropolitan area in a culture where art is appreciated it may take as little as two weeks (2d4 weeks).

Guardian of Grey

Necromancy

Level: Cleric 6

Components: V, S, M, 600 experience

Casting Time: four hours

Range: same plane of existence

Target: 1 creature

Duration: immediate

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

The Grey Paths are more than the way between dreams and waking. They are also the corridors that attach to the proto worlds, begun places abandoned and forgotten, the resting places of imprisoned gods. It is there the elder gods are kept away, where they can do nothing to their progeny and not allowed to die to return to the firmament of creation. Yet the gods can not simply leave their elders without servants for that would mean no awareness and they would wither. So a select few who offend the gods are chosen to serve the elder, drawn to them in their dreams and given missions.

The Guardians of Grey are cursed with knowledge of the Grey Paths, secret ways used to travel between worlds, portals that can appear in any opening and with the right words can be opened to other places. A grey door may be found by walking to the right through a carnival maze of mirrors or by bending down the lowest branch of a cherry tree. The locations of the grey doors can

change and are normally difficult even for magic to find but the Guardians are given the knowledge by the gods themselves. In game terms the DM will tell the player when a grey door is available and how the character knows of it.

The gods that grant this enchantment are ancient even by the standards of things that create worlds. To have earned the distinction of being a Guardian of Grey a victim must have become a truly great enemy of an ethos. It is not enough for a priest to be angry or the faith disrupted - the victim must have opposed the very tenets as well as actions of the church in a significant way. Clerics are rarely cursed with becoming Guardians but those of small gods, especially those seen as impertinent by the elder gods may be.

Once cursed, the victim discovers their fate when they awaken from sleeping to sleep and awaken again. This painful experience causes 4 points of temporary Wisdom loss from the shock. They then find themselves on a path of pale stones set in a drab desert with a lukewarm wind. The air feels unpleasant in its smell and texture. They are met by an envoy - usually the red angel, Techil, who appears to mortal senses as a middle aged black male in very good physical form with silvery eyes that do not glow but reflect all available light. He commonly dresses in faded red robes and speaks in the native language of whatever creature he speaks with. He will inform the victim of their role (the same information provided above) and their new obligations. Should the character wish to argue, he will reach a disinterested party. Techil will patiently wait and continue his explanation to say that the character is free to deny his new role but his fate will be of his own creation. If a victim wishes to sever his tie to the Grey Paths he may, Techil will even tell him how but until such a time he must serve or die and should he die before the curse is sundered he will spend forever directly serving the first gods. This means that any form of resurrection is





impossible for someone cursed to walk the Grey Paths.

Once a month, the character will be pulled in their dreams (or during sometime of rest if the race does not sleep or dream) to the Grey Paths. When this is done, they will meet with TENCHIL or some direct servant of an early god to which the victim is tied. TENCHIL watches the grey paths but the character is now tied to one of those barred from the paths - an elder god whom may only be visited by those charged with both serving them. The DM should briefly design a dying god. These deities represent very broad ideas and are far more alien than the elder gods of most worlds are and they dwell, half insane and weak on worlds fading out of cohesion with a handful of servants.

The tasks in the dream world will leave the victim tainted when they return to the mortal world. Much of what they experience seems distant and then come into sudden focus when they encounter something.

The following effects accumulate at a rate of one every two months. Roll a 1d12. If you roll a result you already have roll again.

* Automatic: Non-aggression with other servants of your dying god. The elder god that cursed you is under no compulsion to protect you and his servants will not defer to you but the dying god that ties you to the Grey Paths will since you promote his will. His servants will not attack you unless you provoke them.

1. You become an outsider for purposes of spells that can hedge out those of your alignment such as Protection From Evil/Good/Law/Chaos but gain no other disadvantages or advantages.

2. Banishment spells that expel an outsider can affect you normally. If you are on your own native plane of existence you gain a Will save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

3. Enthalpy surrounds you and ice cakes over any depressions where your feet walk. Even across a flat surface the ground is very cold after you.

4. Cats are the natural guardians of the Grey Paths and though mortal cats are too mortal to realize their nature they still hiss at you and attack if provoked at all.

5. You gain a +2 Saving Throw bonus against the spells and spell like abilities of servants (such as clerics) of mortal gods (but not primordial gods such as your patron). The victim also automatically attempts to save against even beneficial spells from them (no choice) but may partially suppress it and take a -7 penalty (+2 factored in) to the save. If the victim is a divine caster this penalty does not apply to spells they cast themselves.

6. Chaos twists around you as the powers of enthalpy associated with the dying gods take precedence. Dice will come up on specific numbers or combinations much more often. A deck of cards may suddenly deal in perfect order or give everyone cards of the same suit.

7. A minor temporal drag will affect your relation to parallel spacial planes such as the plane of mirrors. When you look in a mirror the scene drags behind real time 1d4 rounds.

8. Whenever you are being teleported the chance of being dislocated worsens by 10% due to dimensional drag on you. If you are being teleported with a party, this affects the whole party.

9. Haste spells or effects that increase your temporal acceleration develop a 25% chance of overloading - doubling their effects for the duration and then causing the person to burst into flame at the end for 10d8 points of damage, Fort DC 14 for half. This is temporal acceleration and fire - fire resistance only applies to half the damage.

10. The drain on your will while dreaming on the Grey Paths does 2 points of permanent Wisdom damage.

11. Your sense of identity suffers from the traumatic transitions between worlds. You suffer 2 points of permanent Charisma damage.

12. You stand out spiritually, tainted by the connection. Divination attempts against you have their Scry difficulty reduced by -5.

There is only one way to break the curse. In one place the Grey Paths have no power, the place where they began. When the character is pulled to the grey paths, they are pulled body and soul while their body is left behind. So, how does that happen? The Grey Paths lie in the first places of the cosmos where matter and spirit are not distinguished and while the spirit is drawn there (and body left behind) the very existence of anything (in this case spirit) is mirrored by flesh created from pseudo matter. In most cases this means a mirror image of the mortal's body though there may be differences based on self perception. Should they die while on a proto world, their mortal body dies. Whenever a spirit is cut off from its mortal body, it loses cohesion and drifts off to where the dead rest. However, on the Grey Paths, a cut off spirit remains centered within its pseudo flesh. The first step to finding the starting place is to cut your own silver cord. Normally severing a silver cord is very difficult but on the Grey Paths simply pick up a stone and voluntarily fail the save and it will sever. Now you may walk regions of the Grey Paths that a mortal could not.

When wandering the Grey Paths there are few dangers and the paths are clear. The path to the starting place is littered with the remains of cultures whose skies were lit by suns that died before the gods that cursed you were spawned. There, surrounded by mountains, is a dried well, once a well of fore-bought vision it was starting here that the roads of creation were beaten down. Once lowered down and through its base, a tunnel leads to a small mountain valley with three pools - one fed underground, one from

the mountains and one from rain. A sapling grows at the center of the three pools, and this is the primordial tree once tended by the Norn Maidens and here the penitent stays, feeding the tree from his blood, breath and thoughts. The exact process must be created new each time - this is a place of creation, not rote and the tree must be grown for on it they will sacrifice themselves.

The player must create the ceremony that the character will enact and it must fulfill four requirements. One, the character will have to sacrifice themselves and sacrifice from their very being something of intense value. Normally this would be attributes, memories (skills) or experience but a sufficient roleplaying substitution could be substituted depending upon the campaign and role playing style. A ritual must be involved that calls upon the themes of rebirth and creation with the character taking the role of a sort of god themselves. The character must make a dedication as to their moral nature and future lives, understanding that even a small creature can have a big role in the universe just as even the primordial dying gods do. Finally, it must be very, very cool. In the course of the ceremony, riddling tasks that will arbitrated by ancient spirits (Knowledge Arcana, Nature, Religion, others), Concentration checks and acts of Will (requiring Will saves) are all appropriate.

The final part of each ceremony will involve growing the sapling to tree (subjectively the time takes several years though real time has little meaning here) and hanging themselves from a branch. In this place, a spirit can die and be free of the ties that bind to the Grey Paths. The penitent must retain their concentration as they pass through the fallow places back to the realms of the living and cross over the Shard Walls.



As an additional consequence of becoming a Grey Guardian the victim may occasionally be asked to accomplish tasks in the mortal waking world. This happens every few years. Those that fail, however, are treated as traitors when they next return to the Grey Paths by their lord. The victim must carefully balance the displeasure of the dying gods who they serve and the god who actually cursed them.

For example, they may be instructed to find a text that must find its way into the hands of a sage who will discover the ancient legends of Ygue-Itcha-Gulmori, and please the dying god but there can no implication that this is real or to be worshiped lest the mortal gods be angered.



Mark of the Fallen

Divination

Level: Cleric 9

Components: V, S, M, 900 experience

Casting Time: six days

Range: same plane of existence

Target: 1 creature

Duration: special

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

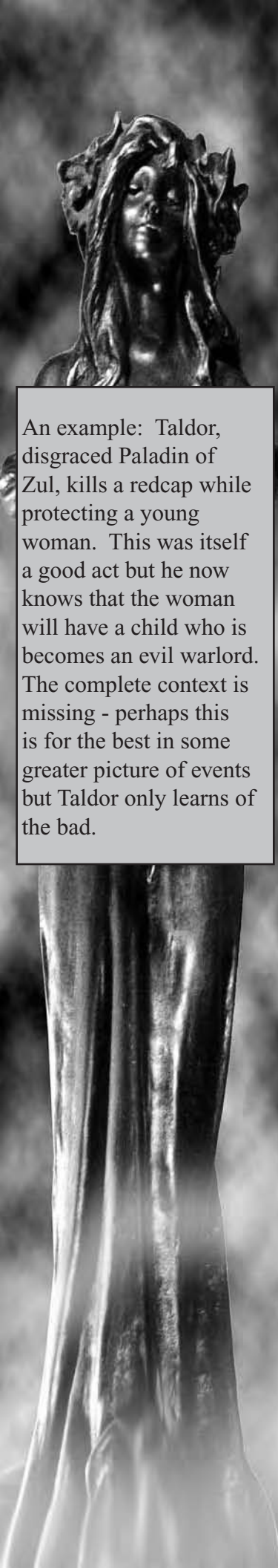
Most faiths simply execute a man who has sinned so much that they are considered beyond redemption. However, a few hope against reason that some individuals are worth this cost for a final chance of redemption. Only good gods with a streak for vengeance and obsessive order will use this curse as it relies on a belief in good and taints its priests with evil.

Someone struck by this curse feels the pain they have visited upon others seven fold, becoming almost omniscient but without the emotional ability to withstand stress of knowing all the suffering even their most minor actions may cause in the centuries hence. They find their every action tumbling forward into the least desired consequences and go mad at an alarming rate.

Each month afflicted by the curse, the victim will develop a random phobia. At first, this is a minor phobia and affects the character as if they were shaken every time they encounter it. The cause of their fear is that they associate the thing with some guilt. For example, Taldor encounters a fish monger. As he notices the fish, he becomes shaken, remembering the last time he ate a fish and how he knew that fish never laid eggs and one of its spawns in a dozen years was then never caught by a starving man. If the victim gains the same phobia again increase the effect to frightened (though they can edge away rather than flee) and, if they gain it a third time, they are affected by panic when they encounter the object of the curse

(Will check DC 20 to maintain composure they may still drop things and move away quickly).

Deep in the hell place that is the corrupted Yultoren Forest there is a small glade of pure life. It is from here that a pure water source, a brook called Ileyau, or Clear Blood of the Heart, is. The journey is difficult to this place and the horrors of the forest are such that a in even a week's time a dozen phobias are likely to find their way there. The sole guardian of the glade is rumored to be some wise ancient power who hides the glade from the abominations of the Yultoren but can do no more. In exchange for a year of service in guarding the glade, during which they can not leave, the spirit will give the disgraced the knowledge of the cure. During this year they can leave the glade for no reason, not even compulsion or fear or the result is invalid. The terrors that occasionally invade are horrible beasts of pure evil. Days must be spent replanting what is destroyed in the battle and small beasts nursed. The secret of the cure is that at the end of the days the cure is already affected. In this place of nightmares no evil can come from what they do here but the chances of survival are bleak. The only thing that can guide a soul through the shadows of this place is the desire to return to the world and the fight for what is good.



An example: Taldor, disgraced Paladin of Zul, kills a redcap while protecting a young woman. This was itself a good act but he now knows that the woman will have a child who is becomes an evil warlord. The complete context is missing - perhaps this is for the best in some greater picture of events but Taldor only learns of the bad.

Opuline

Transformation

Level: Cleric 8

Components: V, S, M, 800 experience

Casting Time: six hours

Range: 10 miles / caster level

Target: 1 creature

Duration: special

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Named for the proud prince first struck with this bane, the curse strikes the beautiful and proud. A series of transformations shorten the person, turn them corpulent, lengthen the nose, widen it and slowly transform them into a freakish water fowl with a taste for only the most disgusting raw fish while maintaining most of their intellect and awareness. It is said that the first use was by the gnomish priests of Applesix Fizzilebalm, god of the erratic, silly and just.

Victims transform slowly over the course of a solar year. Each month they suffer one of the following effects, one after the last.

1. Shrink an eighth of their height.
2. Shrink an eighth of their original height (now 1/4 total) and lose 2 points from Strength permanently.
3. The nose elongates to about twice its original length.
4. Skin pales and becomes clammy. Their alienation from their old life and transformation reduces their Charisma by 2 points permanently.
5. Eyes become permanently dilated with black pupils.
6. Nose elongates again, now becoming about three times its original length.

7. Shrink an additional eighth (now 3/8th of original height). Lose 2 permanent points of Constitution.

8. Shrink the final eighth (now half of his original height). The impact on the spirit of the person is as strongly felt as the physical devolution. Permanent loss of 2 points of wisdom.

9. Most food becomes difficult to digest and tastes horrible. Raw sea food is an exception, preferably regurgitated. Verbal articulation becomes very difficult requiring another speaker of a shared language to make Int DC 15 checks each round to understand what is said.

10. Nose widens by about twice its original width.

11. Toes begin fusing together and feet become more club like, increasing in size and making it impossible to wear normal humanoid footwear though they give the victim a +2 circumstantial bonus to swim checks. Physical changes to the brain make thinking more difficult. There is a permanent loss of 2 points of Intelligence.

12. Hands become clubby with the four fingers to the side of the thumbs fusing together into two wide digits that grant an additional +2 circumstance bonus to swim checks but make manipulating most objects difficult (Dexterity check DC 10 for picking up or grasping anything).

To begin the quest for the cure he must travel across the world to the court of the Tidal King, who dwells during the summer seasons on many worlds, but the tides of any world along the equator will pull the Opuline to him if they truly desire it. There, he will wait for weeks, among the great nobility and very low, all strange and freakish. Finally, when the time comes, he will speak not to the Tidal King but to one of his handmaidens and he must bring





her to respect him, not pity, and respect his wish. For those not inclined to role playing it may be done as a Diplomacy check DC 28. If the attempt fails he must wait another year for another audience. She will tell the victim of the gold vein fish, a fish of many colored scales with golden meat that swims in schools on a single obscure reef and rarely. The victim must then travel there or obtain the meat. The sole island near the reef is occupied by natives who command strong weather magic and dislike outsiders. Still, a victim who can convince their tribal shaman for aid will be given permission to fish. Catching the fish is difficult because of its difficulty to spot, requiring a Wilderness Lore DC 23 check or 5,000 gold in the markets nearby the city from the few rogues willing to sneak around the island's natives. The fish must be kept alive and is very fragile, finding many things toxic.

The fish must be taken live while he finds a place in a public setting, the alleys of a ghetto, a rural field near a town, even in the bazaar of a large city are all fine but close enough to live amongst a people even if they reject him and there build a house of fish bones. This craft requires many thousands of bones but the knowledge is instinctively built into him. In that hut, the Opuline must live under the stares of 1,000 women and children in the course of his days, under their pity and curses. Then, he must take the blood of a human (or whatever race he was before the curse) and flow it down his arm until the first drop hits the bowl in which the Gold Vein fish lives. He then cuts his own arm and lets his own blood flow into it. The fish will die from the blood and with it the curse. Slowly, over the next two months, the curse will rapidly reverse itself.

Afterwards, the once Opuline is expected to conduct himself with a certain respect for others and kindness. Those that don't may find themselves cursed again and a less kindly court at the Tidal King's palace.

Treasured

Enchantment

Level: Cleric 4

Components: V, S, M, 300 experience

Casting Time: ten minutes

Range: 1 mile / caster level

Target: 1 creature

Duration: instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Some gods live off the moments when money changes hands - the experience of creating value from meaningless metal is worship to them. It is the foundation of culture. Even ascetics that do not believe in wealth do not disturb these gods for personal rejection does not mean they deny its value for others. Those who deny its value are often those with the most of it - kings with easy inheritances, adventurers accustomed to wealthy tombs and master thieves who feel that the world's prizes are theirs for the plucking. Even the few aesthetics who reject the material do too little of consequence unless they become too vocal and even then ... well, this curse is unlikely to have much effect upon them anyway.

A cleric who calls upon this curse has been offended by someone's callous use of money, often becoming aware of it due to the affect on the local economy. These clerics can be found in many professions, even as merchants. Once cursed, the value of things exchanged for credit, goods, services or representations of such things of the victim's lose all value to others.

Every time the user wishes to engage in a transaction where they give a good, service or denomination of cash away the recipient fails to understand its value. It is not that the person does not understand what it is - they simply do not understand how it is of value. For example a merchant can have two piles of gold coins in front of him, one from the cursed and one from someone else - they are

identical in all ways that the merchant can see but are still unable to ascribe value to the cursed victims' pile. The material does not even have to be handled. For example, if a warrior was to be cursed and a rogue gathered the group's loot into a bag, the next time that the rogue is cleaning his bag he would see the warrior's share and throw it out as junk. Later he would know that he threw out the warrior's share and why - it was junk. The other party members would agree though with a successful Int DC 15 check know that something was wrong with their own behavior and response.

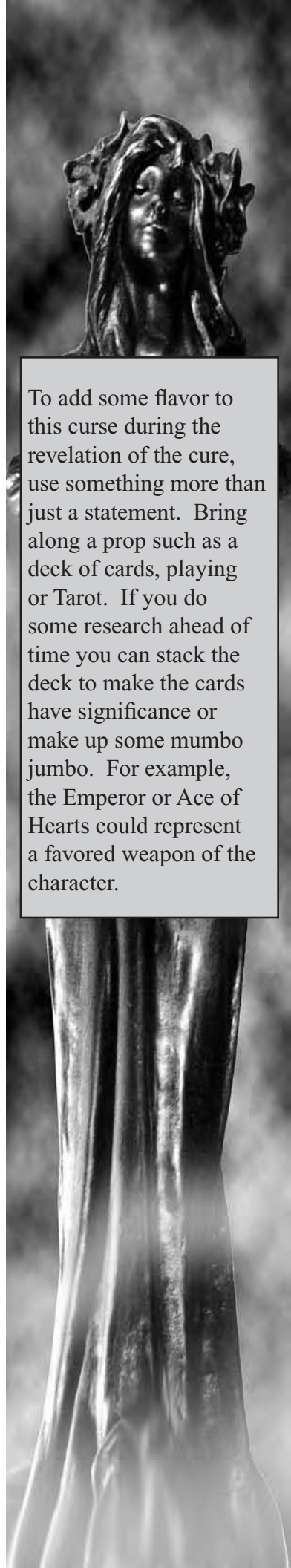
To make a successful transaction, the cursed must make a successful Diplomacy roll of DC 10 + 1 for every 10 gold worth of transaction, rounded down.

To cure the curse, the victim will have to learn the value of coin and goods the hard way. A cleric of a compatible god that holds law or commerce in their portfolio is needed that can cast Divination. Discovering that this is needed requires a Knowledge: Religion DC 28 check. The victim must also bring the cleric a coin he has kept under his tongue as he slept one full night. He will have to sleep with a board tied into his mouth to make sure he doesn't swallow the coin. Concentration check DC 20 to ignore it and sleep and he must sleep through a full night with it in place. Once this is brought to the cleric and Divination is cast, the cleric will be granted a vision of five objects. The significance of these may be vague to the cleric but once related should be very meaningful to the player as they are his most cherished possessions.

The victim will then have to leave from the cleric and has 90 days to complete a task. He must take those five objects and barter them away as goods for goods. He must then barter those items back. In the 90 days he can make multiple transactions and exchange goods for services and even take employment and use the cash to buy items for bartering. However, as in most curses,

stipulations apply. No one that the victim trades with may be coerced or enchanted in any way and they must all come out ahead, making a profit by their own estimation. Furthermore the victim may not have more than cursory aid from companions - for example, a wizard could teleport him to somewhere he needs to be but not if reducing the time or the journey itself was the task to be accomplished. Additionally, the character may only take employment for traditional labor - no adventuring though he may take quests and adventure to gain items to trade that make up no more than 1/2 the final value of the regained goods. Once the items are regained the victim must return to the cleric that did the divination and donate any excess goods or cash to the cleric while they cast a Remove Curse on the victim and donate 150 experience, which they will usually charge at least 5,000 gold for.

Many clerics will also require an oath of donations for some months to come and keep up with the cured by Scrying to ensure that they mend their ways.



To add some flavor to this curse during the revelation of the cure, use something more than just a statement. Bring along a prop such as a deck of cards, playing or Tarot. If you do some research ahead of time you can stack the deck to make the cards have significance or make up some mumbo jumbo. For example, the Emperor or Ace of Hearts could represent a favored weapon of the character.



Chapter Three:

Lycanthropy

"The bite of a veravolv is a bitter and fatal kiss. If all it kills is your flesh, you have been blessed by providence. When flesh survives, you face a long fall towards the final dark. It is the last kiss goodnight you will ever suffer."

- Brother Jerrald of the
Seventh Surgeon's Regiment

Few creatures inspire fear like the dreaded veravolv, or in the modern tongue, werewolves. Wolves are dangerous but combined with the intelligence and appearance of man are the stuff of tales around crowded campfires. In reality, few werewolves are dangerous because the cursed flee to deep woods and live out their lives as beasts. The werewolves that should be feared make up for all the failings of the others – they are cunning, smart and ruthless creatures that adapt to their unholy strength with abandon.

Lycanthropy is a curse, spoken of around campfires by gypsies. It is a mystery made worse by the fact that the dead never die – they simply give up their bodies to a beast that walks and talks, hiding until it kills. Central to understanding the werewolf is that it is a victim and carrier of a cursed disease. When heroes kill a werewolf, they kill what may still be a tortured and good soul. Werewolves are best used in the contexts that spawned them - the themes of man versus beast set in dark gothic lands with unholy powers in the shadows.

Unlike the werewolf lycanthrope presented in Core Rulebook III, this representation is a variable template, essentially making up ten distinct templates representing different

strengths and durations of the curse. Werewolves created by these templates are more complicated than those presented in Core Rulebook III but give the DM additional flexibility and power. DMs may choose to use this however they like but have the option of using it either alongside or in place of werewolves as presented in Core Rulebook III. This version is darker, more violent, screws the player harder and works well in settings filled with dark mysteries of the world.

History and Myth

According to folklore, the werewolf is a witch or warlock who has made pacts with dark powers and been reshaped into a wolf to serve its master. While there is no question that lycanthropy is magical in nature, most werewolves have no contact with infernal powers. While some damned wizard's soul might have been twisted enough to conceive of the curse, the sheer power necessary for it to propagate over centuries indicates a greater power.

The most common new lycanthrope is the result of an unsuccessful kill, such as when a werewolf is interrupted. Intentional infection is rare but does happen when the goal is to create agents or distractions from their own activities. A werewolf may move into an area, commit murders and then infect a target so that its behavior can cover the original werewolf's actions. The new werewolf is much more likely to get caught. Then while the local population is sure they caught the werewolf, the original can escape. Creating lycanthropes as subordinates rarely works because they are not pack creatures and only co-operate so long as one can dominate others. The most rare behavior comes from those that think they can create a kind of family of their own kind.

Levels of the progressive template will be represented by a roman numeral instead of an arabic numeral as a class level would be. Therefore, Jian Rogue 5 with two levels of the werewolf template would be written as Jian Rogue 5 Lycanthrope II.

DMs are free to utilize both the lycanthropy presented in Core Rulebook III and the one presented here. If both templates exist in the game world, the varying states might be distinguished as *natural* (core rulebook) and *primordial* (Book of Curses) lycanthropy.

At least one legend claims that primordial lycanthropy originated from shamans who tried to replace their souls with wolf gods. They went mad and the wolf mind is not only a new mind built from its host but empowered by a fragment of a dead god.

Infection

A lycanthrope affects a humanoid by infecting the target's wounds with saliva. The most common source is a bite. Despite its ability to bite in combat, the lycanthrope will usually only do so either when an opponent closes in or it is in Veritas form. Otherwise, claws are preferred weapons since they do not require straining the neck or head forward. When a lycanthrope does intend to transform a victim, it may lick its claws, but must do so every other round to generate enough saliva. This requires a partial action and generates an attack of opportunity. Most humanoid species are susceptible to lycanthropy.

After the curse enters a target, they are allowed three Will saving throws, versus DCs 20, 25 and 20 on the day before, of and after the first full moon following their infection. If they make all three saving throws their body purges the disease in a few days. This is known as the Test of the Beast. Various preparations both magical and mundane can help prepare for the test, including staying on sacred soil, meditating on principals of reason, being blessed by priests and anything else deemed appropriate by the DM. The DM should rule that most items or powers can not affect this save, such as Luck bonuses. The Test of the Beast is where a man must prove that he is not a animal - to himself as well as the power of the curse and no magic can do that for him. The total bonus to the Will save can not be more than +5 since aid can be used to fortify his will but not determine the test for him.

Curing the Disease

Lycanthropy is a curse that behaves like a disease. Victims, especially the educated, have been tempted to try to find a cure for lycanthropy the way they would an illness. Unfortunately, the curse of lycanthropy feeds from the victim's spirit and curing it

is often accomplished through death. The other ways are no less drastic than death though death is still an accidental result of such quests. Lycanthropy can not be expelled by any conventional magic except a Miracle or Wish and even then at a great cost.

While folklore is not a medicinal guide, there are bits of truth that are dangerous to ignore. The Testament of Babdur is said to include magics that curse, control and cure lycanthropes though only great wizards can use its power without damning themselves. The waters that feed the ancient tree, Silverfell, are said to cure those that bathe in it, though that tree may be long rotted. Another legend claims that in the cold north a temple deep in the mountains has an altar to a dead god that can raise the slain. If the host pierces their own heart on the altar with a dagger made of white gold, they can destroy the curse. Others say that these tales only give false hope to the damned.

If a character does find a cure for the curse, all the accumulated experience that went into the lycanthrope levels is now lost along with all special abilities given by lycanthropy. Subtract all lycanthrope levels from the total character level and give the character the amount of experience necessary to be at that level plus halfway to next.

Volfghast

Some accounts tell of survivors bearing the mark of their ordeals, sometimes walking away with the look of an unnatural peace in their eyes. Strong lycanthropes, level V or higher, that are cured may leave their host stronger for the trials they endured. A DM may choose to give such as character a CR +1 template representing residual effects from the curse.

This template grants:
+2 Insight bonus to Spot and Listen

Siril Sanhaven was the first scholar to discover that the curse of lycanthropy can be transmitted by salvia through an open wound. What agent exists for the curse is unknown but tales of Romany also suggest that is transmitted through some families.

Core Rulebook I describes Paladins as being immune to magical diseases and explicitly mentions Lycanthropy. This lycanthropy differs from that which is presented in the Core Rulebooks because it is a magical curse beyond the scope of trivial enchantments and magical diseases Paladins are normally immune to. In a campaign that uses both types of lycanthropy, Paladins would continue to be immune to natural lycanthropy but vulnerable to primordial lycanthropy. If this is the only form of lycanthropy used in the campaign DMs should decide whether or not Paladins are immune based on the style of campaign intended. In fact, in most campaigns where there is only one form of lycanthropy and Paladins are immune to it, the lycanthropy from Core Rulebook III should be used.



+3 Insight bonus to Wilderness Lore
5 ft base land movement increase
Immunity to Lycanthropy
+2 inherent bonus to Will and Fortitude saves
Use the Lycanthrope Dominate and Pack Speech abilities as a Lycanthrope IV
The Scent special trait

The Leafhelm woodsmen call such men "Volfghast" or wolf ghost, for it is said that a holy man who can see spirits will see their's as an insubstantial silver wolf.

Transforming

When transformed, a new, chaotic evil, personality emerges. It is important to understand that this is not a derangement or enchantment. The beast's mind is a separate personality that assumes control; having been sleeping while the host personality was in control. Although it is based on the PC's personality at the time that the curse begins, the most violent and dangerous aspects are amplified, along with animal ferocity and complete disregard for any values the person had. From that point on, it is a separate entity that learns and grows separately. Thus, the wolf mind based on a ranger, with goblins as a species enemy, would probably have a special hate for goblins. However, it will not show any hesitation to kill the ranger's own kind either and even take extra effort to kill the ranger's loved ones for hate of the host ranger.

This state of forced transformation is called a lunar rage since the most common occurrence of it is during the three nights of the full moon. As documented in Core Rulebook III, characters that are infected with lycanthropy, even this cursed variation, may learn the Wisdom based skill Control Shape. The criteria for using Control Shape from Core Rulebook III also apply to this kind of lycanthrope. Add twice the level of infection to DCs to resist changing during a lunar cycle or during a rage.

Rages can occur because of either a class ability or due to some external stimuli that invokes a flight or fight response. Rages are considered an involuntary change as described in Core Rulebook III, however, instead of the flat DC 25 per quarter of damage it is suggested that you use DC 10 * the number of quarters of hit points lost. So, having lost 1/4 of its hit points the character's Will DC would be 10 to resist the change, or DC 20 at 1/2 or DC 30 at 3/4. Humiliation, anger, or a barbarian's rage will also invoke the Flight or Fight response that requires the DC 25 involuntary transformation check for those that do not want to transform. In all of the scenarios described in this paragraph twice the level of the current curse template would be added to the Will DC. So, a cursed victim, with Lycanthrope IV, resisting an involuntary transformation who has lost a quarter of his hit points would have a DC of 18.

Due to the nature of the curse, Control Shape checks may also be required on the evenings before and after the full moon. This form of lycanthropy is especially brutal on those trying to control their change because their reduced level gains make gaining ranks in Control Shape more difficult.

Characters that willingly become werewolves with the Control Shape skill are embracing a path of evil and should only do so unless under exceptional circumstances. Even with good intent, this is a path of damnation. These characters find that, instead of having their personality suppressed, they remain in control but are far more aggressive and violent. As the curse progresses, their own personality migrates towards chaotic evil and becomes both bestial and violent even when not transformed. Regardless of how much the victim revels in their new power, they are never free of the wolf mind. The wolf mind is separate and hates the host for keeping it from dominance. When transformed, these characters do not suffer the normal lack

Core Rulebook III provides a straight forward means of curing lycanthropy. However, in horror or gothic settings, where lycanthropy is much rarer and emphasizing a style of high drama the cure should be a matter of a great quest.

of access to class abilities and maintain a merged skill list. The challenge rating for these characters is decided by adding their lycanthrope levels to any other levels they have. Most willing lycanthropes are already evil but a few chaotic neutral characters may take this path out of hubris.

Transforming is a full round action and provokes an attack of opportunity. If unaware of their condition, a character may attempt to ascertain what has happened to them when they revert to their natural form as described in Core Rulebook III. Unlike the version of lycanthropy described in Core Rulebook III, a victim may not attempt to return to their natural form after taking an animal or hybrid form.

Items worn follow the rules in Core Rulebook III for being destroyed or discarded when a transformation commences. However, the Pseudo Lupus and Homo Lupus forms are close enough to the host's normal form that the DCs for saving equipment are reduced by 5. Equipment worn when the host transforms into a werewolf usually either falls off or is destroyed during the transformation unless it clings to the victim's body. If a magical item is attached to the lycanthrope, they can use it but lycanthropes will usually make an effort to remove any items they find on them with the man stink on them. In their more advanced states, they may suffer the use of small items such as rings if they are advantageous enough but most are confident enough of their powers that they would not.

As Characters

Lycanthropes do not make good player characters. The greatest strength of the lycanthrope is in their shape changed form, which has limited options for social interaction. However, characters that become lycanthropes will probably find ways to take advantage of it. While it may seem inappropriate, it is the nature of

lycanthropy to seduce characters with easy power and blind them to its nature. Let them.

As the victim gains experience, the curse flourishes rather than weakens – lycanthropy does best in strong hosts. The curse is unique because ultimately it destroys the mind of the victim but along the way it grants power, enabling the victim to feed the curse. In the game, this is represented by experience points and the drained experience going towards lycanthropy.

Lycanthropy acts as a progressive template, with its bonuses stacking. In game mechanics, it looks very much like a prestige class though the curse has less to do with honing skills than it does an ancient power eating at your body and soul. While infected, one detriment of the curse is that the character loses half of all experience gained. Every time the character gains a class level, they also gain a level of the Lycanthrope template. Should this continue until the character becomes a Lycanthrope X, they should become an NPC as they are incurable and virtually uncontrollable. The lost experience represents both the parasitic nature of the curse as well as the effort taken to fight it.

Characters who embrace the curse, including worshipers of violent primal spirits and evil druids, may allow all of their experience to be expended towards gaining template levels as if it were a prestige class. Evil characters that embrace the curse will add the full template level to their challenge rating.

Challenge ratings for player characters who fight the curse will normally be calculated as their total character level minus the Lycanthrope template levels since they are not exploiting it. However, a DM should remember that a werewolf may lose control or choose to tap into their power which would dramatically change the challenge rating of an encounter. If the character invokes a lunar rage, calculate experience





Jerran is halfway between 7th and 8th levels as a Fighter when he contracts lycanthropy. His current experience is unaffected but now must earn twice as much experience as before to go from half way to 8th to actually reach 8th because he only keeps half of that experience. The other half is lost to the wolf. When Jerran finally reaches 8th level, he gains the second level of the Lycanthrope template. Between 8th and 9th levels, Jerran will have to earn twice as much experience as other characters and, upon reaching 9th level, will also become a 3rd level Lycanthrope.



based on how long into the fight (and how decided the fight was) before the curse took over. Victims call on lunar rages more often than many think, despite the disadvantages. Victims rationalize that the ends justify the means by making sure that they can survive long enough to get cured - but the more that they call on the raging power of the wolf the easier it seems to do it just one more time.

Alignment and Morality

Characters who fight the lycanthropic curse are not responsible for their actions while transformed – at least from an alignment standpoint. However, personally, they should and society will, hold them responsible. Whether or not a character is making their best effort to fight lycanthropy is up to the DM but will often include how much attention they spend searching for a cure, understanding whatever failures brought them to this situation, attempting to improve their will and retribute whatever sins were committed while transformed. This means that killing while transformed will not rob a Paladin of his status but failing to live up his obligations in response to it will.

Consequences

Regardless of their good will, characters will be forced to embrace evil once they reach level ten. Before reaching that point there is hope, though it grows ever thinner as the curse grows stronger. Characters that fail to take the lycanthrope form due to natural Will saves and succeed for three months will be broken of the experience drain. While this does not cure them, or negate the gained template levels, it does mean that the curse will not grow any stronger. The first time that they do transform again the experience drain will return and continue until they can resist it for another three constant months. Legends also attest to mental and magical powers that can assist the target

in preventing transformation such as deep places in the under earth far from moon light that the werewolf is free of lunar rage, arcane magic, blessed tokens and meditative trances.

Lycanthropy

Cumulative Template Level Gains:

All abilities from cumulative levels of the Lycanthrope template stack unless they specifically say otherwise. Racial bonuses gained from lycanthropy can stack with the racial bonuses gained from the base creature. Any transformation requires a full round action which draws an attack of opportunity. At every level the lycanthrope gains an additional hit die with bonus hit points if it has an adequately high Constitution score. In forms that grant a Constitution bonus the gained hit points are not lost first as temporary hit points are.

Lycanthrope I

Pseudo Lupus - This is the first form gained that the victim transforms into during a lunar rage. Body wide hair growth is accompanied by lengthened canines, a flattened nose and lupine ears. The general appearance is that of a bestial humanoid. Like all subsequent forms, a lycanthrope's abilities are only accessible while transformed. Starting with the first form, lycanthropes gain Fast Healing 2. This is crucial to the survival of new lycanthropes since many are survivors of werewolf attacks themselves. Some lycanthropes are given away when long time scars mysteriously heal after a werewolf sighting.

Mental State of the Pseudo Lupus: The pseudo lycanthrope is still confused from its transformation. It is a new being and can only access the skills most natural to it from the host's mind if it has them (Hide, Listen, Spot, Search, Survival, Intimidate, Bluff, Sense Motive, Wilderness Lore).

Level	BAB	Hit Dice	Special Abilities
I	+0	+1d8	Pseudo Lupus, Enhanced Senses, Resilient I
II	+1	+1d8	Scent, Claws
III	+2	+1d8	Homo Lupus, Damage Reduction I
IV	+3	+1d8	Dominate, Pack Speech, Resilient II
V	+3	+1d8	Sapiens Lupus, Damage Reduction II
VI	+4	+1d8	Enhanced Threat, Alpha Predator, Natural Cunning I
VII	+5	+1d8	Erectus Lupus
VIII	+6	+1d8	Call the Pack, Natural Cunning II, Feral Mind I
IX	+6	+1d8	Veritas Lupus
X	+7	+1d8	Damage Reduction III, Feral Mind II, Enhanced Critical

The cognitive abilities of the lycanthrope are crude and it has no memory of its host. Its mental state is dominated by confusion and rage. The lycanthrope gains the attack bonus, hit dice, movement rate, reflex saving throw and fortitude saving throw of its host to stack with its own. The lycanthrope has any of the host's feats that represent innate abilities rather than practice and experience. For example, the lycanthrope would have its host's Alertness feat but not an Exotic Weapon Proficiency.

Enhanced Senses – The lycanthrope gains a +2 racial bonus to Spot and Listen checks that stack with any racial bonuses of the base creature.

Resilient I - +2 Racial bonus to Fortitude saving throws.

Lycanthrope II

Claws – The lycanthrope acquires claws in their transformed state. The lycanthrope gains two primary attacks with the claws, doing d4 damage and with a threat range of 19-20 x2.

Scent - The lycanthrope gains the exceptional ability of Scent as described in Core Rulebook III.

Lycanthrope III

Damage Reduction I - The lycanthrope gains damage reduction of 5 / +1. A silver or blessed weapon will negate the damage reduction, in place of the a +1 weapon.

Homo Lupus – This second form is the "wolf man" of legend and can only be mistaken for human in the worst visibility. The lycanthrope gains Strength +2. The lycanthrope mind can access a wider array of the host's skills including some languages (though its ability to articulate is crude) and others the DM feels are appropriate. Many of the host's class abilities and feats are now usable, including all abilities that are not supernatural in nature. The Homo Lupus keeps the extraordinary healing ability and claw attacks.

Mental State of the Homo Lupus - At this stage the lycanthrope's thinking abilities are similar to those of a small, cruel child learning its way about the world. At this stage partial dreamlike memories of its host's life reach the lycanthrope's awareness.

Lycanthrope IV

Dominate – A lycanthrope has the mystical power to control the minds of wolves when in their presence if he succeeds in a contested Will saving throw. The control is broken if they roam more than a hundred times the lycanthrope's charisma modifier in





feet from the lycanthrope.

Pack Speech - The lycanthrope can communicate with wolves as if they had a shared language using a combination of body language and verbal communication. The lycanthropes can use Bluff, Sense Motive, and Intimidation skills with the wolves without penalty.

Resilient II - The lycanthrope gains an additional +3 to Fortitude saves gaining a total of +5.

Lycanthrope V

Damage Reduction 2 - The lycanthrope now has damage reduction of 10 / + 2. Silver weapons may still be used in substitution of the +2 weapon but blessed weapons are no longer adequate.

Sapiens Lupus – The 3rd form supersedes previous forms. The lycanthrope's limbs lengthen and the skull changes to accommodate a new jaw. This is the form that is the truest hybrid between the forms of man and wolf. The character's speed increases by 5 for small characters, 10 for medium and 15 for large. The creature is now also capable of biting for a secondary

attack, which is a d8 weapon, 20 x2, in addition to its two primary claw attacks. It can use any of its host's Charisma based skills now, even class exclusive ones such as Use Magic Device. For the first time, the lycanthrope gains its host's Will saving throw to stack with its own. It retains the +2 to Strength and gains +2 to Constitution. The lycanthrope in this form has Fast Healing 2.

Mental State of the Sapiens Lupus – Its mind has developed into a thing capable of reasoning. It lives in a state of currency where time has little meaning though it does remember. The lycanthrope now has a vague awareness of actually being two beings and of the other mind's existence.

Lycanthrope VI

Enhanced Threat – The range of the lycanthrope's claw attacks are improved from 19-20 to 17-20 and stacks with Keenness (if cast on the claws) and Improved Critical (if the character has the feat).

Alpha Predator - The werewolf is an alpha, having an unholy power over the minds of others. The lycanthrope gains a +2 racial bonus to Sense Motive and Bluff rolls.





Natural Cunning I - The lycanthrope gains +2 to all Reflex saving throws.

Lycanthrope VII

Erectus Lupus – This is the most advanced form of the lycanthrope and combines the most powerful characteristics of both man and wolf with some of neither. It is similar to the previous form, which it supersedes, but holds unique features from either man or wolf that makes the form more powerful. The erectus form is one-size category larger than the victim's natural form. Medium hosts that become large gain a 5-foot reach. Already large (or larger) creatures do not gain a size increase. The lycanthrope can now access most of its host's skills and abilities, including all feats, skills and supernatural abilities except for spells or manifesting powers, if applicable. The lycanthrope gains a +4 bonus to Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution and -1 to AC as well as other disadvantages of large size. The lycanthrope loses their Fast Healing ability, instead gaining the ability to Regenerate two points of damage per minute. It retains all of its accumulated abilities.

Mental State of the Erectus Lupus - For the first time the lycanthrope is fully aware of its nature and hates the other mind it shares the body with. By this time the idea of original or host becomes increasingly irrelevant as the lycanthrope has control as often as not. The lycanthrope takes great joy in being vindictive; attacking its host's loved ones or extracting other forms of revenge. By focusing, the lycanthrope can dig specific pieces of information out of its host's memory.

Lycanthrope VIII

Call the Pack – The lycanthrope may once a day summon wolves for an attack or hunt. Its range is a number of miles equal to its Charisma modifier. Control of the wolves is gained through the Dominate ability.

Natural Cunning II - The lycanthrope gains an additional +3 to Reflex saves increasing the total bonus to +5.

Feral Mind I - The mind of the lycanthrope is highly resistant to the influences of others and gains a +2 racial bonus to Will saves.

Lycanthrope IX

Veritas Lupus – This is the fifth and final form. The werewolf can change into a shape similar to a true wolf but larger. Base creatures that are size Large or bigger become wolves of that size but Small or Medium host creatures may become a wolf of either their size or one category larger. The choice is up to the wolf mind when it changes but usually prefers one size over the other and does not vary it without special need. Unlike the earlier forms of the lycanthrope, Veritas is not a replacement for the previous form and a lycanthrope may frequently shift between the Erectus and Veritas forms. The Veritas form is more comfortable but they enjoy the power gained from the Erectus form. The movement rate of the lycanthrope in Veritas form is increased by +10 for small creatures, +20 for medium and +30 for large above their host's normal speed. The form gains





+2 to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution. The lycanthrope now has access to all of the host's class abilities; even spell casting and manifesting. In this form it gains three primary attacks, two claws and its bite.

Mental State of the Veritas Lupus – At this point the chance of ever acquiring a cure is virtually non-existent since the wolf is in control most of the time. The wolf mind has full awareness of his host and is a lingering presence even when suppressed. For example, if the character is trying to cast a curative spell the wolf mind may reach out and attempt to trigger a lunar rage. Most characters that reach this stage of infection are clinically insane unless they submit to the wolf. The wolf mind is capable of all the higher forms of cognition associated with humanoids but usually chooses to not use them unless threatened.

Lycanthrope X

Damage Reduction III - The lycanthrope gains 15 / +3 damage reduction.

Feral Mind II - The lycanthrope's racial bonus to Will saves increases by +3 to a total of +5.

Enhanced Critical – The critical damage multiplier of the werewolf's claws and bite is increased from x2 to x3.

Stacking Classes with Lycanthropy

Barbarians: Barbarians make truly dangerous lycanthropes since their heavy combat style and movement complement the lycanthrope.

Bards: A bard's charisma and social skills help a lycanthrope escape detection in their host form as well as give them an excuse for traveling. Since many of their spells only require verbal components, they are ideal for use in the Veritas form which does not have the articulation to cast spells with most somatic components.

Clerics: Even at the 10th level of infection, lycanthropes can not access many of the cleric's abilities unless their god allows Chaotic Evil priests. Any abilities that are dependent upon channeling the will of their god (spells, turning, domain abilities, etc...) are denied to the lycanthrope.

Druids: Many natural animals can sense the lycanthrope within a person and this will alienate animal followers and the opportunities to interact with most allies. Otherwise, the druid's ability to manipulate the natural surroundings that a lycanthrope prefers can be very useful. Since druids see lycanthropes as abominations, they will often remand themselves to a druidic order rather than allow themselves to be overtaken unless they follow the path of the shadow druids, in which case, the violent survival of the fittest philosophy suits them well.

Fighters: The physical prowess of a fighter compliments a lycanthrope well but as they rarely use weapons many useful feats are useless to the lycanthrope. A fighter who is a willing lycanthrope can be a terrifying opponent since they can use their bonus feats and apply them towards their claws as weapons.

Monks: Some of the monk's natural abilities, such as movement, are very useful to lycanthropes and at levels 7+ a lycanthrope can use a host monk's base attack damage and other abilities. Some monastic orders have legends of ways to control the inner beast as part of their monastic traditions though no one in living memory has succeeded.

Paladin: No special paladin abilities can ever be accessed by the werewolf. Should a paladin ever become infected with lycanthropy they must immediately seek restitution. They may seek a cure, become hermits or even commit suicide to protect others.

Psion: At levels when a lycanthrope can access manifested abilities, the utility of a psion is even greater than that of a sorcerer due to the lack of material components and other difficulties of casting in a wolf form. However, many of the abilities are also less appealing to the lycanthrope.

Psy Warrior: This combination appeals to lycanthropes due to the usefulness of manifesting and the combat oriented prowess of the Psychic Warrior.

Ranger: The physical prowess of lycanthropes supplement a ranger's own abilities well but at the cost of alienating natural allies. A few revel in the power of being a werewolf but the ties of most to the civilized world, however weak, make the life of a lycanthrope horrifying.

Rogues: Stealth and sneak attack abilities are probably the most useful features the rogue class gives to a lycanthrope. This makes the beast capable of circumventing traps and sentries as well as having brute power.

Sorcerers: At higher levels, a lycanthrope can steal its host's sorcerous abilities, complementing its physical prowess with unpredictable powers but the spell selection may or may not be useful. A lycanthrope will never use polymorph for example, despite its intellect and the spell's usefulness.

Wizards: Wizards have little to contribute to lycanthropes since a lycanthrope has no interest in memorizing magic though a host that accepts lycanthropy may be able to develop horrifying spells to enhance its abilities.





Chapter Four: Vampirism

Perhaps more has been written about the Vampire than any other fantasy monster. Once human, now cursed, empowered, and dependent they hold a unique place in popular mythology. As once human, many of the desires, dreams and impulses that drive them are still those of humanoids though twisted through the perspective of new senses and experiences.

The alternate template for the Vampire given here differs from that given in Core Rulebook III. No single representation can match all of the classic powers associated with various vampires though the one used in Core Rulebook III encompasses many, especially from the Bram Stoker novel, *Dracula*, that is also the basis of vampires in most modern fantasy. The template given here assumes that vampirism itself changes the nature of the creature but most of the powers associated with the vampire are a result of the damned exploring their powers through individual compulsion. The prestige classes for vampires also allow for the powers of vampires represented by a variety of folklore and literature. This template better represents the kind of vampirism seen in media such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and others that stress the importance of aging on the vampiric psychology and power though the supernatural restrictions of the vampire leave no doubt that this is a curse the blessed and divine are offended by. Afterwards another template is presented that can be added onto a vampire, the Elders and then the Ancient One. These are vampires who have not sought out the paths of others but simply through great age and exploration of their natures have gained greater and greater power.

Like many curses, vampirism alienates the victim but it also gives them power. Lycanthropy does the same thing but the victim loses identity as they are overcome by the beast. The vampire gives away his own humanity. More than any other curse, vampirism allows a vampire to damn himself. Unlike a tempting genie or an offer too good to resist, vampirism can be granted by guile or force and, once given, even the most benevolent of souls will never face the sun again. A few mortals do try to maintain their humanity and the Sybarist, Undying Lord and Sin Eaters are distinguished by how they react to their thinning humanity and whether they throw it away or just forget it in pursuit of what they see as enlightenment.

The curse of vampirism is that behind every powerful necromancer or warlord is a cold shell that feels the persistent absence of a soul and, for all their power, looks at the most common peasant and knows they can not do what the peasant does - walk in a river, bathe in the sun and know true love without reservation or doubt. With this realization, the curse takes hold as the mortal dies over the course of millennia and their shell still walks taking the briefest moments of pleasure from hot blood, only to lose the feeling again.

The Risen Vampire

Whether a few days, weeks or even decades old the neophyte vampire is referred to as a newly risen, after a tradition of forcing a progeny to climb and claw from their own grave. Casualties among the Risen are very high from hunters and their own stupidity.

+2 CR

+4 Strength, +4 Dexterity, +2 Charisma

Hit Dice: Increase to D12

Low Light and Dark Vision to 60'

Undead - Vampires gain all standard Undead immunities described in Core Rulebook III including immunity to subdual damage, immunity to critical hits, etc.

Cold Resistance 5

Sunlight - Vampires take damage from sunlight, taking a variable amount depending upon how much light they are exposed to. Even a tiny prick of direct light or large exposure to indirect light will do 1d4 damage per round to a vampire. A beam of light a foot in diameter focused on a vampire would do 1d12 damage and full body exposure would inflict 4d12 damage. These damage ratings are per round with no save or damage reduction possible. Small amounts of indirect or defused light will not damage a vampire but they still have a psychological aversion to the light, requiring a Will save DC 25 to step near. Will saves of DC 40 would be required to intentionally expose themselves to direct sunlight. They are not bothered by moonlight or any artificial light including magical light unless the spell or effect description says otherwise.

Running Water - Running water symbolically represents the flowing life forces of a living creature. When a vampire is immersed in water they suffer from the quickening of their blood. Every round they are immersed they take 1 temporary point of Str damage. This makes many vampires

skittish about crossing running water which bore the myth that they can not. Most vampires prefer to be transported in a coffin or other form to prevent the possibility of immersion if they must cross a large body of water.

Blood Drain - The vampire must drink from a humanoid at least once every three days. The bite is performed as a grapple attack and drains 1d2 temporary constitution points which take one day per to regain. Immediately after feeding a vampire feels a rush of power and euphoria. Failing to feed inflicts 1d2 temporary points of Intelligence loss which are only regained by feeding. Vampires that go too long without feeding become bestial. The draining of blood is their bond to the living and unites their living and dead halves. There are legends fo the Abu Drakie, a cult of vampires in the desert lands who have learned to live off the blood of animals but some say they become beasts themselves.

Siring - A vampire can sire a child by completely draining their blood (Con) and then feeding it back to them. This drains 1d4+1 temporary points from all of the sire's attributes (regained with 1-2 full days' rest, roll separately for each).

Bite - A vampire's bite attack does 1d4 damage normally and may be used as a secondary attack at -5 with no strength bonus if the vampire is attacking unarmed.

Negative Energy Aura - This aura is very subtle but affects living forces around him. Sensitive animals, such as cats, will hiss and dogs will howl if they come near. People will feel lethargic, if exposed to long durations (more than a few hours) at close proximity and plants will die if exposed for days. Vampires that nest in coffins may have grass or plants nearby die. Additionally, any damage they do with their hands, including from grapple or punch attacks do normal damage and appear on the victim as horribly gruesome black and blue bruises from blood



House Rule

In my games, if a creature with d12 hit die has hit dice increased to d12, I add 2 points per d12 hit die. I also, when (player or NPC) hit dice are less than 1/4 the die type, I move it up to 1/4th of the die type. So d4s are never changed, a 1 on a d6 or d8 becomes 2, and a 1 or 2 on a d10 or d12 becomes 3.





vessels rupturing under the touch of the vampire.

Holy Symbols - A holy symbol of a true god of Good alignment will repel a vampire. The vampire can not touch the symbol without being burned for 1d4+2 points of painful damage per round. This creates an effective weapon or barrier.

Garlic - The smell of garlic repulses the vampire and he may not approach it. If ingested or breathed in, in quantity it acts as a poison doing 1d4 temporary damage to his Strength and Dexterity as well as reducing his speed by half.

Home - Vampires may not enter a private home unless invited by a resident but, thereafter, may enter freely unless a ritual is enacted to revoke the invitation. Such invocations are rare and difficult to find.

Regeneration - Vampires regenerate 2 hit points a round. This ability to regenerate can be stopped by ceremonial means. For example, if the head is cut off and mouth stuffed with garlic or the body is laid to rest in consecrated earth with the proper rituals observed.

Staked - Vampires that have a wooden stake shoved through their hearts are paralyzed. Many are then left out for the sunrise.

Spell Resistance: Hit Dice + 5 (maximum 25)

The Elder

This template stacks with the previous template of the Risen. Thus, an Elder would have a total Challenge Rating adjustment of +3.

Most vampires by the time they reach half a millennia in age are considered Elders. In places where vampires hold a body of social lore, younger vampires are expected to refer to vampires who reach this age as Elders. This is invoked in families between a vampire and its progeny. Finally, when a vampire does reach an advanced age, they are unlikely to broadcast it since other Elders may not appreciate another of their rank. Inevitably, vampires close enough to socialize will also feel the friction of competing interests or personalities. Vampires of this age are very protective of their long unives and do not feel compelled to tolerate the existence of anyone powerful enough to challenge them.

This template stacks with the Risen template.

CR +1

Strength +2, Wisdom +2, Charisma +2

Damage Reduction 5 / -

Knowledge History +4 circumstance bonus

Turn Resistance - Elder vampires are treated as being three hit dice higher than they actually are when resisting a cleric's attempt to turn them.

Regeneration of Life - The vampire may regenerate 12 hit points immediately by draining one point of constitution from a victim.

The Ancient One

This template stacks with the previous two templates to the Risen and Elder. Thus, an Ancient One would have a total Challenge Rating adjustment of +4.

Ancient vampires are a thousand years of age or older. These are the eldest of the life drinkers and inspire great fear and rarely appear human anymore. The long seasons of inhumanity have twisted their bodies. Some appear bestial like bats with withdrawn skin and bared fangs, others have become bloated monstrosities, filled with stagnant blood and tended by servants. Legends of even more ancient vampiric things exist, as alien to vampires as they are to us. Still, even if such things do dwell, somewhere in long slumbers, they are so few and remote that the Ancient Ones are the eldest that even the most determined vampire hunter is likely to encounter.

CR +1

Intelligence +2, Charisma +4

Damage Reduction 10 / - (supersedes that gained as an Elder)

All Knowledges: +2 Longevity bonus

Turn Resistance: treated as a vampire of six more hit dice than he really is for purposes of turning and rebuking (supersedes the ability gained as an Elder)

Strength of the Ages: +2 Longevity bonus to all saving throws

New Vampiric Prestige Classes

Undying Lord (UdL)

Some believe that the Undying Lords began as a bloodline tied to a proud king who sold his soul to the devil to defend his lands. However, tales have existed since the dawn of days of immortal kings and god-priests who feasted on human hearts and did not walk in the sun. Whether draped in gold at the heart of a great pyramid or on the battlements of a gothic fortress, the Undying Lord is a vampire who has refused to sever his ties with his own mortality. Most Undying Lords were among the social elite of their culture while living but a few grow into the role during their long existence. Whether enlightened despot, cruel tyrant or even master of an ancient thieves guild, the Undying Lord spends its days trying to remain human while reveling in the power of inhumanity - a contradiction that brings them strength and danger that could destroy all they build.

The archetype of the Undying Lord is that of the noble who rules by right and force. Many Undying Lords were rulers as mortals and are made vampires by their relatives, creating a dynasty of unliving rulers. Other Undying Lords are created by a Lord who wishes to give power to an underdog. For example, a despot who is defending his lands from murderous hordes might be given the curse of vampirism, sacrificing their mortality when they put their role as a ruler above that of as a man. Many vampires, especially Lords, claim that vampirism runs in strains like family and that Lords are a breed apart from common vampires. There is no actual evidence to support this claim.

As perverse as others might consider it, most Undying Lords have a strict code of honor that emphasizes their responsibilities as rulers. Undying Lords are commonly enlightened despots and noble tyrants who may be cruel and hated but genuinely seek out the best interests of their people even if





those interests are clouded by personal goals and perverse standards.

Undying Lords have delved into arcane mysteries, respect the force of arms and seek the rule of men. Undying Lords can fill many roles from the Knight Lord who leads his men into a charge to the Sorcerer King who rules with black magic. Some only dabble in magic while others become bored with the powers of the arm and study magic more, becoming obsessively proficient at it during their un-lives.

Not all Undying Lords are rulers of an actual land but all are social creatures. More than any other vampire, these feel comfortable not only hunting humans but interacting with them. In such cases, an Undying Lord may be a foil in an urban area rather than a gothic castle but they always gravitate towards positions of social influence such as political leaders or guild masters. Undying Lords are classic extroverts who identify themselves by their interaction with others and this continues on in their un-lives. This clinging to their mortality is also the greatest problem they face. Inevitably, their antique habits and persistence betray their age. Rulers often impersonate their own children or grandchildren to escape this or use magic to disguise themselves but it is a dangerous gamble. Vampires are not wanderers by nature, so many impersonate long lived humanoids such as elves to explain their

longevity. In remote regions and ancient cultures, Undying Lords may rule realms where they have control over the land so completely that they no longer hide their natures.

Hit Die: D8

Requirements: Must be able to cast at least 4 enchantment spells, at least one of 2nd level or higher. Base attack bonus +4 or higher. Diplomacy 5+ ranks. Intimidation 5+ ranks. Leadership feat. Affected by Vampirism.

Alignment: Undying Lords are usually Lawful Evil with a few Neutral Evil, Lawful Neutral or Neutral. Undying Lords may not be Good due to the necessary evil choices they make. This does not prevent them from seeing themselves as good. Chaotic characters may not embrace the discipline necessary to be Undying Lords.

Skill Points Per Level: 2 + Int Modifier

Armor and Weapon Proficiency: The Undying Lord is proficient with all simple and martial weapons as well as light, medium and heavy armor.

Class Skills: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (Local, Int), Knowledge (Nobility, Int), Intimidation (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int)

Undying Lord

	Ref	For	Will	Atk	Special Abilities
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Serpent Eyes, Chosen Domain
2	+1	+1	+3	+1	Lord's Domain I, Natural Synergy
3	+1	+1	+3	+2	Regal Presence I
4	+2	+2	+4	+3	Create Thrall 1/day
5	+2	+2	+4	+3	Two Voices
6	+3	+3	+5	+4	Lord's Domain II, Mind Speech
7	+3	+3	+5	+5	Face of the Beast
8	+3	+3	+6	+6	Create Thrall 2/day
9	+4	+4	+6	+6	Lord's Domain III
10	+4	+4	+7	+7	Lord's Grace, Regal Presence II

Serpent Eyes - Peering into the eyes of a vampire is like falling down a deep hole until his strong hands grab you. When interacting with another creature, simply peering into their eyes grant the Undying Lord a +4 supernatural bonus to Diplomacy and Intimidation rolls. They may also cast Enchantment spells without having to use somatic components but the casting time is doubled as they stare at the target.

Chosen Domain - The Undying Lord needs the bond between a lord and his land. The Undying Lord chooses a geographic area that will become his domain (see Lord's Domain I). From this point on he must sleep with at least a small bag of his "native" soil with him or suffer 1 point of Charisma loss every day he sleeps without it, regaining it at a rate of 2 per day he can sleep with it again. This represents the loss of identity he suffers, being torn away from the soil he has bonded with. As Charisma is lost, the Lord will develop paranoid, erratic behavior, emotional outbursts and madness until he goes into a catatonic state at 0. Many Undying Lords have chosen to sleep in coffins to hide, surrounded by their native soil.

Lord's Domain I - A domain is a geographic area over which the Undying Lord has special power and it becomes tied to him. In order to claim a domain an Undying Lord must be recognized as the lord by at least 80% of the people who dwell there. This is often achieved by use of a hereditary title, political power or even gathering followers with the Leadership feat. Over time, a domain can grow. All of the responsibilities and maintenance of followers still exist and, if the Undying Lord loses them, he loses the domain also. Within a domain they can enter any home uninvited since it is theirs as the lord. They are also treated as +1 HD for purposes of being turned within their domain.

Natural Synergy - When casting enchantment spells, the Undying Lord rarely

needs material components and can ignore the requirement unless they would cost more than two gold pieces.

Regal Presence I - A vampire's presence is more than mere charisma - it is an external expression of their will and, within their domain, it has great power. Characters within 15 feet that fail a Will save versus 15 + Undying Lord's Charisma bonus, take a -3 to all skill checks and saving throws. This is a supernatural ability and keeps others off balance in the Undying Lord's presence. These penalties do not apply in combat because the Undying Lord drops his facade.

Create Thrall - This spell like ability works similar to the Charm Person or Animal spells except that it can work on any living creature (not undead, planar or constructs) that is at least four hit dice less than the Undying Lord.

Two Voices - This supernatural ability allows the vampire to speak one thing that is heard by anyone listening but speak with another voice to a specific target. Thus, the vampire can talk to a person and yet everyone standing around hears something else. Afterward the others only have a vague impression of what the vampire meant for them to hear.

Lords's Domain II - Their HD for turning increases to +3 within their domain.

Mind Speech - The vampire gains a limited form of telepathy that allows them to sense emotions, read surface thoughts and understand the language spoken by a sentient creature though they can not speak the language themselves.

Face of the Beast - Despite their best attempts to maintain a tie to humanity, an Undying Lord's frustration with their existence can sometimes be brought to a boil. More than one group of vampire hunters have smugly prided themselves on cornering prey only to find an enraged Lord





plowing through their ranks in retribution. Afterwards, the vampire feels exhausted and must rest until the next evening, taking the quickest route possible to a safe location. They are at -4 to all rolls until the next evening. The rage lasts for a number of minutes equal to their Intelligence score. The Face of the Beast grants +6 Strength and Dexterity as well as +4 morale bonus to saving throws and increases base movement by 10. During this rage, the vampire will fight unless it becomes obvious that they will lose, at which time their intellect takes over and allows them to flee.

Lord's Domain III - Their HD for turning increases to +5 within their Domain.

Lord's Grace - As the lord of the land, an Undying Lord is expected to be graceful and by this stage of power their mastery over enchantment has become considerable. Undying Lords that prepare spells as a wizard may pick two enchantment spells that they can freely swap out prepared spells as a good cleric does healing spells. Undying Lords that prepare spells as a sorcerer may pick two enchantment spells that they can prepare with metamagic feats ahead of time as a wizard does.

Regal Presence II - The Undying Lord's presence is enhanced to the degree that it acts as a distracting aura. Weaker lords can only distract an unprepared opponent but more experienced Lords can use this power even in combat allowing them to gain their Charisma modifier to their AC as it distracts attackers.

Sybarist (Syb)

The grand hall is made of white marble and the people move to the waltz like gears to a timing chain. The costumes are delicate, playful and hide designs of murder, intrigue, passion and commerce. A child, with old eyes, is seated beside a bare breasted whore costumed as a queen, laughs to himself. In a small room far north, a wiry man with clumsy fingers notes that the temperature has changed and wonders if the fact that the woman on the table is still screaming long after the others broke their vocal cords might mean anything. He writes careful notes with a pen made for his fingers and he indulges to caress the ivory. In the east, a woman with once haggard skin is enjoying the first caress of a man that she has felt in decades while her sire watches, parting his hair with only the slightest tint of grey. The wine bottle is nearly empty as he sips gingerly.

Sybarists vary in their individual philosophies but all are sensualist or decadent, if not both. While Undying Lords cling to their mortality through strict social interaction, Sybarists are eager to maintain their range of physical sensation and see vampirism as becoming more human than human by expanding their range of sensations. The roles of Sybarists vary. Some are nobles who use their status to exist comfortably and indulge in a multitude of vices. Others take roles among humans rather than over them in places where they can watch the range of sensations such as owners of entertainment parlors. Generally Sybarists are as fascinated watching as they are experiencing. A few even become hermit like, secluding themselves to study the most obscure forms of experience. Among those that enjoy the studies of pain, especially extreme forms on others. They vary from scientific torturers to sadists who gain sexual release from it. During their





existence, Sybarists usually go through different phases depending upon their personalities but, eventually, all become very bored and begin taking magic more seriously.

In places where vampires rule mortal lands, Sybarist and Undying Lords may constitute related bloodlines of mortal and immortal families. Some Undying Lords may even take up the studies that define the Sybarists, especially if the burdens of rulership begin to bore them in their very long existence.

Sybarists explore necromancy through the power of blood as a focus for vitality. Sybarists are so named for the islands of Sybar, a decadent and now dead culture. They are said to have been destroyed off the small Agueran Coasts. Whether vampires ruled the island or simply came from it is a matter of conjecture since no two Sybarists agree on an answer.

Requirements: Must be able to cast at least 7 necromantic spells, at least one of 4th level or higher and prepare them as a wizard. Knowledge (Arcana) 6 ranks. Brew potion feat. Afflicted by Vampirism.

Hit Die: D6

Skill Points Per Level 2 + Int Modifier

Armor and Weapon Proficiency: Simple weapons but gains no proficiency with armor or shields.

The Sybarist

1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Spell Caster Level +1, Stunning Presence
2	+1	+1	+3	+1	Bathory's Caress
3	+1	+1	+3	+1	Spell Caster Level +2
4	+2	+2	+4	+2	Whispering
5	+2	+2	+4	+2	Spell Caster Level +3
6	+3	+3	+5	+3	Soliloquy, Whisper to a Scream
7	+3	+3	+5	+3	Spell Caster Level +4
8	+3	+3	+6	+4	Blood Song, Sanguine Aria
9	+4	+4	+6	+4	Spell Caster Level +5
10	+4	+4	+7	+5	Blood Slave, Sanguine Chorus

Class Skills: Alchemy (Int), Bluff (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Innuendo (Cha), Knowledge (Arcana, Int), Perform (Cha), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int)

Stunning Presence - Through simple will the vampire can draw the attention of all creatures in a large room or area to him,

commanding their attention for a few seconds. They can also isolate individuals in the room, such as a potential paramour. This requires a partial action.

Spell Caster - Sybarists continue to advance as arcane spell casters, adding +1 every odd level to a previous arcane spell casting class of their choice that prepares spells as a wizard. Only the ability to increase in spell casting power are gained, no other traits of the class, such as bonus feats, are gained.

Bathory's Caress - This gift is named for Madame Bathory who bathed in the blood of maidens to maintain her youth. The Sybarist must bathe in the blood of a mortal (completely draining and killing a medium sized adult) but can then, within the next 24 hours, use their blood to simulate the effects of living that betray other vampires by their absence. Their hearts can beat and warm their skin but they remain very pale. They also gain a +5 to Will Saves to walk outside during daylight (they must still remain covered or take normal damage).

Additionally, the vampire can reduce their apparent age by 20 years but it has no effect on abilities. This effect lasts one hour per class level of the Sybarist.

Whispering - The vampire hunters of the Viltrach Mountains take care to never leave a drop of their spilled blood uncleaned and the care is well taken. Sybarists gain a +4 insight bonus on any roll that involves blood such as tracking a bleeding victim, identifying a blood based poison or Spellcraft roll to identify a spell that uses blood. Additionally, the Sybarist no longer must bite into an opponent to draw out their blood, they can draw it directly from their skin into their own by touch though they must still succeed at a grapple roll. Sybarists describe the ability as the talent to whisper to blood and call it forth, under its own spirit. Some scholars speculate that perhaps the curse of vampirism unleashes a primordial spirit present in the blood of all creatures.

Soliloquy - The Sybarist has discovered how to create a healing potion using her own blood as a curative agent instead of clerical powers though she must still be able to brew potions and pays an experience cost. She can only create Potions of Cure Light Wounds. Sybarists describe this process as expressing the voice of the blood. At the same time they can hear that voice in the blood of others. Any attempt by a Sybarist to detect a living corporeal creature is at +4 due to their ability to sense the blood. Additionally, a successful Scry DC 15 check will allow them to determine the approximate health and age of a target, DC 20 for the presence of diseases and poisons affecting blood.

Whisper to a Scream - A Sybarist can call out to blood in the bodies of others. Once per day per 2 levels of Sybarist they may call to the blood and invoke one of three effects if the victim fails a Will save versus $10 + \text{Sybarist's Charisma bonus}$. If the Sybarist wills the blood to heat, the victim

becomes enraged for 10 rounds as per the Emotion (Rage) spell. If the Sybarist chills their blood they are affected as per the Emotion (Despair) spell for 10 rounds. In both cases, they feel a slight physical heating and freezing of the blood though they are likely to overlook it at the time. Finally, the Sybarist may summon the blood. This causes blood vessels in the victim's body to spontaneously rupture, causing $1d4$ points of damage. There is a 5% chance that this will happen to one of their eyes also causing loss of vision for 10 rounds in that eye. The victim must be within thirty feet for the Sybarist to use this power. Some stories claim that victims killed solely with this power can have their blood made into a powerful component.

Blood Song - The Sybarist can excrete blood from their own body charged with negative energy. The blood only remains fresh for ten minutes but can be spit, coated on a weapon or consumed. It does $1d6$ Str damage, half on a successful Fort save versus DC 20. The Bathorist can only generate this blood once a day through force of will.

Sanguine Aria - The Sybarist's knowledge of blood as the fuel of life allows them an inherent bonus when dealing with spells that effect blood. The Sybarist gains +2 DC to resist and +2 to overcome spell resistance when casting transmutation and necromancy spells that effect living, corporeal creatures.

Blood Slave - Blood Slaves are created by allowing a mortal to feed on vampiric blood. The transference must be done at least once a month and drains 10 experience from the vampire each time. Mortals who do this do not age while they receive the blood and gain +6 to saves against poisons and diseases. They regenerate one hit point an hour. In exchange, a small piece of the Sybarist's spirit rides in them and ensures their loyalty. Acting against the patron vampire's wishes requires a Will save versus $20 + \text{Charisma modifier}$.





Sanguine Chorus - This power can only be used once a week. The Sybarist extracts a portion of their blood and places it in a drink, usually a very sweet wine and lets others drink it (often without their knowledge). Enough can be diluted to effect 20 people per point of charisma modifier. Once imbibed, their voice is more comfortable to the drinkers, giving the Sybarist a +2 to all Charisma based rolls with them as they gain a euphoria similar to drinking alcohol. The Sybarist gains an empathic relationship with the victims and they liken it to the soliloquy of each person's blood being brought together into a great chorus. The Sybarist can extend some of their sensations to the crowd and read back from them. Resisting the effect requires a Fortitude save versus 25.

The Sin Eaters (SnE)

In many places, fruit is placed on the chest of the dead to absorb their sins. The fruit is then given to soulless animals to eat. Folklore says that the sin eaters come from superstitious people who believe that the fruit can only be eaten by another creature with a soul. These villages select a member to eat the sins of the dead who is then outcast so that he will not taint them. When, in turn, they die, there may be no one to eat their sins and then they rise from the dead still hungry. Some cultures believe that these vampiric abominations are birthed as much angel as devil and the more to be feared for it.

The Sin Eaters are a strange combination of beast and mystic. They believe that the transformation into unlife has purged them of the taint of human unreason and they seek to combine the greatest traits of reason and instinct. Many vampires consider Sin Eaters degenerates and despise them but they are the stuff of nightmare - completely devoid of any unreasonable emotion such as mercy. While they are often the most inhuman of vampires, they are actually the least cruel. While Sin Eaters have no pity nor do they have any personal interest in seeing others suffer. They are monastic in inclination and seek enlightenment over power. Their concern is the celestial ladder which places beasts with instinctive knowledge at the bottom, man with reason in the middle and

angels with intuitive knowledge at the top. Sin Eaters believe that they can surpass all three.

Sin Eaters see Sybarists and Undying Lords clinging to their mortality like pathetic children whining about what they lost instead of what they gained. The Sin Eater has taken the other route to damnation by abandoning the only hope that separates them from what lurks behind the curse of vampirism.

Requirements: Wilderness Lore 9+ ranks. Knowledge (Religion) 8+ ranks. Improved Unarmed Strike. Must be at least partially neutral in philosophy (NG - extraordinarily rare, LN, N, CN, NE). Affected by vampirism.

Hit Dice: d12

Skill Points: 4 + Int bonus per level.

Class Skills: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Nature, Int), Knowledge (Religion, Int), Listen (Wis), Spot (wis), Wilderness Lore (Wis)

Armor and Weapon Proficiency: Sin Eaters gain no additional abilities to use any weapons, armor or shields.

At each level the Sin Eater masters a new revelation. These revelations are ways of behaving that ingrain themselves into their

The Sin Eater

1	+2	+2	+2	+1	Way of Revelation
2	+3	+3	+3	+2	Way of Sin
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Way of Arms
4	+4	+4	+4	+3	Way of Man
5	+4	+4	+4	+4	Way of Reason
6	+5	+5	+5	+5	Way of Beast
7	+5	+5	+5	+6	Way of Instinct
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	Way of Angels
9	+6	+6	+6	+7	Way of Intuition
10	+7	+7	+7	+8	Way of Meaning





personality and character - they are not tenants that the Sin Eater must not break so much as firm parts of the character's mentality and the tools that give them power. These are known as the Ten Fold Path.

Way of Revelation: The Sin Eater has removed himself from the world and seeks to explore his inner nature. He pities man and beast for being limited in their roles and sees most vampires as nothing more than humans squandering the gift of immortality. He finds his home in remote places. His senses become sharpened as the natural and supernatural become equally accessible. He may detect magic at will by succeeding in a Wisdom check DC 15 and will have the awareness of a 5th level Sorcerer. The Sin Eater will not willingly interact with others now unless it directly affects his enlightenment.

Way of Sin: The vampire sheds himself of a divine and mortal convention: sin. The Sin Eater rejects the idea that it taints the essence of the individual rather than just being a mistake. If the Sin Eater drains at least six points of Constitution from a victim they may utilize a Lesser Atonement on the



person. This ability literally draws the sin into them and allows the Sin Eater to step through a dream scape with the victim, as an aloof observer and commentator. Most Sin Eaters do this willingly for the opportunity to learn the experiences of others. From here on Sin Eaters reject the divine powers, even those of darkness and refuse to take any form of protection or healing from Divine Spells. Effectively, even if a Sin Eater would normally want the effect of a clerical spell casting they will attempt to resist.

Way of Arms: The Sin Eater sees that among the paths of the divine, mortal and bestial that all practice the way of arms - the way to enforce their will on others and protect themselves. The Sin Eater rejects the use of weapons but gains the ability to generate claws from his hands that do 1d6 slashing damage with a critical range of 19-20/x2. Claws may be created as a free action. The Sin Eater also adds their Wisdom bonus to their Initiative but does not take a penalty if they have a low wisdom.

Way of Man: Now free from his conventions as a mortal, the Sin Eater studies them. What he discovers is the strength of memory. This is the first strength of man, that they remember the past, record it and learn. The Sin Eater may attempt to access memories from a victim as per a Mind Reading spell cast by a 12th level caster, with one casting equivalent to every 2 points of Constitution drained. The Sin Eater now swears to record their own lives in an epic journal to allow others to learn from the successes and failures of their own path and they protect this journal fanatically.

Way of Reason: Applied to knowledge reason is the second strength of man. Beast and angel have this in small portions but only man excels at it and can make reasoned calculations from incomplete knowledge. Reason also draws man to control his environment. The Sin Eater gains a +2

insight bonus on any Int based checks including Knowledges and Crafting.

Way of Beast: Man is a hairless dog on two legs and has forgotten that in search of new strengths. The Sin Eater does not fault man for exploiting his strengths but they are not enough. Instinctual knowledge allows him to draw the same sustenance from animal blood that he would human blood though he must still partake of human blood at least once each moon or suffer mental deterioration of 1 mental attribute point (DM's choice) each month until feeding is restored.

Way of Instinct: Awareness is sharpened for the Sin Eater who has the Scent special trait from Core Rulebook III and may use it to detect any blooded creature within 100 feet. In ascribing to the Path of Instinct the Sin Eater seeks to utilize the knowledge of all his senses and spends time in the darkness running as a beast now, seeking to capture the currency of animal awareness.

Way of Angels: Mystics speak of a peace that embraces them when they tap into their patron's power. Sin Eaters go a step further but without the advantage of divine assistance. From this time on the Sin Eaters finds less use for speech and becomes more abstract in his thinking. In fact it is not uncommon for their journals to become recordings of abstract shapes that represent ideas. The Sin Eater may call upon an inner peace that has several advantages. With a successful Concentration DC 20 check he may place himself in a meditative state for up to 1 day per point of Wisdom bonus and ignore the need to feed. During combat, the Sin Eater may take a total defense action and gain a +4 divine bonus to their AC. Whenever it does either, the Vampire temporarily becomes an outsider and is vulnerable to spells that affect outsiders as well as undead.

Way of Intuition: The Sin Eater now taps the same primordial knowledge of the

universe that angels do. Instead of using knowledge learned or bred by evolution they simply know. Sin Eaters may now make any skill check untrained even if the skill normally requires that it be attempted trained. This may even be done with exclusive skills.

Way of Meaning: The Sin Eater has now spent many years seeking meaning and learning much insight and awareness of how, but nothing of why, the spirit dwells in its prison of meat. Now they must undertake a spiritual pilgrimage. They may detach their spirits with a Concentration DC 30 roll for 5d6 minutes per day. Should they fail this roll, the Sin Eater takes 4d12 points of damage (no saving throw) from the positive energy flooding him. The meditation allows them to suppress their undead nature and take on the outsider template fully, allowing them to exist on both the astral and physical planes at once. They gain the advantage of the True Sight and Astral Projection spells when doing this though they can not take anyone else along or grant the ability to another. Many find the limited time they can do this a problem and seek out places where the walls between worlds are thin. Those go into deep seclusion even by their standards hoping that time will allow them to puzzle out meaning.





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Scrollworks Press
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I just recently got a few complimentary copies of a 'zine called Scrollworks. It's pretty cool. For about the price of one of those long and thin adventures from AEG or Fantasy Flight, you can get an interesting collection of articles. A few variant rules. An NPC or two. An interesting location. A very short scenario. It's pretty cool. I recommend it.

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