

Silent Ones

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by Gary Holian

Silent Ones are members of a mysterious and ancient order of spellcasters based in the Sheldomar Valley of the Flanaess. They seek out lost magical lore and forever lock it from would-be abusers. In their vaunted libraries in the Lonely Tower, the Silent Ones Guard countless secrets regarding pre-Cataclysms history, the Great Migrations, and the evolution of magical theory from the dawn of time to the present day.

The order can be broken down into two distinct branches: cloistered disciples known as Anchorites of the Tower and roving adherents known as Wanderers. The former spend most of their lives steeped in study and contemplation, often guarding places of magical power or conducting research important to the order. Often sought out as sages, they will exchange knowledge for information that does not violate their trust. Some serve as advisors or seers in various noble courts, but their ultimate allegiance is always to the order. Wanderers, on the other hand, actively seek out ancient magicks and mysteries to protect from exploitation. They often travel in groups of three, or attach themselves to adventuring bands (since the abandoned tombs and keeps that so often capture the attention of thrillseekers also happen to hold the type of magic Silent Ones work to keep from dangerous hands and minds).

The Silent Ones usually accomplish their goals through subterfuge and manipulation, but it is not unheard of for the members of the order to act swiftly, even ruthlessly. They are neither good nor evil, seeing their role as above petty morality. Their ethics tend to the lawful, though they will interpose themselves against anyone to protect their interests, taking whatever actions are deemed necessary.

The bulk of the order is made up of sorcerers, who by their very nature have internalized magical processes to the point at which they cannot be stolen or corrupted by the uninitiated. Among the ranks of the Anchorites are found several wizards, whose penchant for study and research make them the perfect archivists. Bards are increasingly popular among the Wanderers, their greatest performances being private tales told to superiors within the walls of the Tower of Silence. Loremasters rarely become Silent Ones, as their focus on discovering magic for personal improvement is seen as antithetical to the beliefs of the order, which hold that some such knowledge should be buried forever from the ken of men.

Silent Ones usually dress in drab cassocks, with gray and brown being most typical. They eschew armor and weapons save the simplest of implements, such as a staff or dagger. Outside the Tower of Silence, Silent Ones rarely carry dangerous spells (on scrolls or in spellbooks) or easily corrupted magical items, so as to better avoid their secrets falling into the hands of the uninitiated. In fact, Silent Ones believe that they do not truly "own" their magical items at all, but rather hold them in trust until they are destroyed (if evil or dangerous) or deposited in the Tower. When artifacts or other great items of magic are carried they are very well protected.

Hit Die: d4.

Requirements

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

Membership: Silent ones are pledged to the tenets of the order and must submit to the authority of the Tower.

Race: Human (primarily of Suel descent; half-elves and Oeridians are rarely accepted).

Spellcasting: Ability to spontaneously cast arcane spells, or prepare arcane spells without need for a spellbook.

Gather Information: 4 ranks.

Knowledge (arcane): 8 ranks.

Knowledge (history): 4 ranks.

Knowledge (religion): 4 ranks.

Spellcraft: 10 ranks.

Language: Must speak Ancient Suel.

Feats: Spell Focus (Divination)

Alignment: Lawful neutral or neutral

Class Skills

The Silent Ones' class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (arcane) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int).

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

The Silent Ones

Class Base Fort Ref Will

Special

Spells per Day

Level	Attack Bonus	Save	Save	Save		
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 save vs. magic, <i>identify</i> 1/day	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Silent Spell	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	+2 save vs. magic, <i>identify</i> 2/day	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Still Spell	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+3 save vs. magic, Tap the Archive Arcanum 1/day	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Rune of regulation	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+4 save vs. magic, Cancellation Touch 1/day	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Mask of Cymius	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	+5 save vs. magic	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Spell Clone	+1 level of existing class

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Silent Ones prestige class.

Spellcasting: A Silent One continues training in magic both in the field and within the forlorn chambers of the Lonely Tower. Thus when a new Silent One level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as metamagic or item creation feats, bardic knowledge, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of Silent One to the level of whatever other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day accordingly. For example, if Felduthar, a 12th-level sorcerer, gains a level as a Silent One, he gains new spells as if he had risen to 13th-level as a sorcerer, but uses the other Silent One aspects of level progression such as base attack bonus and save bonus. If he next gains a level as a sorcerer, making him a 13th-level sorcerer/1st-level Silent One, he gains spells as if he had risen to 14th level as a sorcerer.

If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before he became a Silent One, he must decide to which class he adds each level of Silent One for purposes of determining spells per day when he adds the new level.

Saving Throw Bonus vs. Magic: Their knowledge of the workings of magical formulae allows Silent Ones to have a greater chance of success to avoid the effects of magical spells and spell-like effects. This is reflected by an insight bonus to all saves made against magical effects at 1st level that increases by +1 for every two levels the Silent One gains (+1 at 1st level, +2 at 3rd level, +3 at 5th level, and so on).

Identify (Sp): Initiation into the ranks of the Silent Ones involves hours of hands-on study in rooms filled with magical artifice. Silent Ones learn a secret internalized ritual that allows them to learn the single most basic function of a given magic item simply by holding it in their hands and concentrating. Only one item may be examined at a time, and there is no material component for the attempt. Identifying a magic item in this manner counts as a standard action. The ability is otherwise identical to the *identify* spell (PH p. 216).

Silent Spell: At 2nd level, a Silent One gains Silent Spell as a bonus feat.

Still Spell: At 4th level, a Silent One gains Still Spell as a bonus feat.

Tap the Archive Arcanum (Sp): A Silent One may enter a meditative state to contact the Archive Arcanum, a mysterious psychic repository of knowledge compiled since the earliest days of the order. The enigmatic archivists speak in cryptic phrasings, however, and an answer to a specific query is seldom straightforward. This effect is identical to casting *legend lore*, save that there is no material component. As with a *legend lore*, physical handling of an object related to the query makes for speedier results. Entering the trance is a standard action that may be used once per day.

Rune of Regulation (Sp): Once per day as a standard action, a Silent One may trace a rune upon a single magic item, nullifying all of that item's magical abilities until such time as the rune is removed. Such runes of regulation, as they are known, are plainly visible, and may be removed at will by any member of the order (this is usually done only in the hidden sanctums of the Lonely Tower). Like *bestow curse*, the rune of regulation cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed with a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, or *wish* spell. This ability does not function on artifacts.

Cancellation Touch (Su): Once per day as a standard action, a Silent One may drain the abilities of a magical item by touch. The item touched gets a Will saving throw (DC 19). If a creature is holding it at the time, the attempt provokes an attack of opportunity and the item can use the holder's will save bonus in place of its own if the holder's is better. This ability does not function on artifacts.

Mask of Cymius (Su): Sometimes, a Silent One must use subterfuge to enter an enemy's lair or escape undetected from some theft of magical artifice. In these cases, members of the order turn to the lessons of Cymius, a great Silent One who during the Slumbering managed to liberate the *Talons of Athuseleh* from the Dire

Conclave in Port Toli's fetid undercity. Beginning at 8th level, Silent Ones may *disguise self* at will. Silent Ones of 8th level or higher can see through the *disguise self* effects of other Silent Ones using this ability.

Spell Clone (Su): Only the most experienced Silent Ones can attempt a Spell Clone. By observing the completed casting of a spell in their presence, the Silent One attempts to determine the magical formulae used by another caster and approximate it. Upon observing a cast arcane spell and making a successful Spellcraft check (DC 11 + the spell's caster level), the Silent One may cast the observed spell upon his next action. The caster of the original spell must be within 30ft. of the Silent One at the time of the original casting. If the opportunity to cast the Spell Clone is not taken upon the Silent One's next action, the opportunity is lost. In the case of a multiple-use spell (such as *monster summoning* or *Otiluke's freezing sphere*), only (the observed application of this spell can be cloned).

A Silent One may Spell Clone up to 8 levels of arcane spells per day.

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