

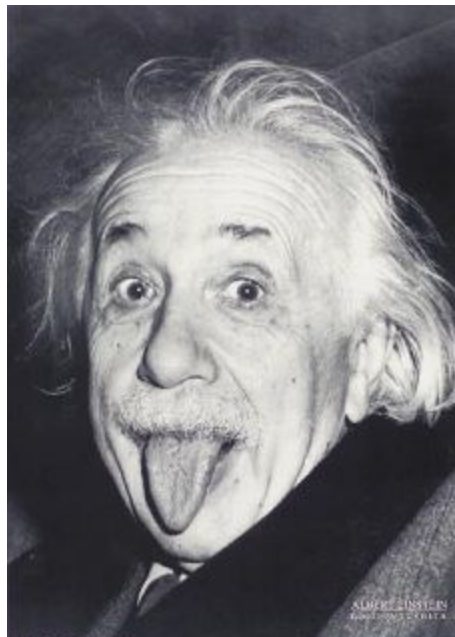
Dawn A Fantasy Role Playing Game

Dawn A Fantasy Role Playing Game



Sluff The Cannonball

In dedication of many of the people over the years who sat down to play some stupid game that you made things up in your head and rolled a bunch of geeky dice. Thanks for your patience and even though you are probably loath to say it I know you had fun. You know who you are Thomas, Devin, Alex, Bubby, Danny, Eric, Greg and Andy.





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Lo, there do I see my mother, and my sisters, and my brothers.

Lo, there do I see the line of my people, back to the beginning.

Lo, they do call to me, they bid me take my place among them,

in the Halls of Valhalla, where the brave may live forever.





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Chapter 1

What is a Role-playing game?



What exactly is a role-playing game? If you need to ask this, then this book is probably not for you. However, if you are hard headed and still wish to learn, hooray for you. Role-playing is the act of pretending to be something that you are not. In this particular game there are no boards and the only thing you will need is a couple of people: one to be god or the game master or storyteller, and one or more others to be players in his story. You will need a couple of character sheets, which can be copied from the templates found in the back of this book, a couple of pencils and about ten 10-sided dice. The object of the game is not to win; it is to have fun. The world of Dawn is whatever you make of it. Perhaps it takes place in mythic England or some world of your own devices. It's totally up to you. What I present to you here within these pages are the game mechanics for playing the game. If something needs to be changed to make playing more enjoyable for you, then change it. I combined my favorite things from the various role playing-games available to come up with my very own RPG. So go forth and enjoy, have fun, and may the world of fantasy be at your fingertips.

DAWN

Chapter 2

Races

In the dawn world there are five main player races. There are Dwarves, Elves, Halflings, Humans, and finally Ogres. Each of the races has special abilities, traits, etc. that are unique to each race and are described below.



Humans

Humans are the dominant race in the world of Dawn. They typically stand between 5 to 6 feet tall weigh between 120 to 300 pounds. Although humans are listed here as a single race they are as diverse as they are numerous and they come in all variations as we know of on earth. Humans are also more social than the other races, accepting companionship from elf, dwarf, Halflings and the like with noticeably less complaint. Humans have become significant powers within the known world and often rule empires that the other races would find difficult to manage. As such humans are the only race that can have both rage and arete or faith but not both arete and faith meaning they can be a men at arms than choose to be either a men of faith or men of magic but not both. Starting willpower is 3 for a human. Starting rage is 3



Dwarves

Dwarves are short, stocky fellows easily identified by their size and shape. They average between 4 and 4 1/2 feet tall and weigh 200 to 350 pounds. They have ruddy cheeks, dark eyes, and always wear a beard of some sort depending upon their family clan. They tend to live to around 400 to 500 years of age. They are broken down into family units known as clans, with each clan known for the way the men wear their beards. All males in the clans wear beards as a symbol of their family or clan. Some may be knotted, braided, worn short or long, dyed, or braided with beads and such in them.

The female dwarves are rare and seldom seen. Many remark because of their rarity that many of the dwarves seen may actually be female, hence the common misconception that females wear beards as well. They bear children for well over a year's gestation with 14 months being the norm. Once born, the dwarf child takes around 100 years to reach maturity basically being the equivalent of a 16-year-old human child at that time. They tend to be dour and sour fellows. They are given to hard work and care little for most humors in the presence of other races. They are strong and brave, enjoying beer, ale, wine, mead and even stronger ale. Their chief love, however, is that of precious metals, especially gold. They also prize gems such as diamonds, emeralds, and rubies.

Dwarves tend to reside in hilly or mountainous regions, usually mining deep into hills and living within subterranean caverns and cities. They prefer life within the gloom and solidness that is found within

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the earth. Dwarves like the earth and dislike the sea. Due to their size, they tend to be ill suited to riding horses and the like, except for ponies, and they are very wary of most things able to be ridden. They are not overly fond of elves or Halflings and grudgingly accept humans as companions. They know that magic is something to be feared, and as such rarely dabble with it. Dwarves are suspicious and arrogant, but their courage and tenacity tend to make up for that. They receive 1 extra wound level at character creation, and they receive 2 extra soak dice anytime it involves magic, poisons, or toxins. This includes even those that are of beneficial nature to them. They cannot use any magic whatsoever. However, they can become men of faith, but the cost for buying into spheres cost twice as much, and they are always at a 2 dice penalty when casting or using it upon themselves or on others of their race. They cannot have an appearance greater than 3. Starting willpower is 4 for a dwarf. They have excellent vision in the dark and get an extra 2 dice when rolling to see in the dark even in pitch-black darkness. Starting rage is 2



Elves

Elves tend to be somewhat taller and slimmer than their human counterparts. Their features are finely chiseled and delicate and they tend to speak in melodic tones. They have long pointed ears and slim features. They usually stand between 6 and 6 1/2 feet tall and weigh 120 to 250 pounds. Although they appear weak and fragile as a race they are quick and strong.

Elves tend to live to well over 1200 years of age. After this time they get a great feeling to withdraw from this world and to depart the realms of men and mortals. Where they go is uncertain, with many elves uncertain themselves as to where they actually go. All that is known is late at night many mortals have seen a solemn parade of elves seen walking through the forests of their homes to bodies of water wherein they board strange white ships and float out to sea or down rivers, never to be heard of again. Some have attempted to follow these crafts, only to be led into a dense fog where they always lose

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sight of the ships, and under rare occasions, are never heard from again. This journey is an undeniable urge felt by this entire race between 1000 and 1200 years of age.

Elves are often frivolous and aloof. In fact, they are not, although humans often find their personalities impossible to fathom. They concern themselves with natural beauty, arts and magic. They love dancing, frolicking, playing, and singing when in the company of their own. However, necessity often dictates otherwise. They are not fond of caves and things underground. They enjoy all things grown, and are often times seen staring in awe and appreciation of great forests and such. Even though elves tend towards haughtiness and arrogance at times they regard their friends as equals.

Elves abide within family groups in such a way that one can usually trace his lineage to anyone within the community. The elves themselves tend to be a very attractive and free spirited race. They do not make friends easily, but they never forget a friend or an enemy. They prefer to distance themselves from humans and have little love for the dwarves. Their humor is clever, as are their songs and poetry. They eat sparingly, drink wine and mead, but seldom in excess. They find magic and arts truly fascinating.

The females tend to carry their offspring for well over 10 years before birthing them. Once born, their children take many years to reach maturity, with 200 years old being the average. Elves begin with starting ability points at 13/11/9, instead of the standard ability points of 11/9/5, with knowledge always being primary. Elves are creatures of magic, and as such begin with the merit awareness. They also begin with 1 extra dot in appearance. Elves also have excellent vision at night. As long as there is some sort of light source, such as moon or stars, they get 2 extra dice whenever rolling perception in the dark, however it must not be underground, since in pitch darkness they are as blind as a human. Starting willpower for an elf is 3. Starting rage is 1.



Halflings

Halflings are short, generally plump people, very much like small humans. They usually stand 3

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to 3 1/2 feet tall at maturity, and weight between 75 and 150 pounds. They usually have curly hair, and always have hair upon the tops of their feet. They prefer to not wear shoes. They have small, pointed ears, and some say they are a distant relation to the elves. Their faces are round, broad, and often quite florid. Their typical life expectancy is around 200 years, with 150 being considered old.



The women usually carry their children for 9 months upon delivery of the child. The children usually are considered adults at the age of 50 or so, equivalent to a 16-year-old human. Halflings are sturdy and industrious people, generally quiet and peaceful. Overall, they prefer the comforts of home to the perils of adventuring. They prefer the simple life of crafting and farming to that of wars and killings and magic. They love ale, mead, wine, and anything else that is intoxicating, and truly love to sing, dance, and make merry to enjoy themselves.

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Their homes tend to be sturdy dwellings, usually built within a small hill or built then buried under a layer of dirt. Their homes are usually well-furnished burrows although most of their life's work is spent outdoors. Elves generally like them in a tolerating way. Dwarves only tolerate them, thinking them somewhat soft and weak. They begin the game with 1 extra dot in dexterity and gain 1 extra die for all soak rolls involving poison, toxins, disease and sickness but they start out with one less wound level starting out at ooch instead of ooch. They also gain 1 extra die whenever it comes to mind altering magic, as they are very stout when they will it. Starting willpower is 4 for a Halflings. Starting rage is 2.



Ogres

Ogres are huge hairy Neanderthal-like humanoids. Some scholars believe that ogres share the same ancestral lineage as humans. This belief is given credence by the fact that many ogres are able to produce healthy offspring from mating with humans. Such an offspring is always considered ogre by both human and ogre standards. While humans and ogres may share the same ancestral lineage that is where the similarity ends. Ogres tend to be large; usually over seven feet tall, weighing well over 300 pounds, and covered in coarse, sometimes splotchy patches of body hair, and rough calluses. They usually live to be considered old around 70 years old.

Ogres are similar to prehistoric man, driven by passions, love, anger and hate. They are considered primal barbarians by the other races, seen as little more than cattle due to their low intelligence but usually strong physical build. They usually live on the outskirts of civilization, forming in small tribes. The strongest and most powerful male of the tribe usually leads them.

Many of the females are sterile, prompting the males to kidnap and hold captive human females for the purpose of breeding. The ogre female has a gestation period of usually around nine months, and will, for the most part give birth to only one child, although two or three are not unheard of.

Ogres can never have mental attributes above 2 and can never have any knowledge abilities above 2. They also can never be men of magic. However, due to their large stature, they begin with 2 points in strength and stamina (this includes the beginning 1 point for a total of 2 not 3), as well as 1 extra wound level. Beginning willpower is 1 and rage is 4.



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Health and Other Things

Health, Willpower, Rage, Arete, Faith, Scourge, Fame, and Infamy. What are they? How do I use them? Why do I need them? All these questions and more will be answered below, hopefully to your full understanding. However, as usual, if you see something you wish to modify, change, or throw out, feel free to do so. After all, this is just a game for fun, and has nothing to do with the exact science of rules. Use these as guidelines to what you want to do.

Health

To begin, we will start out with your health levels. For the normal human being without any merit, flaws, etc. you begin with 9 health levels before you possibly die. If you look to the lower right of your character sheet, you will see where it says Health. Starting from ooch you would count down to incapacitated, which equals nine, so ooch is where a normal human being begins. What does this mean you may ask? Well every time something happens to your character, your alter ego, he has a chance of taking damage. There are 2 forms of damage your character may take: **Bashing** and **Lethal**.

Bashing damage is just that. It is damage that your character takes from being beaten by blunt objects, falling, etc. They are recorded on your character sheet by placing a slash through the bubble on your health chart. Normal humans start out at ooch. Dwarves start out with one extra wound level above ooch, marked as dwarf / ogre, and Ogres start out with 2 extra wound levels, marked ogre and dwarf / ogre. Halflings start out one health level below ooch, at ouch.

You will notice that beside each wound level is a negative number starting at hurt level. What this means is each number is added to your difficulty number whenever you reach that level of being wounded. For example if your character were at injured he would add 1 to the difficulty number of any rolls he had to roll.

Lethal damage is damage, which comes from such things as being hit by a sword or knife. They are marked on your health chart by a x through the lowest bubble. Just as with bashing, you get to roll a soak roll whenever you are hit. Say, for example, you are hit for 2 levels of bashing damage by fighting in a bar room brawl. As a human, you mark a slash through ooch and ouch. Later on in the day you get mugged by a mugger in an alley and take a level of lethal damage as he stabs you with a dagger. You then mark a x through the lowest bubble on the health chart, ooch, and move the slashes up appropriately. Since you still have 2 levels of bashing wounds, you already have a slash through ouch, so you need to add a slash through bruised. So in the above example you wind up with 1 level lethal damage (x through ooch) and 2 levels of bashing (/ through ouch and bruised).

You will notice at the bottom of the character sheet your health table has a category called incapacitated. Anytime you are put at this level; you need to roll stamina against a difficulty of 10. If you botch or get no successes you lose one point off one of your attributes. It is at the game master's / storyteller's discretion which attribute to take the point from. For example, if you were burnt to incapacitated by fire, you would probably have some scarring and lose the point from appearance. If you were beaten to incapacitated in a barroom fight, then you might lose a point from your intelligence due to the head trauma. If you were slashed to incapacitated in a sword duel, you might lose a point from strength or dexterity, as the sword cut the muscles and tendons, or you might lose a point off your stamina, as you had a lung punctured by the sword. All reasons for losing a point off an attribute should be noted under the character description part of the character sheet.



Willpower

Willpower, what is it? Willpower measures how capable a character is at overcoming the urges and desires that may tempt him or her. However, unlike other abilities and attributes, it is not something that you roll, at least not often. Willpower is something that you use. You will notice on your character sheet there are permanent willpower dots and temporary willpower dots. The permanent willpower is rated between 1 and 10, and the temporary willpower underneath your permanent is rated between 1 and 20. Gaining 20 temporary willpower points to trade in for 1 permanent willpower is a way raise your permanent willpower. You gain temporary willpower by playing within the nature and demeanor of your character.

You can use willpower for a variety of different things, some of which are detailed below.

You can use a temporary willpower point to gain an automatic success on any die roll, meaning if you declare you are using your willpower point for an automatic success, you declare it before the die roll, and add that automatic success to any successes you attain from your die roll.

You can use it to succeed after a failed willpower roll. For example, you are besieged in a tower by a horde of invaders, tens of thousands of invaders bent upon your destruction, while you and 10 other individuals defend the tower. It would require a willpower roll to stay focused and not to turn and flee. If you fail the roll you could expend a willpower point to automatically succeed, but this only works for willpower, not for attribute rolls or ability rolls.

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You can regain willpower by playing within your nature and demeanor, or by special circumstances dictated by the game master or storyteller. Also, at the end of each session, you regain your maximum willpower as dictated by your permanent willpower. Meaning if you have 5 permanent willpower at the end of the game, you get to regain a maximum of 5 temporary points. However, if you already have, say, 8 temporary points, you don't get to add 5 to it. You only get back up to the maximum permanent willpower points, which is 5.

Fame / Infamy

Fame/Infamy is how well known you are in the Dark Ages world. You will notice that it is rated between 0 and 5 for both permanent Infamy and Fame. The only way to gain permanent Fame or Infamy is by gaining 10 temporary Fame or Infamy. When you gain 10 temporary points in either category, that category's permanent rating is increased by 1, and its temporary category returns to 0. In the reverse scenario, if you have no temporary Fame or Infamy, and need to expend one or the other, you will need to break down one of the relevant permanent traits into temporary points, thereby lowering your permanent rating in that trait by 1. Permanent Fame and Infamy are listed above and temporary Fame and Infamy are listed below on the character sheet. Now that you know what it is, what can you do with it?

Well, with the expenditure of a temporary Fame or Infamy point you can re-roll an entire roll appropriately, depending upon whether you spent fame or an infamy point. What does this mean? Well, let's say you are attempting to leap across a chasm while a large group of natives are hurling rocks, spears and arrows in your general direction, and you roll and fail or botch. Oh my god! What to do now? You're going to die! Well, with a temporary Fame or Infamy point spent, you can take back the roll in which you rolled fail or botch, and re-roll all the dice.

Yippee! Right? Well, yeah. After all, Dawn is a game of heroes and villains. What kind of game would it be if you failed in rescuing the princess, or you challenged the local ruffian who threatened to kill the entire village to a duel, only you botched at killing him, and you died? There will be times where the game master or storyteller may ask you to roll Fame or Infamy simply to see if anyone knows you.

Fame and Infamy both share one common trait: they measure how well-known you are in the Dawn world, whether that be for good or evil. The higher permanent rating between the two is considered your Renown rating. For example: You have 3 permanent Infamy and 2 permanent Fame. Your Renown rating would be 3, and you would be seen as an evil bastard with a soft heart for certain types of people (children, homeless, etc.) or something to that effect. If you then gained 2 permanent Fame while keeping your Infamy the same, you would then have a Renown rating of 4, widely known as a champion of justice who can be a bit cold-hearted at times. A character's background and actions will affect this heavily, as will Storyteller discretion. A list of renown levels is as follows, with obvious room for modification as players and Storyteller see fit:

0 Renown: Joe Schmoe. Your average unknown member of the masses, known only to the people of your city/town/village.

1 Renown: Town hero/bully. You are well known in your hometown, and word of your deeds may have spread to a neighboring village or two.

2 Renown: Local figure. You are well known in the surrounding towns and villages of your land, and people in other lands are starting to whisper of you. People of your hometown either look up to you in awe or shy away in fear. You are on the verge of being well known by many.

3 Renown: National icon. You are well known throughout the lands of your nation, and somewhat known throughout surrounding nations. You are seen as an authority in your homeland, with possible designs

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on the throne of your nation. Your name is whispered in the streets in tones of adulation (Fame) or terror (Infamy).

4 Renown: International champion/outlaw. You are well known throughout half the nations of the world. Indeed, nations tremble at the mention of your coming. Kings set their armies in your path, either to join you in your noble cause or to stop your dastardly designs in their tracks.

5 Renown: Worldwide phenomenon. You are well known throughout the entire world. Your deeds are the stuff of legends, or nightmares. People either run to throw flowers at your feet, or run screaming from you, clutching their families. Indeed, most mere mortals consider you to be a god among men, or the Devil himself.

Fame tends to be a good Renown, while Infamy tends to be an evil Renown. Thus, Famous characters will find it more difficult to get results with evil actions, while having greater ease in accomplishing goals of good motive. Infamous characters will have more difficulty doing good, and by the same token find evil deeds that much easier. The difference between a character's permanent Fame and permanent Infamy ratings will determine the advantage (or drawback) the character faces when trying to commit acts of good or evil.

Example: A noble hero with Fame 3 and Infamy 1 will have more difficulty torturing or intimidating a man (an evil act), and will suffer a 2 dice penalty on his roll ($1 \text{ Infamy} - 3 \text{ Fame} = (-2) \text{ dice}$), but if he instead were trying to gain the man's trust (usually a good action) he would then gain 2 dice on his roll ($3 \text{ fame} - 1 \text{ Infamy} = (+2) \text{ dice}$). An evil villain with 1 Fame and 3 Infamy would experience exactly the opposite in the situation, with a 2 dice bonus to torture and a 2 dice penalty to gaining trust.

Rage

Rage is something all men at arms get. Men of Faith and Magic cannot ever gain rage or use it. It is that primal instinct, that scream buried deep within your chest when you are battling a large group of trolls. It is a kind of inner strength for you men at arms. The way it is used is given in some examples below.

Say for example you were fighting a brigand and 2 more came running out to fight you as well. You could use 2 rage and suffer no penalties and use your full dice pool to attack them.

With rage spent you can perform multiple actions in a single turn without modifier

With rage you spend 1 point of rage and you negate all your wound modifiers.

With rage you can actually erase 1 dot of bashing damage per day.

Sounds great, yes? But you may be wondering well how do I earn it? Well, that's simple. Anytime you take a wound level, complete a mission, or whenever the game master or storyteller thinks you did something truly heroic, you get a rage point.

Arete

Arete (pronounced AIR - i - tay) is the foundation for a mystic's enlightened will. Through it the caster directs creation's dance. Such awareness might slowly rise from a person's ignorance, or may burst forth with a sudden flood of understanding. It's not unusual for a mystic to acquire a lot of arete when he first realizes the awakening of his mystic powers. Progressing from there, however, is a laborious road. Arete is first determined by rolling the character's willpower versus a difficulty number of 7, with any successes equal to one arete dot, with a maximum of 10 dots in arete, and a minimum of 1. In



game terms Arete lets you manipulate reality. The greater your arete, the greater your mystical will is. Every dot of arete gives you one die to roll with your spheres when casting. Arete can never be higher than your permanent willpower.

Faith

Faith measures the priest's closeness with his particular deity. The more dots he has in his pool, the greater the chance of his prayer or miracle happening. Faith is what arete is for men of magic. You can never have more faith than your willpower score.

Essence

Essence is basically a magical pool of energy, a font of power if you will. Every prayer or spell invoked costs essence points. The more essence you have, the greater the spell, or the more spells you can cast. You regain essence either through resting and relaxation or by meditating and rolling willpower against difficulty 6 (number of successes equal the number of essence regained). A full night's rest (6-8 hours' sleep) allows you to regain essence equal to your permanent willpower rating. Thus, if your permanent willpower is 6, you would regain 6 essence. Meditation requires 2 hours, and once again, you can only regain up to your permanent willpower rating in essence. You can only regain essence equal to twice your permanent willpower rating per day. Thus, with a permanent willpower rating of 6, you could only regain 12 essence per day. Essence is indicated on the character sheet with a O. It is what you use

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to cast spells and such, and is ranked between 1 and 20. You begin with an Essence score of whatever your Willpower plus Arete/Faith is.

Scourge

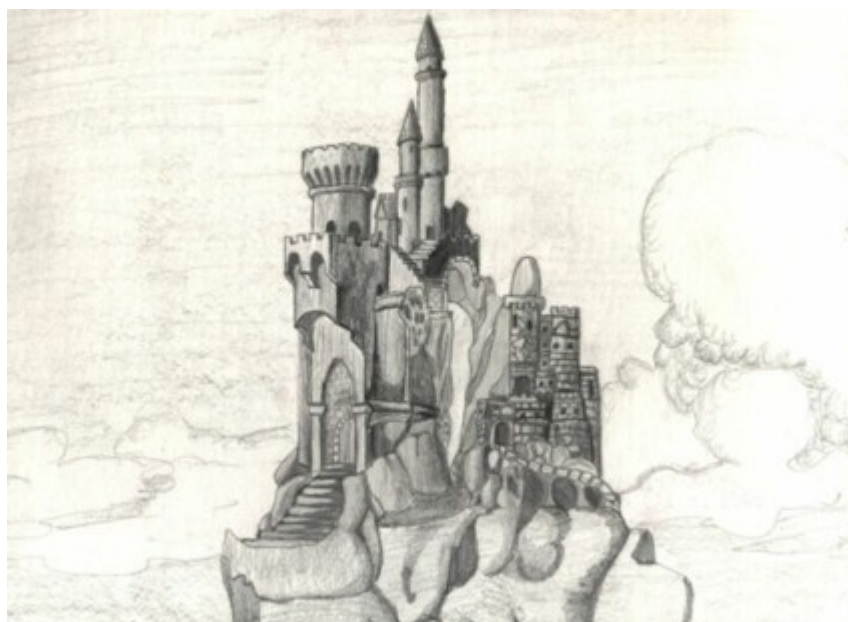
Scourge is for men of magic only, and its meaning is mystical as well. There are two ratings for scourge: a permanent rating and a temporary rating. The permanent rating pool determines the number of dice you take away from your total every time you cast a spell, meaning the more scourge the greater the chance your spell will have a mishap or the wrong conclusion. For example, one point of permanent scourge subtracts one die for all of your castings. So if your arete + sphere dice pool was six and you had one point of permanent scourge you would only roll 5 dice. The temporary pool is used whenever you botch at a fate roll. You gain a point of temporary scourge and something bad happens with your castings, whether to you or to those around you is entirely up to the game master or storyteller. For every seven temporary scourge you get, you gain one permanent scourge. Temporary scourge can be gotten rid of by the non-use of magic. For example, one week of not using magic and resting/relaxing removes one temporary scourge. Permanent scourge can only be bought off with experience points.

Speed

Speed is quite simply your natural physical movement rate. It is determined by adding your strength to your athletics. What does it mean, though? Well, for every dot of speed you have, you may run on a flat level surface ten feet per melee. So, for example, if your character had a strength of 3 and athletics of 2, he would have a speed of 5, meaning that in one melee he could take off running on a level flat surface 50 feet per melee. A lot of things would affect this, such as surface you are running on, grade of surface, and terrain (after all, you can run a lot faster on a flat dirt road than you could through a dense forest up the side of a ravine.)

Initiative

Initiative equals Wits + Alertness. This is your base initiative score. It is used to determine who goes first in a turn. Whenever the game master asks for a initiative roll you take your base score and roll a die (d10). Add the results to your base score and that is your Initiative score for that turn.



Dawn

Chapter 4

Nature and Demeanor

Nature and Demeanor

We humans role-play on an intricate basis. Every moment of our lives is spent playing a role, such as cops and robbers or cowboys and Indians when we were children. Our being is made up of many layers of personalities, some of which we pretend to be, others of which we present naturally. I like to call these personality archetypes, or nature and demeanor. Archetypes encompass not only personalities, but places and things as well. They are a way for the game master or storyteller to get players to better understand their characters and settings, and to get them to further relate to their characters. Archetypes help us make sense out of things and help bring the story or adventure home to the player.

Characters do not fit into such neat and tidy categories. Archetypes are the molds for an infinite number of different personalities, and should not be seen as absolute standards. They are fundamental standards by which you can base your characters and may vary greatly, depending upon the player, in many ways. These personality archetypes are examples of the variety of personalities that can be found in our world, and are meant only to guide, not to restrict you. They are a form (if you have ever played other games) of alignment, if you will.

The key to the use of archetypes is the interaction between your character's nature and demeanor. The nature is a character's true personality, that which he or she truly is, but may not want others to really see him or her as. Most people do not wish others to get to know them as intimately at first, and they create facades, or false fronts from which to hide behind. A character's demeanor is just that, a false front. It is what the character wants everyone else to perceive him or her as. Your nature and demeanor are more than just how your character is and how he or she is perceived. They are also a way to regain temporary will power. More of that later in the chapter on will power.

Here is a brief explanation. Archetypes have a practical impact on the game or adventure, for each archetype provides a different way to regain willpower points. The nature of a character is thus vital in regaining willpower. The procedure works thus: the player plays his alter ego, or character, as much in tune with his nature as he can, and may ask the game master or storyteller if he can gain any willpower for this role-playing. Mind you, this is temporary willpower, usually not more than once or twice during a session, but depending upon the session and the game master it could be more. The game master or storyteller decides if the player has been playing well as his nature, and awards between 0 and 3 points as determined by the character's actions and situation in the session. The game master or storyteller shouldn't award the player the willpower if say for example he has been playing against his nature all session, then in the last ten minutes of the session, he plays in line with his nature, right before asking for willpower.

Okay, on to the descriptions of nature and demeanor. Just remember: **Nature** is how your character really is and **Demeanor** is how your character wants others to perceive him or her. These are just a few of the possible archetypes possible. They are not the absolute only ones you can use. If you decide upon a different one, or one that is not listed, feel free to use it - with the storyteller's permission, of course. This is a game of having fun, so change it to have fun if you feel you need to.

Architect

Chapter 4

Nature and Demeanor

Your sense of purpose goes beyond your own needs. You try to create something of lasting value for those who will come after you pass on. People need many things and you gain satisfaction by providing whatever you can. You are the type of person who makes an effort to build something of lasting value. To found a town, to create a new building, or in some way leave a lasting impression of oneself for the years to come.

Regain Willpower anytime you create or establish something of lasting value.

Autocrat

The Autocrat wants to be in charge. He seeks prominence for its own sake, not because he has an operation's best interests at heart or because he has the best ideas (though he may certainly think so). He may genuinely believe others are incompetent, but ultimately he craves power and control. Directors, gang leaders, bullies, and the like are Autocrat Archetypes.

Regain Willpower Regain willpower whenever you achieve control over a group or organization involving other individuals.

Barbarian

Civilization is a trap that the clever set for the weak, and in which they end up snaring themselves. Truly intelligent, brave, and strong people understand that sedentary existence only brings you that much closer to the grave, and that what counts is what you achieve as an individual. You respect only deeds. Anyone can boast or scheme, but all words vanish in the end. Only deeds remain, having changed the world.

Regain Willpower when you beat civilized competition through your barbaric deeds

Bon Vivant

Life is pointless, shallow, and meaningless, so have a good time while you live. Rome may burn, but you shall drink wine and have a good time. A hedonist, sensualist, sybarite and party animal. The words self-denial and self-control have no meaning or place in your life. You much prefer the concept of self-gratification. Still, you don't mind a little hard work in your life, as long as it means there will be a lot more party time after you are done. Most Bon Vivants have little self-control, as they so dearly love excess.

Regain Willpower whenever you truly are having a good time and can fully express your exultation

Bravo

You are known as a bully, a ruffian, and a tough, and delight in tormenting the weak. Things must always go your way and you do not tolerate those who cross you. Power and might are all you respect. You heed only those who can prove their might to you. You see nothing wrong with forcing your will upon those weaker than yourself. There is nothing wrong with persecuting, antagonizing, heckling, and intimidating those for whom you have contempt, and there are many of them. The emotions of pity and kindness are not completely foreign to you, but you try to hide your own sense of weakness through cruelty to others. While most bravos despise those weaker than themselves, a few become their protectors.

Regain Willpower whenever you intimidate or physically force another person to do what you wish

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Nature and Demeanor



Chapter 4 Nature and Demeanor

Caregiver

You always try to help those around you. You struggle to make a difference in the needs and sorrows of the unfortunate. People around you depend on your stability and strength to keep them steady and centered. You are the one that people turn to when they have a problem

Regain Willpower whenever you successfully protect or nurture someone else or in some way help those that are less fortunate than yourself.

Celebrant

The Celebrant takes joy in her cause. Whether the character's passion is battle, religious fervor, foiling her rivals, or reading fine literature, it gives the Celebrant the strength to withstand adversity. Given the chance the celebrant will indulge in her passions as deeply as possible. Unlike the Fanatic the celebrant pursues her passion not out of duty, but out of enthusiasm. Crusaders, hippies, and art enthusiasts are Celebrant Archetypes.

Regain Willpower whenever you pursue your cause or convert another person to the same passion.

Child

You are still immature in personality and temperament; a kid who never grew up. Though you can hopefully care for yourself, you prefer the security of being watched over by others. Often, you seek out someone to look out for you - a caretaker of sorts. Some may see you as some sort of spoiled brat, while others may see you as a cherub unaffected by the evils of this world. Perhaps you really are a child.

Regain Willpower whenever someone does something for you or to help you without any apparent gain for himself or herself.

Competitor

The competitor takes great excitement in the pursuit of victory. To the Competitor, every task is a new challenge to meet and a new contest to win. Indeed, the Competitor sees all interactions as some sort of opportunity for her to be the best - the best leader, the most productive, the most valuable or whatever. Professional athletes, and impassioned researchers are examples of the Competitor.

Regain willpower whenever you succeed at a test or challenge.

Conformist

You are a natural born follower. To you, taking charge is foreign and unnatural, and is just not your style. It is easy for you to adapt, attune, adjust, comply, and reconcile yourself to whatever new situation you find yourself. You flit to the brightest star, the person whom you feel to be the best, throwing your lot in with him or her. It is both difficult and distasteful for you to go against the flow or to rebel. You hate inconsistently and instability, and know that by supporting a strong leader you help prevent chaos from occurring.

Regain Willpower whenever your group succeeds in something because of your support and aid

Conniver

What's the sense of working hard when you can get something for nothing? Why drudge when just by talking you can get what you want? You always try to find the easy way out, the fast track to

Chapter 4

Nature and Demeanor

success and wealth. Some people might call what you do swindling or even outright theft, but you know that you only do what everyone else does, you just do it better. After all, life is only a game, and you get great pleasure out of outwitting someone.

Regain Willpower anytime you can get your way by tricking someone out of something or to do something for you.

Curmudgeon

You are an irascible, churlish person at heart, taking everything seriously and finding very little humor in life. Cynicism is your middle name; it is the tool with which you judge everything in life. You have a very well defined understanding of how things really work, especially when they involve the circus of human endeavor. Long ago the foolish actions of others ceased to amaze you.

Regain Willpower whenever someone does something stupid just as you predicted. You must predict it out loud either to the whole group or in private to the storyteller or game master.

Deviant

There are always people that don't always fit in to society, and you are just one of those miscreants. Your belief, motivations, and sense of propriety are the complete antithesis of the status quo. You are not so much an aimless rebel as an independent thinker who does not belong in the society in which you were raised. You don't give a damn about other people's morality, but you do conduct yourself within your own code of conduct. Deviants are typically irrational, and some have truly bizarre tastes and desires.

Regain Willpower whenever you are able to thumb your nose at society and its precepts without retaliation

Director

You despise chaos and disorder, and tend to take control of things in order to suppress anarchy. You like to be in charge, live to organize, and habitually strive to make things work smoothly. You trust your own judgment and tend to think of things in terms of black and white. "This won't work," "You're either with me or against me," and "There are 2 ways of doing this: my way and the wrong way," are some of your favorite phrases.

Regain Willpower whenever you are allowed to lead a group and accomplish a task

Fanatic

You are consumed by the cause. It is the primary force in your life, for good or for ill. Every ounce of blood and passion within you is aimed directly towards that cause, and you may start to feel very guilty if every waking minute is not spent drawing you closer to that cause. You will not let anything stand in your way; nothing that you can overcome in some way or another, in any case. You and those around you may suffer, but that is something you are willing to sacrifice for the cause. After all, the end justifies the means. Before the game talk with the game master or storyteller to describe and work out your cause and define how it affects your behavior.

Regain Willpower anytime you do something that directly furthers your cause.

Gallant

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You are as flamboyant as you are amoral. Some see you as a rogue, a don Juan, a rake, a paramour, or just a lounge lizard, but you see yourself as all of the above; a consummate actor who loves to make as big a show out of things as possible. After all, nothing attracts your attention more than an audience. You love people and you love to impress them even more. Though you may indeed be a superior lover, you enjoy the chase almost as much as the act. Gallants vary differently in temperament and ambition, holding little in common save their love of attention.

Regain Willpower whenever you manage to dazzle or impress someone.

Guardian

In this hostile world the strong must protect the weak. Did the gods themselves not command as much? You might act out of duty or love, or to protect your lord, family, or faith. The weapons you choose could be physical, social, or mental depending on who you are. All around, the weak are taken advantage of and left unprotected, to be besieged by horrors and calamities. You cannot simply sit around and watch this happen.

Regain Willpower whenever you successfully shield someone or something from harm.

Jester

You are the fool, idiot, clown, or comic; forever making fun of both yourself and others. You constantly seek the humor in any situation, and strive always to battle the tides of depression and sorrow wherever you may find them. You hate sorrow and pain, and strive to take others' minds off those thoughts. Sometimes you will do anything to make others forget the dark side of life and to laugh and be merry. Your particular brand of humor may not always suit your companions, but it usually makes you feel better.

Regain Willpower whenever you lift the spirits of others and make them smile even in the face of gloom.

Judge

As a facilitator, moderator, arbitrator and peacemaker, you always seek to make things better. You pride yourself on your rationality, your judgment, and your ability to deduce reasonable conclusions when all the facts are presented. You struggle to promote truth, but you understand how difficult it is to ascertain. You respect justice, for that is the way that truth can reign.

Regain Willpower whenever you can successfully deduce the truth behind a web of lies.

Loner

You are the type of person that is always alone, even in the midst of a crowd. You are a wanderer, hunter and lone wolf. Though others might think of you as lonely, forsaken, isolated or remote, in truth you prefer your own company to that of others. There are many different reasons why this might be so: you don't understand others, you understand people too well, people dislike you, people like you too much, or you simply are lost in your own thoughts most of the time. Your reasons are your own.

Regain Willpower whenever you manage to accomplish some goal on your own without the aid of others, but still manage to help the group out.

Martyr

Chapter 4

Nature and Demeanor

All possess the martyr instinct but few act upon it. Your desire for self-sacrifice stems from many things, such as low self-esteem, a feeling of lack of control, or a profoundly developed sense of love for those around you. You are able to endure long lasting and severe suffering because of your beliefs and ideals. At worst a martyr expects sympathy and attention because of his suffering, and may even feign or exaggerate pain or deprivation. At best a martyr will choose to suffer injury or even death rather than renounce his beliefs, religion, principles, cause or friends.

Regain Willpower whenever you sacrifice yourself in real or immediate way for your beliefs or another individual.



Masochist

The masochist exists to test his limits, to see how much pain he can tolerate before he collapses. He gains satisfaction in humiliation, suffering, denial, and even physical pain. The Masochist defines who he is by his capacity to feel discomfort - he rises each day only to greet a new pain. Certain extreme athletes, urban traditionalists and the clinically depressed exemplify the Masochist archetype.

Regain Willpower whenever you experience pain in a new way.

Monster

The monster knows that he is a creature of darkness and acts it. Evil and suffering are the monster's tools, and he uses them wherever he goes. No villainy is below him; no hurt goes uninflected and no lie remains untold. The monster does not commit evil for its own sake, but rather as a means to understand what he has become. Psychopaths and unstable individuals display characteristics of the Monster archetype.

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Nature and Demeanor

Regain Willpower whenever malignant deeds are done. The player should pick a specific monstrous deed by which his character will regain willpower from. For example a tempter regains willpower for luring someone into wickedness.

Pedagogue

The pedagogue knows it all, and desperately wants to inform others. Whether through a sense of purpose or a genuine desire to help others, the Pedagogue makes sure his message is heard - at length, if necessary. Pedagogue archetypes range from well meaning mentors to verbose blowhards who love to hear themselves talk. Instructors and the over educated are all examples of the Pedagogue.

Regain Willpower whenever you see or learn of someone who has benefited from the wisdom you shared with them.

Penitent

The Penitent exists to atone for the grave sins that she commits simply by being who she is. Penitents have either low self - esteem or legitimate, traumatic past experiences, and feel compelled to "make it up" for inflicting themselves upon the world. Penitent archetypes are not always religious in outlook; some truly want to scourge the world of the grief they bring it. Repentant sinners, persons of low self - esteem and remorseful criminals are all examples of the penitent archetype.

Regain Willpower whenever you feel that you have achieved absolution for a given grievance.

Perfectionist

Perfectionist archetypes demand the best. A half - hearted job gives the perfectionist no satisfaction and expects the same degree of commitment and attention to detail from others that she demands from herself. Although the perfectionist may be strict and exacting, the achievement of the end goal drives her - and often those for whom she is responsible. Prima donnas and artists are examples of the perfectionists.

Regain Willpower whenever you accomplish your goal without any demonstrable flaw or impediment.

Rebel

You are malcontent, iconoclast and free thinker. You are so independently thinking and free willed that at times you are unwilling to join any particular cause or movement. You are just yourself and only desire the freedom to be yourself. You do not make a good follower and aren't usually a very good leader, either, unless your followers are willing to follow you wherever you may lead. You tend to be insubordinate to authority even to the point of stupidity.

Regain Willpower whenever your rebellion against the status quo turns out for the best

Rogue

Only one thing matters to the rogue; himself. To each his own, and if others cannot protect their claims, they have no right to them. The rogue is not necessarily a thug or bully, however. He simply refuses to succumb to the whims of others. Rogues almost universally possess a sense of self sufficiency. They have their best interests in mind at all times. Prostitutes, capitalists and criminals all embody the rogue archetype.

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Nature and Demeanor

Regain Willpower whenever your self - centered disposition leads you to profit material or otherwise.

Royalty

You was always brought up knowing and taught that you was better than everyone else. Whether your family has been royalty for generations or that you just know that you are better than everyone else, you just act and talk this because this is how you are, Better! You have an air of superiority wherever you go. Everyone around you is beneath you and there for not as good as you. Kings princes and royalty all usually tend to have this archetype.

Regain Willpower anytime you show how royal you are and others understand that they are not as important as you are.

Survivor

No matter what, you always manage to survive. You can endure, pull through, recover from, outlast, and outlive nearly any circumstance. When the going gets tough you get going. You never say die and never give up. Never. Nothing angers you more than someone who doesn't struggle to survive and to make things better, or someone who surrenders to the nameless forces of the universe.

Regain Willpower whenever you survive a difficult situation through your own cunning and perseverance.

Thrill - Seeker

The Thrill - Seeker lives for the rush brought on by danger. Unlike those of arguably saner disposition, the Thrill - Seeker actively pursues hazardous and possibly deadly situations. The Thrill - Seeker is not consciously suicidal or self destructive - he simply seeks out stimulation of imminent disaster. Petty thieves and exhibitionists are both examples of the Thrill - Seeker archetype.

Regain Willpower whenever you succeed at a dangerous task you have deliberately undertaken.

Traditionalist

What was good enough for you when you were young is definitely good enough for you now. You are orthodox, conservative, and an extremely traditional fellow or lady. You almost never change. In general, you oppose change for the sake of change; after all, what good is that? You may be seen by some as a miser or an old fogey, but you almost always strive to preserve the status quo.

Regain Willpower whenever you are able to protect the status quo or prevent change.

Trickster

The trickster finds absurd in everything. No matter how grim life may become, the Trickster always uncovers a kernel of humor within it. Tricksters cannot abide sorrow or pain, and so they strive to lighten spirits of those around them. Some Tricksters even have higher ideals, challenging static dogma by exposing its failures in humorous ways. Comedians and social critics are both examples of the Trickster.

Regaining Willpower anytime you manage to lift others spirits especially if you are able to deny your own pain in the process.

Visionary

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There are very few who are brave enough, strong enough, or imaginative enough to look beyond the suffocating embrace of modern day society and mundane thought and see something more. Society treats people such as you with both respect and contempt, for it is the visionary who perverts as well as guides society into the future. You see beyond the bounds of conventional imagination and create new possibilities. Though you might have your head in the clouds and are often of an impractical bent, you are filled with new ideas and perceptions.

Regain Willpower whenever you are able to convince others to believe in your dreams and follow the course of your actions outlined by your vision of the future.



DAWN

Chapter 5

Attributes

Attributes:

Attributes are qualities that every living being has to some degree. Each attribute is assigned a dot rating between 1 and 6, with 1 being the lowest and 6 being heroic in nature. A being with no dot is either dead, suffering from a severe form of supernatural curse, or something of that nature. A rating of 2 dots is average for most beings. For this game, Dawn, there are 9 basic attributes. I'll try to explain them as best I can here. They are broken down into 3 categories: Physical, Mental, and Social. Physical attributes are strength, dexterity, and stamina. Mental are perception, intelligence, and wits. Social are charisma, manipulation, and appearance. Once an attribute has 4 dots in it you may choose a specialty for your attribute. However, only 1 specialty can be chosen per attribute. Unlike all other specialties, attribute specialties cost nothing. By assigning an attribute specialty, whenever you roll your attribute using your specialty, you can re-roll any 10 you get. For example: Let's say in manipulation you specialize in charming, so anytime you are trying to be charming you may re-roll any 10's in the roll. At character creation, everyone starts out with one dot in every attribute, then they fill in dots past the first dot using their starting points .



Physical Attributes

The physical attributes measure qualities of the body such as strength, speed, coordination, resilience, and so forth, and are explained below.

Strength:

Strength is a character's innate muscle power, governing how much he can lift and how hard he can hit things. Strength is the attribute that provides damage dice for most combat feats, as well as for leaps, shoves, brawling and the like.

- O Poor; You can lift 40 pounds
- OO Average; You can lift 100 pounds
- OOO Good; You can lift 250 pounds

- OOOO Exceptional; You can lift 400 pounds
- OOOOO Outstanding; You can lift 650 pounds
- OOOOOO Heroic; You can lift 800 pounds

Dexterity

Dexterity covers the qualities of physical prowess apart from strength, such as speed, agility, coordination, and so on. Dexterity also affects such things as your ability to hit things at a distance and your ability to move gracefully, such as sneaking and balancing on narrow walkways.

- O Poor; You are always awkward and often clumsy (no running with scissors)
- OO Average; You get through life without too many embarrassing accidents
- OOO Good; You move with notable grace and can do well at most athletic feats
- OOOO Exceptional; You could be a professional acrobat or tumbler
- OOOOO Outstanding; You have the catlike reflexes and grace of a ninja
- OOOOOO Heroic; You move with the reflexes and grace of the gods themselves

Stamina

Stamina includes overall physical health and well being, including toughness and resilience. Characters with high stamina can take more damage in and out of combat, and they recover more quickly when they do sustain injury.

- O Poor; Your existence is a constant parade of minor and major maladies.
- OO Average; You're of decent health
- OOO Good; You seldom succumb to illnesses sweeping around you
- OOOO Exceptional; You keep going in the face of challenges that exhaust others
- OOOOO Outstanding; You regularly do all-nighters without consequence
- OOOOOO Heroic; Disease, what's that? The cold? I've never heard of these things

Social Attributes

Social attributes measure how well a character deals with others in various ways. They encompass her appearance, charm, ability to master social graces, and so forth. Social attributes provide the dice rolls to make a good first impression, charm, or cow others, and understand what's happening in one's community

Charisma

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Charisma is the mysterious quality that lets one person impress and please others through the force of his or her personality. Charisma plays a part in efforts to win others' trust and sympathy, and to bring them into alignment with the character's own plans and goals.

- O Poor; Even your best moments contain many gaffes
- OO Average; You seldom give unintended offense
- OOO Good; People trust you and enjoy your company
- OOOO Exceptional; You naturally lead whatever group you happen to be in
- OOOOO Outstanding; You have the confidence to walk in and out of high society
- OOOOOO Heroic; Faux pas, what's that? The gods call upon you for etiquette advice

Manipulation

Manipulation is the quality of expressing oneself in ways to get others to agree with your own views and ideas. It represents your ability to get others to agree with you even if they don't trust you. Where charisma brings allegiance, manipulation brings obedience in the present moment, with or without lasting affiliation. Manipulation isn't necessarily dishonest. People can and do use theatrical tricks in the service of causes they genuinely believe in.

- O Poor; You have a hard time sounding sincere even when you truly are
- OO Average; You can persuade and be persuaded just as easily as anyone else
- OOO Good; You are accustomed to getting your way
- OOOO Exceptional; You have the makings of a preacher
- OOOOO Outstanding; Your words can start riots or end them
- OOOOOO Heroic; Your words move all that hear them to your aid and cause

Appearance

Appearance is the sum of all factors that make an individual attractive to others. Physical beauty is part of this attribute, but so are one's implicit attitudes; the subtle cues of body movement, poise, and many other less obvious features.

- O Poor; You are butt-ugly
- OO Average; You're inconspicuous
- OOO Good; You attract favorable attention almost everywhere you go
- OOOO Exceptional; You stand out in any crowd for good or for ill

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Attributes

OOOOO Outstanding; You have never gone home without a date

OOOOOO Heroic; The Goddess Aphrodite is your ugly kid sister



Mental Attributes

Mental attributes are qualities of the mind such as reasoning, memory, intuition and sharpness of the senses. These are as much a matter of understanding what the senses tell one as the quality of the sensory organs themselves. Depending on the individual, high mental attributes can represent wide-ranging genius or more focused cleverness.

Perception

Perception is the ability to accurately sense one's environment. It combines keen senses with the intuitive grasp of what may or may not be significant, without needing to pause for labored analysis. It contributes to efforts at concealment and finding what others have concealed, as well as preparing for and defending against ambushes, and interpreting clues.

- O Poor; You may be bright, but you are self-absorbed or inattentive
- OO Average; Subtlety may elude you, but you don't miss the obvious
- OOO Good; You are aware of your environment without having to concentrate on it
- OOOO Exceptional; Little remains hidden from you when you want to find it
- OOOOO Outstanding; You see all things clearly
- OOOOOO Heroic; The book of the world opens every page unto you

Intelligence

Intelligence includes your character's ability to master facts and knowledge recall them at need and put them together to produce new insights. Problem solving and logic lie within the domain of this attribute. It does not include common sense moral judgment or other useful qualities and the clever but inept scholar is as much a medieval stereotype as the modern one. Depending on the individual low intelligence may indicate actual impairment in mental faculties or poor use of one's potential.

- O Poor; If you're not actually a halfwit, you at least have one wit
- OO Average; You've got average smarts, and go through life without too much bewilderment
- OOO Good; You're insightful and can count on making sense of many mysteries
- OOOO Exceptional; You learn much, forget little, and routinely make discoveries
- OOOOO Outstanding; You have written several books on the principles and theories of science
- OOOOOO Heroic; You're a latter day Solomon or Odysseus

Wits

Wits is the capacity for quick thinking, not necessarily for brilliant intellectual reasoning, or even for careful appraisal of the environment, but for rapid response based on available information and survival instinct. It also contributes to more deliberate efforts, such as identifying clever courses of action

Chapter 5 Attributes

and ways around others' defenses, and recalls precisely the necessary information at key moments.

- O Poor; Your jokes fall short on almost every occasion
- OO Average; You get through life without too many unpleasant surprises
- OOO Good; You're quick on the comebacks and you often get the best of others
- OOOO Exceptional; You're the one that makes others think "I wish I'd thought of that"
- OOOOO Outstanding; You are very rarely left speechless
- OOOOOO Heroic; You have the psalmist's gift for the appropriate response to every occasion

As always, these cannot encompass every single thing in the game, but they should encompass a large majority of them. As I have said before, if you don't like something change it, but the storyteller or game master has final say.





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Chapter 6

Abilities

Abilities

Abilities measure your character's capacity to undertake specific kinds of tasks. Whereas attributes measure raw potential in broad fields, each ability is a much more focused area of knowledge or expertise. Abilities let your character use his potential most effectively, and compensate for underlying deficiencies in some cases. A weak but experienced knife fighter can make mincemeat out of a big burly opponent who has no clue how to fight well. For instance, a priest who lacks personal charisma, but understands the principles of rhetoric can defeat a charming, but unskilled opponent in debate. Most abilities can be broken down into wider areas called expertise, and can be broken down into even narrower categories using specialties. These listed are only some of the possible abilities available. If by chance you see one that you want to change, or something that you want that isn't listed and doesn't fit under any of the listed ones, then by all means change it, add to it, or delete it to get the character you are wanting to play. After all, this is fantasy.

Specialties and Variations

Specialties

Most abilities, with the exceptions noted in their respective descriptions, start out with a common body of lore, with many variations and separate branches available depending on a character's culture and circumstances. Specialties measure this property in game mechanics. When your character has a relevant specialty you start out with the number of dots in the respective ability but instead of the maximum of 4 dots per ability, you can raise it to a maximum of 6, plus you get to re-roll any 10s in any task that involves that specialty. You purchase ability specialties only after you have at least 3 dots in the main ability, at the cost listed in the chart in Chapter 11, Character Experience. You can only have 2 specialties in any given ability, and no more than 1 can apply to any die roll. You cannot start the game with any specialties.

Variations

Many abilities have many variations instead of specialties. In these cases the abilities have many different disciplines in a related field like anatomy, biology, and mathematics, all listed under science. Each of these must be purchased separately, like a brand new ability, and cost the usual points as listed in Chapter 11, Character Experience.

Acting without the given ability

There is bound to be a time when you want to use your character to do something that uses an ability your character just doesn't have. What, then, do you do? Does the fact that you don't have the sword weapon proficiency mean you can never use a sword? Not at all. But the fact that you didn't spend any points in medicine does mean your character doesn't have much hope at treating a villager's disease. It's actually when you don't have an ability that the difference between talents, skills and knowledge's become clear. Talents are relatively easy to do by the seat of your pants, skills are harder, and knowledge's are damn near impossible. When you need to roll an ability + attribute combination and you don't have the ability in question, you roll the attribute alone. That roll is modified depending on what category the missing ability falls into.

Missing Talent - +1 to difficulty number

Missing Skill - +2 to difficulty number

Missing Knowledge - +3 to difficulty number

Talents

Talents are matters of innate aptitude, requiring no training to develop, and they improve primarily through experience. Characters get better at them only by doing them regularly. It's possible to attempt actions related to talents that a character doesn't possess. The player simply rolls the character's attribute dice pool without the benefit of a talent based dice pool, but with a slight penalty. Everyone possesses a rudimentary grasp of each talent even without the minimal competence required for one dots worth.

Acting

You are practiced at feigning emotions, beliefs, or a certain frame of mind. If the situation calls for it, you can easily play the role of someone rather different from yourself. You are able to feign tears, anger, friendliness and virtue.

O Novice: A rank amateur. You can feign being sick

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Abilities

OO Practiced; You may have been in a play or two as a child

OOO Competent; You could earn a job with a traveling troupe

OOOO Expert; You could play a part well for days on end

Specialties: Pretend, Inspirational, Feign Emotions, Religious Awe, Mimicry

Alertness

Over the years you have become practiced in noticing all that happens around you, even if you are not actively concentrating upon the surroundings. This talent does not dictate the ability to search a specific area, but rather the ability to stay alert for long periods of time. Alertness simply indicates how aware you are of your surroundings. It describes how much attention you pay to things other than the rumblings of your own belly or the doubts in your mind.

O Novice; You tend to be alert to major things happening to you

OO Practiced; You are watchful and very attentive to your surroundings

OOO Competent; You are highly vigilant

OOOO Expert; You are truly a cautious individual and very rarely let your guard down

Specialties: Ambushes, Traps, Forests, Crowds, Noises, Paranoia

Animal Ken

Animals do not behave the same as humans do under the same circumstances. The ability to understand the actions of animals can come in quite handy. Those characters with this talent can not only predict the actions of animals, but can use it to enrage or quiet them down, as well as use it to train them.

O Novice; You can befriend a domesticated animal

OO Practiced; You can housebreak a puppy

OOO Competent; You could train a Seeing Eye dog

OOOO Expert; You have trained several hunting hawks

Specialties: Dogs, Cats, Horses, Etc.

Athletics

This talent dictates your general athletic prowess at various sports and physical games. It determines your ability to jump across a stream, swim through a storm, vault a fence or climb a tree. Athletics concerns complex motor actions. Physical activities requiring only one motor action, such as lifting, do not use the athletics talent score, nor do athletic actions classified under another ability, such as wrestling, which would be under the brawl skill.

O Novice; Serf

- OO Practiced; Squire
- OOO Competent; Trained knight
- OOOO Expert; Skilled juggler or tumbler

Specialty: Swimming, Juggling, Tumbling, Skiing

Empathy

You understand and can sympathize with the emotions of others and are thus able to respond to them appropriately. You can often discern the motives behind someone's actions by simply listening to him or her. You can also detect when you are being told lies. There is a downside to this, as occasionally you are so open to the feelings of those around you that sometimes your own emotions mirror those of any crowd you may be in.

- O Novice; Gossipy widows feel they can trust you
- OO Practiced; Occasionally you get sympathetic pains from others
- OOO Competent; You have an amazing insight into others' motivations
- OOOO Expert; No lies ever get past your scrutiny

Specialties: Emotions, Truths, Personalities

Enigmas

You understand the totally mysterious. Through a combination of insight, trivia and intuition, you can piece together seemingly meaningless images or words. Riddles, puzzles, cryptograms and codes present less of a problem than they might to the average mind.

- O Novice; You can win a local riddle contest
- OO Practiced; Uncommon symbols are clear to you
- OOO Competent; Stumping bards is your favorite pastime
- OOOO Expert; You could interpret the declaration of independence

Specialties: Riddles, Logic, Theology, Symbols

Leadership

People look to you to take charge. With a firm voice and unflappable calm, you give orders and retain grace under stress. Leadership is more than a steady hand in battle, however; a good commander understands tact, strategy and timing. Combined with charisma and manipulation, your skill turns the tide in many conflicts, military or otherwise.

- O Novice; You could lead a hunting party

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- OO Practiced; You are the unofficial spokesman of the group
- OOO Competent; Others look to you for guidance
- OOOO Expert; You inspire the masses to do great or terrible things

Specialties: Military, Commands, Matters of Faith, Nobility



Music

You can create and play music and you know how to play one or more instruments. Of course, the higher dots you have, the more instruments you can play and the better you are at playing them. This is also the ability for making music; the higher your ability the better your musical ability

- O Novice; You can carry a tune and plunk out a melody or two
- OO Practiced; Your voice stands out during a choir
- OOO Competent; You could make a decent living as a traveling bard
- OOOO Expert; Your skill is haunting and memorable

Specialties: Harp, Lyre, Lute, Lyrics, Composition, Bawdy Songs

Stealth

Chapter 6 Abilities

Stealth is the ability to sneak around or hide without being seen or heard, and is often rolled against another character's perception.

- O Novice; You can hide in the dark
- OO Practiced; You can hide in the shadows
- OOO Competent; You are an accomplished hunter
- OOOO Expert; You could walk quietly over 2 inches of dried leaves

Specialties: Prowl, Hide, Lurk, Crowds

Subterfuge

You know how to conceal your own motives. Moreover, you know how to decipher the motives of others and how to use those motives against them. The secrets and intrigues of others interest you, and you work at understanding their weaknesses. The command of this ability makes you the ultimate conversationalist or the ultimate spy.

- O Novice; You understand tact
- OO Practiced; You could hold out on the tax collector
- OOO Competent; You could woo two women at once
- OOOO Expert; You could, with time, convince your archenemy to trust you

Specialty: Finding Weaknesses, Seduction, Fast Talk, Flattery

Survival

The wilderness is a dangerous place, at least for those that do not understand it. This ability includes seeking shelter, finding a direct route through the wilderness, and tracking.

- O Novice; You can survive a five mile hike
- OO Practiced; You are familiar with the wilderness
- OOO Competent; You can feed yourself for long periods of time in the wilderness
- OOOO Expert; You are at home in the wilderness

Specialty: Tracking, Desert, Edible Plants, Marsh Hunting

Ride/Drive

You are able to ride comfortably on a mount, and with practice might be able to fight from horseback. You can also tell the rough value of a horse, are familiar with its tack, and can spot obvious

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ailments and defects. You can also drive a chariot or wagon and steer a drawn cart with practice. You could probably win a race if you really tried.

- O Novice; Hang on, shut up and don't try to gallop
- OO Practiced; You can gallop, clear small jumps, etc
- OOO Competent; You can compete in jousting tourneys without problem
- OOOO Expert; You're perfectly at home in the saddle and could ride for weeks without any discomfort

Specialty: Chariot, Mounted Combat, Trick Riding, Forest, Jumping



Skills

Skills are all the abilities learned through practice and rigorous training. If you try to use a skill, but have no training in it, the difficulty number goes up by two. You are simply untrained in that skill and thus have a harder time accomplishing the task than someone who at least has some idea of what he or she is doing.

Brawl

Your bare hands are weapons. Kicking, scratching, punching, biting, grappling; all come easily to you.

- O Novice; The local ruffians practice on you

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- OO Practiced; The local ruffians leave you alone
- OOO Competent; You are the local ruffian
- OOOO Expert; You can knock a man out with one punch

Specialties: Boxing, Grappling, Barroom Brawls, Martial Arts.

Crafts

Craft skills are simply the professional skills most people use to make a living and to survive. Once this skill is chosen, you must pick a variation. Some possible variations are blacksmithing, farming, carpentry, tanning, brewing, mining, etc.

- O Novice; An apprentice or part time worker
- OO Practiced; Newly qualified craftsman
- OOO Competent; An experienced professional
- OOOO Expert; A respected master craftsman

Variations: Armour Crafter, Weapon Crafter, Goldsmith, Jeweler

Weapon Proficiencies

A person trained in a specific area of expertise with a weapon gains a certain degree of expertise with that broad category of weapons. Most of the weapon proficiencies are fairly self-explanatory. Axes include anything from simple hand axes to 2-handed battle axes. Blunt includes anything from a table leg to a mace to a 2-handed war hammer. Knife includes knives, daggers, and stilettos. Miscellaneous is for any weapon you decide you want to try for such as kitchen utensils. Archery includes any weapon that has to have ammunition fired from it, such as bows, crossbows, slings, and slingshots. Pole arms include such things as bardiche, glaive, voulge, and lance. Shield includes all shields and the skill in using a shield in unison with a weapon. Spears/Forks include hunting spears, tridents, pitchforks, javelins. Staves include wooden staves, iron shod staff, and quarterstaff. Swords include long sword, short sword, bastard sword, broad sword, cutlass, great sword, flamberge, falchion, rapier, and claymore. Finally, thrown includes hand axe, dagger, throwing stars, throwing spikes, and rocks.

- O Novice; You've seen a knife fight or two
- OO Practiced; Peasant militia
- OOO Competent; Practiced knight
- OOOO Expert; Any weapon in your grasp is deadly

Specialty: Long Sword, Battle Axe, War Hammer, Long Bow, Knife, Large Shield, Lance

Knowledge

Knowledge's include all abilities that require rigorous application of the mind rather than the body,

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so nothing but mental and social attributes should be used to modify knowledge die rolls. Though the ratings discuss knowledge's in terms of colleges and degrees, school is not the only way to gain knowledge; it is simply the most common. These are scholastic abilities for the most part, but self-study and tutoring is also possible. In most cases, if you do not have knowledge, it is impossible to even attempt a roll that involves it. There are exceptions however, such as when the storyteller rules that the roll deals with trivial information that anyone has a chance of knowing. However, in such a case there is a plus three difficulty to the attempt.

Academics

You can read and write your native tongue and have been taught some theology and philosophy. This is the standard medieval education and requires that you have attended some sort of college or school. A high rating indicates that you can probably read and write several languages, and probably went to a university. This education did not come cheap and most likely you or someone in your family was very rich to afford your education. Remember that most people in medieval times were illiterate.

- O Novice; You can read and write your native tongue
- OO Practiced; Your grammar is excellent and you have a good grounding in math as well
- OOO Competent; You can probably read and write 2 or more languages
- OOOO Expert; You are qualified to teach in any school and know many languages

Variations: Latin, Theology, German, Slavic

Commerce

Commerce is the ability to bring goods to market, and all such action entails. This includes the ability to know the worth of certain goods in a certain area, to know who would want such things, knowledge of trade routes and fairs, and the skill at negotiating prices and such. You can use commerce to evaluate any market and use it to negotiate and haggle over pretty much anything. In the dark medieval times, there is a shady line between legitimate and illegitimate goods, and this ability can be used for anything from buying a round of cheese to hiring a mercenary to soliciting a prostitute. As such, commerce sometimes calls into effect the shadier side of life, that which modern people might call streetwise.

- O Novice; You can get a fair price when bringing fall harvest to market
- OO Practiced; You can broker exchanges and know who in your vicinity deals in what
- OOO Competent; You can make a good living as a merchant
- OOOO Expert; You could make a deal for the Devil's soul, if he had one

Specialties: Clothing, Crops, Mercenaries, Relics, Slaves, Stolen Goods

Culture

If you can understand culture you can predict how people will behave; a useful skill when you

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want something from a foreigner. A wellspring of beliefs, mores, taboos and politics; culture presents a picture of a people. Those with proper training can master those secrets.

- O Novice; You know a few names from far off lands
- OO Practiced; Folklore gives you a muddled picture
- OOO Competent; Though your perceptions are a bit off you manage to understand most concepts
- OOOO Expert; You pick up foreign customs easily

Specialties: Religions, Taboos, Heathens

Etiquette

You understand the small nuances of social life and are able to conduct yourself accordingly in a manner that is unobtrusive and gracious. You understand how to get along well with society whether it is courtly or rustic.

- O Novice; You know when to shut up
- OO Practiced; You know how to address the local lords of the land
- OOO Competent; You understand the nuances of courtly behavior
- OOOO Expert; You get along well with just about anybody

Specialties: Courtly Manners, Street Culture, Peasants, Barroom

Herbalism

An important thing in the dark medieval world, this knowledge covers the identification and preparation of herbs for cooking, healing and harming. You can find, prepare, blend and preserve herbs for any of these purposes.

- O Novice; You watched your mother prepare herbs
- OO Practiced; You learned all your mother and grandmother knew
- OOO Competent; Village expert
- OOOO Expert; People come from surrounding areas to buy your herbs and remedies

Specialties: Culinary, Medicinal, Poisons, Narcotics

Investigation

You are trained to notice all sorts of details that others might miss, and at high levels may function as a detective. This ability lets your character do research through libraries, word of mouth, and through questioning of suspects.

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O Novice; You would notice the footprints on the stable floor

OO Practiced; You can get information by buying a few drinks

000 Competent; You can tell an accidental fire from a deliberate one

0000 Expert; You could be a latter day Sherlock Holmes

Specialties: Search, Locate, Interrogate, Shadowing

Larceny

You know how to steal - no mean feat considering that the punishment if caught is mutilation and probably death. Since criminals tend to stick together, you probably know others of your kind and understand their shady ways. The street patois makes sense to you and you know how to find the lairs of thieves. A character with larceny has picked up a few tricks of the trade such as purse cutting, picking pockets, beggary, mugging, etc.

O Novice; You are a lowlife with sticky fingers

OO Practiced; Street urchin

000 Competent; Seasoned thief

0000 Expert; A skilled member of the underworld aristocracy

Specialties: Street Slang, Robbery, Spying, Forgery, Pick pocketing

Law

The gods decreed an order to creation. Consequently you have made the law your passion. You know its intricacies and can recite them at will. Obviously, different towns have different laws, but your learning has given you the basic common strains between each law and the classic examples. This can also be used to find loopholes in laws as well.

O Novice; Knowledgeable as city watchman

OO Practiced; Knowledgeable as local sheriff

000 Competent; Knowledgeable as court bailiff

0000 Expert; Knowledgeable as Johnny Cochran

Specialties: Local Laws, Religious law, Weaseling, Loop Holes, Courts

Linguistics

The wise man understands many tongues. Linguistics involves more than the memorization of words and phrases its the ability to understand the basic structure of communication recognize and mimic accents and speech and fathom the effect of language on thought. When picking this ability you must pick an immediate variation. Each new variation still costs as usual. For each additional language keep one dot in linguistics for up to four dots but each new language starts out at one dot as a variation.

O Novice; you can speak one additional language

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- OO Practiced; you can speak two additional languages
- OOO Competent; you can speak three additional languages
- OOOO Expert; you can speak four additional languages

Variations: Arabic, Slavic, Hebrew, Various Asian, Latin, Greek

Medicine

Despite vaunted claims of surgeons medieval medicine is very primitive nevertheless with this ability you can patch someone together stop their wound from bleeding usually cleanse a wound remove a limb usually with the patient surviving soothe a fever deliver a child.

- O Novice; you can bandage a wound
- OO Practiced; minor wounds and sickness are not beyond your care
- OOO Competent; your patients usually survive
- OOOO Expert; you understand new and radical procedures and can use them with skill

Specialties: Surgery, Plagues, Battleground wounds, Colds and flues, Diseases

Occult

You know the ways of the invisible world and can reel off endless accounts from folklore and arcane texts to back up your suspicions. This ability has little to do with actual magic instead it has to do with recognizing the many curses enchantments forbidden lore ancient legends and hidden esoteric. Some of what you know is true a lot of it is false and a good deal of it is both.

- O Novice; you have heard tales
- OO Practiced; grandmother told you many things
- OOO Competent; you know more truths than falsehoods
- OOOO Expert; All to close to the fires of the inquisition

Specialties: Folk tales, werewolf, vampires, warding rites, Pagan wisdom, Cults

Science

To you creation has solid underpinnings provable facts with which one can move the world. Naturally your understanding differs considerably from 20 Th century science.

- O Practiced; an apprentice to a monk or other scholarly fellow
- OO Practiced; a serious fellow

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000 Competent; you can design your own inventions

0000 Expert; you could argue with Leonardo himself

Specialties: Astronomy, Engineering, Anatomy, Biology, Mathematics, Metallurgy, Navigation

Naturally speaking this cannot be a listing of ever-single ability you could ever want or that is possible in the dark medieval age. There should be ample space on your character sheet for you and the storyteller to come up with others after all this is a game for you to have fun and if its something that doesn't make sense or that you would rather see a different ability or one that you made up if the storyteller and you both agree than change it have fun is the main purpose. Most of this system is based off of white wolf dark ages books and world of darkness s storyteller system I am only changing and adapting things to fit a fantasy game.





Dawn

Chapter 7

Merits and Flaws



Physical Merits and Flaws

Acute Sense - 1 point merit

One of your senses is extremely sharp - be it sight, hearing, smell, touch or taste. The difficulties for all tasks involving the use of this particular sense are reduced by two.

Ambidextrous - 1 point merit

You have a high degree of off hand dexterity and can perform tasks with the wrong hand at no

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penalty. You must still use the rules for using multiple actions, but will not suffer a penalty if, say, you use two weapons, or are forced to use your off hand. If using two weapons at once, however, one must be a smaller weapon(2 ft. or less), such as a knife or hand axe.

Armor Proficiency - 5 point merit

You are highly adept at wearing armor of all types, and as such, you reduce all difficulties related to stealth and dexterity by two points.

Bad Sight - 1 point flaw

Your sight is defective. The difficulty number for all rolls involving vision are increased by two. This could be due to near sightedness, far sightedness, or just plain bad sight.

Blind - 6 point flaw

You automatically fail in any roll involving sight. The world of sight and color is gone to you.

Bad Teeth - 1 point flaw

You have a case of bad teeth. Whether they are all crooked, missing teeth, or are green and oozing, there is something wrong with your teeth. You are at a plus one to the difficulty roll on any social roll in which you are attempting to use your looks to sway or coerce anyone.

Catlike Balance - 2 point merit

You possess an innately perfect sense of balance. Characters with this merit reduce the difficulty of all balance related rolls, such as walking on a narrow branch of a tree, by two.

Child - 4 point flaw

You are a small child. You have yet to grow up, making some social circumstances very difficult, if not downright impossible. You may not have more than 2 dots in physical attributes, and the difficulty for all die rolls where you attempt to lead or direct adults is increased by two.

Disfigured - 2 point flaw

A hideous disfigurement makes your appearance disturbing and memorable. The difficulties for all die rolls relating to social interaction are increased by two. You may not have an appearance greater than two.

Deaf - 4 point flaw

You cannot hear. You automatically fail at any roll involving hearing and the difficulty of any alertness rolls is increased by 3.

Deformity - 1 to 3 point flaw

You have some sort of deformity; a misshapen limb, hunchback, club foot, one leg shorter than the other, or perhaps a severe form of Elephantitis which affects your physical abilities and interactions with others. A hunchback, for example, would lower the character's dexterity by one and increase the difficulty of social rolls by 2. The storyteller or game master has the final say.

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Dual Weapon Mastery - 5 point merit

Your skill with weapons has been honed to such a degree that you can wield any one-handed weapon, regardless of size, in each hand, with no penalty. Furthermore, while each weapon attack is rolled separately, the two weapons are considered one attack for purposes of multiple actions. Thus, with one action you can use both weapons to attack a target. Penalties for multiple targets still apply, though. You must be a man at arms to take this merit.

Elderly - 4 point flaw

You are older and considered an elder in most societies. Increase all your soak difficulties to 7 instead of 6, and increase all your wound level penalties by one.

Huge Size - 4 point merit

You are large by every standard. You add at least 1 foot to your height and 100 pounds or more to your weight. This does not mean that you are any stronger than anyone else, it just means that you are quite a bit bigger. You gain two extra wound levels.

Hale - 2 point merit

You are in good health and rarely, if ever, take to sick. Subtract two from all difficulties to resist disease, whether natural or supernatural in origin.

Hard of Hearing - 1 pt flaw

Your hearing is defective. The difficulties for all rolls involving hearing are increased by two.

Hairless - 1 point flaw

Your entire body is hairless and you cannot grow any hair. Add one to any social situation rolls where your appearance could be involved.

Hairy - 1 point flaw

Your entire body is excessively hairy and at times you may even look like a Neanderthal. Add one to the difficulty whenever your appearance may be involved in social rolls. You are also very flammable.

Lame - 1 to 3 point flaw

Your legs are damaged, which prevents you from running or walking easily. You are forced to walk with a cane or a staff, and have a pronounced limp to your walk. Your walking speed is one quarter of the normal speed and running is impossible.

Leper - 7 point flaw

You suffer from leprosy. Your appearance may never be higher than 2 and your flesh is marred by sores, scars, puss filled scabs, rashes and so on. Most authorities refuse you entry into any city, and those who look upon you do so with disgust. Those that are hit with your puss juices must make a stamina roll against a difficulty of 8 or they will get the dreaded disease. All social roll difficulties are increased by 3.

Male Pattern Baldness - 2 point flaw

Your head is either partially bald or you have very thin and wispy hair. Perhaps you have a heavily receding hairline, or you have the pronounced horse shoe hairline. Any social difficulty rolls involving your appearance are increased by 1.

Monstrous - 3 point flaw

Your Physical form was twisted upon birth. Characters with this flaw may appear as savage or disgusting monsters, and they have an appearance rating of 1. All social difficulty rolls involving appearance are increased by 3.

Muscular Physique / Barbie Doll Physique - 1 point merit

You have the physique of a bodybuilder or an underwear model. If male, you are ripped with muscles, and if female, this means you have all the right curves and the figure of a goddess. Although this does not affect your strength rating, you appear as though you are very strong.

Mute - 4 point flaw

You cannot speak. You may communicate with the storyteller and describe your actions, but you cannot talk to players or storyteller characters unless everyone uses linguistics dots to purchase a commonly understood sign language, or you write down what you wish to say, in which case somebody in the party must be able to read that language.

Obese - 2 point flaw

You are overweight, weighing an extra 100 plus pounds. This added weight makes you winded in half the time, and you are half as fast on movement as well. you gain one extra wound level due to the blubber, though.

One Eye - 2 point flaw

One of your eyes is either dead or gone. If still in your skull, it may wonder around and make it very hard for people to tell exactly what it is you are looking at. You are at one higher difficulty number on any depth perception rolls. Also, you must add one number to any social roll where your appearance may be a factor.

Pain Resistant - 2 point merit

You are extremely resistant to pain. Whenever you take damage you always use the wound modifiers at a level higher than what you should have. meaning if you are at -2 you would be at -1 instead.

Repugnant Odor - 2 point flaw

You have a foul smell about you that is constant. Whether it is from sweating or you just smell, it is always around you. For any roll that could involve your smell, such as tracking or a social roll, the difficulty number is raised by 2. For example, you are at a +2 difficulty when trying to sway someone's opinion face to face in a social situation, or someone who is trying to track you with dogs is at a -2 difficulty roll.

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Merits and Flaws



Short - 1 point flaw

You are short. You are at least 1 foot shorter than the average person, possibly more. You will have problems finding armor and clothing to fit you, and you will also find problems with weapons and such, due to your short stature.

Smell of the Grave - 1 point flaw

You smell and look like you should be dead. A lot of the times you may be mistaken for a vampire, due to the pale color of your skin and the smell about your body as if you just came out of the grave. You are at +2 to difficulty on all social rolls involving your looks.

Slow Healing - 3 point flaw

Anytime you are hurt it takes you twice as long to heal up; even when bruised it takes you that long. Supernatural healing takes twice as much to heal you.

Trick Knee - 2 point flaw

Chapter 7 Merits and Flaws

You have a knee that at certain times may go out on you. Usually it is up to the game master or storyteller, but it will randomly have a chance of just going out on you. When this happens you cannot put any pressure on it due to the fact that the leg will not hold you. In game terms, you will have to roll willpower versus difficulty 6 to see if your knee gives out on you, and when it does it will be for anywhere from a few minutes to a few weeks.

Weak Lungs - 2 point flaw

Whether because of a birth defect, or a condition such as asthma, you become winded easily. Increase difficulty numbers by 1 on all sustained physical activities such as running, prolonged combat, climbing, etc.

Mental Merits and Flaws

Amnesia - 2 point flaw

You are unable to remember anything of your past, your family, or yourself, though your past may well come back to haunt you. Your origins and the circumstances behind your amnesia are for the storyteller or game master to decide. They are encouraged to make it as interesting as possible :).

Addiction - 1 to 3 point flaw

You have an addiction. It could be a small one, such as for sweets, or it could be a heroin addiction. Either way, anytime you are around it you must roll willpower against difficulty of 8 or be overcome by your addiction.

Absent-Minded - 2 point flaw

You are very forgetful of everything except for what you are currently doing or thinking. Anytime you have to try to remember something you should roll intelligence against difficulty of 8.

Common Sense - 1 point merit

You have a significant amount of practical everyday wisdom. Whenever the character is about to act or do something in a way contrary to common sense, the storyteller can make suggestions and comments, or give warnings to the character about the implication of the said actions. This is a very useful merit to give to beginning characters who are unfamiliar with the game.

Concentration - 2 point merit

You have the ability to focus your mind and shut out any distractions or annoyances. Characters with this merit are unaffected by any penalties stemming from distracting circumstances such as loud noises, hanging upside down, etc.

Compulsive Liar - 1 point flaw

You cannot help yourself; anything you say will probably be a lie. In fact, you must actually make a willpower roll in order to say anything that is truthful to anyone.

Code of Honor - 2 point merit

You have a personal code of ethics to which you adhere. The specifics of this code should be

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Merits and Flaws

worked out with the game master or storyteller prior to play, and the character must follow it strictly. Characters with this merit gain an additional two dice to all willpower rolls when acting in accordance with their code. Whether it is a knights code or a thieves code doesn't matter. They also gain this bonus whenever they must roll to avoid a situation in which they may be forced to violate their code.

Deep Sleeper - 2 point flaw

When you sleep it is very difficult to awaken you, and the difficulty to awaken you is raised by two anytime you want to awaken or someone tries to awaken you.

Deranged - 2 point flaw

Either a pre-existing condition or one caused by trauma has sown madness upon you. You begin play with a serious derangement that dogs you in your existence. It is possible to rid oneself of this through play, though it is a long and arduous task. Some possible derangements are Amnesia, Catatonia (withdraw from the world when in times of stress), Fantasy, Hysteria (unable to control their emotions in stressful situation - crying, laughing, etc), Lunacy (it comes and goes in spells), Megalomania (you believe you should lead, no one else but you), Melancholia (you slip into great depression - very easy when your willpower is halved), Multiple personalities, Obsession, Overcompensation, Paranoia, Perfectionism, Regression (in stressful situations they regress and withdraw into a childlike state), Saint Vitus' dance (sufferers of this get involuntary movements of the face and limbs, resulting in a dance-like series of movements, which may last for minutes or for weeks), Visions (players believe they are the recipients of visions from a deity and such.)

Devotion - 1 to 3 point merit

You are completely devoted to service or to reverence of a higher power - be it Odin, Christ or Allah. Once per game session you may pray to your divine patron for aid and guidance. In game terms your character receives 1 to 3 temporary willpower points for the duration of the scene, even if this takes him or her over their maximum.

Eidetic memory - 2 point merit

You remember with perfect detail things seen and heard. Under stressful situations involving numerous distractions, you must make a perceptions and alertness roll, difficulty 6, to summon enough concentration to remember what your senses absorbed.

Epilepsy - 3 point flaw

In stressful situations or times, when you are extremely worn out, say, for example, lack of sleep, you must make a stamina roll against a difficulty of 7 or fall into a seizure lasting anywhere from several seconds to several long minutes.

Faint of heart - 2 point flaw

You are easily sickened by the sight of blood. Whenever you witness a gory scene you must roll willpower against a difficulty of 7. If the roll fails you are overcome with nausea for the next few minutes. This doesn't mean you start vomiting everywhere (unless, of course, you botched your roll) it does mean, however, that until the sickness passes you are at +1 to the difficulty of all your rolls.

Forrest Gump - 2 point flaw

You are a lot like the character in the movie, a real simpleton. Others find it very easy to fool,

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persuade or dupe you. All your rolls are at +2 difficulty to resist when someone is lying to you, trying to tell you something or persuading you into doing something. If someone told you the earth was round you would believe them.

Hypochondriac - 2 point flaw

You constantly believe that you are getting sick. You should constantly see a clergy to try to get aid for whatever ailment you think you are getting at that particular time. You will talk about your ailments at all the wrong times as well.

Homosexual - 2 point flaw

You are gay. If male, you have a sexual preference of men. If female, you have a sexual preference for women. It is very difficult for the opposite sex to excite you, having a +2 to their difficulty number to seduce or attract you. Also, it is easy for the same sex to entice you, having -2 to their difficulty number.

Iron Will -2 point merit

When you are determined and your mind is set upon something, nothing can thwart you from your goals. You receive 3 extra dice whenever rolling to resist any mind altering, swaying magic or spell, or intimidation.

Impotent/Frigid - 2 point flaw

This simply means that you cannot get aroused. Members of the opposite sex have no sway over you, and you are at -2 difficulty to resist their attempts to sway or seduce you through sexual means.

Jack of All Trades - 3 point merit

You get one die to roll for anything you have no skill or dice in. For example, if you are told to roll drive + strength, and you have no dice in drive, you get one die along with your strength dice to roll. However, the penalties for not having the skill are still there.

Kleptomaniac - 3 point flaw

Anytime there is something which you or the game master or storyteller feels is a tempting target for theft, and you don't want to steal it, you must roll willpower against difficulty of 7. If you fail, you must attempt to pilfer that item.

Light Sleeper - 2 point merit

You are very easy to awaken when sleeping. In fact, it is so easy that any time there is a chance (such as noise being made, etc.) that you might awaken, the difficulty is reduced by two.

Nightmares - 1 point flaw

You are plagued by nightmares whenever you sleep. Anytime you sleep, roll one die against a difficulty of 7. If you fail, you awaken screaming and cannot go back to sleep the rest of the night.

Natural Linguist - 3 point merit

You have a flair for languages. You may add three dice to any die pool involving written or spoken languages.

Narcolepsy - 3 point flaw

Having this rare disease means that at anytime you may fall asleep - sometimes even in mid-sentence. You may remain asleep for a few seconds, or for several hours. Anytime the game master or storyteller thinks it's appropriate, roll your stamina against difficulty of 7. If you fail you fall asleep, but if you succeed nothing happens.

Obsessive-Compulsive - 1 to 3 point flaw

You have a compulsive disorder. Whether you always want to straighten your hair (1 point), or you must always clean things (3 points), it is obsessive and drives you. It could be anything at all. Talk to the game master or storyteller prior to the start of the game to decide this. If you want to resist you must roll your willpower (+1 to 3 to the difficulty number depending upon level of the flaw taken).

Pyromaniac - 1 to 3 point flaw

You have a problem with fire. It amazes you and anytime you are around it you feel you must either watch it (1 point), tend to it (2 points), or make it bigger (3 points). Anytime you are around it, roll willpower against difficulty 7.

Paranoid Schizophrenic - 3 point flaw

Every one is out to get you. This constant thought makes it very difficult to think straight and to discern if someone is telling the truth or a lie. You are at +1 difficulty in any social situation, and must roll willpower against difficulty 6. If you fail, you think they are all trying to get you. Is it the king? Your friends? etc. Use your imagination.

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Phobia - 1 to 5 point flaw

You have a fear of something. Whatever it is, you and the game master pick it out. 1 point's worth would be something rarely seen and less likely to have a daily impact, while five points would be something far more common, and much more likely to affect the character on a daily basis. Anytime you are around this thing, animal, etc. roll willpower against difficulty 7. If you fail, you want to get away from it as fast as you can.

Sleepwalker - 1 point flaw

Whenever you are asleep you are at the game master's whim. He will ask you to roll one die, a fate die, against difficulty 7, to see if you start to sleep walk. People have been known to sleep walk out windows, through streets, etc.

Short-Term Memory Loss - 3 point flaw

You have a lot of problems remembering things that were just said, that you were going to say, etc. Anytime you want to remember to say or do something other than what you are currently doing, roll intelligence against difficulty 7.

Time Sense - 1 point merit

With a simple Intelligence roll against a difficulty of 6, you can tell within 5 minutes what time it is wherever you are.

Third Person - 2 point flaw

Whenever your character is speaking to anyone he must talk about himself as if he wasn't there. For example, if your character's name is John and he was asking a barkeep for something to eat, this might be something he would say "Barkeep!! John is hungry and thirsty! Would you mind bringing him some ale and a side of ham? John loves ham hot off the spit!"

Vengeful - 2 point flaw

Anytime someone has wronged you, you feel the overwhelming urge to exact revenge on them as soon as possible, even becoming reckless at times in your desire for revenge. You must roll willpower anytime you are around that person in order to not exact revenge upon them immediately. Until you have exacted your revenge, your thoughts are so focused on it that you suffer a +1 penalty to all difficulties, due to constantly thinking about your revenge.

Well Traveled - 2 point merit

You have been pretty much everywhere. Anytime you are in an area and you are trying to recall something simple about the area, roll intelligence against a difficulty of 6 to see if you can remember something about the area you are in. For example, you are in the town of Thimble. You could roll to see if you remember if there was a tavern anywhere nearby, but not how many people lived there.

Weak-Willed - 2 point flaw

Anytime someone tries to sway you or casts a magic spell to sway you, you are at +2 difficulty to resist it.

Social Merits and Flaws

Canadian - 1 point flaw

Any time you speak, you must end your statements with the phrases "Eh?" or "Don'tcha know?"

Craven Image - 2 point flaw

You have the mannerisms and appearance of being lower than everyone else. Everyone is your superior, and you are their lesser - even the beggar in the street. As such, in any social situation which concerns your station or lineage, such as talking to a prince, arguing with a village elder, etc. all difficulties are increased by 2.

Dark Secret - 1 point flaw

You have some sort of secret that, if uncovered, would be of immense embarrassment to you. This could be anything from having murdered someone to having been caught having sex with a goat.

Enemy - 1 to 5 point flaw

You made an enemy of someone in the past, whether it was the village bully(1 point) or the king of a country(5 points), they may be hunting you or have reward papers posted for your death or capture.

Excessive Drooling - 1 point flaw

You drool and cannot help yourself. Anytime you are trying to impress someone or your appearance is rolled in a social situation, you are at a +1 difficulty.

Enchanting Voice - 2 point merit

Your voice is very melodic and enchanting. Anytime you speak and wish people to pay attention to you, whether it be through song or through yelling, you are at +2 dice to your pool.

Flatulence - 2 point flaw

You have a problem with uncontrollable passing of gas. It is totally random, so anytime the game master or storyteller asks you, you must roll a fate die against a difficulty of 7. If you fail you pass gas, which is always loud and always smells.

Hunted - 1 to 3 point flaw

Somewhere someone has posted a reward for your capture or death. Perhaps bounty hunters search for you, or perhaps you are only wanted in a small town .

Mistaken Identity - 1 to 3 point flaw

You bear an uncanny resemblance to someone of importance. You could resemble a king, prince or town mayor, or you could bear a similarity to a bandit king or outlaw.

Nervous Tic - 1 point flaw

You have a nervous tic. Whether it is a constant shrug of your shoulders or the tilt of your head,

Chapter 7 Merits and Flaws



your condition is very noticeable. You are at +1 difficulty in social situations.

Noble Bearing - 1 point merit

Whether you are commanding men in an army or demanding admittance to a ball, you have the bearing of a noble. As such you add one die to any social roll involving such actions.

Noble Blood - 3 point merit

You are blue-blooded, meaning you were born to nobility, whether you are a king's distant cousin or the son of the lord of a large estate.

Royal Blood - 5 point merit

You have an even higher pedigree than those of noble blood. You could be a king's child or younger sibling, or the Lord of a small, but influential nation.

Natural Leader - 1 point merit

You are a natural leader. Anytime your leadership skills are in question, add one die to your leadership roll.

Oversized Libido - 2 point merit

Chapter 7 Merits and Flaws

You are very well endowed. If male, you have a very large member, and if female, You have exceptionally large breasts. Add one die to any roll to seduce the opposite sex(or same sex, if the target is Homosexual).

Shy - 1 point flaw

You are a very shy person and are very uncomfortable in large groups or crowds. You are at a +1 to all difficulties anytime you are in such situations, due to your shyness.

Soft-Hearted - 1 point flaw

You cannot stand to see anyone hurt or tortured. In fact, you must roll your willpower anytime you see someone getting hurt, or else you will try to subdue the one who is doing the hurting.

Speech Impediment - 1 point flaw

You have a serious stutter, lisp or other such speech problem. As such, you are at +1 difficulty anytime speech or social situations are involved.

Short Fuse - 2 point flaw

You are a ticking time bomb and it doesn't take much for someone or something to piss you off and cause you to fly into a fit of rage. What this means is anytime a stressful situation occurs, such as someone disagreeing with you, or some form of obstacle blocking your progress, you must roll willpower against difficulty 7 or fly into a rage against said person or obstacle.

Ties - 1 to 3 point merit

You have friends in high places. Perhaps the local mayor is a friend of yours(1 point), or you grew up with a prince(3 points).

Undersized Libido - 2 point flaw

To put it simply, you don't have what it takes to seduce people. If male, you're hung like a hamster, and have been laughed at by more women than you care to remember. If female, you're nearly(if not completely) flat-chested, and get mistaken for the stable boy quite often. As such, any time you are trying to seduce the opposite sex(or same sex, if your target is Homosexual) you are subtract one die from your pool.

Vain - 2 point flaw

You are very concerned about how you look and you feel you must always be primping your appearances, whether this means constantly combing your hair or begging not to be hit in the face. Roll willpower against difficulty 6 anytime you are sitting idle and don't wish to start primping yourself(combing hair, filing nails, etc.)

Yeller - 3 point flaw

"You ain't nuthin' but a yellor bellied coward!" Anytime someone threatens you or it appears as though you are going to lose, you must roll willpower against difficulty of 7 or take off running. This doesn't mean you need to roll if, say, your group of 6 are beating down 2 ruffians, but if the odds are not at least 2-to-1 in your favor, then you will be required to roll.

Supernatural Merits and Flaws

Arcane Background - 5 point merit

You start out with one extra dot to distribute to any sphere upon creation. You must be a man of magic to have this merit.

Arcane Resistance - 2, 3 or 5 point merit

Whenever you are the recipient of any sort of faith or magic spell you add 1, 2 or 3 dice to your roll to resist. This includes beneficial magics as well as harmful ones.

Awareness - 3 point merit

Whenever magic is around or a spell is being cast near your character, you have a chance of noticing it and feeling it. Roll your perception against a difficulty of 7 to see if you sense the magic.

Berserker - 5 point merit

Anytime you are faced with a combat situation roll willpower against difficulty 7. If you fail you fly into a berserker rage, gaining 3 extra wound levels and negating any wound penalties, but you cannot dodge or parry anything, and you will attempt to kill anyone around you, friends and foes alike, until you are subdued or dead. If you are subdued or run out of targets, you will come out of berserker rage in 10 minutes.

Cursed - 2 point flaw

There is some kind of supernatural curse upon you. Perhaps you cannot fall in love, or the ones you love always die horribly, or anytime you touch a mechanical device it breaks, etc. You and the game master can decide the specifics of your particular curse.

Daredevil - 3 point merit

Anytime you do something daring, such as leaping over a chasm or attacking 4 obviously superior opponents, you gain 3 dice to your pool.

Eerie Presence - 2 point flaw

You have an aura around you that makes people and animals anxious and ill at ease in your presence. Because of this, all rolls relating to social interaction are at +2 difficulty.

Haunted - 3 point flaw

You are haunted by an angry or annoyed spirit, possibly someone you murdered or killed. The spirit will try to constantly harass and annoy the character, and will try to destroy the character in any way it can. The storyteller is responsible for determining its exact powers and whether or not the spirit can eventually be laid to rest. The spirit may do such things as unlock the character's bedroom door while the character sleeps, or wail and moan loudly when the character is sneaking down a hallway.

Inoffensive to Animals - 2 point merit

Something about you puts wild and domesticated animals at ease whenever they are around

Chapter 7 Merits and Flaws

you. Anytime they attempt to attack you they are at +2 difficulty to their rolls.

Lucky - 3 point merit

You were born lucky, or else the gods look after their own. You may repeat any three failed rolls per session, including botches.

Medium - 2 point merit

You possess a natural affinity to sense and hear spirits, ghosts and shades. Though you cannot see them, you can sense them, and sometimes you can even hear them and speak to them. Sometimes, with proper negotiation or bargaining, you can call upon them for aid, but there will always be a price.

Nine Lives - 7 point merit

Fate has granted you the opportunity to come as close to death as possible and still walk away from it. When a failed roll occurs that would result in your death, you make the roll again. If you succeed, you survive, and you have used up one of your nine lives. If you fail again, you keep rolling until you either succeed or you use up all of your nine lives. The game master or storyteller should keep careful count of the lives a character has left.

Oracular Ability - 3 point merit

You can see and interpret signs and omens. You are able to draw advice from these omens, for they provide hints to the future and warnings of the present. Whenever the game master or storyteller feels that you are in a position to see an omen, you will be required to make a perception + occult roll (difficulty relative to how hidden the omen was). If successful, you may then roll intelligence + occult to interpret what you have seen (once again, difficulty relative to the complexity of the omen).

Poison/Toxin Resistance - 2 point merit

You are extremely resistance to poisons and toxins. This applies to everything from alcoholic beverages to lethal potions, even to hazardous fumes. You gain 3 dice whenever you roll to resist the effects of any poison or toxin.

Repulsive to Animals - 2 point flaw

Animals are very anxious and ill at ease around you. Whenever you are around domesticated or wild animals, they must roll their willpower against a difficulty of 7 or they will flee from you. Some animals may even attack

Superstitious - 1 point flaw

You believe almost every superstition you know of, and there is nothing anyone can say to change your mind. If, for example, you are hunting vampires, you will believe every rumor about them you hear at a tavern. You may throw a pinch of salt over your shoulder any time you spill salt, or avoid walking under ladders. You must roll willpower against difficulty 6 to not do such things.

Touch of Frost - 5 point flaw

You have an aura of dread around you. Plants wither and die at your touch, and anyone you touch is filled with dread. People and animals you touch must roll willpower against difficulty 7 not to shiver and cringe as you steal the warmth from them and they feel your icy touch.

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True Faith - 5 point merit

With this merit you start out with an extra dot in the faith sphere. You must be a man of faith to take this merit.

Visions - 5 point merit

You are endowed with future sight. Visions can be triggered by such things as walking through a doorway, picking up an item or touching a person. Whenever the storyteller or game master feels it is appropriate, you must roll a fate die against difficulty 7. If you fail, nothing happens, but if you succeed, you are given a vision of a possible future related to whatever triggered the vision. The game master determines when this happens and what it entails.



Dawn

Chapter 8

Men at Arms / Men of Faith / Men of Magic



Men at Arms

Men at arms are basically those who don't study magic or worship and gather power from the gods. These are the rough-and-tumble men and women of adventure who sell their sword and muscle for gold and glory. Their skills are usually in combat, and self-preservation is usually far superior to those of normal men and women. They are jacks-of-all-trades when dealing with the fundamentals of adventuring and combat, be it fighting off a mighty wyvern or combating in a jousting tournament. They tend to fight hard, work hard and play hard, and are not known for their subtleties. If a door is locked, kick it in. If someone won't talk, beat it out of them. These things are what men at arms are all about. Most men at arms find such scholarly things as writing and reading unimportant in the fields of adventuring. Men at arms can freely use any type of armor without much restriction. A man at arms can be a knight, a mercenary, a barbarian, a rogue, a soldier or an archer, just to think of a few. These are professions, not absolutes, since in Dawn there are no classes as such.



Men of Magic

Perhaps the most complicated player class to play is that of the men of magic, because of the simple fact that so much can happen for good or for ill with them. After all, toying with the forces of the cosmos can be very tricky at the best of times. This is a world where magic and creatures of magic abound, yet the ways of magic are secret and guarded by those that ply the trade, keeping their secrets from the uninitiated and fellow magicians alike. Men of magic tend to forsake training in the more physical aspects of life, instead focusing their minds upon mastery of the mystic arts. Most of the spell casting in Dawn will involve one or more of the following components: material components, physical gestures, and verbal syllables, which are spoken aloud or mumbled. A spell caster uses magic forces invoked by spoken incantation and directed by the caster's words or thoughts, some of which are said to have come from before the time of the gods. The properly spoken word can summon, direct or unleash great forces in the blink of an eye.

For most simple spells, no components, no diagrams, no deity and little, if any, preparation are required. Merely a few spoken syllables and perhaps a few simple hand motions are all that is needed. Most times spell magic is spoken softly, so that others cannot hear or understand it. It is the repetition of words or series of words, spoken properly, that invoke and ignite the spell into existence. Most times these spell words are closely guarded and rarely shared, even with fellow wizards. A wizard will usually disguise the words of an incantation or spell within a string of loudly spoken, meaningless gibberish and phrases, often mumbling the key words or phrases within the meaningless gibberish he says when casting a spell. Some wizards recite their spells by combining several different languages, since the spell can be invoked in any tongue. Consequently, the same spell will be spoken differently by different casters. No two wizards will cast the same spell the same way. Furthermore, the same wizard casting the same spell may not cast it exactly the same way each time. For the most part, spell magic is spoken quietly, almost inaudibly. Only the meaningless parts are ever spoken aloud or shouted, and then only for the showmanship of it. After all, a snarling, bellowing person, seemingly molding forces out of sheer force of will, is more imposing than a soft spoken, calm and ordinary person. One thing to remember, though, is that in the dark ages of Dawn, magic is not something just anyone sees all the time. It is a rare occurrence, and many times a village will still be very wary and sometimes riotous of having a spell caster in their midst. Remember, witch burnings are fairly common, but it is very unlikely that the ones they are burning are actually witches. Wizards use essence as well as Arete to cast various spells. More on this will be explained later, in the chapter explaining magic. They also have the chance of gaining scourge whenever they cast. Every time they roll to cast a spell they must roll the fate die (one die that is a different color from the rest).

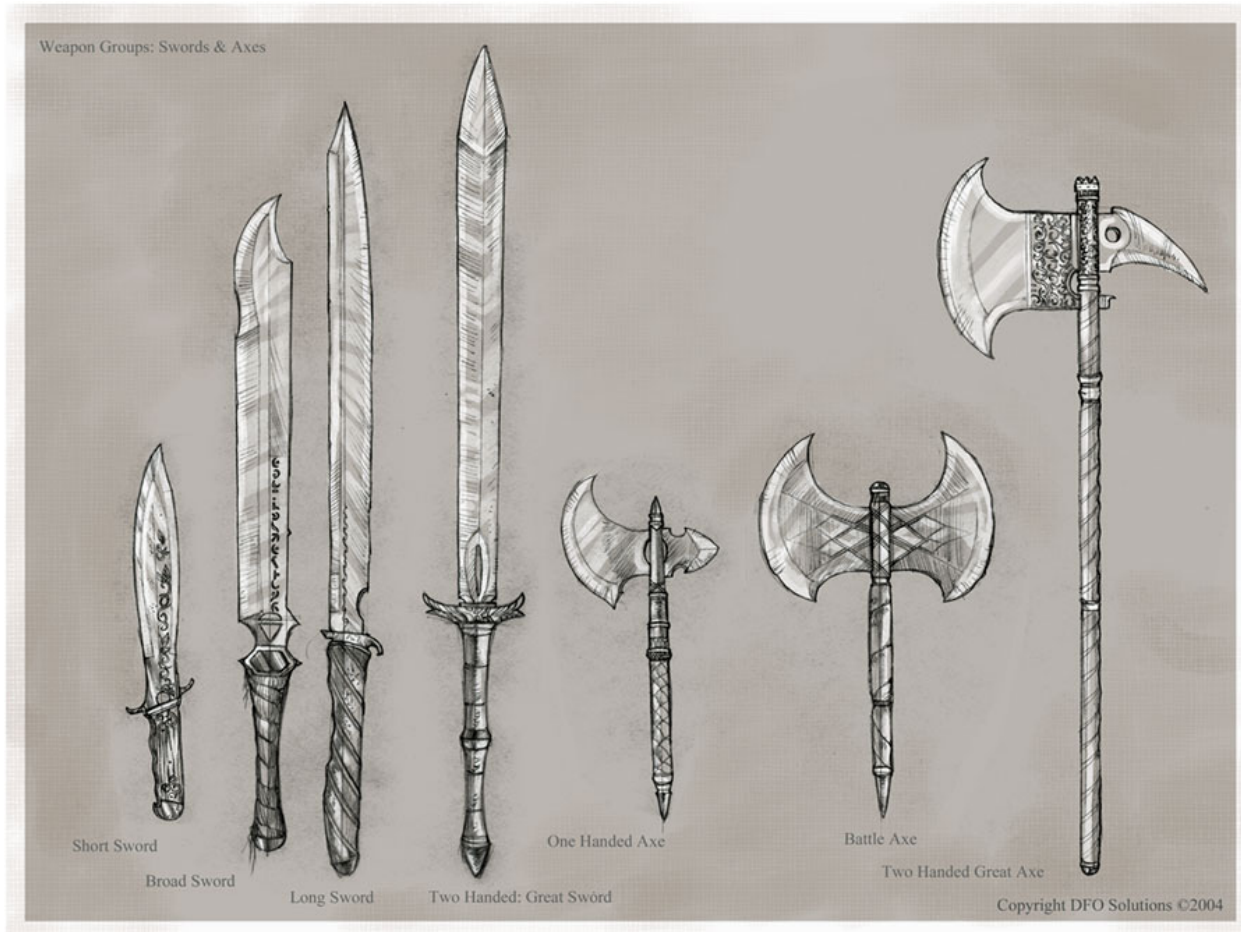


Men of Faith

The men of this dark time of Dawn need the gods even more so than ever before. Goblins and Trolls constantly raiding the border towns, lecherous acts by men of authority, and murderous acts performed by heathens are just some of the things that men of faith work to right. In the context of the world of Dawn, we shall mainly be concerned with the ones most of the public will see in the open, such as the clerics and priests. All men of faith are basically the same, though, whether they be a monk, cleric, pastor, priest or friar. Most men of faith have dedicated their lives, nay, their very existences to serving a particular god or gods or religion. They must, before the start of the game choose a god or religion to dedicate their lives to. Once they have chosen they can never forsake their god or they can never again become a man of faith. They are not trained as men at arms nor as men of magic, but as scholars, healers, men of learning and most importantly liaisons between men and the gods. Most priestly duties vary depending upon a particular religious organization. Priests gain any so called spell magic from their prayers to their specific deity, whether it be healing the sick, performing miracles such as curing the lame boy in a village, or dispelling the undead that besiege the living. All these are prayers that priests pray for from their specific god or deity. Some possible prayers could be for resurrection(though resurrections are rare) removal of curses, healing touch and turning the dead, as well as the usual prayer for intervention. Priests are as diverse as any of the other races and classes. One priest may be able to wear heavy Armour and swing a mace as well as any man at arms, while others may wear robes and chant prayers and heal their flock as a Shepard would. Men of magic use faith pool to cast their prayers and miracles.



Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods



Dawn Chapter 9 Arms, Armour and Goods

There are many items available for purchase listed below. All of these are available at the price listed below only at the beginning of a game or campaign. After the start, you may find that some of the items listed may cost quite a bit more, or may not even be available for purchase. Those decisions will be up to the game master's discretion, whose decision is final.

Armour

(The pluses to stealth and perception rolls apply to the relative difficulty numbers. The pluses to dexterity rolls apply to the difficulty numbers of all

dexterity-related activities)

Light Armour

Name	Cost	Weight	Additional soak modifier
Cloth	20 gold pieces	2 pounds	adds 1 die to soaking
Padding or Quilt (is very bulky: +1 on dexterity related tasks)	35 gold pieces	11 pounds	adds 2 dice to soaking
Soft Leather	70 gold pieces	5 pounds	adds 2 dice to soaking
Hard Leather (+1 to stealth, since even oiled hard leather creaks)	125 gold pieces	8 pounds	adds 3 dice to soaking
Studded Leather (add 1 soak die vs. slashing attacks, +1 whenever attempting a dexterous task)	160 gold pieces	20 pounds	adds 3 dice to soaking

Any time Light Armor takes more than 5 damage in a single hit, it is destroyed.

Heavy Armour

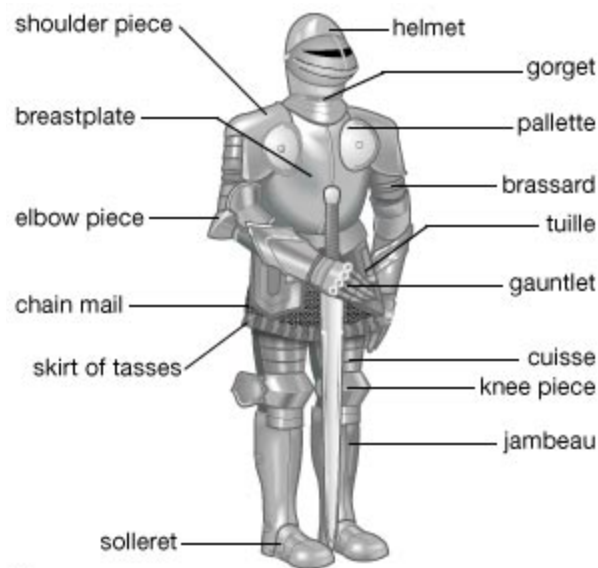
Name	Cost	Weight	Additional soak modifier
Chain Mail (shirt) covers the chest area)	170 gold pieces (noisy , +2 to stealth)	25 pounds	adds 4 dice to soaking (only
Chain Mail	280 gold pieces (noisy +2 to stealth, +1 to dexterity rolls)	65 pounds	adds 4 dice to soaking
Scale Mail (shirt) (only covers the chest area)	190 gold pieces (noisy , +2 to stealth +1 to dexterity rolls)	35 pounds	adds 5 dice to soaking
Scale Mail	315 gold pieces (noisy , +2 to stealth +2 to dexterity rolls)	80 pounds	adds 5 dice to soaking
Plate (shirt) (only covers the chest area)	450 gold pieces (noisy , +3 to stealth +3 to dexterity rolls)	30 pounds	adds 5 dice to soaking
Plate	900 gold pieces (noisy , +3 to stealth +3 to dexterity rolls)	110 pounds	adds 7 die to soaking
Plate and Chain (Full suit only)	700 gold pieces (noisy , +3 to stealth +2 to dexterity rolls)	90 pounds	adds 6 die to soaking

Any time Heavy Armor takes more than 10 Damage in a single hit, it is destroyed.

Helms

Name	Cost	Weight	Additional soak modifier
Light helm	30 gold pieces (+1 to perception rolls)	3 pounds	adds 2 blunt / 3 lethal
Heavy Helm	45 gold pieces (+2 to perception rolls)	7 pounds	adds 3 blunt/ 4 lethal

Full suit includes leggings or leg-panting, knee, shoulder & elbow guards, helmet, coif, chest, hauberk, arms, gloves and sur-coat worn over Armour. When purchasing a full suit, a padded suit is automatically included under the full suit. Armour shirts only protect the chest area, all other areas are left unprotected. Helms provide protection to the head only. A minimum strength rating requirements are 2 for light armor and 3 for heavy armor.



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Axes

Name	2handed	average length	weight	cost	damage
Hand axe	no	2 ft	2 lbs.	12 gold	str +1 lethal
Throwing axe	no	1.8 ft	1.6 lbs	15 gold	str +1 thrown
Battle Axe	no	3 ft	4.6 lbs	45 gold	str +2 lethal

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Arms, Armour, and Goods

Bipedal Axe	yes	4 ft	6 lbs	60 gold	str +3 lethal
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Blunt

Name	2handed	average length	weight	cost	damage
Mace	no	2.6 ft	4.5 lbs	40 gold	str +1 bashing
Hercules Club	yes	4 ft	7.6 lbs	55 gold	str +3 bashing
Hammer	no	2 ft	2.9 lbs	20 gold	str +1 bashing
War Hammer	yes	4.5 ft	8.2 lbs	60 gold	str +3 bashing
Morning Star	no	2.75 ft	3 lbs	40 gold	str +1 lethal
Ball and Chain	no	3.5 ft	4.5 lbs	50 gold	str +2 bashing
Mace and Chain	no	3.5 ft	4.5 lbs	55 gold	str +2 lethal
Goupillon Flail	yes	3 ft	5.5 lbs	65 gold	str +3 lethal
Maul	yes	5 ft	20 lbs	50 gold	str +4 bashing

Knives

Name	2handed	average length	weight	cost	damage
Throwing Knife	no	1.3 ft	1 lb	10 gold	str +1 thrown
Dagger	no	1.3 ft	1.5 lbs	7 gold	str +1 lethal
Rapier	no	2 ft (+1 dice to hit versus chain scale plate)	1 lb	15 gold	str +1 lethal

Missile Weapons

Name	2handed	average length(range)	weight	cost	damage
Light Crossbow	yes	3 ft (400 ft)	12 lbs	55 gold	
Light Bolt	no	1 ft	1 lb / dozen	10 gold	Dex +1 lethal
Heavy Crossbow	yes	3.6 ft (800 ft)	14 lbs	65 gold	

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Heavy Bolt	no	1.3 ft	1.5 lbs / dozen	12 gold	Dex +2 lethal
Short Bow	yes	4 ft (500 ft)	1 lbs	30 gold	
Arrow short	no	2 ft	1 lb dozen	10 gold	Dex +1 lethal
Long Bow	yes	6 ft (1000 ft)	2 lbs	45 gold	
Arrow long	no	3.5 ft	1.5 lbs / dozen	12 gold	Dex +2 lethal
Sling	no	1 ft (150 ft)	.6 lbs	5 gold	
Sling ammo (rock or metal slug)	no	1 inch	1 lb / dozen	1 gold (for metal slugs)	Dex +1 bashing
Dart	no	4 inch (20 ft)	1 lb / dozen	20 gold	Dex +1 lethal

****Note**** All Ammo prices are per dozen

Pole Arms

Name	2handed	length	weight	cost	damage
Bardiche	yes	7 ft	12 lbs	50 gold	Str +3 lethal
Glaive	yes	7 ft	11 lbs	45 gold	Str +3 lethal
Voulge	yes	7 ft	10.6	52 gold	Str +3 lethal
Awl Pike	yes	11 ft	14 lbs	65 gold	Str +3 lethal
Halberd	yes	7.6 ft	13 lbs	60 gold	Str +3 lethal
Scythe	yes	6.5 ft	6 lbs	35 gold	Str +3 lethal
Lucerne Hammer	yes	9.75 ft	15 lbs	85 gold	Str +3 lethal
Pike	yes	16 ft	12 lbs	78 gold	Str +3 lethal
Lance*	yes	13 ft	10 lbs	100 gold	Str +5 lethal

* The lance can **ONLY** be used from atop a charging mount. It is simply too large and unwieldy otherwise.

A note about all pole-arms: because of the length of most pole-arms, they give +2 dice on initiative, but add +2 modifiers to dexterity difficulties while wielding the pole-arms. If the pole-arm

wielder uses the shaft to hit someone, it is considered bashing damage and is only str +1.

Shields

<u>Name</u>	<u>parry or block difficulty #</u>	<u>vs. melee</u>	<u>vs. ranged</u>	<u>cost</u>
Small Shield	7	+1 die	0	20 gold
Medium shield	6	+1 die	+1 die	30 gold
Large Shield	6	+2 die	+2 die	40 gold

****Note**** Small and Medium Shields can be used while mounted, Large Shields cannot.

****Note**** The above parry number indicates the difficulty number whenever you are attempting to block or parry with the shield. The + vs. melee or ranged is the number of dice added to the shield user's die pool when blocking. Shields' soak levels are as follows: Small Shield, 4 bashing 3 lethal; Medium Shield, 5 bashing 4 lethal; Large Shield, 6 bashing 5 lethal. If the total damage against the shield is greater than the soak levels in any single attack then the shield is broken.

Spears and Forks

<u>Name</u>	<u>2 handed</u>	<u>length</u>	<u>weight</u>	<u>cost</u>	<u>damage</u>
Hunting Spear	no	5 ft	3 lbs	15 gold	str +2 lethal
Trident	no	5 ft	5 lbs	28 gold	str +2 lethal
Pitchfork	yes	6 ft	4 lbs	10 gold	str +1 lethal
Javelin	no	6 ft	3 lbs	17 gold	str +2 lethal
Long Spear	yes	7 ft	5 lbs	18 gold	str +2 lethal

****Note**** All spears get +1 die for initiative. If they are thrown they use (dex) instead of (str) to determine damage. Users are also +1 difficulty to all dex rolls when wielding a spear because of the length.

Staves

<u>Name</u>	<u>2handed</u>	<u>length</u>	<u>weight</u>	<u>cost</u>	<u>damage</u>
Wooden Staff	yes	5 ft	4 lbs	4 gold	str +1 bashing
Quarter Staff	yes	6 ft	6 lbs	8 gold	str +1 bashing
Iron Shod Staff	yes	6 ft	12 lbs	22 gold	str +2 bashing

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****Note**** All staves, with the exception of the short staff, receive +1 die on initiative when wielding.

Swords

<u>Name</u>	<u>2handed</u>	<u>length</u>	<u>weight</u>	<u>cost</u>	<u>damage</u>
Short Sword	no	3 ft	3 lbs	40 gold	str +1 lethal
Long Sword	no	3.7 ft	3.5 lbs	55 gold	str +2 lethal
Bastard Sword	no	4.3 ft	5.7 lbs	70 gold	str +2 lethal
2-Hand Bastard Sword	no	4.5 ft	6 lbs	75 gold	str +3 lethal
Broad Sword	no	4 ft	5 lbs	65 gold	str +2 lethal
Cutlass	no	3.2 ft	4 lbs	57 gold	str +2 lethal
Falchion	no	3.5 ft	4.2 lbs	62 gold	str +2 lethal
Flamberge	yes	6 ft	8 lbs	100 gold	str +3 lethal
Claymore	yes	5 ft	7 lbs	90 gold	str +3 lethal
Greatsword	yes	7 ft	14 lbs	150 gold	str +4 lethal

****Note**** All swords come with a sheath of some sort, included within the price.

Misc. Weapons

<u>Name</u>	<u>2handed</u>	<u>average length</u>	<u>weight</u>	<u>cost</u>	<u>damage</u>
Blackjack <i>(stamina versus diff 7 if hit behind head to see if victim is knocked unconscious.)</i>	no	10 inches	3 lbs	7 gold	str bashing
Bullwhip <i>(An attacker can attempt to entangle an opponent with a resisted dex roll. If the attacker wins he entangles his opponent)</i>	no	8 ft	3 lbs	20 gold	dex bashing
Net(weighted) <i>(An attacker can attempt to entangle an opponent with a resisted dex roll. If the attacker wins he entangles his opponent)</i>	yes	10ft x 10 ft	5 lbs	20 gold	no damage
Meat cleaver <i>(also can be thrown)</i>	no	1 ft	4 lbs	7 gold	str +1 lethal
Frying pan	no	1 ft	1 lbs	5 gold	str +1 bashing
Large Pick Axe	yes	4 ft	5 lbs	11 gold	str +1 lethal

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

Shovel	yes	4 ft	5 lbs	10 gold	str +1 bashing
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Clothing

Socks, Wool	1 gold	Socks, Silk	5 gold
Socks, Canvas	1/2 gold	Shirt, Cloth	2 gold
Shirt, Wool	6 gold	Shirt, Silk	15 gold
Dress Shirt	20 gold	Vest, Cloth	2 gold
Vest, Wool	6 gold	Vest, Leather	15 gold
Vest, Silk	20 gold	Vest, Dress	25 gold
Vest, Velvet	29 gold	Jacket, Fur	35 gold
Jacket, Light Cloth	2 gold	Jacket, Light Wool	10 gold
Jacket, Light Leather	25 gold	Jacket, Light Dress	45 gold
Jacket, Short Down Filled Cloth	45 gold	Jacket, Short Down Filled Leather	65 gold
Jacket, Long Down Filled Cloth	60 gold	Jacket, Long Down Filled Leather	80 gold
Jacket, Long Cloth	30 gold	Jacket, Long Leather	50 gold
Pants, Cloth	10 gold	Pants, Leather	18 gold
Pants, Velvet	35 gold	Pants, Dress	40 gold
Skirt, Cloth	7 gold	Skirt, Fancy	35 gold
Dress, Cloth	12 gold	Dress, Fancy	36 gold
Dress, Silk	45 gold	Dress, Leather	30 gold
Boots, Cloth	8 gold	Boots, Soft Leather	15 gold
Boots, Leather	20 gold	Boots, Work/Reinforced	30 gold
Boots, Knee High	45 gold	Boots, Hip High	60 gold
Boots, Fancy	45 gold	Shoes, Wooden	25 gold
Sandals	15 gold	Scarf	2 gold
Cap, Pull-Over	5 gold	Cap, Wool	10 gold
Hat, Short brim	15 gold	Hat, Large brim	20 gold
Hat, Large brim leather	22 gold	Hat (Robin Hood)	15 gold

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

Sword Belt, Plain	6 gold	Sword Belt, Fancy	26 gold
Sword Sheath, Plain	15 gold	Sword Sheath, Fancy	50 gold
Knife Sheath, Plain	12 gold	Knife Sheath, Fancy	32 gold
Cape, Short Plain	12 gold	Cape, Short Fancy	40 gold
Cape, Long Plain	18 gold	Cape, Long Fancy	45 gold
Hooded Cape, Long Plain	20 gold	Hooded Cape, Long Fancy	50 gold
Cape, Fur Plain	30 gold	Cape, Fur Fancy	56 gold
Hooded Cape, Fur Plain	35 gold	Hooded Cape, Fur Fancy	76 gold
Robe, Light	20 gold	Robe, Heavy	30 gold
Robe, Fancy	60 gold	Robe, Hooded	45 gold
Nightgown, Cloth	14 gold	Nightgown, Silk	65 gold
Nightgown, Fancy	55 gold	Undergarments	6 gold
Undergarments, Silk	45 gold	Undergarments, Fancy	37 gold
Leather Tunic	25 gold	Cloth Tunic	15 gold

Containers

Saddlebags	20 gold	Small Pocket Purse	1 gold
Belt Purse, Attaches to Belt	2 gold	Shoulder Purse, Small	2 gold
Shoulder Purse, Large	5 gold	Small Sack	5 gold
Large Sack	8 gold	Knapsack, cloth	15 gold
Knap Sack, Leather	25 gold	Backpack	20 gold
Handle Bag	22 gold	Handle Bag, Leather	35 gold
Tobacco Pouch	5 gold	Water Skin, Small 2 pints	5 gold
Water Skin, Medium 1/2 gallon	10 gold	Water Skin, Large 1 gallon	15 gold
Cask, Wooden 4 gallons	12 gold	Cask, Wooden 10 gallons	18 gold
Cask, Wooden 25 gallons	30 gold	Vial, Glass 2 ounce	5 gold
Jar, Glass 1 pint	4 gold	Jar, Glass 2 pints	8 gold
Jar, Glass 4 pints	10 gold	Jar, Glass 1 gallon	12 gold

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

Jug, Clay 1/2 gallon	10 gold	Jug, Clay 1 gallon	15 gold
Jug, Clay 5 gallon	25 gold	Wooden Bucket, 1 gallon	5 gold
Bucket, 1 Gallon Metal	10 gold	Snuff Box	5 gold
Sm. Wooden Box w/Lid, 1 lb.	10 gold	Med. Wooden Box w/Lid, 5 lbs.	20 gold
Lg. Wooden Box w/Lid, 10 lbs.	30 gold	Sm. Wooden Trunk, 25 lbs.	25 gold
Lg. Wooden Trunk, 50 lbs.	50 gold	Sm. Metal Box, 5 lbs.	15 gold
Lg. Metal Box, 15 lbs.	30 gold	Sm. Metal Trunk, 25 lbs.	50 gold
Lg. Metal Trunk, 50 lbs.	80 gold	Mug, Clay	1 gold
Mug, Wooden	2 gold	Mug, Metal	5 gold
Glass Cup	10 gold	Glass Goblet	15 gold
Metal Goblet	10 gold	Bowl, Wooden	3 gold
Bowl, Clay	5 gold	Bowl, Metal	8 gold
Plate, Wooden	5 gold	Plate, Clay	8 gold
Plate, Metal	10 gold	Pot, Small Clay	10 gold
Pot, Medium Clay	15 gold	Pot, Large Clay	20 gold
Pot, metal small	10 gold	Pot, Medium Metal	20 gold
Pot, Large Metal	30 gold	Kettle, Metal	15 gold
Glass Bottle	25 gold	Clay Bottle	15 gold
Frying Pan	5 gold	Cooking Pot w/Tripod	10 gold

Field Equipment

Snare Cord, per 4 ft.	2 gold	Rope, per 40 ft.	10 gold
Rope Ladder, per 40 ft.	25 gold	Light Chain, per 10 ft.	10 gold
Heavy Chain, per 10 ft.	25 gold	Hand Manacles	25 gold
Leg Manacles	35 gold	Lock, Key-Type	5 gold
Lock, Tumbler Type	40 gold	Beaver Trap(5 dice damage)	10 gold
Wolf Trap (7 dice damage)	20 gold	Bear Trap (10 dice damage)	50 gold
Animal Trap - No Teeth	10 gold	Animal Trap, Large - No Teeth	20 gold

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

(2 dice damage)

Net, Fishing 6ftx6ft	10 gold
Net, man sized 10ftx10ft	20 gold
Fishing line, per 40ft	3 gold
Blanket, light	6 gold
Blanket, fur	18 gold
Tent, 2 man	75 gold
Tent canvas 4ftx4ft section	15 gold
Mosquito netting 4ftx4ft section	15 gold

(4 dice damage)

Net, animal 8ftx8ft	15 gold
Fishing hook, metal	2 gold
Sleeping bag	40 gold
Blanket, heavy	20 gold
Tent, 1 man	50 gold
Tent, 4 man	100 gold
Hammock, cloth man sized	15 gold
Large, Fancy Circus-Style Tent, 4 man	250 gold

Lighting

Flint and Steel	3 gold	Tinder Box	5 gold
Treated Torch, Lasts 3 hrs	3 gold	Untreated Torch	1 gold
Candle, 1 hr	1 gold	Candle, 5 hour	5 gold
Metal & Glass Candle Lantern	25 gold	Metal Candle Lantern	15 gold
Metal Oil Lantern, 1 pint	10 gold	Metal Oil lantern, 2 pint	15 gold
Oil lamp, Glass 1 pint	30 gold	Oil Lamp, Glass 2 pint	50 gold
Lantern Oil, per pint (6 Hour Burn Time)	4 gold	Clay Candle Holder	3 gold

Writing equipment

Paper, 1 Dozen Sheets	8 gold	Parchment, 1 Dozen Sheets	15 gold
Paper, 100 Sheet Book	50 gold	Parchment, 100 Sheet Book	100 gold
Slate Board, 18" x 24"	10 gold	Chalk, Dozen Sticks	2 gold
Charcoal Sticks, 1 Dozen	2 gold	Ink, Black 6 Ounces	3 gold
Ink, Colored, 1 oz.	7 gold	Powder Pigments, Colored, 2 oz.	4 gold
Gold leaf, 1 oz.	100 gold	Silver leaf, 1 oz.	50 gold
Bronze leaf, 1 oz.	30 gold	Crow Quill Pen	5 gold
Brushes, Low Quality	8 gold	Brushes, High Quality	16 gold

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

Etching Needle	4 gold	Etching Plate	15 gold
Wood Sculpting Tool Set	45 gold	Metal Sculpting Tool Set	140 gold

****Note**** A standard sheet of paper or parchment is 9"x12"

Misc. Items

Smoking Tobacco, Per oz.	8 gold	Chewing Tobacco, Per oz.	12 gold
Snuff, Per oz.	8 gold	Perfume, Cheap, Per oz.	10 gold
Perfume, Expensive, Per oz.	50 gold	Soap, Per oz.	10 gold
Soap, Perfumed, Per oz.	12 gold	Wax, Clear, Per lb.	12 gold
Beeswax, Per lb.	10 gold	Rabbit Skin Glue Per lb.	10 gold
Lock Picking Toolkit	15 gold		

Edibles

Fowl, Per Whole Bird

Pigeon	3 gold	Chicken	5 gold
Duck	8 gold	Goose	12 gold
Quail	10 gold	Pheasant	20 gold
Turkey	15 gold		

Fish, Per Whole Fish

Common	1 gold	Game fish	4 gold
Shellfish	(Clams, Crayfish, Oysters, Shrimp, Lobster) per dozen		6 - 10 gold

Fresh Meat

Rabbit, Whole	8 gold	Squirrel, Whole	8 gold
Venison, Leg or Roast	20 gold	Beef, Steak	4 gold
Beef, Leg or Roast	15 gold	Beef, Side	75 gold
Beef, Whole Cow	150 gold	Pork, Steak	4 gold
Pork, Leg or Roast	20 gold	Pork, Side	50 gold

Chapter 9 Arms, Armour, and Goods

Pork, Whole Pig	100 gold	Lamb, Steak	3 gold
Lamb, Leg or Roast	12 gold	Lamb, Side	35 gold
Lamb, Whole	65 gold		

Prepared and Preserved Food

Smoked Sausage, Pork or Beef	4 gold	Spiced Sausage, Pork or Beef	5 gold
Smoked Beef	8 gold	Salted Beef	8 gold
Jerked Beef, lasts months	10 gold	Smoked Pork	6 gold
Salted Pork	6 gold	Smoked Fish	6 gold
Salted Fish	6 gold	Canned Vegetables	3 gold
Canned Fruit	4 gold	Dried Vegetables	2 gold
Dried Fruit	2 gold		

(Most fresh vegetables last 2 to 8 weeks before spoiling)

Others

Bread, 4 loaves	1 gold	Buns or Rolls, 2 dozen	1 gold
Pastries, Per Dozen	3 gold	Cheese, 2lbs	5 gold
Curds and Whey, 1 lb	2 gold	Butter, Salted, 1lb	3 gold
Butter, Unsalted, 1 lb	2 gold	Lard, Per lb	1 gold
Cream, Per Pint	2 gold	Honey, Per Pint	2 gold
Jam, Per Pint	3 gold	Syrup, Per Pint	3 gold
Maple Syrup Candy, Per lb.	3 gold	Sugar, Per lb.	4 gold
Salt, Fine, Per lb.	5 gold	Salt, Rock, Per lb.	3 gold
Pepper, Per 2oz.	2 gold	Spices, Per 2oz.	8 gold
Flour, Per lb.	1 gold	Oatmeal, Per lb.	1 gold
Cooking Oil, Per Pint	1/2 gold	Eggs, Per Dozen	1 gold

Feed Grain for Livestock, Per 25 lbs.

(approximately 1 week's rations per animal for horse size. May be greater or smaller than a week depending upon the animal)

Wheat	25 gold	Oats	15 gold
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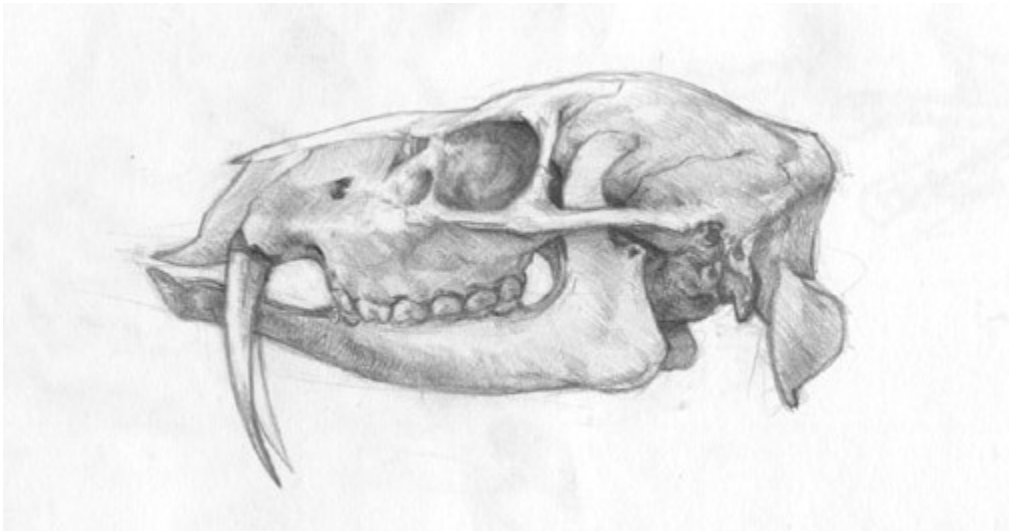
Chapter 9
Arms, Armour, and Goods

Hay	10 gold	Straw	7 gold
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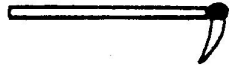

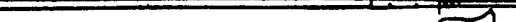










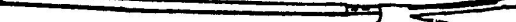




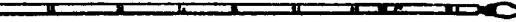


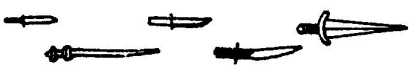
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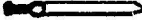
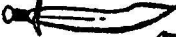
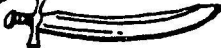
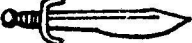
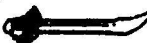
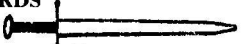
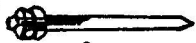
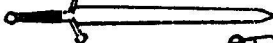


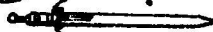
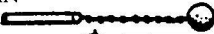
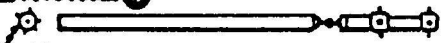
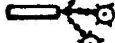
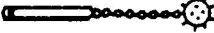

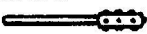
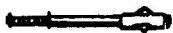
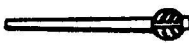

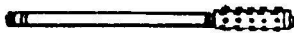

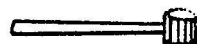




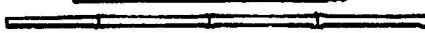
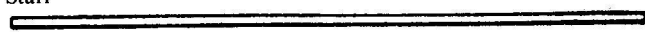







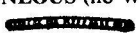


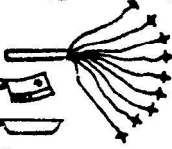






Cow's/Goat's Milk, Per Gallon	2 gold	Fruit juices, Per Gallon	4 gold
Tea, Per lb	4 gold	Coffee, Per lb	6 gold
Tonics(Foul Tasting), Per Pint	8 gold	Mead, Sweet, Per Pint	4 gold
Ale, Light, Per Pint	5 gold	Beer, Heavy, Per Pint	6 gold
Wine, Poor, Per Pint	4 gold	Wine, Good, Per Pint	10 gold
Wine, Very Fine, Per Pint	20 gold	Moonshine, Per Pint	8 gold
Champagne, Poor, Per Pint	12 gold	Champagne, Good, Per Pint	20 gold
Brandy, Poor, Per Pint	25 gold	Brandy, Good, Per Pint	15 gold
Rum, Poor, Per Pint	15 gold	Rum, Good, Per Pint	30 gold

The prices listed above are only an approximation, as in some areas some items may not be available, or may be very scarce, upping the price considerably. Feel free to change the rate of the goods as you see fit, depending upon your own game. I may not have listed everything here but I have tried to list as much as I could.





TYPE		2-HANDED	AV. LENGTH	AV. WEIGHT	COST IN GOLD
AXES					
Axe, battle		no	.8m/2.75ft	2 kg/4.6lb	40 gp
Axe, throwing		no	.4m/1.25ft	1.4kg/3 lb	8 gp
Axe, stone		no	.6m/2 ft	1.8kg/4 lb	18 gp
Axe, bipennis (2-head)		no	.8/2.75ft	2.8kg/6 lb	45 gp
Oncin Pick		yes	1.0m/3.75ft	1.8kg/4 lb	20 gp
POLE ARMS					
Awl Pike		yes	3.2m/10 ft	2.7kg/6 lb	45 gp
Beaked Axe		yes	2.3m/7.5 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	40 gp
Berdiche		yes	2.1m/7 ft	3.2kg/7 lb	50 gp
Glaive		yes	2.3m/7.5 ft	2.7kg/6 lb	40 gp
Guisarme		yes	2.5m/7.25ft	2.7kg/6 lb	50 gp
Halberd		yes	2.2m/7.25ft	2.3kg/5 lb	60 gp
Sabre Halberd		yes	2.4m/8 ft	3.2kg/7 lb	60 gp
Hippe		yes	2.3m/7.5 ft	2.7kg/6 lb	55 gp
Lucerne Hammer		yes	2.9m/9.75ft	2.9kg/6.5lb	40gp
Military Fork		yes	2.1m/7 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	30 gp
Pike		yes	5.0m/16 ft	3.6kg/8 lb	45 gp
Runka		yes	2.3m/7.5 ft	2.7kg/6 lb	45 gp
Scythe		yes	2.4m/8 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	45 gp
Voulge		yes	2.1m/7 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	60 gp
SPEARS					
Short Spear		no	1.2-1.8m/4-6 ft	1.8kg/4 lb	30 gp
Long Spear		yes	2.1-3.0m/7-10ft	2.9kg/6.5lb	40 gp
Javelin		no	2.1m/7 ft	1.8kg/4 lb	30 gp
Beaked Axe		no	1.4m/4.5 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	30 gp
Trident		yes	1.5/5 ft	1.8kg/4 lb	40 gp
Lance (Palladin & Knights ONLY)		no	4.0m/13 ft	3.6kg/8 lb	60 gp
KNIVES					
Daggers and Knives		no	.2-.5m/10-20in	.5kg/1 lb	10 gp

TYPE		2-HANDED	AV. LENGTH	AV. WEIGHT	COST IN GOLD
SHORT SWORDS					
Short Sword		no	.7m/2.5 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	40 gp
Sabre		no	.6m/2 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	30 gp
Scimitar		no	.7m/2.5 ft	1.5kg/3.5lb	35 gp
Falchion		no	.8m/2.75ft	1.8kg/4 lb	50 gp
Cutlass		no	.6m/2 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	35 gp
LARGE SWORDS					
Bastard		yes	1.0m/3.75ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	50 gp
Broadsword		no	.9m/3 ft	1.6kg/3.5lb	40 gp
Claymore		yes	1.2m/4 ft	2.9kg/6.5lb	60 gp
Flamberge		yes	1.3m/4.25ft	3.4kg/7.5lb	70 gp
Long Sword		no	.9m/3 ft	1.6kg/3.5lb	55 gp
2-handed Espandon		yes	.9m/3 ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	60 gp
BALL and CHAIN					
Ball and Chain		no	.9m/3 ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	50 gp
Flail		yes	1.6m/5.25ft	2.5kg/5.5lb	55 gp
Goupillon Flail		yes	.5m/2 ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	60 gp
Mace and Chain		no	.9m/3 ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	50 gp
Nunchaku		yes	.8m/2.75ft	1.1kg/2.5lb	30 gp
BLUNT WEAPONS					
Arab Mace		no	.6m/2 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	40 gp
Mace		no	.7m/2.5 ft	2.0kg/4.5lb	40 gp
Cudgel		no	.8m/2.75ft	1.0kg/2.5lb	40 gp
Club / Stick / Pipe		no	.8m/2.75ft	1.4kg/3 lb	10 gp
Hercules Club		yes	1.2m/4 ft	2.5kg/5.5lb	60 gp
Horseman Hammer		no	.8m/2.75ft	1.6kg/3.5lb	45 gp
Maul		no	1.2m/4 ft	2.0kg/4 lb	12 gp
Morning Star		no	.8m/2.75ft	1.0kg/2.5lb	40 gp
War Club (wood)		no	.9m/3 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	25 gp
War Hammer		no	.7m/2.5 ft	2.1kg/4.5lb	40 gp
STAVES					
Short		no	1.2-1.8m/4-6 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	20 gp
Long		yes	1.9-2.7m/7-9 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	25 gp
Bo Staff		yes	2.8m/9.5 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	40 gp
Quarterstaff		yes	1.8m/6 ft	1.5kg/3.5lb	30 gp
Iron Staff		yes	1.8-2.1m/6-7 ft	3.2kg/7 lb	45 gp
MISSILES					
Short Bow		yes		1 lb	30 gp
Arrows		no			10 gp per dozen
Long Bow		yes		2 lb	70 gp
Arrows		no			20 gp per dozen
Cross Bow		yes		7 lb	60 gp
Bolts		no			15 gp per dozen
Sling		no		2 oz	10 gp
MISCELLANEOUS (no W.P. bonuses)					
Black Jack		no	10 in	1.4kg/3 lb	8 gp
Dart		no	6 in	6 oz	1 gp
Bull Whip		no	2.4m/8 ft	1.4kg/3 lb	20 gp
Cat-o-Nine Tails		no	.8m/3 ft	.5kg/1 lb	15 gp
Meat Cleaver		no	.3m/1 ft	.5kg/1 lb	2 gp
Frying Pan		no	.3m/1 ft	.5kg/1 lb	2 gp
Hand Pick		no	7 in	8 oz	1 gp
Large Pick/Mattock		yes	1.2m/4 ft	2.3kg/5 lb	25 gp
Shovel		yes	1.2m/4 ft	2.0kg/5 lb	10 gp
Hammer (tool)		no	10 in	1/4kg/3 lb	7 gp

Dawn

Chapter 10

Character Creation

Character Creation has been made as simple as possible, so I will first explain the procedure, then guide you through one.

Character Creation

First off, look at the top of your character sheet. Get a general idea of what kind of hero you want to play. Will he be a man of arms, magic or faith? Next, pick out a name, then pick out a race. After you pick out your race, determine whether your character is male or female. Then, according to your race, pick out your height, weight and age. After all that is done and you have a good idea of what you want your character to be like, pick out his nature and demeanor. Speed is determined by adding your strength and athletics together. Initiative is determined by adding your wits and alertness together. Starting permanent willpower is determined by race.

Second, look at your character's physical, mental and social attributes and choose which will be primary, secondary and tertiary. What this means is you must decide what direction your character will take in life, and which attributes he will make more important than others. For example, a man-at-arms would most likely make his physical attributes primary, while a man of magic would probably focus more on his mental attributes. Secondary attributes are those you still consider somewhat important, but not so much as your primary ones. Tertiary attributes are those you consider least important in the beginning of your character's career. You automatically start out with one dot in each attribute for free, and may invest another 5, 4 or 3 points, respectively, in your primary, secondary and tertiary attributes..

Third, do just as you did before and choose primary, secondary and tertiary ability groups from your talents, skills and knowledges. Assign 11 primary, 9 secondary and 5 tertiary points to your abilities. For elves, these points start out at 13 primary, 11 secondary and 9 tertiary abilities. If any of the abilities are ones which need variations chosen, you should do this now and place the variation in the appropriate section. Remember, you cannot have any specialization starting out, you can only specialize by spending experience. Also, you start out with no Infamy / Fame in the beginning.

Fourth, if you are a man-at-arms, your starting rage is determined by your race. If you are a man of magic or faith, you automatically start out with 1 dot in arete or faith, accordingly. Men of faith can only spend points in the spheres of Mind, Body and Spirit without penalty. All other spheres cost twice the normal points to buy and cost twice the amount of essence to use. To determine your Arete or Faith score beyond the initial free dot, you must roll your starting Willpower against a difficulty of 7. Any successes add one dot to your Arete or Faith score. For example, say your willpower is 4. You would roll 4 dice against a difficulty of 7, meaning if you rolled a 5, 4, 10, 9 you would start out with 3 points in either Arete or Faith (2 successes + the starting 1). Men of Magic start out with 0 scourge. Starting essence is equal to beginning Willpower plus Arete or Faith score. Men of Magic and Faith start out with two points or dots to distribute amongst any spheres of their choosing for free, however, Men of Faith must place these free dots in either Mind, Body, Spirit or Faith.

Fifth, you get 100 gold pieces and another 2d10 x 10 gold to spend on starting supplies. Check

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chapter 9 for lists of goods for purchase. You may spend this money immediately or after the story starts, however, later on, these listed prices may be greater or less depending upon the GM or storyteller.

Sixth, you may decide upon up to ten points of merits to take, but if you do, you must also choose the same amount of points to take in flaws. So if you choose 4 points of merits, you must also choose 4 points of flaws.

Finally, you get to spend your freebie points. Every starting character begins with 15 freebie points to spend on whatever they want. The costs for these freebie points are different from spending experience. The expenses are as follows:

Attributes 5 per dot, maximum of 4 starting out

Abilities 3 per dot, maximum of 3 starting out

Willpower, permanent, 3 per dot

Willpower, temporary, 1 per dot

Spheres 5 per dot, maximum 3 dots per sphere starting out

Arete/Faith 5 per dot, maximum 3 dots starting out

Essence, permanent, 3 per point

Essence, temporary, 1 per dot

Rage, 1 per dot

Finally, hand your character sheet to the game master or storyteller and get his approval before beginning the session or story. Have fun.

Okay, you're ready to try this. Let's try to make a character together.

DAWN

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____
Nature: _____ Demeanor: _____ Race: _____
Height _____ Weight: _____ Speed: _____ Initiative : _____

Willpower ○○○○○○○○○○ Temp Willpower ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○○	Charisma	●○○○○○	Perception	●○○○○○
Dexterity	●○○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○○	Intelligence	●○○○○○
Stamina	●○○○○○	Appearance	●○○○○○	Wits	●○○○○○

Thomas wants to create a man of arms character, so to begin with, he looks at the top of the character sheet and starts out. Thomas decides that he wants to play a human male. He looks in the race section and decides upon an 18 year-old human male standing 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighing around 140 pounds. His starting willpower for a human is 3. All of these variables are listed in the race section under Humans.

And so he starts to fill out his character sheet.

DAWN

Name: *One Eyed Willie* Age: *18* Sex: *male*
Nature: _____ Demeanor: _____ Race: *Human*
Height *5 foot 11 in* Weight: *140 pounds* Speed: _____ Initiative : _____

Willpower ●●●○○○○○○○ Temp Willpower ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○○	Charisma	●○○○○○	Perception	●○○○○○
Dexterity	●○○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○○	Intelligence	●○○○○○
Stamina	●○○○○○	Appearance	●○○○○○	Wits	●○○○○○

Next, Thomas will look through the section on nature and demeanor and pick what best represents the kind of character he is wanting to play. After looking through the chapter of natures and demeanors, he decides that he wants his nature (*The way his character truly is*) to be a **barbarian** - a constant outsider never really fitting in, and his demeanor (*The way everyone perceives his character*) to be a **guardian**. Thomas will then fill in his first set of points or dots by choosing which of his abilities will be primary, secondary and tertiary, in the order of importance.

Thomas decides that One eyed Willie is a physical guy and not much of a looker, but he is fairly smart, so Thomas chooses *Physical* as primary, *Mental* as secondary and *Social* as Tertiary. As such, he gets 5 dots or points for primary and fills them in as 2 on strength 2 on dexterity and 1 on stamina.

For One Eyed Willie's mental abilities, Thomas gets 4 dots or points to distribute into his mental attributes. One Eyed Willie is very intelligent so Thomas decides that Intelligence gets 2 dots while

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Perception and Wits both get 1 point. Finally, for One Eyed Willie's tertiary picks, he gets 3 points to spend. He decides to pick them straight down the line, 1 dot in each. Speed and Initiative are determined after you have picked some skills, so we will wait to mark these down until later.

DAWN

Name: *One Eyed Willie*

Age: *18*

Sex: *male*

Nature: *Barabarian*

Demeanor: *Guardian*

Race: *Human*

Height *5 foot 11 in* **Weight:** *140 pounds*

Speed:

Initiative :

Willpower ●●●○○○○○○○○ **Temp Willpower** ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○
Stamina	●●○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○	Wits	●●○○○○

Okay, next we need to look at the abilities and choose them just as above assigning primary, secondary and tertiary categories.

ABILITIES

TALENTS		SKILLS		KNOWLEDGE	
Acting	○○○○	Brawl	○○○○	Academics	○○○○
Alertness	○○○○	Crafts	○○○○	Artist	○○○○
Animal ken	○○○○	WP Axes	○○○○	Commerce	○○○○
Athletics	○○○○	Blunt	○○○○	Culture	○○○○
Empathy	○○○○	Knife	○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○
Enigmas	○○○○	Misc	○○○○	Herbalism	○○○○
Leadership	○○○○	Archery	○○○○	Investigation	○○○○
Music	○○○○	Polearms	○○○○	Larceny	○○○○
Stealth	○○○○	Shield	○○○○	Law	○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○	Spear/Forks	○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○
Survival	○○○○	Staves	○○○○	Medicine	○○○○
Ride/Drive	○○○○	Sword	○○○○	Occult	○○○○
	○○○○	Thrown	○○○○	Science	○○○○
Variations				Specialties	
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○

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Thomas decided long ago that One Eyed Willie was going to resemble the legendary character, Conan The Barbarian, so he decides that **Skills** will be primary, **Talents** secondary and **Knowledges** tertiary.

He picks his *Primary* 11 points, or dots in **Skills**: *Brawl* 3 dots, *WP - Axes* 2 dots, *WP - Knife* 2 dots, *WP - Shield* 2 dots, *WP - Sword* 2 dots.

For *Secondary* he gets to spend 9 dots, or points in **Talents**. He decides that *Alertness* will be important so he puts 2 points into it. One Eyed Willie is a pretty *Athletic* guy so he puts 3 points into it. *Stealth* and *Survival* are both necessary, he decides, so he puts 2 points into each of them.

Finally he gets to spend 5 points into the last group of abilities, **Knowledges**. He decides that Culture, Linguistics, Herbalism, Investigation, and finally Larceny are all equally important, so he distributes 1 point into each of them. Since with linguistics, you must choose a variation, he chooses barbarian for his language, as all characters start out with a common tongue, known simply as Common.

ABILITIES					
TALENTS		SKILLS		KNOWLEDGE	
Acting	OOOO	Brawl	●●●O	Academics	OOOO
Alertness	●●OO	Crafts	OOOO	Artist	OOOO
Animal ken	OOOO	WP Axes	●●OO	Commerce	OOOO
Athletics	●●●O	Blunt	OOOO	Culture	●OOO
Empathy	OOOO	Knife	●●OO	Etiquette	OOOO
Enigmas	OOOO	Misc	OOOO	Herbalism	●OOO
Leadership	OOOO	Archery	OOOO	Investigation	●OOO
Music	OOOO	Polearms	OOOO	Larceny	●OOO
Stealth	●●OO	Shield	●●OO	Law	OOOO
Subterfuge	OOOO	Spear/Forks	OOOO	Linguistics	<i>Variation</i> OOOO
Survival	●●OO	Staves	OOOO	Medicine	OOOO
Ride/Drive	OOOO	Sword	●●OO	Occult	OOOO
	OOOO	Thrown	OOOO	Science	OOOO
Variations		Specialties			
<i>Barbarian</i>	●OOO		OOOO		OOOOOO
	OOOO		OOOO		OOOOOO
	OOOO		OOOO		OOOOOO
	OOOO		OOOO		OOOOOO
	OOOO		OOOO		OOOOOO

Now, since we have already filled in the middle of the sheet we can now fill in the Initiative and Speed on the top part of the sheet. Thomas looks up the rules for determining Initiative, and discovers that it is found by adding Wits and Alertness together. He looks at One Eyed Willie's character sheet and sees that he has a Wits of 2 and Alertness of 2, so he gets an Initiative score of 4, which he writes down on his sheet. Next, he looks at the rules for Speed and finds that it is determined by adding Strength and Athletics together. One Eyed Willie's Strength is 3, and his Athletics is also 3, so by adding them together he gets a 6 for his Speed rating. His character sheet now looks something like this:

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equip One Eyed Willie with some equipment, so he turns to the chapter on Arms, Armour and Goods and goes shopping. The first thing he decides is that he needs some good armour. Looking at the costs and types of armour available, he decides to buy *Hard Leather* for 125 gold. He marks that down in his possessions and deducts his gold. He has 95 gold left. It will probably not bode well if One eyed Willie didn't have at least a sword, so he looks at the swords and decides to buy a *Claymore Sword* for 90 gold. That leaves him with only 5 gold left. Foolishly, he decides that the only other thing One Eyed Willie will need is a sack to carry all the gold he is sure to find on his adventures, so he spends his last bit of gold on a small sack and marks them all down on his character sheet. Remember that fame and infamy start out empty, and other than that, if you want to put any notes down, make sure to do so now.

Possessions		Gold	0	HEALTH						
<i>Hard studded leather armour</i>	<i>Claymore Sword</i>	<i>Small Sack</i>		Extra	O					
				Extra	O					
				Extra	O					
				Dwarf/Ogre	O					
				Ooch/starting	O					
				Ouch/Halfling	O					
				Bruised	O					
Notes	Experience Points	0		Hurt	-1 O					
				Injured	-1 O					
				Wounded	-2 O					
				Mauled	-3 O					
				Crippled	-4 O					
Permanent Infamy		O O O O O		Permanent Fame		O O O O O		Incapacitated		O
Temp Infamy		O O O O O O O O O O O O		Temp Fame		O O O O O O O O O O O O				

Now Thomas has decided he wants to pick some Merits and Flaws for his alter ego, One Eyed Willie. Looking through the Chapter on merits and flaws, he decides that, because of his character's name, he wants the *2 point flaw, One Eye*. Next, he decides that he definitely wants to look cool, so he goes for *1 point merit, Muscular Physique*. He also peers down the list and decides that he wants One Eyed Willie to have his own type of honor, so he picks *Code of Honor 2 point merit*. Finally, to even things out, he decides upon a *1 point flaw, phobia*, and chooses magic and sorcery for his phobia. Thomas has decided that this is enough merits and flaws for him. Next, he looks down at his character sheet and sees that he needs to mark down his character's rage, weapons and armour, and descriptions of the damage, weight, etc., of the weapons and armour.

DAWN
Men at Arms

Flaws (must equal merits)

One Eye 2 point Flaw

Phobia of Magic 1 point flaw

RAGE ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

[illegible]

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Notes and Penalties
<i>Hard Leather</i>	<i>Add 3 die to soak rolls</i>	<i>8 pounds</i>	<i>+ 1 to diff number whenever trying to be stealthy</i>

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Conceal	Notes and Penalties
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Shield and Parry	Parry or Block Difficulty	vs. Melee	vs. Rnged	Notes
Small Shield	7	+1 die	0	can be used on horseback
Medium Shield	6	+1 die	+1 die	can be used on horseback
Large Shield	6	+2 die	+2 die	cannot be used mounted
Knife	7	-2 die	-4 die	
Any Weapon	6	+1 die	-3 die	

Finally, all Thomas has left to do is spend his freebie points. One Eyed Willie has 15 freebie

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points to spend. Thomas decides that what he really wants, since he took the merit *Muscular Physique*, is to actually be muscular, so he adds 2 points to strength. Those cost 5 freebie points each, so he has 5 freebie points left. He decides that he is going to spend 3 freebie points on rage and 2 on temporary willpower, since both traits cost 1 freebie point each. He has used all his freebie points, and listed below is what his character sheet looks like.

DAWN

Name: *One Eyed Willie*

Age: 18

Sex: *male*

Nature: *Barabarian*

Demeanor: *Guardian*

Race: *Human*

Height 5 foot 11 in **Weight:** 140 pounds **Speed:** 6

Initiative : 4

Willpower ●●●○○○○○○○○ **Temp Willpower** ●●○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●○	Charisma	●●○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○
Stamina	●●○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○	Wits	●●○○○○

ABILITIES

TALENTS		SKILLS		KNOWLEDGE	
Acting	○○○○	Brawl	●●●○	Academics	○○○○
Alertness	●●○○	Crafts	○○○○	Artist	○○○○
Animal ken	○○○○	WP Axes	●●○○	Commerce	○○○○
Athletics	●●●○	Blunt	○○○○	Culture	●○○○
Empathy	○○○○	Knife	●●○○	Etiquette	○○○○
Enigmas	○○○○	Misc	○○○○	Herbalism	●○○○
Leadership	○○○○	Archery	○○○○	Investigation	●○○○
Music	○○○○	Polearms	○○○○	Larceny	●○○○
Stealth	●●○○	Shield	●●○○	Law	○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○	Spear/Forks	○○○○	Linguistics	<i>Variation</i> ○○○○
Survival	●●○○	Staves	○○○○	Medicine	○○○○
Ride/Drive	○○○○	Sword	●●○○	Occult	○○○○
	○○○○	Thrown	○○○○	Science	○○○○
Variations				Specialties	
<i>Barbarian</i>	●○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○
	○○○○		○○○○		○○○○○○

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Possessions			Gold	0	HEALTH	
Hard studded leather armour	Claymore Sword	Small Sack			Extra	0
					Extra	0
					Extra	0
					Dwarf/Ogre	0
					Ooch/starting	0
					Ouch/Halfling	0
					Bruised	0
Notes	Experience Points		0		Hurt	-1 0
					Injured	-1 0
					Wounded	-2 0
					Mauled	-3 0
					Crippled	-4 0
					Incapacitated	0
Permanent Infamy	0 0 0 0 0	Permanent Fame	0 0 0 0 0			
Temp Infamy	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	Temp Fame	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0			



DAWN

Men at Arms

Merits (10 point's total)

Muscluar Physique 1 point merit

Code of Honor 2 point Merit

Flaws (must equal merits)

One Eye 2 point Flaw

Phobia of Magic 1 point flaw

RAGE ● ● ● ● ● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Weapons

[illegible]

Armour

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Notes and Penalties
<i>Hard Leather</i>	<i>Add 3 die to soak rolls</i>	<i>8 pounds</i>	<i>+ 1 to diff number whenever trying to be stealthy</i>

Helm

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Conceal	Notes and Penalties
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Shield and Parry	Parry or Block Difficulty	vs. Melee	vs. Rnged	Notes
Small Shield	7	+1 die	0	can be used on horseback
Medium Shield	6	+1 die	+1 die	can be used on horseback
Large Shield	6	+2 die	+2 die	cannot be used mounted
Knife	7	-2 die	-4 die	
Any Weapon	6	+1 die	-3 die	

Character Description and History

The plus versus ranged and melee is added to the attackers difficulty number when facing an opponents using a shield for blocking

Well, there it is. Hopefully, after a few tries, you will be comfortable enough to make them yourself now.

Dawn

Chapter 11

Character experience

Character experience: what it is and what to do with it

Throughout the story, there will be what are called sessions. Each session is one night or day's game. During these sessions, you get to earn experience points. You can spend these experience points when you have enough to buy extra dots in attributes and abilities, as well as buy Arete, Faith and Essence. Remember that, especially with knowledge abilities, you have to have a way to learn that particular trait before you can actually start to use it. For example, if you spend a dot in linguistics and decide you want to learn how to speak dwarven, you can spend the points, but until you find someone to actually teach you, or work out a way with the game master or storyteller as to how you are going to get this knowledge, you can't actually use it until you have been trained in it. Okay, now down to the real nitty gritty. Experience points - how do you earn them, how do you spend them, and how many do I need?

Earning experience points

Earning experience points happens during the course of a story. There will be many sessions in every story, in which you play and earn experience points. During these sessions, you will accomplish goals and complete many objectives. The game master or storyteller may award you between 1 to 5 points for heroics, playing in character, and for showing up. He or she may even award you an extra point or two depending upon if you did something amazing. After a story ends, which is the compilation of many sessions, you should be awarded points for achieving goals, finishing the game and basically playing as heroically as possible. A good average will probably be somewhere between 5 and 10 points at the end of each story.

Spending experience

Spending experience is done at the end of a story or a session.

Attributes

Attributes cost five experience points per level for each new level of an attribute you want to raise. So, if you have 3 in dexterity and want to raise it to 4, the cost would be 20 points. Now, if you had 2 points in intelligence, and wanted to bring it up to 4, you would first spend 15 points to bring it to 3, then another 20 points to bring it up to 4 dots.

Abilities

Abilities cost 5 points to buy the first level of an ability you don't have, and 3 points per level for each new level of an ability you already have. That means, for example, that if you have 0 dots in alertness, and you want to buy it at one dot, it would cost 5 points. Now, later on in the session or next story, you decide that you want to add another dot to alertness to raise it to 2 dots, it would cost 6 points (level 2 X 3 points per level = 6 experience points). Remember, for all abilities you want to raise, you must have a way of learning how to use the ability, such as a teacher or a trainer. Even though you have the new dots and have spent the points, you have to be taught the skill in order to use it. Whenever the game master or storyteller says you have been trained, you may then start to use the ability.



Willpower

You can only buy temporary willpower with freebie points when first starting out. The only way to raise permanent willpower is through gaining enough temporary willpower to gain one permanent dot of willpower. Gaining 20 temporary willpower earns you 1 permanent willpower point, at which point you erase the 20 temporary points and add 1 point to permanent willpower. So willpower, temporary or permanent, cannot be bought with experience points

Infamy / Fame

Infamy / Fame cannot be bought with experience points, the only way to raise it is by performing Villainous / Heroic goods and gaining temporary Infamy / Fame points, and after gaining 10 temporary Infamy / Fame points, you erase them all, and add 1 permanent point to the category for which you had gained those temporary points.

Spheres

For most men of magic, they may spend points to gain dots in a sphere. It costs 5 times each new level in experience to gain a dot, meaning that if you have 3 points in earth and want to go to 4, it would be 4×5 , or 20 points. If you are buying a new dot in a sphere you never had before, it costs 10 points.

Essence

Essence is the magical energy retained within the mortal body of a being. You may spend 1 point per dot to gain essence points. However, this could become a major waste of experience, as essence can be gained in many other ways as well.

Scourge

You can use experience to buy off permanent scourge at a rate of 3-for-1, meaning you can spend 3 experience points to lose 1 point of permanent scourge. You cannot buy off temporary scourge.

Arete

Arete allows a mage to manipulate reality and the mystical essence. They are determined at character creation by rolling willpower against a difficulty of seven, with any successes being equal to one point of arete. The starting minimum is 1 arete, and the starting maximum is 5 arete. After character creation, arete can be bought with experience at a cost of 5 times the level you are wanting to achieve, so if you have 6 arete and want to go to 7, it would cost 35 experience points. If you had 6 arete and wanted to go to 8 arete, the cost would be 75 experience points (35 points to go to level 7, and 40 points to go to level 8).

Faith

Faith is the way a clergyman determines how much he is in touch with his particular deity. Just like arete, it is determined at character creation by rolling willpower against a difficulty of 7, with any successes being equal to one point of arete. Once again, the starting minimum is 1 faith, and the starting maximum is 5 faith. After character creation, faith can be bought with experience at a cost of 5 times the level you are wanting to achieve, so if you have 6 Faith and want to go to 7, it would cost 35 experience points. If you had 6 faith and wanted to go to 8 faith, the cost would be 75 experience points (35 points to go to level 7, and 40 points to go to level 8).



Dawn

Chapter 12

Gods

The following is a list of gods most of them pagan from the dark ages. These are by no means a definitive guide to the gods and by no means are an absolute. Feel free to use these or to make your own as you go.

CELTIC

ANGUS OF THE BRUGH

Also OENGUS OF THE BRUIG God of youth, son of the Dagda. In Ireland, Angus is the counterpart of Cupid. Angus' kisses turn into singing birds, and the music he plays irresistibly draws all who hear.

ARIANRHOD

"Silver Wheel," "High Fruitful Mother." One of the Three Virgins of Britain, her palace is Caer Arianrhod, the Celtic name for the Aurora Borealis.

BADB

A goddess of war. One of a triad of war goddesses known collectively as the Morrigan. Bird shaped and crimson mouthed, Badb uses her magic to decide battles. Badb lusts after men and is often seen at fords washing the armor and weapons of men about to die in combat.

BRIGHID also BRIGIT.

Goddess of healing and craftsmanship, especially metalwork. Also a patron of learning and poetry. In Wales she is Caridwen, who possesses the cauldron of knowledge and inspiration. The Celts so loved Brighid that they could not abandon her even when they became Christians, and so made Brighid a Christian saint.

CARIDWEN also HEN WEN

In Wales, BRIGHID "White Grain," "Old White One." Corn goddess. Mother of Taliesen, greatest and wisest of all the bards, and therefore a patron of poets. The "white goddess" of Robert Graves. Caridwen lives among the stars in the land of Caer Sidi. Caridwen is connected with wolves, and some claim her cult dates to the Neolithic era.

CERNUNNOS

Horned god of virility. Cernunnos wears the torc (neck-ring) and is ever in the company of a ram-headed serpent and a stag. Extremely popular among the Celts, the Druids encouraged the worship of Cernunnos, attempting to replace the plethora of local deities and spirits with a national religion. The Celts were so enamored of Cernunnos that his cult was a serious obstacle to the spread of Christianity.

DAGDA

Earth and father god. Dagda possesses a bottomless cauldron of plenty and rules the seasons with the music of his harp. With his mighty club Dagda can slay nine men with a single blow, and with its small end he can bring them back to life. On the day of the New Year, Dagda mates with the raven goddess of the Morrigan who while making love straddles a river with one foot on each bank. A slightly comical figure.

DANU

Mother goddess, an aspect of the Great Mother. Another of a triad of war goddesses known collectively as the Morrigan. Connected with the moon goddess Aine of Knockaine, who protects crops and cattle. Most importantly, the mother of the Tuatha de' Danann, the tribe of the gods.

DIAN CECHT

A healer. At the second battle of Moytura, Dian Cecht murdered his own son whose skill in healing endangered his father's reputation. The Judgments of Dian Cecht, an ancient Irish legal tract, lays down the obligations to the ill and injured. An aggressor must pay for curing anyone he has injured, and the severity of any wound, even the smallest, is measured in grains of corn.

DIS PATER

Originally a god of death and the underworld, later the chief god of the Gauls. The Gauls believed, as their Druids taught, that Dis Pater is the ancestor of all the Gauls.

DONN

Irish counterpart to Dis Pater. Donn sends storms and wrecks ships, but he protects crops and cattle as well. Donn's descendents come to his island after death.

EPONA

Horse goddess. Usually portrayed as riding a mare, sometimes with a foal. Roman legionnaires, deeply impressed with Celtic horsemanship, took up the worship of Epona themselves and eventually imported her cult to Rome itself.

ESUS

A god of the Gauls "whose shrines make men shudder," according to a Roman poet. Human sacrifices to Esus were hanged and run through with a sword. For unknown reasons, Esus is usually portrayed as a woodcutter.

GOVANNON

The smith god. The weapons Govannon makes are unfailing in their aim and deadliness, the armor unfailing in its protection. Also a healer. Those who attend the feast of Govannon and drink of the god's sacred cup need no longer fear old age and infirmity.

LUG also LUGH, LLEU

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A sun god and a hero god, young, strong, radiant with hair of gold, master of all arts, skills and crafts. One day Lug arrived at the court of the Dagda and demanded to be admitted to the company of the gods. The gatekeeper asked him what he could do. For every skill or art Lug named, the gatekeeper replied that there was already one among the company who had mastered it. Lug at last pointed out that they had no one who had mastered them all, and so gained a place among the deities, eventually leading them to victory in the second battle of Moytura against the Formorian invaders. (The Formorians were a race of monsters who challenged the gods for supremacy in the first and second battles of Moytura.) The Romans identified Lug with Mercury. The most popular and widely worshipped of the Celtic gods, Lug's name in its various forms was taken by the cities of Lyons, Loudun, Laon, Leon, Lieden, Leignitz, Carlisle and Vienna.

MACHA "Crow."

The third of the triad of war goddesses known as the Morrigan, Macha feeds on the heads of slain enemies. Macha often dominates her male lovers through cunning or simple brute strength.

MEDB "Drunk Woman."

A goddess of war, not one of the Morrigan. Where the Morrigan use magic, Medb wields a weapon herself. The sight of Medb blinds enemies, and she runs faster than the fastest horse. A bawdy girl, Medb needs thirty men a day to satisfy her sexual appetite.

MORRIGAN, THE also MORRIGU MORRIGAN

A war goddess, forerunner of the Arthurian Morgan La Fey. Like Odin, fickle and unfaithful, not to be trusted. A hag with a demonic laugh, the Morrigan appears as a grotesque apparition to men about to die in battle. Her name is also used for a triad of war goddesses, who are often thought of as different aspects of the Morrigan.

NEMAIN "Panic."

A war goddess.

NUADHU also NUD, NODENS, LUD.

"Nuadhu of the silver arm." God of healing and water; his name suggests "wealth-bringer" and "cloud-maker." At the first battle of Moytura, Nuadhu lost an arm, and Dian Cecht replaced it with a new one made out of silver. Because of this, Nuadhu was obliged to turn leadership of the Tuatha de' Dannan over to Lug. People came to be healed at Nuadhu's temple at Lydney, and small votive limbs made of silver have been found there.

OGMIOS also OGMA

"Sun Face." A hero god like Hercules, a god of eloquence, language, genius. Generally portrayed as an old man dressed in a lion skin. From his tongue hang fine gold chains attached to the ears of his eager followers.

SUCELLUS

Guardian of forests, patron of agriculture. His consort is Nantosvelta, whose name suggests

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brooks and streams. Sometimes considered synonymous with Cernunnos or Daghdha.

TUATHA DE' DANANN

The divine tribes and people descended from the goddess Danu. Skilled in druidry and magic, the Tuatha de' Danann possess four talismans of great power: the stone of Fal which shrieked under the true heir to the throne; the spear of Lug which made victory certain; the sword of Nuadhu which slays all enemies; and the ever full cauldron of Daghdha from which no man ever goes away hungry.



EGYPTIAN

AMMON Also AMON; AMUN; AMEN

"Hidden." King of the gods of Egypt. Patron of the Pharaohs. Originally a god of fertility, a local deity of Memphis. Ammon became linked with the sun god Ra through the royal family, becoming Ammon-Ra.

ANUBIS

The jackal-headed god. Anubis can foresee a mortal's destiny and is associated with magic and divination. Anubis supervises the weighing of the soul when the departed are brought to the hall of the dead.

ASTARTE

The Assyro-Babylonian goddess Ishtar, inducted into the Egyptian pantheon and made a daughter of Ammon-Ra. Sometimes identified (or confused, which is the same thing) with Isis.

ATUM

The first of the gods, the self-created. By sheer will, Atum formed himself out of the stagnant waters of Nun. Atum was bisexual and was sometimes called "the great He-She." The Egyptians had two cosmogonies, one taught by the priests at Heliopolis and the other by the priests at Memphis. The priests at Memphis taught that Nun and Atum, together with Atum's children Shu and Tefnut, were aspects or forms of Ptah.

BAST Also BASTET.

The cat-headed goddess, a local deity of the delta. The kindly goddess of joy, music and dancing. Cats were sacred to Bast as a symbol of animal passion. Bast's devotees celebrated their lady with processions of flower-laden barges and orgiastic ceremonies. Her festivals were licentious and quite popular.

HATHOR

A sky goddess, sometimes represented as a woman with cow's horns between which hangs a solar disc, sometimes portrayed as a cow. Hathor concerns herself with beauty, love and marriage, and watches over women giving birth. Mother and wife of Ra. Hathor is also a goddess of death and offers comfort to the newly dead as they pass into the afterworld.

HORUS

The falcon-headed god. A complex deity with many aspects. Some of them are: Horus the Elder, a sky god whose eyes are the sun and the moon, continually at war with Set, the god of evil; Horus of the Horizon, symbolized by the rising and setting sun; Horus the Child, whose frequent depictions as a baby at the breast of his mother Isis influenced Christian images of the Madonna and the Christ child; Horus, son of Isis, avenger of Osiris. There were many others.

ISIS

Wife and sister of Osiris (the ancients had nothing against a little divine incest). The ideal wife and mother. Generally a goddess of the home and person rather than of the temple and the priest. After the twenty sixth dynasty, Isis is increasingly portrayed as a nursing mother, and her cult eventually spread throughout the Roman empire.

MAAT

Goddess of truth and justice. Her symbol is the feather.

MIN

A god of fertility and sexual potency. An ancient god of pre-dynastic origins. His symbol is the thunderbolt. As orgiastic festivals were held in his honor, Min was quite a popular god.

NUN

God of the primal waters. Nun was a mass of stagnant water which filled all the universe.

OSIRIS

At first the god of corn; later the god of the dead. Osiris brought civilization to the Egyptians, teaching them the uses of corn and wine, weaving, sculpture, religion, music and law. Set slew Osiris and dismembered his body; but Osiris' consort, Isis, reassembled the body and brought Osiris back to life. Osiris then retired to the underworld. Osiris is the god of the Nile which rises and falls every year; the god of corn and the vine, which flourish, die, and flourish once more; and the god of the rising and setting sun.

PTAH

The artificer. The creator god. According to the priests of Memphis, the fount of all creation. God of artisans and artists, designers, builders, architects, masons, metal workers. Ptah's consort is Sekhmut, goddess of war.

RA

God of the sun; sometimes identified or considered synonymous with Atum. Ra created man from his tears. At one time Ra became so disgusted with men that he ordered Hathor to kill them all. This Hathor did with such zeal that Ra took pity on men and ordered Hathor to stop. Crazy with blood, Hathor ignored the order, and Ra resorted to chicanery to save humankind. Ra mixed beer with pomegranate juice and left pots of the concoction about the battlefield. Thinking the mixture was blood, Hathor drank it greedily and got too intoxicated to carry out her mission.

SEKHMUT

Goddess of war and battles, consort of Ptah. Hathor took Sekhmut's shape when she made war on men. Sekhmut is usually portrayed as a woman with the head of a lioness, sometimes brandishing a knife in an upraised hand.

SET

Red of hair and eyes, pale of skin, Set is the god of evil, of drought, of destruction, thunder and storm. Set tore himself from his mother's womb in his hurry to be born. Every month Set attacks and devours the moon, the sanctuary of Osiris and the gathering place of the souls of the recently dead.

THOTH

"Thrice Greatest." God of wisdom, music, magic, medicine, astronomy, geometry, surveying, art and writing. Historian, scribe and judge. Thoth's priests claimed Thoth was the Demi-Urge who created everything from sound. It was said that Thoth wrote books in which he set forth a fabulous knowledge of magic and incantation, and then concealed them in a crypt.

GREEK

ADONIS

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Beloved of Aphrodite, the central figure of a widespread fertility cult, god of vegetation and re-birth. Adonis seems clearly linked with Tammuz, the Assyro-Babylonian god who dies and rises again. Adonis is the Greek version of the Phoenician term Adon, which means "Lord."

APHRODITE

Goddess of fertility, love and beauty. When Zeus killed his father, Uranus, he cut off his father's genitals and cast them into the sea. The sea foamed and boiled and Aphrodite arose from the waters. As Aphrodite stepped from the ocean, flowers grew wherever her feet touched. Paphos, the place where Aphrodite supposedly rose from the waters, was her most important place of worship, and at Corinth she was worshipped with sacred whores. Aphrodite is clearly related to Ishtar and Astarte and very much loves the company of the male gods. While married to Hephaestus, she also dallied with Ares, Poseidon, Adonis, and Dionysius. Aphrodite is a complex, many faceted deity. Among her many names are Melaina (the Black One), Androphonos (Killer of Men), Epitymbidia (She Upon the Graves), Anadyomene (Rising from the Sea), Urania (Sky Borne), and Pandemos (Goddess of All the People).

APOLLO

God of light, god of prophecy and music, god of medicine, god of flocks and herds, the divine archer, a pastoral god. Wise, beautiful, all-knowing, ever just, ever young. Apollo urges forgiveness to all offenses, even the blackest of crimes, so long as the offender was truly penitent. After Zeus and Athene, the greatest of the Gods. Apollo's most important place of worship was the famous temple at Delphi, where oracles prophesied in his name. The Sybil at Cumae in southern Italy also foretold the future in his honor. Paintings and statuary show him with his bow and lyre, which were a gift from the infant Hermes. Apollo loved young men and young women alike, though his affairs usually ended unhappily. Artemis is his twin sister, and Horus is his counterpart in the Egyptian pantheon.

ARES

to the Romans, MARS God of war. The Greeks detested Ares. Quarrelsome, spiteful, unfaithful, Ares loves only hatred, strife and bloodshed. Ares was the first god to be placed on trial for murder, and the place in Athens where he was supposed to be have been tried was called the Aeropagus, the Hill of Ares. By custom trials for murder were held at the Aeropagus. The Romans believed Ares to be the father of Romulus and Remus.

ARTEMIS Also PARTHENOS

Fertility goddess, patron of maidens, goddess of childbirth. Identified with the moon, as her brother Apollo is identified with the sun. The Virgin Huntress, Mistress of Beasts, Lady of All Wild Things, A Lion unto Women. Usually benevolent, but stern and demanding, dangerous to cross. Artemis lived in Arcadia with a band of nymphs subject to her strict discipline; those who dallied with men, as did Callisto, might be shot down with an arrow or otherwise punished. No man or god ever gained the love of Artemis. Artemis is virtually unbeatable in combat. The only one of the immortals who ever bested her was Hera, who defeated Artemis on the battlefield at Troy, whipped her with her own bow, and sent her fleeing in tears.

ASCLEPIUS

God of medicine and healing, son of Apollo. Originally a mortal. So great was Asclepius' skill that he could revive the dead. Zeus killed Asclepius after Hades complained that he was being cheated of his lawful due, but Asclepius' virtues and good deeds won him a place among the gods. Those who wished a cure of Asclepius would sleep in his temple, where he would appear to them in a dream and advise them. Snakes are his symbol and were allowed to wander freely in his temple at Epidaurus.



ATHENE

To the Romans, MINERVA Goddess of wisdom, of architects and sculptors, of weavers, of oxen and horses. A goddess of war. Like Artemis, an eternal virgin. Often associated with birds, particularly the owl. Athene taught men to tame horses and invented the potter's wheel. Her city is Athens, which she won in a contest with Poseidon.

CHARON

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The ferryman who carries dead souls across the river Styx to Hades. His fee is one gold, which was placed in the mouth of the dead man before he was buried.

CRONUS

The chief of the Titans, the race of giants who preceded the Olympian gods. In very ancient times, Cronus was probably a corn god. Told that he would be overthrown by one of his own sons, Cronus devoured them all as they were born until his wife Rhea deceived him to save Zeus. Wrapping a stone in swaddling clothes, Rhea gave the stone to Cronus and spirited Zeus away to a hiding place. After defeating Cronus, Zeus imprisoned him and the rest of the Titans, thus beginning the age of the Olympian gods.

DEMETER

To the Romans, CERES Goddess of grain and the fruitful earth. An earth mother who was certainly one of, if not the oldest of the gods. Demeter's immensely popular festivals, held twice a year at Eleusis, were so highly revered that no initiate was ever known to break the vow of secrecy. Demeter gave the gift of grain to men and instituted the Eleusinian Mysteries. The nature of these Mysteries has been lost to us, though we know that the mystery cults celebrated the Lesser Mysteries in February of every year and the Greater Mysteries in September of every fifth year. Most likely the rites included processions, ritual cleansing and religious dramas.

DIONYSIUS

God of religious ecstasy and wine, accompanied always by satyrs and nymphs. The force of life in all growing things. Dionysius is the Greek form of Thracian and Phrygian deities of vegetation and fertility, who followers worked themselves into a frenzy and ritually tore apart their god in the form of a goat, a bull or a man. The cult survived the introduction of the Olympian gods and proved so popular that it finally had to be accepted by the Dorian Greeks. In the dark age which followed the decline of the Myceneans, the cult of Dionysius spread rapidly, especially among women. His followers were known as maenads (mad women) and it was best not to be near when their frenzy came upon them. Animals, and sometimes people, were torn apart and sometimes eaten in the belief that they were devouring the god himself. Drunk, lawless and noisy, not terribly impressed by authority or convention, the followers of Dionysius were often unwelcome. His worshippers danced wildly, and his rites were designed to cleanse men of lowly irrational emotions and desires.

ERIS

The dark sister of Eros. Goddess of chaos and discord, Eris loves confusion and conflict. It was Eris who gave the goddesses the golden apple inscribed "To the Fairest," which set in motion the chain of events that led to the Trojan War.

EROS

God of love both heterosexual and homosexual, though his domain is not limited solely to sexual love and includes love in all its broadest senses. One of the oldest of the gods, the center of his worship was at Thespieae. The ancient Greeks feared Eros. Eros can cause havoc, and there is an air of maliciousness about him. Eros can drive men and women to noble self-sacrifice, but he can also torture them to madness and drive them to self-destruction. Lacking wisdom, moderns have made Eros contemptibly cute and sweet, and somewhat prankish.

GAIA

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"Mother of all things." The Earth itself, mother of the Titans, the old gods. Usually represented as a giant woman. Before anything else existed, there was only Chaos (the Void, the Nothingness, the Emptiness) and the Earth. Gaia nurses the ill and watches over marriages. Gaia is an oracle as well, and the temple at Delphi was hers before it was Apollo's. The Greeks had no tales about Gaia, because she belonged to the distant past.

HADES Also PLUTO

"The Unseen," "the Rich." God of wealth and the underworld. Hades is stern but perfectly just, and rejects all pleas for mercy, but he is in no sense evil or destructive. His realm is not a place of flames and torment, as is the Christian hell. Most dead souls dwell on the plain of Asphodel, where they wander aimlessly as mere shadows of their earthly selves. The blessed go to the Elysian Fields, a place of great joy and beauty, while the abominably wicked go to the dismal plain of Tartarus. You're born, you live, you die, you go to Hades. End of story.

HEBE

Goddess of youth and beauty. An eternally young girl, Hebe helps the gods wash and dress themselves, though her main duty is to serve nectar and ambrosia at their feasts. A minor but charming deity.

HECATE

Goddess of black magic and evil ghosts. Often portrayed with three faces: maiden, mother and crone. The poor and down trodden often turned to Hecate for protection or vengeance. Hecate defends children and appears with her dogs at crossroads and tombs.

HELIOS

God of the sun, the charioteer who drives the sun across the sky. From his great height, Helios sees everything and was often called upon to witness contracts and oaths. From the fifth century onward, Helios was considered identical with Apollo.

HEPHAESTUS

To the Romans, VULCAN The lame blacksmith god, patron of craftsman and metalworkers, god of fire. The centers of his cult could be found wherever metalworkers congregated and near volcanos. Hephaestus was so ugly that his mother Hera kept him out of sight, and the other gods laughed at his lame gait. In revenge, Hephaestus tricked the gods into giving him Aphrodite for his wife, though he never succeeded in keeping her faithful. Some scholars say Hephaestus' lameness was a reflection of an actual practice. A skillful smith was a rare and valuable man, and tribes or villages would often cripple a good smith to keep him from leaving or running away.

HERA

To the Romans, JUNO. Wife of Zeus, queen of the gods. Zeus is quite a randy god, and Hera's domestic life with him is always stormy. Zeus and Hera were on opposite sides during the Trojan War, and they squabble all the way through the Iliad. At first a sky goddess, Hera later became the embodiment of womanliness. Like Dionysius, Hera is a pre-Olympian deity whose cult was so strong that it had to be adopted by the Dorian Greeks. Hera was worshipped in high places, and her temples were built on mountain peaks. Her festival, held at Argos and called the Heraia, involved athletic contests.

HERMES

To the Romans, MERCURY The messenger of the gods, the god of eloquence, the god of luck. God of travelers, merchants and athletes. Originally a pastoral and fertility god in Arcadia, in his oldest monuments Hermes is represented simply as a phallus. Easygoing, kind and obliging, Hermes is quite helpful to both gods and men, though he appears in some stories as a trickster. Hermes invented the lyre, which he gave to Apollo to get out of a mess he'd made by stealing Apollo's cattle. Hermes' image was often found at crossroads and junctions, and he is shown with winged sandals and a winged helmet. Hermes was quite popular.

HYPNOS

God of sleep. Brother of Thanatos (Death). Hypnos has power even over the gods.

IRIS

Goddess of the rainbow. Like Hermes, a messenger for the gods. The center of her cult was at Delos, and the proper offerings to her were dried figs and honey cakes.

MOROS

God of destiny. Dark, unknowable, all powerful. Even the gods are subject to Moros.

MORPHEUS

God of dreams. His name is the root word of "morphine."

NEMESIS

Also ADRASTEIA Goddess of destiny and inevitability, the repayment of sin and crime.

NIKE

To the Romans, VICTORIA Goddess of victory. Generally portrayed as a winged maiden holding high a wreath of bay leaves, the victor's laurel. Her most famous temple was in Athens.

OCEANUS

Ancient god of the oceans, eventually displaced by Poseidon. With his sister, Tethys, he had six thousand children, half of them sea spirits, the other half river spirits.

PAN

"The Pasturer," "the Feeder of Flocks." God of herds, fertility and male sexuality. Pan has the horns and legs of a goat and plays a syrinx, a pipe with seven reeds. An ancient god, he has no moral or social aspect whatsoever, and is simply the embodiment of pure, basic instinct. Some said that Pan taught Apollo the art of prophecy. Pan especially loves mountains and wild country. Pan has a dark aspect as well, causing men and animals to go suddenly mad with terror in distant, lonely places. His name is therefore the root word of "panic."



PERSEPHONE

Also KORE "Maiden." Daughter of Demeter, wife of Hades. Hades kidnapped Persephone and took her to the underworld to be his queen. When Demeter heard, she wandered the earth in mourning, abandoning her responsibilities, and the earth grew gray and barren. The growing famine forced Zeus to demand that Hades return Persephone to the surface world. But Persephone had eaten part of a pomegranate, and eating of the food of the dead bound her to their world. Zeus and Hades struck a bargain -- Persephone would spend seven months a year in the world of the living and five in the world of the dead. When Persephone is in the world, her mother Demeter is content, and the world blooms and

lives. When she is in the underworld, Demeter mourns, the world languishes, and we have winter.

POSEIDON

God of the sea and earthquakes. Horses and bulls are sacred to him. Originally the god of earth tremors, of vegetation and fecundity, Poseidon fought for the Olympians against the Titans, and his reward after the victory was dominion over the seas, lakes and rivers. Poseidon's fits of rage manifest as storms, and seamen dread his anger. Bulls were thrown into the sea as sacrifices to Poseidon. His amorous adventures played an important role in Greek mythology, and he loved men no less than women.

THANATOS

God of death. Sometimes portrayed as a winged spirit, at other times as a man robed in black armed with a sword. Thanatos is not evil or hateful. He is just doing his job.

URANUS

Heaven personified. The son born to Gaia when she first emerged from Chaos. Uranus' rain made Gaia fruitful, and she brought forth the Titans. Jealous of his children, Uranus confined them to the earth, and Gaia conspired with Cronus, the boldest of her children, to overthrow him. Cronus castrated Uranus with a sickle, only to be overthrown by Zeus in his turn.

ZEUS

To the Romans, JUPITER. "Cloud Gatherer." The ruler of the Olympian gods, god of the sky, thunder, and lightening, the upholder of custom and tradition. Zeus had many names. As Soter, he is known as the father and saviour of mankind; as Herkeios, guardian of the home; as Xenios, keeper of the rules of hospitality; as Ktesios, protector of property; as Gamelios, god of marriage; as Zeus Chronios, god of the earth and fertility; as Zeus Eluetherios, protector of freedom; and as Zeus Polieus, god of the civic virtues. Despite all these duties, Zeus still had plenty of time to romp with young girls and boys. His wife Hera persecuted his lovers, both mortal and divine.

Norse

Norse mythology

Now let's explore Norse Mythology and some of the legends that it fosters to this day.....

"Mommy and Daddy, where do thunder and lightning come from?"

If you've ever been asked this question chances are you will answer in one of two ways. For those more analytical among us, one might launch into an explanation of cloud formations, airborne moisture and wind currents caused by high and low pressure centers running into each other and the interaction of those polarities in creating voltage. It's about this time that the eyes of the child glaze over and as the next bolt descends and the thunder peals the fear and fascination that spurred the question return. Then of course there are those that take the more simplified and ethereal approach: "Honey, it's just the angels bowling. There's nothing to be afraid of." If instead you tried what the moms and dads of the Migration and Viking eras used to explain this phenomenon, you might actually make the child feel good about thunder and lightning and look forward to the next thunderstorm.

According to Norse Mythology, THOR rode through the heavens on a golden chariot pulled by

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two large enchanted goats who had sparks flashing from their hoofs and teeth and thunder rumbling from the wheels of the chariot they pulled as they pursued the evil giants through the skies that were attempting to escape them. THOR, the god of thunder, benefactor of man, and the implacable foe of the giants, wearing his magic strength giving belt and magic iron gloves that protected his hands from the red hot hammer, Mjolnir, created thunder and lightning every time he felled another of the evil giants trying to do bad things to little kids and grown-ups.

Why is it called Wednesday, and why is it spelled that way?

Norse Mythology gets credit for naming six out of our seven days of the week, and renaming the seventh! Not many know the origins of these names we all use so frequently. In Wednesday's case, for example, this is the day of the week named after.....drum roll please.....you guessed it!.....ODIN. Wednesday is the English name for the fourth day of the week. The name comes from "Woden" for Woden's day or "ODIN", the chief god in Norse Mythology, to whom it was considered sacred. (Woden is Old English and Wodin is Germanic for Odin; also Odhinn, Wodan, & Wuotan). So when they modernized the word, they changed the "o" to an "e", switched the "e" with the "n" and left out the apostrophe...and just that simply Woden's day became Wednesday.

But let's start at the beginning. Sunday..."was the day sacred to the sun among old Teutonic peoples, and its name means day of the sun".

The next one is just as easy...Monday..."the word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *monandaeg*, which means the moon's day. In ancient (Teutonic) times each of the seven days was dedicated to a god or goddess. Monday was sacred to the goddess of the moon."

Tuesday, the name of the third day of the week, was taken from Tiu, or Tiw, which was the Anglo-Saxon form of Tyr, the name of the Norse god of war. Tyr was the son of Odin, or Woden.

So if Tuesday was named after one son of Odin, and Wednesday was named after Odin himself, can you guess who Thursday was named after? Right, THOR...Thursday, as the fifth day of the week was named after Odin's eldest son, THOR, means Thor's day, and was considered by ancient Norsemen to be sacred to the Teutonic god of thunder and agriculture, son of Odin & Jord (mother earth) and champion of the Aesir.

So what about Friday, was there a Fri?

Pretty close...meet Freyja (*FRAY ha*), the goddess of love and beauty in Norse mythology. She was the sister of Frey (*fray*) (who had the power over rain and sunshine, and at who's command the fruits of the earth grew and prosperity followed), and daughter of the great sea god, Njord (the head god of the Vanir). Freyja was like Venus in Roman mythology, but she is sometimes a war goddess (now let's see....love, beauty and war; yep, sounds like somebody I know!). Often she went with the Valkyries to the battlefield. After a fight she claimed half of the dead men, and let the spirit of life (Odin) have the other half. She took them to her palace. There she revived them and held a feast for them. Freyja eventually married a god named Oder, but he didn't know what he had, and deserted her to travel and seek other women. Freyja could not stop weeping, and her tears were drops of gold. In Norse poetry, gold is called the tears of Freyja, or the rain of Freyja's cheeks. The cats which drew her chariot are symbols of her enjoyment of the senses. Her many names show the different ideas about love in life. So Friday comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *Frigedaeg*, which means Freyja's day.

Those are the six out of seven named from Norse mythology, and the seventh day, Saturday, "called *Saeter-daeg* by the Anglo-Saxons is named for the Roman god Saturn. It is the only day named for a Roman god". So score that six for the Norsemen and one for the Romans!

What are these Valkyries you keep mentioning?

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These were the warlike goddess-maidens of Norse Mythology who attended Odin. Yes, even the women fought in these ancient Viking battles. They rode on swift horses, sang war cries, were armed with spears, shields, helmets and brilliant armor, and rode through the air distributing Odin's commands. Odin also dispatched them to every battlefield to choose the bravest of the dead heroes and bring them back to Valhalla. (I wonder if Odin knew the Valkyries were in cahoots with Freyja to give her first pick?) Life giving dew fell from the manes of their horses, light streamed from the points of their spears, and a flickering brightness heralded their arrival on the scene of the battle. They carried the dead on their horses and lead their souls across the bridge Bifrost, which was the only path from Midgard (the rainbow) to Asgard (heaven), into the hall of Valhalla. Then they put on white robes acting as cupbearers to the immortalized warriors and served them a daily feast of wild boar and horns of mead (a fermented drink made from honey). Sometimes in Norse poetry, they are described as supernatural beings of giant stature, striding across the mountains or appearing in time of danger to take up the hero and carry him out of his predicament. The Valkyries were represented as being of diverse origin; some were descended from elves and other supernatural creatures, while others were the daughters of noble men. They are also said by Saxo to vary their appearance, and to be seen sometimes as fearsome beings and sometimes as beautiful maidens, who offer love to the warrior (sounding familiar?). Protective spirits of this kind were said to attach themselves to the kings and princes who worshipped Odin, giving them help and counsel and bringing them luck in battle, while at their death they received them as their husbands.

"What else can you tell us about Odin?"

How about this 2-part \$64,000 question...What was the name of Odin's horse and how many legs did he have? OK, give up? "In the Viking Age, Odin was pictured traveling through the skies on Sleipnir, his mighty eight legged horse who could carry his spirit to worlds beyond the earth. The story of the birth of this horse of Odin is found in the story of the building of the wall round Asgard, the stronghold of the gods.

A giant offered to build a wall for them in the space of one winter. It was agreed that, if he could finish the work on time he should have the goddess Freyja and the sun and the moon as payment. The gods thought themselves quite safe in making such a bargain, but the giant brought with him a marvelous horse called Svadilfari, which was so intelligent and swift that when the beginning of spring was only three days away, the wall was practically complete. The gods, however, were saved from making payment by the cunning of Loki, the trickster of Asgard, who took on the form of a mare, and neighed at the stallion until he was lured away from his work. Thus the wall was never finished, and THOR slew the giant with his hammer, and Loki in the guise of the mare gave birth to an eight legged colt. This was Sleipnir, the finest of all steeds, whom Odin kept for himself."

Odin was the chief god of Northern mythology and from his throne seat Valaskjalf, he ruled the heavens and earth omnisciently. By drinking from Mimir's fountain he became the wisest of gods and men, but he purchased the distinction at the cost of one eye. Frigga was his queen but he had other wives and favorites and numerous sons and daughters. To him answered all of the Aesir, the gods of the Teutonic pantheon collectively. Do you remember the "Sword in the Stone" story? Well, before that story was the real version... "The Sword in the Tree." To those that dedicated their efforts to Odin, he gave great gifts. In one such case he gave a splendid sword to Sigmund the Volsung, then Odin himself plunged the sword deep into the tree forming the central pillar of the family hall, so that only the hand of this young hero, an einherjar (soldier of Odin), who had won his favor was able to withdraw it.

What was Odin's favorite weapon?

Odin's great treasure was his mighty spear Gungnir, which could determine victory by the direction which it took over the battlefield. Well into the middle ages it was still thought a lucky omen to throw a spear over the heads of an advancing band of enemies. The horned helmets that are so familiarly associated with the Vikings and their expeditions and attire were said to bear horns ending in eagle's

beaks, the mark of Odin.

Why did Odin wear so many rings?

Another of the treasures of Odin was the self-perpetuating gold ring Draupnir, from which nine new gold rings dropped every ninth night. As a leader in battle, Odin was naturally viewed as a ring-giver, dealing out treasure in the form of gold rings to his followers. There may also be a symbolic link with the three intertwined triangles or rings, known as the valknut, which can be seen on the carvings of the Gotland Stones of the Viking Age and elsewhere in association with Odin much like the linked rings of the Olympics.



What was Odin's greatest gift to the gods and men?

Before we answer that, we must study some of Odin's other magic capabilities. Odin could turn himself into an eagle and fly through the heavens. The eagle which sat on the world tree as pictured on many of the Gotland stones of antiquity may well have been Odin himself, since he had a special seat from which he could view all the worlds at once. Odin could also lie as if asleep, while his spirit could journey in the twinkling of an eye to far-off lands in the form of a bird or wild beast, fish or dragon. Odin flew in the form of an eagle when he won the greatest gift, the mead of inspiration. The mead was prepared from the blood of the wise giant Kvasir, who was created by the gods. He was killed by the dwarfs, who mixed his blood with honey and brewed the marvelous drink. It could give to him who drank it the power to compose poetry, or to speak words of wisdom. An intoxicating drink was probably an essential part of the rituals of worshipping Odin. Is there a moral to this story? If you're going to drink and utter profound sayings, you should probably do it on Wednesdays.

Are there any of these gods we should especially watch out for?

Yes, keep your eyes peeled for a rascal named Loki. He was an enigmatic, mischievous, sometimes demonic, schizophrenic figure who appears occasionally as a helper but mostly as an enemy of the gods stirring up all kinds of trouble that others must contend with. Sometimes he is more closely associated with the giants, (Jotunn) than the gods of which he is one. Loki was credited with the killing of Balder, the favorite son of Odin's wife Frigga. Balder was so beloved of his mother, that Frigga endowed him with the power of being impervious to wounds by taking a pledge from all plants, trees and metals that weapons made of them would cause him no harm. She neglected one small plant, however, which grows not on the ground but on an oak tree, the mistletoe. From this plant, Loki made a dart and gave it to Balder's brother Hoder suggesting he hurl it at Balder in sport. When Hoder threw the dart, however, it pierced Balder like a spear and he fell dead. For this Loki was chained to a rock with a snake hung over his head. The poison of the snake dripped into his face and made him howl with pain and agony. According to one legend, Loki will remain chained until the gods no longer rule. Then he will break his bonds and the earth will be drowned under the sea.

Another story of Loki's mischievous conduct involves Sif, the wife of Thor. She had long golden hair which covered her from head to foot like a veil. Thor was very proud of his wife's hair, but she awoke one morning and found it all gone. Thor was angry and said that he would punish the thief. He believed that Loki had taken it. At last he captured Loki and made him admit his guilt. Thor was going to punish him, but Loki promised to get new hair for Sif. Loki went to the land of the dwarfs. He begged Dvalin, their chief, to make the hair for him. Loki had also angered Odin and Frey, and he asked for presents for them as well. Dvalin took fine threads of gold and spun long tresses of hair. They grew as soon as they touched the head of Sif. The dwarfs got so interested in the spinning of the hair that they tried to see which one could make the most clever and magic things. They made for Odin an enormous boar with golden bristles and the magic spear, Gungnir, which would always hit its mark. A wonderful ship that could sail over land and water was made for Frey, as well as a magic ring. But the dwarfs made three very useful gifts for Thor. The first was his magic hammer, Mjolnir, that came back to the hand that threw it. The hammer was always red hot so they made a pair of magic gloves to protect Thor's hands. The third gift was a magic belt which doubled Thor's already impressive strength when he wore it around his waist.

This story is so typical of both the poetry and irony of Norse mythology. From the nasty deed of a trouble making god came many good things that went on to benefit the good gods and through their deeds, the common man. Think about it. Not everything in life is good and wholesome; many things go awry and seem to be insurmountable hurdles. Eventually, though, they seem to work themselves out and from the experience comes knowledge and good.

The Old Norse Mythology is rather fascinating. The ones acquainted with the world of Tolkien can to some extent recognize themselves when dealing with this mythology. According to the old tales a man

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with the name of Gylfe, king of Svithiod, once entered the home of the gods and there he was told how the world begun. He met with three beings which had the names: Hög (High), Tredje (Third) and jämnhög (Even Height or something like that. They told him how the world had been created and how everything was done.

At the beginning there was the abyss (Ginnungagapet), North of this there was Nifelheim, the world of cold where Cold and Darkness rules. Frosty mists rose from the cold well of Hvergelmer. In the south there was the hot Muspelheim, a place where the being Surte ruled with a flaming sword. The mists from Hvergelmer formed the frozen stream of Elivågor which flowed in to the Ginnungagap and filled it with ice. But at the same time flares from Muspelheim fell into the abyss and the falling drops which became the result of the mix of flares and ice formed two giant beings: A cow with the name 'Audhumbla' and a giant named 'Ymir'. Ymir got his food from the cow by means of four mouths which he used to milk the cows four nipples. Audhumbla in turn lived on the white frost of the rocks. Her warm breath created a man called Bure which by some mysterious way managed to get a hold of a wife (it is not described how) and they where the first of the Asa dynasty of which Odin, Vili and Ve would be the greatest.

Ymir on his side created several different creatures. From his left arm a lovely couple sprung, from which the three fates Urd, Verdandi, Skuld (Guilt) and the wise Mimer came. His feet on the other hand created a three headed monster which became the ancestor of the Rimtusarnas evil giant family. Odin, which destiny had chosen to become the one who would fulfill the creation, killed the giant Ymir (with help from his two brothers) and used his body as a ground for the new world. His blood became the sea (Where all the Rimtusarnas but one drowned). His skull became the sky. The bones in his skeleton became mountains, his brain the clouds and his tissues was grinded in the great mill 'Grottekvarnen', around whose main axis the universe turned, to become the dirt. The mill was driven by the giantesses Fenja and Menja. Ymers Eyebrows became a wall against the inhabitable surroundings. This new world was called Midgård.

The world down under was divided into three kingdoms each one with its own well. Hvergelmer, Mimers well and Urda well. From the Ginnungagap a large ash with the name 'Ygdrasil' grow. The branches of Ygdrasil covered all the then known world. In Hvergelmer the dragon Nidhög lies and gnaws on the roots of the tree. Mimers well on the other hand is the well of wisdom, guarded by Mimer, Oden once gave his right eye for a drink of the water in this well.

At Urdawell which is guarded by the three fates the gods have their conferences each day. They ride daily over the bridge Bifrost, a bridge which shimmers in all the colors of the rainbow and is watched by the god Heimdal (also called Rig), nine mothers and nine sisters son and beholder of Gjallarhornet which is nordic tales last trump. Heimdal sleeps lighter than the bird, sees one hundred travel days in each direction from his castle Himinbjorg and has such sharp hearing that he can hear the grass and the wool grow.

Once when Odin and his brothers where out taking a walk at the shore of the sea in Midgård, he found two Sceptring trees with the names Ask and Embla. They set them free from the earth and gave them blood, power of motion, intelligence, will, fantasy and spirit. They where formed after their own appearance. From this couple the whole humanity evolved. The fate Urd gives every human a being called Fylgia at birth. Thus being are to follow her throughout his/her life. Odins wife is called Frigg, and his sons are called Thor and Balder. Thor is the strongest of the gods and is all ways in war with the giants. He is armed with his 'strength belt' Megingjard and the hammer 'Mjölner' which like a boomerang always return to his hand after a throw. He is traveling through The skies in a wagon which is pulled by the goats 'Tandgniostr' and 'Tandgrisner'. About his fights with the giants there is a lot of fascinating stories which have the character of folklore tales and which most certainly never have been accepted by the believing. As the god of thunder he enjoyed respectful worshiping from the believers which can be proved by among other things the surviving names on villages (Thorsvik) and in other words like 'thordön' (The sound of lightning), thorsdag (Thursday).

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Balder on the other hand was the god of battle but got some of the characteristics of Christ when the Christian faith became known in the nordic countries. There is no certain proof that he really was the focus for some serious worshipping. Any way, the story about Balder is rather fascinating. In Snorre Sturlassons Edda he was portrayed as Balder the kind. He was residing in his stronghold Breidablick. He was the kindest and the most fair of the gods. He was therefore loved of all the living beings in the world. Therefore his mother took a promise from all the living not to hurt him and cause of this Balder was invulnerable. The gods therefore used him for target practicing, the arrows they used just bounced of him. But there where one plant which his mother had forgotten to ask and that was the mistletoe. One of the creatures in the 'inner circle' around the gods was the devious Loki (who really was of a giant family although he had been taken up by the gods) who when he realized the mistake made by Balders mother, quickly made an arrow of the mistletoe and instructed Balders blind brother, Höder, to shot it in a certain direction. The arrow hit Balder and he was promptly killed.

The following story reminds a bit of the greek story where 'Persefone' and 'Prometheus' get in more or less the same situation. The shocked gods tried to get Balder back from the kingdoms of death. But failed due to the sly Loki which had disguised himself as an old woman with the name Töck. Loke got his punishment, he was caught in the river when he was trying to escape in the shape as a salmon. He was chained with his sons (Nares) Bowels to a rock just under a jut where a viper constantly drips his venom on the poor fellows face. Sigyn, his beloved, stays with him and tries to ease the pain by collecting the venom in a bowl but when the bowl is full and she is away to empty it Loki gets the poison in his face and he trembles in his agony, and with him the rest of the world.

Some of the creatures which stems from Loki is Fenrisulven and Midgårdsormen. Midgårdsormen was thrown in to the sea where he grew rapidly so that he eventually encircled the earth and bit himself in the tail. Fenrisulven on the other hand was adopted by the gods (which proved to be a big mistake). The playful puppy soon grew into a monster whose strength and hostility threatened the other gods. Therefore they tried to bind him with a chain (named Gleipner) made of iron which he promptly ripped apart. They made a new leash made of, among other things, the beard from women, the roots of the mountains, the sound of steps from a cat, the spittle from the bird and other equally rare materials. This very soft and thin rope was shown to Fenrisulven and he was offered to rip it apart. Fenrisulven, which suspected foul play, was rather reluctant to take the offer. Only when the god Tyr put his hand in to his mouth did he allow the rope to be pulled over the head. When he found out that he was tricked he thus in anger bit the hand of Tyr and that's the story behind Tyr's lost right hand...

There are other gods in the family, Like Brage (The god with the long beard) which sits at home in his fathers stronghold and uses his time to drink beer and write poems. There is 'Forsete', son of Balder, who is the god of justice and lives in the heavenly hall Glitner. The silent Vidar which rules over the lower regions where the last battle will be held. Njord, son of a allegory daughter to Mimer with the name Natt (Night) and brother to Odins wife Frigg, belongs to a different breed called vanerna and is in the beginning in Asgård as hostage. He is the god of richness and the protector of sailors. He commands the weather. His wife the skiing Skade is born in the mountains. Therefore she doesn't like being in Njords Stronghold 'Noatun' as she can't stand the screaming of the sea gulls. On the other hand Njord can't stand the howling from the wolfs in Skades mountains. Therefore they are living separately. Njords son is named Frej (or frö), and he rules over the fertility on earth. Frö:s sister, Freja (or Fröja) which resides in the castle Folkvang, most fittingly rules over love.

These brothers and sisters have rather complicated marriage relations. But Frejas husband seems to be Svipdag or Hermod while Frej after some persuasion managed to get a fair looking giantess with the name Gerd. Of the dynasty of the vanerna was furthermore Nanna, which became wife to Balder (she got a chrushed heart when he was killed). Other gods and goddesses comes from the dynasty of elves. which in turn can be divided in to black elfs and light elfs. To this dynasty belongs, among other, the fair headed Siv, wife of Thor in the wooden castle Bilskirnir (the greatest of all timebered houses) in the land of Trudvang. They had sons with the name of: Magne and Mode. Idun, wife of Brage, which made the wonderful apples which gave the gods their eternal youth. Ivalde, which in the beginning of time was the guardian against the Rumtusarerna at Elivågor. He had a son , Valand (or as he also was called:

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Limping Valand or Völund), which was a blacksmith and whom one of the sadest edda stories is about. The seagod Ágir which is related to the giants but nevertheless has good relations to the gods and his wife the unfaithful Ran which brings unhappiness to the humans.

To the gods one also counts, Billing and Delling, which is the morning glow and the sunset. The young maid Geifon, the literary Saga which guards the mead of wisdom which comes from the river of Sökvabäck and fills the horn of the moon.

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The Norse gods are divided into two major groups, the Aesir and Vanir, Ymir the giant who was the father of Buri came first. Buri in return fathered Bor and he is the father of the famous Odin, Ve and Vili. Some believe the Vanir gods represent an older pantheon of the indigenous people whom the invading Indo-Europeans encountered. In the end the Aesirs, overcome and assimilate the Vanir. Each god held different functions in the military, religious, and economic area.

AEGIR

"Alebrewer." So called because Aegir loves to give feasts for the gods. God of the sea. Saxon pirates gave to Aegir a tenth of their captives, who were thrown into the sea.

The god of the sea, seashore and ocean and a son of Mistarblindi. He was a personification of the ocean, both good and bad. He caused storms with his anger and the skalds said a ship went into "Aegir's wide jaws" when it wrecked. Aegir was crowned with seaweed and always surrounded by pixies and mermaids while in his hall. Aegir's wife was Ran and they lived under the sea by the island Hlesey. Ran and Aegir had nine daughters who were the waves. Aegir brewed ale for the gods after Thor brought him a big enough kettle. Every winter the gods would drink beer at Aegir's home. He was, therefore, famed for his hospitality. Gold was put onto the floor of the hall to provide light, instead of having a fire. Gold is therefore called Aegir's fire. The cups in Aegir's hall were always full, magically refilling themselves. Aegir had two servants in his hall, Fimafeng and Eldir. Sailors feared Aegir, and thought he would sometimes surface to destroy ships. Sometimes human sacrifices are made the god of the sea.

Angrboda

The giantess who mated with Loki to create Hel, Fenrir and the Midgard Serpent.

Balder

A hero god, the god who dies and rises again. Fair skinned, fair haired, wise and merciful, beloved of all. Loke tricked Hoder into killing Balder, who had to be rescued from the underworld. According to the epic poem VOLUSKA, Balder will come to rule again after Ragnarok.

Aesir god, son of Odin and Frigg, husband of Nanna, father of Forseti. He was killed with mistletoe thrown by his blind brother Hod. According to some Hod (Hother) did it on his own; others blame Loki. Baldur is the god of light, purity, beauty and justice. He is the god of the season Spring and it is said that a light emanated from within him. He resided with his wife Nanna in the Bredablick territory. Baldur was always plagued by terrible nightmares that he could not decipher. To investigate these dreams, he decided to ride to Nifelheim. A wolwa (magic woman, shaman) told him that soon his brother Hod will kill him and the land of death has already prepared for his arrival. As a counter measure, his mother Frigg removed all poisons, illnesses and elements from the world so that no harm may come to Baldur. However, she overlooked a mistletoe bush during her removal that Loki noticed. And so, the Asgards were calmed down and enjoyed a meeting at which the invincible Baldur was amongst them. Loki however broke off a branch of the mistle toe and handed it to the blind Hod who in fun harmlessly threw the branch and hit Baldur with it thus killing him. In rage, his brother Vali avenged Baldur's death by killing Hod. Everyone was very upset and began to cry. Quickly they sent for Hermod to ride on his father's (Odin) horse named Sleipnir into the land of death and offer a bribery to Hel in order to release Baldur and then bring him back.

In the meantime, funeral procedures have begun and as per tradition, Baldur was laid out on his ship named Hringhor and they wanted to push it out into the sea with the help of the giant hyrrockin. She barely had to push the ship when it headed out to sea. Baldur's Wife Nanna could not stand knowing her beloved husband being dead and died shortly thereafter of a broken heart. She was laid on a stack of wood which was blessed by Thor with his hammer which ignited the heap of wood. Present at the funeral

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were not only the Asgards, but also the Valkyries and even some of their enemies like the Hrimthurs and the mountain giants. In addition, Baldur's horse was also cremated and as a special offering, Odin laid his ring named Draupnir onto the ashes. Hermod, who after 9 days and 9 nights ride finally arrived at the land of death saw Baldur sitting there on a chair and so he addressed Hel to please allow him to bring Baldur back home. Hel, goddess of death decided that only if all creatures alike would mourn about Baldur, she would release him out of her kingdom. Hermod thought that this was not impossible to do because Baldur was a well like and loved god by all. Hermod returned to the Asgards with the news and messengers were sent all over the world and the world started to cry and mourn over Baldur. Only the giant Thoeck refused to mourn or cry and therefore, Baldur had to remain with Hel. Not until Ragnarok will Baldur and Hod make peace and return from the land of the dead to reign over a newly cleansed world.

Bor

A son of Buri and married to Bestla, and father of Odin, Vili, and Ve which embody all that is good. Bad giants from Thrudgelmir tried to destroy the powers of Good and therefore a long war between gods and giants happened at which not either party could win. Finally, Odin, Vili, and Ve ambushed the giant Ymir and killed him. He bled so fiercely from his wounds that surrounding giants drowned in his blood and only Bergelmir and his wife survived. The both of them traveled in a boat to the land of Jöthunheim at where they started a new race of giants. After having killed Ymir, Odin and his two brothers decided to create the world out of his carcass. His blood became the oceans, his flesh became Midgard, bones became mountains and valleys, his teeth formed cliffs, his hair became the plant life, his skull became the sky, and his brain became the everlasting bulgious clouds.

Bragi

Bragi is the god of poetry and eloquence. He was married to the goddess Iduna who dwelt in the underworld. In *The Lay of Hakon*, Bragi is in Valhalla with Odin who tells Bragi to go out and greet Hakon as he arrives. Bragi is also in Valhalla alongside Odin in *The Lay of Eirik*, and Odin refers to Bragi as one who "knowest everything well". During the feast in Asgard attended by Aegir, it is Bragi who relates to Aegir the tales of the gods. He was older and long-bearded and had runes carved into his tongue. It is Bragi's duty to prepare Valhalla for new arrivals.

Donar

German god of thunder, forerunner of Thor. His symbol is the swastika. Oak trees are sacred to Donar, as they are to Jove.

Fenrir Also Fenris Wolf

A monstrous wolf conceived by Loki. Fenrir was raised in Asgard, the home of the gods, until he became so immense and ferocious that only the god Tyr was brave enough to feed him. Tyr bound Fenrir until the day of Ragnarok, when Fenrir will break loose to slay Odin.

Fenrir is a giant wolf who is the son of Loki. Fenrir was chained down by the gods because he was too dangerous. Over and over he broke himself loose until the gods finally chained him down with a magical chain named Geiphir which was anchored down at the bottom of a mountain within the biggest roots of giant trees Fenrir tore himself loose during ragnarok at where he devoured everything including Odin himself.

Forseti

God of justice, the great arbiter, the god who "stills all strife." Forseti dwells in a hall of gold and silver called Giltneir. Forseti was the Asgard god of justice and the son of Balder and Nanna. Every day he would reconcile the differences between the gods and between men, often also between men and

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gods. His judgments were so pure and fair, that no one ever felt treated unfair. He resided in Glitznir.

Freyr

"The god of the world," son of Njord, husband of Freyja. God of fertility, sunlight and rain, peace, joy and contentment. Freyr was worshipped with human sacrifices and a kind of religious play in which men dressed as women mimed and danced to the sound of chimes and bells. Freyr had some association with the horse cult as well, and horses sacred to his service were kept near his shrines. Freyr and his sister/wife FREYJA were of the Vanir, a family or race of gods which originally competed with the Aesir and later became allies. The Vanir may have been the gods of an earlier Scandinavian race who were adopted into the pantheon of later conquerors.

God of weather and fertility; son of Njord and brother of Freya. His step-mother was Skadi. The dwarves built him a ship, Skidbladnir, that could hold all the gods and yet could be so small that it could fit in one's pocket. He also owned a chariot drawn by two boars, Gullinbursti and Slidrugtanni. He could ride Gullinbursti [golden-bristled] through the sky. It was made by dwarves for Loki to give to Frey. He went as a hostage to the Aesir, along with Njord and Freya in order to dwell and reside there. His name means "Lord" and it is thought that he was at one time the consort of his sister Freya [Lady]. His wife was Gerd, a beautiful giantess who he fell in love with when he spied her from Odin's throne. He sent his servant, Skirnir, to win her for him. For this task, Frey lent Skirnir his sword which "swings itself if wise he who wields it" and his horse. After Skirnir's threatening of her, Gerd agreed to give herself to Frey in nine nights at the forest Barri. At the Ragnarok, Frey will be killed by the fire giant Surt. Also known as Yng,

Freyja

Goddess of magic and death, goddess of sex, daughter of Njord, a shape-shifter who often took the form of a falcon. When her husband Od disappeared, Freyja wept golden tears. Donning a magical garment, Freyja could fly long distances. Patroness of seiðr, a practice in which a sorceress would enter a trance to foretell the future. The women who practiced seiðr, who were known as Volva, wandered freely about the country casting spells and foretelling the future. Freyja's worshippers involved orgiastic rites which horrified and outraged the Christians. Half of all those slain in battle belonged to Freyja, the other half belonging to Odin.

Vanir goddess of sex, fertility, war, and wealth, daughter of Njord and sister of Frey. She was taken in by the Aesir, perhaps as hostage and remained there becoming an Aesir. Her daughters, by Od, are named Hnoss, who is so beautiful that whatever is valuable and lovely is named "treasure" after her, and Gersemi.

Freyr also Frey

God of weather and fertility; son of Njord and brother of Freya. His step-mother was Skadi. The dwarves built him a ship, Skidbladnir, that could hold all the gods and yet could be so small that it could fit in one's pocket. He also owned a chariot drawn by two boars, Gullinbursti and Slidrugtanni. He could ride Gullinbursti [golden-bristled] through the sky. It was made by dwarves for Loki to give to Frey. He went as a hostage to the Aesir, along with Njord and Freya in order to dwell and reside there. His name means "Lord" and it is thought that he was at one time the consort of his sister Freya [Lady]. His wife was Gerd, a beautiful giantess who he fell in love with when he spied her from Odin's throne. He sent his servant, Skirnir, to win her for him. For this task, Frey lent Skirnir his sword which "swings itself if wise he who wields it" and his horse. After Skirnir's threatening of her, Gerd agreed to give herself to Frey in nine nights at the forest Barri. At the Ragnarok, Frey will be killed by the fire giant Surt. Also known as Yng,

Frigg

Wife of Odin, mother of Balder, queen of Asgard. A fertility goddess. She was a Norse goddess

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of love and fertility. In some accounts she was Odin's wife, making her foremost among the Aesir goddesses. She receives credit for seeing the fate of all mankind. She was the mother of Tyr, Hod, Baldur, Bragi and the day Friday is dedicated to her.

Heimdall

The god who guards the Bifrost Bridge which is the entrance to Asgard. Heimdall can see for immense distances, and his ear is so sensitive that he can hear the grass grow. On the day of Ragnarok, Heimdall will blow the great horn Gjallarhorn, and in the ensuing battle he will slay Loki.

He watches the rainbow bridge, for the coming of the frost giants at the Ragnarok, at which time he will sound his horn Gjallar. In the Ragnarok, he and Loki will kill each other. He never sleeps, can see in the dark, and can hear sheep wool growing. His dwelling place is Himinbjorg [heavenly mountains]. Nine sisters, signifying the waves, gave birth to him. As Ríg, he begets Thrall, Carl, and Earl, representing the three classes of man; slave, freeman, and noble.

Hel

Goddess of death. Daughter of Loki. Ruler of Niflheim, the land of mists. Heroic souls go to Valhalla. Those who die of disease or old age come to Niflheim. Surrounded by high walls and strong

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gates, Niflheim is impregnable; not even Balder could return from there without Hel's permission.

Hermod

A hero god. Hermod rode through the gates of Niflheim to rescue Balder and found Balder seated on the right hand of Hel. Hel agreed to release Balder on condition that all living things weep for him.

The messenger of the gods. He rode to Hel's realm after the death of Balder to try and convince her to let Balder come back from the dead. He got her to agree to let Balder return to the living if all things would weep for him. One giantess named Thokk, Loki in disguise, refused to weep, so he remained dead and was cremated on his funeral boat, Hringhorni. He is supposed to come back to life after the Ragnarok.

Hoder also Hod

Little is known about Hoder, other than that he is blind. Loki tricked Hoder into killing Balder with a sprig of mistletoe. Hoder will join Balder in the new world which will come into being when the present one is destroyed. Hod is the Son of Odin. Blind god of Winter who kills his brother Balder with mistletoe and is in turn killed by his brother Vali.

Idunn

Wife of Bragi, keeper of the golden apples of eternal youth. The giant Thiazzi kidnapped her with the aid of Loki.

Goddess of youth, her name means "The Rejuvenating One". She is married to Bragi and is the keeper of the apples which keep the gods eternally young. The only myth we have concerning Idun is the story of her kidnapping by the giant Thiazi.

Odin, Loki, and Hoenir, were on one of their travels when they happened upon an ox and, since they were so very hungry, decided to cook it. For some reason however, the meat would not cook. As they were trying to discern the reason for this travesty a huge eagle perched above them in an oak tree told them he knew why the ox wasn't cooking and would show them how to roast it if they would first let him eat his fill. No sooner had they agreed than the eagle ate such a great portion of the ox that Loki got angry, took a pole and struck at the eagle. The eagle flew upwards with the pole and Loki stuck to the other end. He told Loki he would only let him down if Loki agreed to kidnap Idun and her age-defying apples. When the gods arrived in Asgard Loki did as he had promised and lured Idun outside of Asgard to where the eagle was waiting. The eagle, who was none other than the giant Thiazi in his eagle skin cloak, took Idun to his home called Thrymheim in the mountains of Jotunheim. The gods began to quickly age once the source of their immortality had been stolen so they decided Loki should have to go and fetch her back. After all, he was the one who had caused all the trouble. Loki borrowed Freya's falcon cloak and flew to Thrymheim where he found Idun alone. He turned her into a nut and flew back to Asgard as fast as he could, holding Idun in his claws. As soon as Thiazi returned and found Idun gone, he put on his eagle cloak and flew towards Asgard. His wings beat so quickly and with such force that he caused strong storm winds to hamper Loki's escape. The gods could see the eagle coming in pursuit of Loki so as soon as Loki was safe inside the bounds of Asgard they built a bonfire which set fire to Thiazi's wings. Once the giant fell to the ground the Aesir killed him. Afterwards, his daughter Skadi came to avenge his death.

Loki

A trickster. Sly, deceitful, a master thief, not to be trusted. Nevertheless, Loki is charming, witty, quite capable, and possessed of a sardonic sense of humor which he aims at himself no less often than at others. A shape shifter who can change into almost any animal form. Loki was involved in many of the

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gods' adventures, usually because one of his tricks had made some kind of a mess.

A giant. Trickster god, possibly responsible for Baldur's death. Adopted brother of Odin, bound to a rock until Ragnarok. Loki was a trouble instigator first class. Originally he was a giant, but because in his young years he mixed his blood with Odin, he was eventually taken in by the Asgards. He betrayed the Asgards and was ultimately responsible for Baldur's death. He gets punished for that by completely being tied up and then a venomous snake place on his head who dripped venomous saliva continuously onto his face. His wife however was completely faithful to him and stood next to him with a shallow bowl in her hand to catch the venomous saliva of the snake. Every once in a while, the venom would drip onto Loki's face and he had to shake his head so vigorously that the whole world would shake and tremor as what we call today earthquakes. Loki did have children in Asgard and some other strange offspring that he sired with the giantress Angrboda such as his son Fenrir, a giant wolf, his daughter Jormangund the serpent, and Hal (Hel) which became goddess of the kingdom of death. As you can see, Hel is the origination word for Hell, also known in other countries as Hoelle and Holla, Holle. Loki changed his appearance into a female and was impregnated by a beautiful horse named Swadilfari and gave birth to the stallion Sleipnir.

The Midgard serpent or Jörmungandr

The great snake which lies in the ocean and encircles the world, its tail in its mouth. On the day of Ragnarok, the world will disappear under the ocean's waters when the Midgard Serpent rises from the sea. Thor will kill the Midgard Serpent but will be killed by the Serpent's poison.

Mimir

The guardian of a spring of wisdom at the root of Yggdrasill, the world tree which connects the lower and higher worlds and is the source of all life. Odin gave an eye to drink from that spring.

Nanna

Wife of Balder and mother of Forseti. Moon goddess. She died of grief when her husband Balder died.

Nerthus

An earth mother worshipped by the German tribe of the Suebi. Her sacred grove stood on an island in the North Sea.

Njord

The chief of the Vanir, who warred with the Aesir. Lord of the winds and of the sea, giver of wealth. Particularly revered on the west coast of Sweden. In pagan days, oaths in law courts were sworn in his name. Njord may be a masculine form of Nerthus. God of wind and sea, father of Freya and Frey. His wife was the giantess Skadi who selected him on the basis of his feet which she thought belonged to Balder

Odin Also Othinn; Woden; Wotan

A god of strife and war, magic and death. The chief of the Aesir who lives in his hall Valaskjal in Sagard from which he can look out over all the worlds. In his hall Valhalla, valkyries (female war spirits) serve heroes who have fallen in battle and will aid the god in the great battle of Ragnarok. On Odin's shoulders perch two ravens, Hugin ("Thought") and Munin ("Memory") who can fly about all the worlds to bring Odin knowledge. Odin often aids great heroes but is quite fickle and can turn against a man for any

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reason or none. Tales of Odin's treachery are not merely Christian propaganda. Odin's worshippers themselves could be quite sharp-tongued about Odin's unfaithfulness. Odin's worship involved human sacrifices, who were generally hung from trees or gallows.

He is also known under the names Woden and Wotan. Listed as father of all gods and Head of the Aesir after the death of his father Bor. God of war, poetry, wisdom, and death. He gathers his portion of the slain warriors in Valhalla for the final battle of Ragnarok. He had a spear, Grungir, that never missed. He made sacrifices, including his eye, for the sake of knowledge. He has two brothers named Ve and Vili with whom he ambushed and killed the great evil giant Ymir and then created the world out of his carcass. During the creation of the world, Odin noticed maggots emerging from the carcass of Ymir. He turned them into dwarves and fairies.

Ragnarok

"Destruction of the powerful ones." The Twilight of the Gods. The time of fire and ice. The great battle at the end of time between the gods and the Frost Giants in which the world will be destroyed and made anew. Ragnarok will be preceded by three winters of bitter wars followed by the Fimbulvetr, a winter so cold that the sun will give no heat. Then the forces of evil will gather and make war on the gods.

Ran

Ran was a giant and Aegir's wife (and sister) and they lived under the sea by the island Hlesey. It is she who uses a net to draw the sailors of sinking ships to their doom. Ran and Aegir had nine daughters who were the waves: Himinglaeva, Dufa, Blodughadda, Hefring, Unn, Hronn, Bylgia, Bara, and Kolga -- all of their names are poetic names for waves.

Sif

Sif is the Goddess of crops and fertility; wife of Thor and mother of Ull.

Skadi

Skadi is Frequently referred to as the goddess of skis or snow shoes, she traveled on skis, carried a bow, and hunted. She was the daughter of the giant Thiazi. Thiazi was the son of a very rich giant named Alvaldi [Olvaldi]. When Alvaldi died Thiazi and his brothers Idi and Gang divided their inheritance by each taking a large mouthful of gold. After Thiazi was killed by the Aesir, Skadi took up arms and went to Asgard for vengeance. The Aesir offered her compensation for the death of her father, she was allowed to choose a husband from among the gods. There was only one small catch, she had to pick her new husband based only on the appearance of his feet. She picked Njord by mistake, assuming the best looking feet must have belonged to the god Balder.

Thor

God of thunder. Huge, red-bearded, red-eyed, powerful. His weapon is the magic hammer Mjollnir, which is augmented by a magic belt which doubles Thor's strength, and iron gloves with which Thor grips Mjollnir. In some ways Odin's rival, Thor is the god of law and order, the champion of the people. Unlike Odin, Thor will keep faith. Oaths were sworn in Thor's name, which no sane man would ever do with Odin. When Christianity came to Iceland, the other gods surrendered meekly, but Thor fought to the bitter end. The Hammer is Thor's sacred sign and is the most common image in Nordic art. The worship of Thor survived well into the Christian age; little silver hammers were often made in the smith's shop along with crosses and crucifixes. Thor is a god of thunder, son of Odin and a member of the Aesir. He smashed giants' heads with his mighty hammer. The day Thursday honors him and still called Donnerstag in Germany (Donner = Thunder)



Tiwaz

The one-handed sky god and war god of the early Germanic peoples. Tiwaz was worshipped with human sacrifices conducted in the deep forest. Tiwaz is god of law and justice, and oaths were sworn in his name. His functions were later taken over by Odin and Thor, though unlike Odin Tiwaz is completely without deceit and guile. Tiwaz is also known as Irmin, and his sacred pillar Irminsul symbolically held the universe together.

Tyr

God of battle, the only god with the strength and courage to bind Fenris. Warriors marked their swords with a T to gain the god's protection. Tyr was retained in a later pantheon but overshadowed by Odin and Thor.

Ulle also Ull

Ull was the god of the chase, archery and hunting. His weapon was a longbow made out of Yew and he lived in Ydal. He was called upon for help in duels. He was the son of Thor and Sif

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Ve

Ve was a son of Bor and Bestla. It is said that he and his brother Odin created the world out of a carcass. Ve receives credit for giving the first humans feeling, appearance, and speech.

Vili

Vili is another son of Bor and brother of Odin and Ve. The legend goes about the creation of the world. Ymir was the primeval giant and then there was the cow Audhumla. The cow's milk was Ymir's food. While Ymir slept his underarm sweat formed two frost giants, one male one female, while his two legs begat another male. While Ymir was busy procreating, Audhumla was busy eating. Her nourishment came from licking the salty ice. Her incessant licking formed the god Buri. He had a son named Bor who was the father of Odin, Vili, and Ve. For some reason the sons of Bor decided to kill Ymir. His blood caused a flood which killed all of the frost giants except for two, Bergelmir and his wife, who escaped the deluge in their boat. Odin, Vili, and Ve put Ymir's corpse into the middle of ginnungagap and created the earth and sky from it. They also created the stars, sun, and moon from sparks coming out of Muspelheim.

Vidar

A son of Odin and Grid, and had a twin brother named Vali. He dwelled in Vidi and was one of the strongest of the gods and was considered a god of vengeance. It is said that in the Ragnarok he would avenge his father by killing Fenrir. He is one of the Aesir who will survive the final battle.

Weland Also Volundr; Wieland; Wayland

God of smiths and metal workers. Son of the giant Wade. Weland has much in common with smith gods such as Govannon and Hephaistos, which comes as no surprise. Technology and metalworking spread slowly in the ancient world, usually on a person to person basis, and highly skilled metal smiths and other technical workers formed a virtual international brotherhood similar to the Masons.

ROMAN

ANGERONA

Goddess of secrecy. Angerone is portrayed with her mouth bound and sealed, her finger raised to her mouth in a gesture of warning. The ancients thought names powerful; the commonly known name of an individual or a community was often not the real name at all, the real name being a closely guard secret. Very probably the cult of Angerona guarded the secret name of the city of Rome. Little else is known of her.

ATTIS

A god of vegetation, similar to Tammuz and Adonis. Imported together with his mother Cybele from Persia. Driven mad by the deranged love of his mother, Attis castrated himself under a pine tree. Attis' priests were eunuchs.

BELLONA

War goddess. Bellona's priests were recruited from the gladiators, and emissaries were received at her temple.

CYBELE

An Asian goddess adopted by the Greeks and Romans. A healer, mistress of fertility and untamed nature, a protector in war. Cybele is always accompanied by two lions. Cybele granted immortality to those who worshipped her. Cybele's priests danced wildly and mutilated themselves. Her festivals, held at the beginning of spring, were occasions for wild orgies.

FAUNA

Goddess of fertility. Fauna's festival, which seems to have been quite an orgy, was open only to women, being strictly forbidden to men.

FAUNUS

God of crops and herds. An oracle. Faunus' temple, the Lupercal, was supposed to have been the site where the she-wolf suckled Romulus and Remus. Goats and dogs were sacrificed at his festival, the Lupercalia, and priests dressed in newly skinned goat hides whipped women who wished to become pregnant with whips made of goatskin.

FEBRUUS

The Etruscan god of the underworld, later associated with Dis Pater, the Latin equivalent of Hades. The month of the dead, February, is named after him.

FIDES

God of faithfulness.

FLORA

Goddess of flowers and blooming plants. Usually shown with a wreath of flowers in her hair. A favorite deity of courtesans, Flora's festivals were held in April and May.

FORTUNA

Goddess of fate and chance. Fortuna's statue was kept veiled, because she was ashamed of the capriciousness of her favors. Fortuna is represented by the sphere, the ship's rudder, the cornucopia, and the wheel. To this day, wheels of fortune can be found in casinos, and the wheel on the tenth card of the Major Arcana is Fortuna.

GENIUS

A guardian who protects both individuals and homes.

JANUS

Guardian of entrances and exits, the opener of all things who looks inward as well as outward, custodian of the universe. Janus' two-faced image was usually displayed over doorways and gates. Janus signifies both past and future wisdom. Janus is the god of beginnings, so the first month of each year, the first day of each month, and the first hour of each day are dedicated to him.

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Janus

Was the first god to be mentioned in prayers, even before Jupiter.

LAR

God of the house, a cheerful and beautiful youth.

MARS

God of farming, war and springtime. Like the typical Roman citizen, Mars was first a farmer and then a soldier. The wolf, the oak and the woodpecker are sacred to Mars. Often identified with the Greek god Ares, but the differences are more important than the similarities. For one thing, the Romans liked Mars.

MITHRAS

The god who dies and rises again, god of vegetation, the sun god, the Savior who who redeems mankind from evil. A Roman version of a Persian god. Especially popular among soldiers, Mithras was widely worshipped throughout the Roman empire and gave Christianity a run for its money. Mithras' cult served a number of purposes and its organization was highly complex. A temple of Mithras served as a social club, a place of worship, a dramatic society, a magical society, an officers' club, and much more. The worshippers of Mithras conducted elaborate ceremonies to which no woman was admitted. The worship of Mithras emphasized correct behavior in this world, which was the only way to win the favor of the god in the next. There were different degrees of initiation into the cult, each degree having its own name: the Crow, the Secret, the Soldier, the Lion, the Fathers and many more on up to the King of Kings, which was open only to those of royal blood. Initiates were placed under a grating upon which a bull had been slaughtered and were drenched in its blood, signifying the emergence from death to rebirth. Ceremonies generally took place in caverns or rooms made up to look like caverns, and involved the wild beating of drums, anointings with honey, the unveiling of hidden statues, and the use of hallucinogenic drugs.

OPS

Goddess of the harvest. Identified with the Greek goddess RHEA.

QUIRINIAS

A mystery. Originally a war god of the Sabines, later a state god of the Romans. One of the highest gods of ancient Rome, every bit as important as Mars or Jupiter, yet almost nothing is known today of Quirinius or his worship.

TELLUS MATER

An ancient earth goddess. Pregnant cows were sacrificed on her festival, April 15. Tellus is one of the very oldest gods, dating back to the time before the Roman religion was formalized.

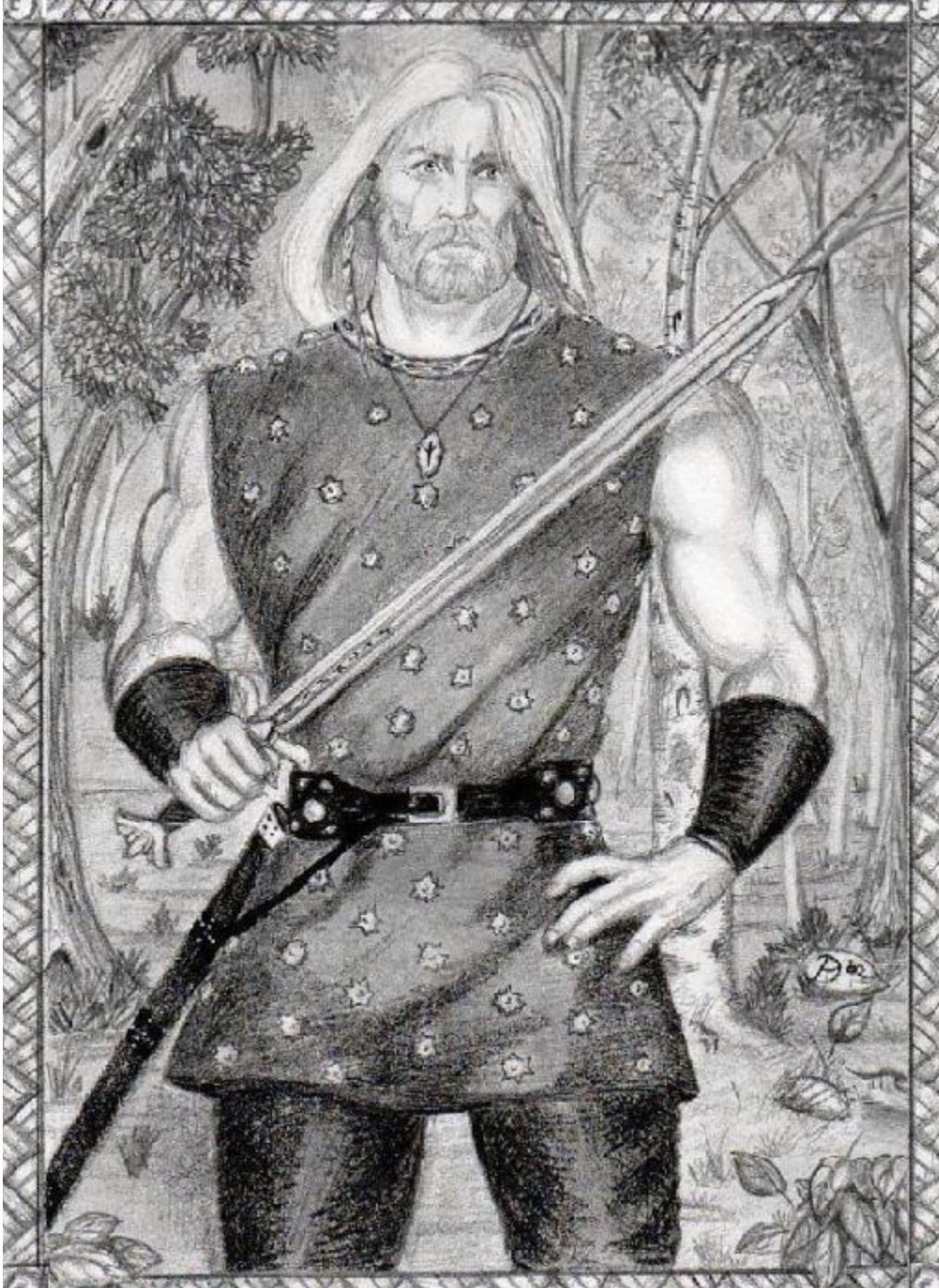
VESTA

"The Shining One." Goddess of domestic life and the hearth. Worshipped privately in the home and publicly in Vesta's temple. In the home, Vesta lived near the hearth and was offered food and drink at every meal. The Vestal Virgins served her, and (apart from mothers who were allowed to bring offerings

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during festivals) were the only ones allowed to enter her temple. The Vestal Virgins, chosen only from the nobility, tended a sacred fire which was the symbol of the hearth of the nation. A strict vow of chastity was imposed on the Virgins, and a Virgin caught breaking the vow was walled up alive. In more than a thousand years, only twenty women were so punished.



Christianity

GOD

Or the mighty all being the creator who created all the earth within seven days he is divine

JESUS CHRIST

The son of GOD he was slain by the Romans because he refused to deny GOD.

12 DISCIPLES

They are the disciples that followed JESUS CHRIST and wrote his preaching's and carry on his religion to others.

CHRISTIANITY

This is the religion of the one GOD

ANGELS

These are the lesser divine beings that are used by god to go about and perform his duties It is said that there is an angel responsible for everything on earth from one in charge of creating swamps to one for the oxen of the world.



LUCIFER/SATAN

Or the devil he is a fallen angel of the lord GOD who was thrown down to earth for his vanity. He is said to rule Hell and be in control of devils and demons.

DEVILS/DEMONS

They are the lieutenants of Satan each one of them is responsible for sins that man does.

HEAVEN

The place that GOD resides in it is said that all people who have been forgiven by GOD go here when they die.

HELL

This is the place where all those that are evil and have sinned and are unforgiving by GOD go when they die to live out eternity in torture and agony

Hyborian Gods

Adonis

In the Shemitish pantheon Adonis, also known as Pteor, is the male Sky God. Where Mitra worshippers use altars as a focus the Shemites believe their gods inhabit the great brass idols they have built within their temples and homes.

Ahriman

The evil more ancient than the serpent. Ahriman was driven from this universe by the god-kings of Stygia with the power of Set. Spells more powerful than any known in the Age of Conan were established to keep him away. Great Ahriman was the Lord of Destruction, The Shatterer of Worlds; a god so evil and terrifying that even the priests of Set had to aid in his banishment. They seemed to fear his return so greatly that all of the temples and sanctuaries of Ahriman were utterly destroyed, every gate through which the unspeakable god might return pulverized and then laid under dread curse. His priests are even more despicable than most. They are men of a race long thought extinct. These lizard-men speak in the ancient tongues of their ancestors. Ahriman is the deadly enemy of everyone, gods and men alike.

Ailing

The god Ailing was worshipped by the Jora Tribe of Picts, a sect of the Oglowa Nation. It was believed that Ailing was the new successor of what was known to Conan as the Pine Forests of the Northern Pictish Wilderness. Ailing never appeared to Conan, or any other man, white or Pict, and was believed to be a farce created by a young sage, Ontiag, a young warrior who saw the destruction of his people in a dream.

Al'Kiir

Known as the god of lust, pain and death. Al'Kiir is primarily worshipped in Ophir. He has been known to wield a dagger and whip, and wears bracers and armlets bearing his own likeness around each arm. Al'Kiir has a massive body, half again the size of any human man, with 6 claw-tipped fingers and toes on each hand/foot. He appears in the form of a hideous monster with four horns, three lidless black eyes and a broad, lipless mouth full of needle-like teeth. In ages past, he was worshipped in ancient Ophir and demanded the sacrifice of beautiful women as "offerings." In return, he gave his worshippers great power. A band of mages known as the *Circle of the Right Hand Path* opposed Al'Kiir with the help of **Mitra** and **Azura**. As a result, Al'Kiir was magically entombed inside of a mountain which became known

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as Tor Al'Kiir. Lady Synelle freed Al'Kiir from his captivity using the statue of Al'Kiir, but Conan blocked his return to earth by throwing the Staff of Avanrakash into the god's heart.

Ashtoreth

Handmaiden to Ishtar, represents purity and chastity, and the revitalization of spring. She was known to have sent messages in between Adonis and Ishtar.

Asura

Most Vendhyans worship Asura, who teaches that life is illusory and the only final truth comes after death, in the light of the soul. The cult devotes itself to "penetrating the veil of illusion of life." Asura's doctrines reveal that all beings reincarnate, and that the purpose of life is the paying of the karmic debt against the soul. Each evil act extends the cycle of reincarnation; each good act shortens it. Those who suffer earned their trials in previous lives; they are not to be pitied. The cult of Asura has spread throughout the Hyborian empires. however, its secretive nature combines with its odd doctrines, has kept it distrusted and persecuted. It is beleived that Asuran priests engage in human sacrifice, cannibalism and the worship of snake gods. There has been no record of any Asuran temple engaging in such acts as the temples are rarely found at all.

Bardisattva

The Coyaklans god, who takes the shape of dark stormclouds. Somewhere in Brythunia, this extremelly old god known as Bardisattva has his temple, which only his priests may enter. The temple is on a very high pillar that reaches up into the sky. There, priests prepare captured victims to be sacrificed to him. Each victim is branded with burn marks, and then their lips are sewn together so that they can't talk.. or scream.

Bel

A god of thieves worshipped in Zamora. His name is used to identify other thieves. "In the name of Bel!"

Crom

Crom, the Cimmerian god, lives on Ben Morgh. The cimmerians seldom pray to him; they believe it is usually best not to attract his attention. The Cimmerians believe, however, that Crom breathes the strength to strive and slay into a man at birth. After death the Cimmerians believe their souls go to "a grey misty realm of clouds and icy winds, to wander cheerlessly for all eternity." Hyborians maintain that such grim beliefs explain much about Cimmerian temperament.

Dagoth

Dagoth is known as the "Dreaming God." It is said that he is so powerful that if awakened, his evil could potentially, destroy the world. Dagoth is worshipped in Zamora

Derketo

Derketo, Goddess of Lust, is a servant of Set. She represents the seductive nature of the flesh, and desire for life which Set offers to maintain eternally. Derketo is commonly worshipped among the peasantry of Stygia, who find Set's ascetic demands to restrictive.

The temples of Derketo are a bit of a mystery Thalís is from Stygia, but she is no commoner. The

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ruling cast of the Stygians were dusky, hawk-nosed, and haughty. The warrior castes of the Stygians were a tall, muscular race with skin bronzed by the sun, and dark hair, while the lower classes were a mixture of Negroid, Stygian, Shemite, and Hyborian. It is widely known that Stygian kings are chosen by Set, seated in Luxur, Stygia's capital. Thalís of course is described as having an "ivory body" and "her limbs were like alabaster", a king's daughter and that she grew up in the capital of Luxur. We know that Xaltotun is not Stygian, but perhaps a descendant of the ancient Giant-Kings, and is described as "a tall, lusty man, naked, white of skin, and dark of hair and beard", not the dusky Stygian noble type. It seems, that those who are initiated into the Temples of Derketo, are made up of pure blooded noble stock, displaying rare beauty. Entering at young ages, as early as 14 years, gives the priestesses enough time to teach the mysteries of the pleasure of the flesh through rituals and orgies. This is not to say that the lesser of Stygian stock are excluded, but are perhaps preferred behind those of noble blood. The temples in Shem may have followed the same profiling of pure Shemitish stock.

Erlik

Erlik the Flame-Lord is a god of Panthenia, in northern Hyrkania. As such, Erlik would be a minor god were it not for the prophet known as Living Tarim. Tarim brought Erlik worship from Panthenia to a group of Hyrkanian tribes who, with the strength of their religious fervor, swept down and founded the Turanian Empire. Erlik is a harsh god, who believes in the tempering of the soul through trials and deprivation. His tenets, as revealed by Tarim, forbid fornication, the consumption of alcohol and usury. However, even most of his priests ignore these precepts.

Gullah

Gullah the gorilla-god (or Jullah as he is known in the Black Kingdoms) is worshipped by the Picts and the commoners in Kush. Little is known of Gullah worship, as few scholars have been permitted in the temples, but the god requires occasional human sacrifice, and the temple is decorated with the skulls of victims.

Hanuman

Hanuman the ape-god is worshipped in Zamboula. Hanuman's priests are feared rather than loved, but worship of the ape-god is still supreme in Zamboula.

Harakht

The Hawk-God of Harakht is another lesser member of the Stygian pantheon. According to Set's doctrine, the Hawk-God of Harakht hovers over Stygia, watching all that occurs, and when the sun passes the western horizon, he wings his way to set and tells him all that transpired during the accursed day.

Ishtar

Ishtar is the Earth Mother who was courted by Adonis. She is another of the Shemitish gods.

Ilas

Ilas is the patron god of all harpers. He is also one of the many gods who protect poets.

Jhebbal Sag

Jhebbal Sag, Master of Beasts, is the most commonly worshipped Pictish deity. According to Pictish legend, all animals, including man, once worshipped Jhebbal Sag. Now, most have forgotten, and

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only the largest, smartest and strongest animals remember the earliest days. Those who remember are bound together, however, and can be controlled by one who serves Jhebbal Sag. Jhebbal Sag is the leader of the Animal Gods and all other animal totems serve him.

Jhil

Jhil the Merciless, King of Ravens, is worshipped primarily by the Picts, the Ghanatas and their allied tribes. Jhil promises freedom to the strong and slavery to the weak. This theology provides the Ghanatas with their justification for their slaving. Those who worship Jhil are often known as the Children of Jhil.

Katar

The other sect in Vendhya captures the attention of Hyborians: Katar, Goddess of Death. Katar is the judge of souls, and determines the form each soul should take in its next life to most quickly purge its karmic debt. The temples of Katar hold secret power in the form of the Katari assassins. These incorruptible warriors will assassinate anyone for whom they are paid, although they do it in their own way, and at their own time. They are potent warriors, and are known for their suicide missions, committing assassinations in places offering no hope for their own escape. They are encouraged in this by the promise of eternal life in Katar's paradises if they die while performing their "holy" task.

Mitra

Mitra, Lord of Light, God of Hyborians, is worshipped in Aquilonia, Argos, Corinthia, Nemedra, Ophir and Zingara. Mitra is a benevolent god, believed to be all-pervasive and without form, although he is often pictured as a tall man with wide-set, piercing eyes, curly hair and a patriarchal beard. Mitra takes no living sacrifices, although the temple takes extensive tithes in money and services. According to Mitraic belief, each person is called to a virtuous life. It is the obligation of each individual to follow the tenets of the faith of Mitra, which include truthfulness, honor and trustworthiness. In Mitra's tenets, telling a lie or betraying a friend are mortal sins.

Mitra holds his priests to even more strict behavior. Priests of Mitra must remain celibate and must abstain from all alcohol and mind-altering drugs. In addition, they must never perform sorcery, rather trusting totally in Mitra. One of Mitra's most potent aspects is as the Defender, protecting Hyborians from evil sorcery, most specifically from his ancient enemy, the serpent-god Set. In his battles with Set, Mitra prefers working through mortals, so that those who are called to be his champions can both defeat Set and act as living proof of the validity of his cult's tenets.

Nebethet

Nebethet, the Ivory Goddess of Punt, is worshipped primarily there, although some Shemitish scholars equate her with Derketo. Her traditional image is of a voluptuous woman with the head of a skull.

Set

Religion in Stygia is dominated by the worship of Father Set and his pantheon. No other religion is tolerated. Temples to other sects are forbidden, and worship of other gods is considered treason. The tenets of Set worship are difficult and sheathed in many layers of dogma. Principally, the temples profess that Father Set is the most potent of gods, a powerful friend and a terrible enemy, and that is the fate of mankind to serve. Apostates who have learned some of the inner knowledge have reported that Set also offers eternal life in the tomb to those who serve him faithfully. This promise, perhaps more than fear, has brought the people of Stygia to Set's service. Set's greatest opponent is Mitra, Lord of Light. According to the priests, Mitra is perhaps as powerful as Set, but lacks the strength of heart to use his power to rule. Thus, Mitra is ever doomed to failure; no matter how many times he succeeds, Set need only prevail once. In the Black Kingdoms, Set is known as Damballah. He is worshipped throughout the Black Kingdoms by many of the various tribes.

Thog

Chapter 12

Gods and Religions

Worshipped in Xuthal. A large, octopus-like creature who creeps in darkness and devours any Xuthalan he encounters.

The True Gods

Worshipped by the Imalla (a cult situated in the Kezankian mountains), these Gods represent all that exist, mainly taking the forms of Earth, Wind, Water and Fire. These Gods demand the deaths of all unbelievers, including women. These people are usually sacrificed to the Imalla's Fire-demon; said to be the incarnate of the Fire God. All disciples of the True Gods must forsake things such as gold and women.

Wiccanna

Wiccanna is the nature goddess who is mostly worshipped by the Brythunians. Like the Ligureans, the oak and mistletoe are revered and their symbol is the golden sickle, and they are devoted to healing. However, unlike the Ligureans who are men and live in forests, Wiccanna only accepts priestesses; men may not directly serve the goddess. The priestesses vow never to cut their hair, secondly the priestesses reside in villages, rather than secluding themselves in private sanctuaries.

Xotli

Xotli, the Demon Lord of Terror from the elder night is worshiped by the Antillians. Xotli requires human sacrifice atop the Great Pyramid in Ptahuacan. Hundreds of people are sacrificed each month while the demon hovers above the Great Pyramid. Their hearts are cut out, their souls feed Xotli and the bodies feed the dragons beneath the Great Pyramid. Xotli is described as a large, tentacled black mass with a single central eye. The Priesthood is led by the Hierarch of the Sacred Mysteries of Xotli. The priests shave their heads and wear feathered robes, platform shoes (to increase appearance in height), neck chains, golden rings, and arm and ankle bracelets. "A shadow dimmed the sun. A cold gloom fell over the square. The air bit with the chill of interstellar space. Hovering over the zikkurat, the Demon of Darkness took shape."

Yajur

Yajur is the most infamous deity in the bewildering Kosalan pantheon. He is the god of Yota-Pong. The Prefect of Yota-Pong is the head of the religion and ruler of the city-state, a masked figure reputed to be eternal. Yajur's priests sacrifice humans by strangulation. The sacrifice is offered by specially trained servants of the temple, who strangle the victim with their bare hands. These servants are trained from young childhood, strangling a victim each day until they become extremely strong and adept at crushing the life from anyone.

Yama

Yama is the king of the devils of Vendhya and who the Meruvians worship. Yama is portrayed as a six-limbed demonic being with a beast's head, and is credited with the creation of the Cup of the Gods. According to the priests of Yama, should the people ever revolt against the theocracy, Yama will destroy the Cup of the Gods, and thrust the Seven Sacred Cities back into the snow and ice of the Roof of the World.

Yezud

A horrible Spider God with a multitude of obscure and evil priestesses. He is generally worshipped in the form of a great, black statue carved out of smooth stone representing him. Only pain

Chapter 12 Gods and Religions

and disease can be asked from this fierce god, who never neglects his worshippers of his deathly 'gifts.'

Ymir

The Nordheimr worship Ymir, the Frost Giant, Lord of Storm and War. Ymir lives in Valhalla, in his caste far in northern Vanaheim. According to Nordheimr shamans, the souls of warriors who fall in battle go to Valhalla to feast and fight forever. This belief makes Nordheimr warriors terrible in battle, as the fight with no regard for their own safety, preferring to take an honor guard with them to Valhalla.

"Swear not so often by Ymir," uneasily muttered a warrior, glancing at the distant mountains. "This is his land and the god bides among yonder mountains, the legends say."

Yog

Yog the Demon Lord of the Empty Abodes has been worship since the Khari invasion. Hyborian scholars believe Yog to be one of the demons of the Elder Night. Yog's doctrines are simple.

Worshippers may only eat meat, never any plants of any kind. The must consume human flesh at least once per month, and those who fail are considered ritually unclean until they have done so. Darfar is the only country where cannibals live. Some are captured as slaves periodically and sold to other parts of Hyboria. Darfarian slaves are usually permitted to continue their cannibalistic practices for fear or revolt. For proper sacrificial power, the victims are clubbed into unconscious and thrown into fire-pits. Dead sacrifices are considered inferior, as are those who have been cut, so Yoggites do not use knives or swords. One adult can feed as many as thirty or forty Yoggites, as only a token consumption is required to meet Yog's requirements.

Zath

The most famous of Zamoran divinities is Zath, the spider-god of Yezud. Zath's worshippers believe that the great spider-god walks the earth, and must be served by humankind. Indeed, the giant spiders which have occasionally been seen in the hills near Yezud are testaments to Zath's power. Priests of Zath do not drink alcohol or fornicate, and those laymen in the service of the temple must also abide by these strictures. Even more guarded are the temple virgins, who dance for the spider-god on holy days. There are rumors of extensive caverns beneath the temple, where hundreds of giant spiders reside, fed cattle (and occasionally humans) by the priests of Zath. The cattle is part of the enforced tithe on farmers who live around the city of Yezud.



Dawn

Chapter 13

Magic and Faith

In the following chapter we will talk mostly about men of magic, however it is meant for men of faith as well, due to the fact that the only major difference between the two is the words arete and faith. They both mean basically the same thing, and a mage's ritual is the same as a clergyman's prayer in game terms. However, only men of magic can gain scourge.

For the practitioner of magic, everyday life is fantastic and perpetually a thing of greatness. They can wield great powers in either secret or wide display. They can sway the outcome of battles or persuade a crop to come to fruition within a matter of minutes. There are no spell lists, per se, due to the fact that magic is the wild and widely uncontrollable force of the universe, and the mage who casts a spell is simply tapping into these cosmic forces and using some of this energy. However, for every reaction there is an opposite reaction. The more spells a mage casts, the greater his chance of scourge creeping up on him. There are a few things that are important to a mage, these mainly being his willpower, arete, spheres, essence and scourge. I have already explained what each of these are with the exception of the spheres, which will be explained later in this chapter. Now, you ask yourself, what can I do with each of these? Let me explain, then, what you can do with each of these.

ARETE

Game effects of arete.

* You may not possess sphere rating higher than your arete rating, unless the latter has been lowered through loss of willpower.

* The greatest magi learn that the greater your power, the easier it is to cast a spell or weave an incantation.

1 arete: you must use 5 tools in order to cast a spell or incantation.

2 arete: you must use 4 tools in order to cast a spell or incantation

3 arete: you must use 3 tools in order to cast a spell or incantation

4 arete: you must use 2 tools in order to cast a spell or incantation

5 arete: you must use 1 tool in order to cast a spell or incantation

6 arete: you no longer need to use tools, and can now manipulate already present energies

7 arete: you can use mystical energies to create small things(under 10 pounds) out of thin air

8 arete: you can use mystical energies to create large things(over 10 pounds) out of thin air

9 arete: you no longer get a negative modifier for casting spells in the presence of others.

10 arete: a true master of your art. All your difficulty numbers for casting are reduced by 1

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* When using tools, such as arete 1 through 5, you can still cast the same as level six, with the exception that you need tools in order to cast.

* Your arete can never be higher than your willpower, meaning that if you had 4 willpower and 4 arete and you lost 1 permanent willpower point your arete and spheres would lower to 3 temporarily.

ESSENCE

Game effects of essence

* You must spend a point of essence anytime you cast a spell or incantation. The game master or storyteller may decide that you will have to spend more than one essence to cast something exceptionally hard or big.

* A mage or priest can also spend extra essence to increase the damage of a given spell or prayer, or increase the duration. For every extra point of essence spent past the needed amount, add one extra wound level or double the duration or intensity.

* You may spend a point of essence to lower the difficulty number of a spell or incantation, to a maximum of 3 per turn.

* You can never spend more essence than your Arete score, meaning if you have 6 Arete, you can never spend more than 6 essence within a single turn.

SCOURGE

Game effects of scourge

* For every point of permanent scourge, you subtract one die from your total pool when casting.

* For every day your character spends not using magic and resting he removes one temporary scourge point.

* If your character ever gains 6 permanent scourge points the forces of the universe have destroyed the mage and he is taken over by the game master.

* You gain temporary scourge whenever you botch at a fate roll or you botch on a casting.

* You must buy off permanent scourge with experience points or by a quest or other such way, as determined by the storyteller or game master.

WILLPOWER

Game effects of willpower

* By spending a temporary willpower point prior to a roll, you can guarantee one success in an action or casting.

* Willpower determines your starting Essence

* Willpower determines your starting arete and faith, by rolling willpower against a difficulty of 7, with anything over seven being a success, so it is possible for a starting character to begin with an arete or faith score of 5.

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* You may spend a temporary willpower point to halt a panic reaction, such as running from a mob etc.

FAITH

Game effects of faith.

* You may not possess sphere rating higher than your faith rating unless the latter has been lowered through loss of willpower.

* The greatest Priests learn that the greater your power, the easier it is to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

1 faith: you must use 5 tools in order to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

2 faith: you must use 4 tools in order to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

3 faith: you must use 3 tools in order to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

4 faith: you must use 2 tools in order to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

5 faith: you must use 1 tool in order to chant a prayer or invoke a miracle.

6 faith: you no longer need to use tools, and can now manipulate already present energies

7 faith: you can use mystical energies to create small things(under 10 pounds) out of thin air

8 faith: you can use mystical energies to create large things(over 10 pounds) out of thin air

9 faith: you no longer get a negative modifier for chant a prayer or invoking a miracle in the presence of others.

10 faith: a truly devout follower of your deity. All your difficulty numbers for chanting prayers and casting miracles are reduced by 1

* When using tools, such as faith 1 through 5, you can still cast the same as level six, with the exception that you need tools in order to cast.

* Your faith can never be higher than your willpower, meaning that if you had 4 willpower and 4 faith and you lost 1 permanent willpower point your faith and spheres would lower to 3 temporarily.

Fate die

The fate die is for Men of Magic only. What it represents is the chance that when the mage messes with the forces of nature, sometimes they will push back. Basically, anytime a mage casts a spell, he rolls one 10 sided die that is different from the rest of his dice, against a difficulty of 6. If you succeed, nothing bad happens, but if you fail something bad happens, either to you or to someone around you, possibly even the target of the spell, but usually it happens to the caster. Anytime you botch(meaning that you roll a 1) on the fate die, you get a temporary scourge point.

SPHERES

There are 10 spheres which the mage or priest may choose from. These 10 should cover virtually any situation you may get into. However, remember that for a priest choosing a sphere besides mind,

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Magic and Faith



body and spirit costs twice the normal cost to buy, plus costs twice as much essence to cast from that sphere. Spheres can never be higher than your Arete or Faith score. Below is a brief explanation of what each sphere is. Also, you will find below a list of some examples for each point you have in a sphere.

Simpleton 1 point

Changing the color of your eyes or making an existing fire bigger

Learned 2 points

Changing the shape of your face or lighting a candle

Adept 3 points

Changing your entire shape or bringing a bonfire into existence

Impressive 4 points

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Magic and Faith

Altering a willing person's shape or exploding a small wagon

Mighty *5 points*

Altering an unwilling person's shape or exploding a small cottage

Godlike *6 points*

Altering many unwilling people's shapes or exploding a large, well fortified structure

SPHERES

FIRE

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the element of fire. Some sample spells possible with fire sphere are fireball, lighting a torch, putting out a large house fire.

Water

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the element of water. Some sample spells could be purifying dirty water, creating water, dispersing water, using already present water as a hammer to hit someone.

Earth

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the element of earth. Some sample spells could be opening up a crevice under someone, burrowing under something, using the earth to form a shield in front of you.

Air

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the element of air. Some sample spells could be creating a gust of air to move a ship's sails, blowing out a torch, using air to fly.

Time

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the time. Only Men of Magic may have this sphere. Some sample spells could include maturing a crop, causing someone to grow old, deteriorating a cage you are being held in so that it rots with age, or divination spells.

Weather

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the weather. Some sample spells might include causing a rainstorm, clearing a cloudy night, and casting lightning bolt.

Body

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the physical body. Some sample spells might include healing someone who is sick or hurt, causing sores to spread across someone's flesh, and changing a shape of a limb.

Physical

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with anything that needs to be physical usually combined with the other 4 elemental spheres to make them physical. For example, casting a fireball spell without a fire source already present would be fire + physical, and to bring into existence a body of water in the middle of a desert would be physical + water.

Mind

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the mind of a person. Some sample spells might include an illusion of a dragon, or removing the affliction of a phobia.

Spirit

This sphere encompasses anything that has to do with the spirit. Only Men of Faith may have this sphere. Some sample spells may include dismissing the dead, resurrection, and dispelling evil spirits.

TOOLS

So much has been said about tools, but what exactly are they? To start out with, they are the components, gestures and vocal commands used when casting a spell or asking for a miracle or prayer. I will try to list a few possible tools, but the game master or storyteller has the final say on such matters. These tools are used in spells, rituals and prayers. For example, to cast a fireball spell, a mage may be required to use the blood of a fire giant and speak a syllable, as well as use a certain hand gesture. The more tools, the better. However, the proper tools must be used for the job at hand. For example, say you're casting a scrying spell, which requires 5 tools. Even though you have some rare monster's blood(3 tool-points) and a power wand(2 tool-points), you would still need to have at least a simple scrying bowl or mirror(1 tool-point each). Now, let's say you have the proper tools, and are trying to cast a spell that requires 3 tools, but you use 5 tools. The 2 extra tools would reduce the difficulty number by 2. The more tools you use over the required amount, the lower your difficulty in casting the spell. However, no matter how many extra tools you use, you can only gain a bonus for up to 3 extra tools, meaning you can't lower your difficulty more than 3 points by using extra tools.

Tools

** Alchemical Laboratory*

Housing a complex collection of tubes, charts, tables, ingredients and containers, the laboratory is as much a reflection of its owner as it is a workplace. The alchemist's laboratory can be used to make the many potions, powders and other tools used within a spell, or for a prayer.

** Blood and other humors*

Although vile and somewhat gory, the use of blood and other fluids is found within many spells, and is used for the making of many potions and concoctions. Examples are such things as dragon's blood or the blood of Christ.

** Bones, skins and other remains*

Bones can be used as components in many spells, potions and such. The skins of many things are used, as well as heads and other remains, especially with shape shifting spells.

** Books*

Many times a mage or priest may use a book that he has his spells or prayers written down into. Examples are such things as the exorcism found within the bible, and the classic mage's spell book.

** Brews, Potions, Powders and Poultices*

Brews, potions, powders and poultices can be used for many magical uses, as well as holy prayers and rituals, such as sprinkling of holy water upon a house to bless it.

** Cards, Dice, Straws and Lots*

Cards, dice, straws and lots can be used for a great deal of magic, especially in the divination uses of the time sphere.

** Celestial Alignment*

The placement of moon, stars and sun in the sky is of great importance to many rituals and spells.

** Circles, Pentagrams and other Shapes*

These are especially useful in the summoning of creatures, both spiritual and material.

** Cups, Chalices and Other Vessels*

The holy grail is a prime example of these, but they can basically be anything that holds something.

** Dances and Gestures*

Almost every spell has some sort of gesture. Whether it is the correct placement of the mage's hand or the complex dancing of a summoning spell, these all have their places within a mage or priest's life.

** Elements, Stones, Gems and Minerals*

Once again, another material for use in spells and prayers. It could be a lava rock representing the element of fire or earth, or something as precious as a diamond.

** Group Rites*

Rites held with people chanting or all believing in the same thing are very powerful. Whether they be with other priests or practitioners of magic, or with such common folk as a possessed Child's parents, it all acts as another tool.

** Herbs and Roots*

Many herbs and roots carry great mystical semblance, and as such, work extremely well in mystical spells and prayers. Many examples, such as ginger root, mandrake root and the like can be used in potions and brews of many kinds.



** Household Tools*

Whether it is a simple shovel, or something like a pot or pan, many household items can be used to hold essence, and used as symbols in spells and rituals.

** Knots*

Knots in rope or string are also another very effective way of using magic, and used within prayer.

** Numbers*

Numbers have a great symbolic measure, such as 666, the number of the Beast.

** Offerings and Sacrifices*

The sacrificial virgin is a prime example of this.

** Sex*

Sexual rites are yet another great way of conducting rites for the mage, especially among the

pagan beliefs.

* *Symbols*

There are so many symbols it would be impossible to name them all. Whether it be the Hammer of Thor or the Cross of Christ, they are all symbols.

* *Voice*

A phrase spoken just so or a syllable said in just the right tone is sometimes what you need for a spell.

* *Wands and Staves*

Many mages use wands and staves to store essence or spells. It is yet another way to channel magics.

* *Weapons*

There are many uses for weapons within a spell, such as the sacrificial knife or the sword that works exceptionally well against giants.

* *Writings and Inscriptions*

Once again, scrolls, writing and inscriptions are a great way to store essence for spells.

Casting spells and prayers

So, now down to the nitty gritty. How do you cast a spell, and what are all the numbers used for?

First, figure out what you are wanting to do, then explain this to the game master or storyteller. He will tell you what spheres you need to use, added with your arete, how many successes you will need, and what difficulty number you will be rolling against.

Second, tell the game master or storyteller how much willpower and essence you are using and what tools you are using to cast the spell.

Third, determine if it is a resisted action spell, an extended duration spell, or a simple success spell.

Make all the necessary rolls and determine the number of successes. Don't forget to roll the fate die against diff. 6, and remember that if you fail something very bad happens to you or to your companions or the target of the spell. If you botch (as in get a 1) while rolling fate die you gain a temporary scourge point. Even if you succeed with the fate die, it doesn't affect anything else, and doesn't count towards your successes.

Spell casting Summary

Simple spell

Roll Arete plus Sphere

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If the sphere requirement is higher than the caster's sphere level, the caster must spend a point of essence for each dot of the sphere required over the caster's sphere level. This only works for spheres, not for Arete or Faith. Don't forget to roll the Fate die against a difficulty of 6.

Difficulty

The difficulty for Simple Spells is 4 plus the number of spheres required. Also, if the sphere requirement is higher than the caster's sphere level, the difficulty goes up 1 point for each dot of the sphere required over the caster's sphere level. If the difficulty number exceeds 10, then you need an extra success for every point of difficulty over 10, regardless of how much essence you spend.

Complex spells

Roll Arete plus Primary Sphere, plus one die per each additional sphere needed

If the sphere requirement is higher than the caster's sphere level, the caster must spend a point of essence for each dot of the sphere required over the caster's sphere level.

Difficulty

The difficulty for Complex Spells is 5 plus the number of spheres required, plus one die for each additional sphere used in casting. Also, if the sphere requirement is higher than the caster's sphere level, the difficulty goes up 1 point for each dot of the sphere required over the caster's sphere level. If the difficulty number exceeds 10, then you need an extra successes for every point of difficulty over 10.

Extended spells

Extended Spells are created the same way as a simple or complex spell, except that successes are accrued over a series of rolls, until either the spell is achieved, time runs out or a roll botches. The time between castings varies with the task, and essence may be spent with each roll to lower the difficulty.

Ongoing spell

Ongoing Spells function the same as an extended spell, but ten times the usual successes must be achieved. These spells cost 1 essence point per success, plus 5 points per level of highest sphere used, as well as 1 temporary willpower for every 10 essence spent.

Listed below are some charts that make casting useful, but should only be used as reference, as the game master or storyteller has the final say.

Magical Difficulties

Maximum modifiers are +/- 3, Minimum difficulty is 2 and maximum difficulty is 10

Researches lore on subject or spell before using magic -1 to -3

Has a personal item of the subject of the spell -1 to -3

Using extra tools	-1 to -3
Extra time spent beyond the required	-1
Spending a extra point of essence spent to maximum of -3	-1 per point
Hidden or distant object	+1 to +3
Mage or Priest is distracted	+1 to +3
A monumental feat	+1 to +5

Degrees of Successes

Botch

The mage or priest has made a costly mistake. The spell fails in some spectacular fashion.

Total Failure

No successes, but no botches either. Nothing of note happens except the loss of willpower and essence

Partial Success

This happens when many successes are needed and not all the successes are rolled. The essence and willpower must be spent again, and the spell cast all over until enough accumulated successes are rolled

Success

The spell is successful. The mage or priest does exactly as he or she wanted to.

Extraordinary Success

The mage exceeds the minimal number of successes needed and something extra happens, whether it be an unusual light when the spell is cast, or a different hue to a weapon.

Damage and Duration

Successes	Damage	Duration
<i>One</i>	one	one turn
<i>Two</i>	two	One scene
<i>Three</i>	three	One day

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Magic and Faith

<i>Four</i>	four	+1	One week
<i>Five</i>	five	+2	One month
<i>Six +</i>	six	+3	Game master's decision

Let's try to take what we have learned and put it into an example:



Brother Raphael has a Faith of 4, as well as Mind 2, Body 2 and Spirit 3

He has entered a crypt where the dead are said to have been coming to life. Prior to entering the crypt, he studied on the undead extensively, and he has a holy staff which is sacred to his god, as well as an emblem of his god and a prayer book from his god. While exploring the crypt, he walks into a room where there are 3 undead skeletons shambling towards him. As per the chart above, he has arete of 4, meaning he needs 2 tools in order to cast a prayer. He wishes to chant a prayer to dispel the undead skeletons' restless spirits. The game master deems that this is a simple prayer, and declares that since there are 3 skeletons he needs 3 extra successes over an extended simple prayer. The game master determines he needs at least a 4 in the required sphere, which in this example is Spirit. Since brother Raphael only has 3 spheres in Spirit, the difficulty number goes up one, for a total of 4, plus the required 4 Spirit sphere, plus 1 more, since he only has 3 in spirit, for a total of 9. Also, since he was one sphere under the requirement, he must spend an extra essence, for a total of 2, in order to chant the prayer. Raphael rolls his faith 4 plus Spirit 3, for a total of 7 dice. The difficulty of this roll is 9, but since he studied beforehand, it lowers down to 8. Since he also has one extra tool (the prayer book), the difficulty goes down to 7. Finally, he spends another extra point of essence, for a total of 3, to further lower the difficulty down to 6. He rolls his seven dice and gets a 2, 5, 7, 6, 5, 1 and 1. He gets 2 successes, but since the rule of one cancels out a success for each one rolled, he loses both the successes. Since this is an extended spell, he spends the 2 points of essence to recast the spell (one for the spell itself, plus one for being one sphere under the requirement), plus one more point of essence to keep the lowered difficulty number, but since this is the second casting, the difficulty raises to 7. He decides to spend 2 temporary willpower points for 2 automatic successes, and rolls his seven dice again. This time he gets 7, 10, 8, 6, 9, 2 and 3. He rolled 4 successes plus the 2 automatic from his willpower expenditure for a total of 6 successes. After looking at the chart above, Raphael determines that he has rolled 2 exceptional successes, adding 2 levels of damage to the 1 level of damage he did with his basic success, for a total of 3 damage. Since this is a resisted roll (because the skeletons don't want to be dispelled), they must each roll their willpower and receive 3 successes against a difficulty of 7, or be dispelled. The skeletons each roll a willpower of 3, and each receives 1 success, so they each lose 2 points of willpower. When their willpower is gone, they are dispelled.

Anna the sorceress has an Arete of 5, as well as Fire 2, Physical 2 and Mind 3

She happens to be walking down an alleyway, going back to her room at the local inn, when 2 ruffians attack her. She is unprepared, so is at +1 to the difficulty of her magics. She decides she is casting a large fireball spell at each of the ruffians. The game master decides that the required sphere level is 3, due to the larger size of the fireball. Anna's Arete is 5, meaning she must use at least 1 tool in order to cast the spell, and since she is dealing with the element of Fire, casting would be much easier with a fire source nearby. She has her favorite walking stick, and there is a torch lit in the alley, but she has decided her main tool will be a throwing gesture. So, the difficulty for the first thug is 4, plus the required 3 Fire sphere, for a total of 7. However, since she doesn't have the required 3 in Fire sphere, the difficulty goes up 1, for a total of 8. Since she was hurried, she adds 1 more to the difficulty number, and since she is distracted, she adds yet another point, for a total of difficulty 10. She has her staff in hand, though, and there is already a source for the fireball, so the difficulty goes down 2 points, to 8. Since she was one sphere under the requirement, she must spend an extra essence, for a total of 2, to cast the spell. She then spends another extra essence point, for a total of 3 essence, to lower the difficulty to 7, rolls 7 dice (Arete 5 plus Fire 2), and gets 10, 10, 3, 6, 9, 6 and 2, for a total of 3 successes, which is two successes over her required minimum, meaning she deals 3 levels of lethal damage (1 for success, plus 2 exceptional successes) to the first thug, and so on and so on it goes.

As with all things within this game, if something is found to be unwieldy, or not what you want it to be, or just doesn't work for you, simply change it. After all, the point of this book is to have fun. However, the game master or storyteller has the final say, as always, for any changes.

Sample Spells and Prayers

Fireball

Arete 2 Fire 2 (Physical 2 as well, if there is no fire source present)

Lightning bolt

Arete 3 Weather 2 (Physical 2 as well, if there is no storm nearby)

Charm a living Being (power of suggestion)

Arete 2 Mind 2 requires eye contact with the individual

Dispel Undead

Faith 3 Spirit 2 will also probably require a symbol of ones faith

Heal Wounds

Faith 1 Body 2 (if physical) or Mind 2 (if healing a mental illness)
The priest needs to be in contact with the patient, and
must also hold his holy symbol in his hands .

Raise the Dead

Faith 5 Body 5 Spirit 5 requires the expenditure of permanent Willpower, as
well as direct physical contact with the body.

Magical items

In the world of Dawn there will come a time when your character may come across an item that can be termed magical. I'll try to explain a few here, to kind of give a brief example of what some may be, but in reality, it is up to the game master or storyteller to make the final decisions.

Staves

Most staves of the magical kind are usually magical essence batteries, allowing the caster to cast more spells in a given time than is otherwise possible. They hold a number of essence within them, and can be used to cast a spell whenever a mage needs, simply by concentrating and opening the staff's flow of essence to himself. However, there is usually a maximum number of essence that the staff can hold. Also, remember that the staff can only be recharged by the mage using it. If another mage were to use the staff, he would have to first recharge it in order to gain the benefits of essence from it.

Some other examples could be a staff that casts a light spell and uses the essence within itself to fuel the spell, or a weather control staff, or whatever you deem necessary. Just remember that the game master or storyteller has the final say, and that nothing magical should be considered godlike.

Rings, Necklaces and other pieces of Jewelry

They can be made to hold a charge just like staves, and practically any spell can be put into a piece of jewelry. The only stipulations are that, for the most part, only precious metals are deemed worthy for magical purposes, and only one or two spells can be put into any one item.

Weapons and Armor

Magical swords are not unheard of, and neither are magical suits of armor. Some possible spells placed within them are sharpness, so they never dull, weightlessness, to reduce the weight of a weapon or armor, and a bonus for a weapon which will be used against a particular race.

Scrolls

Scrolls and books of magic are as numerous as are memorized spells. There are two kinds of scrolls and books of magic. The first is Scrolls and Books meant to teach someone a spell or spells. In order for a mage to learn a spell from a book, or scroll, or some other means, instead of from a teacher, he rolls his Intelligence and Investigation against a difficulty of 10. The storyteller or game master has final say as to how many total successes are needed to succeed, but usually at least 5 are required for a simple scroll.

The second type of scrolls and books are those meant for a one time use. Scrolls made to cast a spell can be read aloud by anyone who can read the language the scroll is written in, whether the reader is a mage or not. The scroll maker has already imbued the proper wording and essence into the scroll, and as such it does not require any extra essence. To activate, it however, the reader must be able to read the scroll or book.

Making of magical items or scroll

The making of magical items is a long, arduous and costly process. Many of the ingredients to make permanent spells on weapons and material items are very precious items, and require the personal expenditure of permanent Willpower while the item is being made. For example, say Hzah the mage wishes to imbue a short sword with the ability to give off a faint glow anytime goblins are near. First, he would have to have a smith willing to help him make it. Then, for the entire process, the storyteller has decided it will take 20 successes, as well as 20 essence and 2 permanent Willpower.

Of course, Hzah must know how to create the effect, and have the appropriate dots in the correct spheres as well. The storyteller may determine that a certain constellation must be up as well, or any number of things. A good rule of thumb is the more powerful something is, the more difficult it will be to make.

The making of scrolls is tough, as well. For a mage to make a one time use scroll, he must spend the appropriate essence, know the appropriate spell, and will probably have to have a number of special tools while the scroll is created.

For example, Hzah wants to make a Lightning Bolt scroll. He has the necessary knowledge in spheres, and the storyteller determines that he needs to spend 5 essence to get it working. He then wants it to inflict 5 levels of extra damage, besides the one level of damage normally done by the successful use of the scroll. The game master determines he will have to spend an additional 15 essence (3 essence per extra damage level) in order to create the scroll.



Talismans

Not all a magician's efforts result in an immediate display of power, levitation, or some other, obvious effect. Many spend a great deal of time using their craft to perfect more long-term processes or things. Some concentrate on agriculture, using their gifts over water, wind, and plants to produce more robust crops. Still others concentrate similar abilities on the animal kingdom, to breed superior animals or

to train them with unquestioning loyalty and obedience. And others spend hours or even weeks bent over a forge to produce weapons or rings of legendary power. As many artisans come to the ways of magic by accident or happenstance during the practice of a common craft, it presents little surprise that many continue that craft, now enhancing it with their new powers. More than one alchemist knows a blacksmith nearby who is eager for the chance to help forge magical steel that won't break and never needs sharpening. Creating permanent, reusable magical effects within an item requires an ongoing spell cast upon that item. Regardless of origin, once an enchantment is perfected, there will always be those willing to pay high prices for its fruits. Whether they deserve such powerful gifts is the mage's call alone.

Enchanting Items

Magic has a variety of uses in the everyday world: to sharpen knives so that they never dull, to strengthen a wagon wheel so that it never splinters, or to enchant a well such that its water is always pure and fresh. Below are a number of effects and some magical means of achieving them. The methods and materials listed are by no means the only ones possible; they are simply those that fit best into local superstitious beliefs, aiding a mage to cast his spells when performing them as listed.

Sharpness

This common charm is promised by many an alleged magician. Most who can actually perform this task do so silently, letting the charlatans collect the grief when sharp blades are not enough. To place a blessing of sharpness upon a forged blade during its final stages of sharpening and polishing is a somewhat common craft among most mages.. Olive oil is carefully buffed into the blade with cloth made from the hair of a jackal, while chanting the spell. The task is completed with a simple test. A cord of rough wool is dropped over the blade; if the blessing went well, the cord will split without hesitation, stopping not a moment on the edge of the blade. Subtract one from an opponent's armor per every two casting successes.

Unbreakable

This mix of will, sulfur and iron can aid in the strengthening of almost any creation. Hermetic smiths create this effect through precisely forged iron, tempered in a mild copper solution exactly twenty-two times. Once cooled, the item is packed in red clay for two days. When removed, the item is impervious to all but the most grievous of damage dealt by the hand of man. Even powerful magic finds difficulty banning these creations. The forged item has an effective armor rating of +8B/ +8L and delivers +3 bashing damage.

Unerring Valor

This blessing is often placed upon the blades of kings, lords, chieftains, or their champions by a resident holy man. This blessing protects the wielder from fatigue and fright on the battlefield, making her certain in the righteousness of her cause. Conversely, the blessing limits the weapon's use, forbidding it to be so much as drawn from its sheath for an unjust cause.

Lightened Weight

This not-so-simple charm aids in lightening armor, weapons and other heavy materials. It requires few exotic materials, but is dangerous to put in place, as the mix is known to combust when pouring or shaping metals, ruining the item. Mages and Priests use this craft to lighten the arms and armor. It allows the guardsmen to move in their normally bulky and heavy steel as though it were cloth, wielding their weapons effortlessly. The item must be made with the mage present at all times, using blessed water and iron ore from the Holy Mount. This spell cancels out any Strength or Dexterity penalties.

Purity

This charm of the Hermetic Order protects the contents within a cask or bottle from spoiling due to age, weather or poor care. Whether wine, mead or water, no natural or supernatural source may foul the contents. Even poisons added are rendered inert. To provide this protection, the mage must coat the outside of the container with a mixture of volcanic ash and river clay, carefully baked at a constant temperature for three days. By coating a water skin in the blood of a three-day old lamb, mages can ensure that all water that leaves the skin will be pure and cool.

Divining Rod

Some mages aren't so lucky as to have easy access to essence. When in this predicament, a wizard has little choice but to seek out a source. Although he can find one on his own by simple force of will, this is a slow and tiresome process, able to work only at limited distances and in very vague directions. A solution to this problem is to create a divining rod. A simple charm, this forked branch from a tree can be used to determine the general direction of large concentrations of essence. Those with greater power can expand the range of the rod's view in rough proportion to their skill and art. It takes only a few moments' concentration to attune oneself to the branch, and then begin its use. It points the mage in the general direction of any essence within a day's walk. If a node cannot be located within a day's walk, the mage may spend an hour further attuning himself to the branch and its sensitivity to the flows of power in the world. At the end of the hour, the mage will be able to sense the general direction of all essence within one week's walk. This requires the expenditure of one Willpower point.

Magical Foci

Every Fellowship has layers and layers of habit and ritual associated with its magic, such that it is no longer certain if the practices themselves create the magic or the magic creates the practices. Habit is reinforced by belief, which in turn reinforces the habit. This circle of ritual is a powerful thing. Important components in any ritual are the instruments through which a mage's power is focused, channeled, and in some cases, amplified. Many witches and wizards continue to use these instruments even when their mastery has long surpassed their necessity.

Attuning and Investing Foci

Apprentices learn to use certain materials or processes when casting their spells. These do not have to be attuned or special items. If a spell requires water or a bone, any water will do, whether it be collected from falling rain or drawn from a rushing stream; likewise, the bone could be that of the chicken the mage ate for dinner, or one dug up from a graveyard under the new moon. Items that have a special tie to the mage provide some extra benefits to her magic, however. These might be staves or rings handed down from master to apprentice, or a beloved grandfather's cloak or mother's shawl. Items used regularly as foci for spellcasting can be invested with essence, providing them with special properties. It generally takes at least one year of regular magical practice with a particular item as focus before it becomes attuned. An attuned focus can then be invested with essence points, storing them for the mage to draw out and spend as he sees fit (only the mage attuned to the focus can tap its essence). An attuned focus can store up to two points of essence for each point the mage has in his Sphere. Some Fellowship's have well-known traditions of using certain foci, and these are known to provide various special properties....

The Wayfinder's Staff

A common focus among wandering Mages, this staff itself appears to be a sturdy length of common wood, weathered by time and use. Decoration is a personal issue, subject to the wise woman's personal beliefs, patrons or whim. A quiet word and the expenditure of stored essence from within the staff brings another aspect quickly to light — literally. The staff emits a scent, rather like perfumed oil,

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intoxicating to fire sprites. Within moments, all minor fire elemental within an hour's walk are drawn to the staff, from both the physical and spirit realms. Until the scent is extinguished, the sprites dance about the stuff, hovering about its tip. To those without the ability to see the spirit realm, the sprites appear as a swarm of fireflies, oddly attracted to the wise woman's staff. The light generated is equivalent to that of a well lit torch. It can also be used to start small fires. The Wayfinder's staff can function as a Focus, but also can be used to light one's way in the deepest of darkness.

The Healing Drum

Used by mages and priests alike, this hide drum can aid them in driving spirits away from the afflicted. When played by the shaman as he peers into the Other World, or even steps into it, it sets up a reverberating thrum that surrounds him and the patient he seeks to aid, as long as the shaman also spends a point of the drum's stored essence. While this provides an eerie effect for most listeners, it is jarring to a spirit's very essence. Any spirit who has possessed or is attempting to possess the patient must make an essence roll to maintain the attempt. If successful, the drum is ignored. If not, the thrumming noise distracts the spirit enough to halt the process of possession. The spirit can try again, but only after a successful Willpower roll. If this roll fails, the spirit cannot possess that person at all. The Healing Drum can also function as a Focus when attempting to heal others or themselves, and while playing it, lowers all spells' or prayers' difficulty by 1 for the purpose of healing the body or spirit.

Crucifix of Absolution or other Holy symbol

With its carved likeness of the suffering Christ, this crucifix can help others to gain peace with themselves and God by removing guilt over sins. By muttering a prayer over the sinful with the crucifix and spending a point of the crucifix's stored essence, the Priest can convince the person that he has been absolved of any petty sin. Serious sins, such as unwarranted murder or rape, cannot be cleansed this way. Persons so healed by the prayer and crucifix feel thankful to the theurgist. They will aid him however he asks, as long as the task is within their power and not obviously or immediately dangerous to them. Helping to smuggle the priest past some guards in a hay wagon is acceptable, although attacking the guards to distract them while the priest runs is not. The crucifix can be used as a focus, and while the priest is using the crucifix, all prayers chanted add 1 additional die to their pool.

Hermetic Tome

Most mages take their duties to preserve lost lore seriously. Many mages not only collect ancient tomes, they often compose new ones themselves. This focus is just such a personal tome, a collection of the mage's own writings about his magical experiences. It does not have to be written in a common tongue, or even a tongue known to any one else (it can be a special alphabet or glyph series created by the mage for himself). When he thumbs through its pages and spends a point of its stored essence, he remembers some fact or imagining he once had during its composition that provides an incredibly relevant insight to a current problem, adding 1 die to his player's Enigmas or Academics die pool for one roll only (choose which skill the tome affects when it is attuned; it can affect only one of them).

Elixirs and Poultices

Modern pharmacology has revealed to the learned man and midwife a number of ways to aid the body in removing unwanted devils, unbalanced humors, or imperfections of flesh and mind. Nearly every village and town has an old hag, a self-proclaimed doctor, or other local healer capable of crafting these items. Some even have the Gift to make them work. The methods used to make these potions are not required of the magician, but they are usually believed to aid the effectiveness of the magic nonetheless (as with any magic that adheres to superstitions, using the following processes in a spell negates a single 1 from any roll).

Fertility/Sterility

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A popular request among nobility, this elixir works equally well on all manner of live-birthing animals. More than one farm wife knows its secret. The elixir is made by taking honey-sweetened mead and mixing in it the petals of a daisy and an egg. It must be mixed well and cannot work if the drinker knows its purpose. Sterility is caused by omitting the egg yolk. Stories hold that this elixir can be made with sweet wines by court wizards.

Truth/Falsehood

This concoction compels the speaker to speak only the direct truth. Made with crushed rosemary, brook water and boiled with rosehip wine, the result is indistinguishable from any mild red wine until the drinker is questioned. By substituting the brook water with stagnant water, the speaker is compelled to lie, no matter how much he wishes not to.

Strength/Weakness

This elixir, made with salt, pepper, honey and cow's blood, when used as a sauce or marinade over beef, mutton or venison, endows any who eat it with greater strength than the human form allows for three full days. If chicken's blood is used in place of a cow's, the victim will find himself unable to rise from his bed for the next four sunrises.

Mental Clarity/Madness

By carefully mixing the green of wild onions with assorted wild greens, and then dousing them in a coating of vinegar, oils and sweet spices, the alchemist can produce a meal that provides its diner with heightened mental acuity until the next full moon. Should the oils, vinegar and spice be cooked with mutton and onions, the result is madness until the next full moon.

Health/Sickness

This simple poultice is made by wrapping a leech in damp peat, coating it with mud, and then wrapping it over a wound with soft linen. If kept damp for as many days as it is needed, a man can heal from all but the most grievous of wounds, so long as the skin was punctured. A live leech must be used. If a dead leech is used, the wound will fester and rot, eventually killing the patient if the leech corpse is not removed.

Slow Rot

The industrious witch has all manner of potions, fair and foul. Many of the less moral find no trouble at all selling their wares. When someone comes looking for a way to cripple a foe without using an obvious poison, numerous choices exist for delivering seemingly common afflictions or social diseases. This particular poisonous curse inflicts the indelicacy of gangrene upon a person. Two separate snake venoms must be mixed with spider silk and wood alcohol. The poison must be applied with a pin prick to the lower half of the body. The poison is slow acting; it may be days or even weeks before its effect is noticeable.

Heavy Sleep

When the body needs rest and cannot, ill health and temper result, leading ultimately to madness. A fevered child must rest or she will never heal. Sometimes it is necessary to render a man unconscious, to subdue him for reasons of state or crime. This sleeping draught is made with honey, moon dipped well water, a crocus petal and a few iron shavings. Mixed well at three hours past sunset, it will store indefinitely, allowing it to be used as needed to aid in sleep, or for more nefarious purposes.

Vigor

There are days when it is simply impossible for man's body to keep up with what his mind wills it to do. Times of extreme crises might call for superhuman strength and endurance until the challenge is overcome. This potion is made with the powdered leg bones of a wild hare mixed in mare's milk. The sturdier the horse's bloodline, the more effective is the draught. For the next day, the imbiber finds himself

without fatigue, able to keep his top pace at any physical endeavor without fail or need of rest. The day of activity is followed by two days of absolute rest.

Weapons

As long as there has been powerful magic, there have been those who use it to craft items of great cunning and even wicked power. Some were created to be the penultimate act of a wizard's power, others to aid, guide, or even destroy a hero of legend. Most such items of power are now lost or destroyed; only a handful remain. New works are created every now and then, however. The occasional weapon of legend reappears, hopefully in the arms of the righteous, but just as often not. Some take this to mean that the time of great magic has passed, that the gods have abandoned the earth and taken their power with them. Not all these weapons are of great power, used by a single man to cleave opponents by the score. Instead, some aid his brethren, steel his spirit or speed his journey. Although the magic of the battlefield is rarely subtle, such items don't make the magic grossly blatant; it simply isn't always hidden from the mundane eye. Great magic can be hidden in plain sight, in a captain's breastplate or a herald's trumpet.

Sword of Recompense

Many items of such power come from unknown sources, created for equally unknown purposes. As oft as not these creations exist for solely malevolent purposes, doing the devils work unknowingly. All accounts of this particular creation of Hell are consistent in a number of details. The sword reveals itself with little subtlety, appearing embedded in the ground before its victim. This is always someone who has just lost a loved one to petty strife or blatant malevolence. The blade has been described in many forms, all having winged serpents etched into the surface of the blade. Beyond this, it takes the shape most suitable to its new master and his abilities. It is not unusual to hear of it appearing as an axe or even a long spear, or even the form of a weapon not used in that part of the known world. The blade's evil is rarely known to the new wielder - how it devours the soul of the one avenged, powering itself and its master until vengeance is achieved. Then, and only then, is the true nature of the blade apparent. Most cannot live with themselves after learning the truth and, in suicide, feed the blade with their final moments.

Arrows of Alarm

Not all martial creations show their results directly on the field of combat, in the dance of a duel or through the skulking form of an assassin. These particular arrows are found in the northwest, crafted by a village fletcher and blessed by the local priest to aid in the town's defense. The arrowhead is a blunt egg of metal with a set of fine holes bored through it. These holes create a piercing whistle as the arrow flies. The priest's blessing creates an additional effect, attracting the arrows to large metal shields hung like gongs about the town. When properly crafted, these arrows may be fired as far as three days march away from the town, traveling directly to the gongs unless caught or forcibly intercepted. Unfortunately, an arrow only works with a given target and may only be fired once, for the arrow's speed shatters it upon hitting its target, leaving nothing but dust. The arrows travel at great speed; while magic allows them to move around obstacles, they can be caught or blocked in flight. Treat the arrow as a target with a Dexterity + Dodge dice pool of 8. If intercepted, it hits as a normal arrow, but delivers bashing damage.

Distance Arrows

Renowned by hunters and scouts alike, these arrows are able to fly to great distances until they strike their target. These long-bow arrows, fletched with the feathers of an eagle, can hit any target, at any distance, so long as the archer can see it. The target must stand still, for the arrows do not magically follow the quarry. The arrows can be fashioned by many magical principles common to most mages or priests. As the text implies, the arrows may strike at any distance the archer's eye can see. A round must be spent aiming; hasty firing wastes the arrow's benefit. When the target is within the normal range of the

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archer, the arrow decreases the difficulty by two and negates all range-based penalties. If the target is beyond normal range, the archer's player still faces no range-based penalties but loses the difficulty reduction.

Staff of Ten Men

This stout oaken staff seems to have wandered its way through history, appearing in the hands of some skilled peasant warrior, then vanishing after his death. It is attracted to those who can martial their fellows, strengthen their resolve, and form them into a capable force for the defense of their homes. There are no known sightings of the staff in the hands of any who do not embody selflessness for their fellow man. The staff is a man and a half tall, with a stylized sun carved at its midpoint. Additionally, a ring of five faces is carved at each end. Other than a fine, polished finish, the staff bears no additional decoration. The staff is unbreakable, protected in some unknown way. As the name suggests, the staff bears the strength of 10 men, which it shares with its current, chosen wielder. This gift bears a price. When the wielder dies, his (or her) spirit is drawn into the staff, adding its strength to the collective. One face falls from the staff and is replaced by that of the most recent wielder. This imprisonment lasts until 10 new spirits have been drawn in. There are never more or fewer than 10 spirits in the staff. The staff grants the user an addition 10 dice of Strength for all actions using the staff.

Sublime Snare

This rope snare has a dual purpose. It is used primarily for trapping small- to moderate-sized game, for its magic encourages an appropriate catch to come near while discouraging away game too small to feed upon or so large as to be wasteful. Upon capture, the prey's panic and fear are channeled into the rope, calming it to prevent suffering until the hunter is able to come and thank the animal for its bounty. It can instead be set to guard places holy or mundane from intruders who are well aware they do not belong. When an intruder steps into the snare, the panic and fear drawn from captive animals are forced into him. Nightmarish visions of torture and impending death assail the captive until he is released. The snare's magic makes it difficult to detect, increasing by two any perception difficulties to spot it. The images assaulting a person captured in the snare require a Willpower roll versus difficulty 8 to prevent all-out panic. These snares are most often found in use near holy places.

Banner of Valor

Every force has its colors, a rallying point, a warning, or claim of divine right. When this special banner is flown, no man breaks, fears death or contemplates failure. The colors of the king are ever-glorious. The banner may be made of any material deemed fit; the colors and decoration are determined by the ruler's lineage and whim. Banners such as these are prepared carefully by the king's tailors, then blessed by a priest or mage four times, one in each cardinal corner of the land. In each location, the priest must say three prayers, one each requesting the blessings of his god or deity. If the prayers are answered, when the banners are flown at the front of any army, they bolster the troop's confidence, for the Gods have blessed them. So, kings fly the banners when they are within a day's march of the kingdom, and all troops make all Stamina and Willpower rolls at one less difficulty. Should the banner fall and not be recovered, these benefits are reversed until the banner is righted.

War Drum

This great drum, made from the oak of a century tree and the skin of a great stag, sends its rumbles across great distances, from ally to ally, gathering strength before a descent upon the enemy. Anger and hate build, focusing their strength upon those poor unfortunate souls about to be put to the sword. On the battlefield, the drum's roll strengthens the army's resolve, bolstering confidence in their skill and weakening their fear of death. So long as the drum is played, those allied with the drummer are fearless, acting without second thought and effectively increasing their initiative by two. Additionally, the drum's magic reduces wound penalties by one level. If played before the battle begins, terror creeps



slowly into the foes' bones — those opposing are also affected by the beat's power. As the armies rush forth in the first clash, the players of those stricken by the drum's fear must make a Willpower roll versus difficulty 7 or flee the scene. Those able to resist bolting are still encumbered by fear; and act with initiatives reduced by one.

Armor of Air

Rumors swell of a great defensive magic from the lands of the Djinn. The very air is shaped by magic and craftsmanship into a perfect shirt of chainmail, invisible save for a brilliant reflection in the light of the midday sun. This chain weighs less than nothing — it might float away if not pinned down. The chain alone has no weight, and its enchantment even reduces the wearer's own weight by half. It is durable, seemingly incapable of permanent damage, and repairs itself as the day passes. This item has only one flaw: its magic dies in the light of the moon. It then becomes visible and heavy. Should the shirt be removed and not properly held down, it will rise into the clouds; only the light of a full moon will force it back to earth, landing with the weight of steel.

Helm of Nightmares

Created for a specific victim, these helms usually resemble one the victim already owns. When worn, enemy forces appear stronger and larger while allies' losses appear more grievous. Should anyone sleep in the same room as the helm, it will whisper doubts and send nightmares of fantastic losses to them. This helm is ensorcelled by mages or priests, to prevent atrocities of war from occurring on their

own lands. By planting these doubts and fears, they hope to force invading armies to reconsider their plans and prevent bloodshed. The helm is prepared by encouraging ancestor spirits of the area to take up residence in the helm. Those who died by violence and war are preferred, having greater strength when it comes time to cloud the victim's mind with images of carnage and loss. While these creations are made for a specific person, any who wear one will be subject to its effects. Those suffering the helm's nightmares will have an increasingly difficult time sleeping until it begins to affect their activities. After two weeks of regular exposure, the victims will suffer one level of increased difficulty on all activities. Additionally, wearing the helm increases the difficulty of Willpower rolls in combat-related situations by two.

Valkyrie's Barding

These rare treasures are not found on the battlefield as often as they once were. Most of these items are taken into the afterlife with the horse and rider after their untimely death in battle. Most still in use are found among the descendants of the Norse who settled in the British Isles. The barding is of a simple enough design: thick, boiled leather pieces with an assortment of steel rings sewn on in the shape of runes of war, strength and protection. The leather plates are attached to each other and placed upon the horse with a set of leather straps bearing the names of family members who have died in glorious battle, and were thus afforded a place in Valhalla. The barding is surprisingly light given its durability; the rider finds that he and his steed can move as easily as without armor. The barding has an armor +4B/+4L and levies no encumbrance penalties. The blessing on the barding is hereditary, but it may be passed along only if the last owner died in battle. His name must be added to the harness straps to acknowledge this transition. Should the name of any family member unworthy of a place in Valhalla be written upon the straps, the blessing placed on the barding is reversed, causing the barding to weigh so much it cannot be lifted. So few have earned this armor in the past century that the Valkyrie no longer bestow it anew

Sleipnir's Shoes

Crafted by those who remember the old ways, these horseshoes are created in honor and homage to the great steed of the All-Father. Shining black as Sleipnir's coat, these iron shoes grant the horse that wears them great endurance and speed. A single shoe allows the horse to travel all day without rest. A pair adds half again to the distance he may travel. Three grant the horse strength to travel a full day at full gallop. A horse wearing four can carry a fully armored man at full gallop for a week without rest. This last journey will unfortunately result in the steed's death, however. Any number of shoes grants to the horse toughened skin that can repel arrows(armor + 3B/+4L). The shoes must be forged in the deep of winter, while the snow still stands waist high. The iron may be worked only over coals of ash and cooled only directly by the snows outside the forge. Any who fail to perform this task properly can never succeed at it again. This requires the mage or priest to have nine successes per shoe over three rolls: one while stoking the coals, another while shaping the iron, and the last while cooling the shoe.

Shield From Assassins

Armor is not the only protective magic created. Dating back to the time of the Roman Senate, this protective amulet is reported to have saved the lives of many in its centuries of service. Although no proof exists, tales claim it was created by the Oracle of Delphi. The amulet is believed to presently be in the possession of a priest. This amulet, when worn, keeps a constant impression of the intents of those present. Anyone plotting the wearer's death will cause the amulet to turn so cold the wearer can barely withstand it against exposed skin. Anyone actually attempting the wearer's death causes the amulet to warm enough to burn. The wearer need not be aware of the presence of the assassins, would-be or otherwise; he must simply be within 20 paces of those with untoward thoughts and the intent to fulfill them. False impressions rarely occur, although it is possible. Most are from short thoughts of rage quickly suppressed by better judgment. The amulet is useless on a battleground, giving no indication of the wearer's personal danger.

Magical Aides

Every magic worker worth his salt has numerous aids to make his life easier. Magic takes great effort; very little wisdom is required to know that reducing effort is always desirable. Not all aids are meant to supplement the magical craft; some exist for daily chores or less routine but equally mundane tasks. Still others carry ages of wisdom, granted by the life experiences of past owners or even the spirits of those very same ancestors.

Seer's Pool

For every old crone predicting doom, gloom and other less pleasant futures there is a seer's pool. Few would attempt for long the scrying arts or the interpretation of omens without this important aid. The pool must be made of a difficult-to-obtain item, such as the shell of a dragon-turtle, or the helm of a cyclops. Once acquired, the insides must be polished so smooth and clean that the reflection of the moon's light blinds the onlooker. It must then be consecrated at the height of a new moon, and placed into its final home. Every night, until the next new moon, it must be filled with fresh water and four drops of the mage's blood, stirred with the wing feather of a raven. By the time of the next moon, the mage and her pool will be joined in power, and it will extend her powers of augury. The rite takes 28 days to cast, and one roll may be made per day; 84 successes must be obtained. The resulting pool adds three dice to any form of scrying or prediction used with the pool. If the pool is moved, its power is lost. Many Priests and mages alike dedicate their runes for scrying similarly, in a brass bowl of water mixed with their own blood. This grants one bonus die to scrying or prediction attempts.

Animated Tools

Many an hour in the alchemist's lab is used up preparing ingredients *just* so. Such things can be dangerous, and is not work meant for a bumble-headed apprentice who can barely be trusted to fetch fresh water. The simpler, and safer, solution is to animate the tools themselves. They do as told, waste no time daydreaming and never fall asleep in the sulfur. These things are difficult to create, taking great skill and patience. Perfecting a mortar and pestle is often the first sign an apprentice is ready to strike out on his own. Similarly, such a tool might be an aid in other ways, providing advice of a sort, or supervising a situation for its mistress. A generations-old anvil speaks encouragement to the apprentice smith, reminding him when it is time to reheat the iron or if he strikes too softly. Grandfather's walking stick knows every path in the county and never gets lost. Mages often create such animate items, by either binding spirits to them or awakening the spirits slumbering within. They spend many hours with the item in question, sitting and talking with the spirits around them until one agrees to live within the item, or the item itself awakens. It's not unheard of for a rope, door, walking stick, or rucksack to act as much as a mentor as it does an aid. A day must be spent with the item, with one roll per hour of darkness; a total of 20 successes per item is required. Hermetics are also fond of this craft, using their will to force a semblance of life into an item, thus making it capable of following simple orders and performing equally simple movements.

Concealed Journal

A wizard's thoughts should stay his own. What knowledge these minds hold is not meant for mortal men. What compels a mage to put such dangerous things to pen where a Commoner can read them (well, those who can read) is beyond comprehension. Fortunately, for those who have the knack, this simple enchantment makes a wizard's secret journal exactly that — secret. The oldest form of this journal probably comes from the Batini, who claim to have relearned this skill from those who came long before them. The written work, or materials to be written upon, is dusted with a fine coat of dander from a mouse. The dander must be allowed to sit for a day before being brushed off with the feather of a bird of prey. Once enchanted and cleaned, anything written upon it is visible only to the caster; everyone else sees only an empty surface. If closed, sealed, or similarly shut and again dusted with the dander of a

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mouse, the item will be unobtrusive in plain sight or invisible if hidden. Closed items hidden in plain sight are -4 to spot; deliberately hidden items are -8. Invisible text may be seen only if the hiding ward is broken. In times past, the early Mages used this effect to hide the symbols that showed the way to their secret places of meeting. This is still a common practice, though one practiced more from habit than need. The surface must be washed with sacramental wine. Once the stain has set, the symbols are written with lamb's blood. Those not holding the proper crucifix will see nothing but red upon the wall.

Wizard's Lock

This charm prevents a lock from opening without the presence of the wizard's chosen focus. If the focus is unavailable, the lock simply will not open, not even for the caster. Should a thief try to pick or otherwise disable the lock, she'll find it has been strengthened, though a few lock picks may break before this becomes obvious. Most brute force attempts to break the lock will remove the latches long before damaging the lock. Enchanting the lock requires a small bit of sulfur and the key matching the lock. Should the mage fail to enchant the lock, it will not be apparent until the first time he tries to lock it, which it will repeatedly fail to do. The priests of old used this charm to prevent the pilfering of a raid's spoils before returning home, ensuring that there was proper distribution of the voyage's gains. The charm was placed on ropes that allowed only the raid's leader to tie and untie them. The charm for making this rope is still taught to priests of most religions. The rope retains this charm only for a journey to and from a place.

Irresistible Spices

Hunger can tempt a man beyond sanity into acts that could surely lead to certain death. This potent packet of seasonings reminds a man of his worst hungers, making him pliable for a witch's needs. Mushrooms from a faerie mound must be gathered under a full moon and then dried only in the midday sun until they are brittle enough to crumble by hand. Sea salts, hand gathered from a fisherman's net, are added, along with the meat of an acorn and crushed pepper, over slightly warmed coals, all while speaking softly the name of the victim. As practiced by the priests and mages alike, this requires 15 successes over two days. The player rolls once per day of game time at moonrise. Once the victim catches the scent of mutton cooked with these spices, he is compelled to sit and eat. He is willing to do anything demanded of him to get even the smallest morsel. Once the mutton is eaten, the victim is unable to resist fulfilling his promise. The priests create a similar wine, used to seal bargains with those who are likely to prove untrustworthy. Those who drink the wine at the end of an agreement will find themselves unable to break the agreement so long as the other party is equally true. A red wine is warmed for two days over a low fire, flavored with honey and flower petals.

Ever-Opening Door

Sometimes, as hounds nip at your heels, an exit is never as close as it need be. The exit you were certain was just over there is actually a ladies' dressing closet. There's never the door that you *need* when you need it. In the realm of magic, anything becomes possible, something every mage is thankful for at least once in his life. This brass door handle, when pressed against a door or gate, links it with a specific door up to two hundred leagues away. The handles are crafted as any, then carefully painted with a specially-made gold patina. One of the handles is permanently attached to a door, and its mate is held to the opposite side for four hours while the sorcerer attunes the handles to each other, meditating on the idea that distance is an illusion and that all places are the same. Many priests have a similar talisman that aids in making a quick exit. A small charm in the shape of a bird's wing, when clutched to a door before opening, forms a gateway to the outermost door of the structure.

Light of Understanding

As long as there have been more than two peoples in the world, there has been divergence in thought. From divergent thought comes separate language and, in turn, differing understandings. It is



difficult to broker peace, educate the masses, or even buy dinner provisions when one cannot understand the local language. In the light of the Almighty, all is made clear. When the holy oils are burned in these lamps, all words and intentions in their light are made clear. The priests produce this item literally as used. It is made by filling a brass altar lamp with oil from the Holy Lands. A brief prayer is said as a single serving of sacramental wine is poured into the oil. Once the oil is lit, all who are touched by the light of its fire will be understood as though the listener and speaker share the same mind. Many mages have a similar spell which uses a heavily perfumed oil for similar effect; when placed in a lamp, all who can see the light and smell the oil will know without flaw the intent of a man's words.

Self-Climbing Rope

This infinitely useful item appears to be a typical coil of flaxen rope. Upon command, the rope becomes animate, able to move along any surface. The rope does not have much of a backbone,

however, making it unable to stand up for more than an arm's length. When the rope is created, fresh pine needles and spider's silk are woven in with the fibers. The rope is then left to steep in a cold kettle of brine made from sea salts and the eggs of a snake. This task takes seven days once the rope is wound, requiring a total of 21 successes, with one roll per day. The rope has a Strength of 7, a Dexterity of 2 and is limited to 30 feet in length. Additional ropes may be tied or spliced to it, but they do not gain its magical abilities. Priests have learned a similar prayer, by drawing on the commonality of all things. The rope is similarly made, using silk and nettles in the weaving and scented with rose perfume.

Unfolding Constructs

This tightly bundled pack of sticks, when untied, moves swiftly to take the shape of a necessary object. The user need only speak the appropriate words as he unties the knots to have an instant bridge, hut or ladder. More creative—and dangerous—uses are not uncommon. The power is limited, allowing the owner to create things that are no more than one hundred times the size of the bundle. A simple sixty-foot bridge or a similarly sized ladder is possible, but one can not shape large fortifications or a massive longboat. The creation of this item is a closely guarded secret among the elder mages. The process requires the bones of an enemy shaman be ground to powder, then mixed with eggs and oils to make a glaze. This glaze is in turn used to varnish 10 straight and smooth branches of an ash tree, tied together with rope made from the same shaman's skin. This requires 15 successes on six rolls—one for each day the glaze must bake before the fire.

Magic Hindrances

Parallel with a mage's need to assist himself in his work is the need to make things harder for others. Many a crone makes a good living delivering curses for those deserving and not. Some of these annoyances and curses require a physical form, a source of even a small bit of power to keep the spell going until its appointed end. These cursed items are a bane on their victims. Not all these effects are a direct curse; some instead affect those around the victim. With a small bit of creativity, they can still be turned on a victim. One should be careful of a witch's gift.

Glyph of Obscurement

This complex ward, when sewn with red lamb's wool on the inside of a cloak, makes the cloak's wearer increasingly unrecognizable the farther away he gets. The ward muddies the viewer's mind, causing his eyes to blend the face of the cloak wearer with others he has seen that day. Although useless at sword's range, one can easily blend into a crowd to elude missile attacks, for example. This is sometimes bestowed in more powerful form on someone whose identity is of import, to sully their claims at who they are. In a time when the only proof of identity is being recognized and confirmed, this glyph can be a powerful nuisance, or even a cause of death. This ward requires one foot of red lamb's wool thread for every year of the victim's life. All the thread must be used in fashioning the glyph; none can be wasted. The caster who performs this curse needs to roll one attempt for every five feet of thread sewn, with two successes needed each roll.

Tempest's Anger

Many a mob has been stirred up seemingly by magic. Truth is, they often were. By spreading this powder about an area, discreetly or overtly, any who come in contact with it feel compelled to gather and harass, fight, or otherwise raise civil mischief against something they all feel strong opposition toward. The powder is made of a mix of river clay, goat dung, salts, and the blood of a wronged man. Once mixed, it resembles simple soil, making it easy to spread about a village square or other place, to slowly gather forces.

Aura of Disbelief

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For those unfortunate enough to have suffered the curse of the village wise woman or forest hag, there is little respite until something is made right. This curse is a popular choice against thieves caught in a lie who will not admit guilt or return what was stolen; the curse follows them until they admit their misdeed and make things right — for whatever value of right is relevant. The victims of this curse will no longer be able to speak with a silver tongue; every word uttered will be questioned and doubted. If asked the color of the sky, a truthful answer will be met with words questioning the speaker's eyes or even sanity. This curse is well known to the Priests and commonly used on traveling thieves calling themselves merchants. The curse requires no physical components, only the angry words of someone wronged and a clear view of the perpetrator.

Forced Belligerence

Sometimes, it's not enough to manipulate a diplomat with words. Calm and rational people can be difficult to sway without reasoned argument. To force the truth to the surface, it must often be provoked forth. Struck with a stick, the angry serpent will itself strike out, showing all its venomous ways. Mystics have a scent that forces a victim into dissonance with the smell. This perfume, thinned with water, will make a calm man edgy. Mix it thicker and he will become tense, responding to every word as an accusation. Mix it pure and he will be beyond rational, searching for conflict in whatever form he may find it. Priests create the perfume with the needles, water, and crushed petals of a desert cactus, ground and blended to a thick paste. If thinned with anything but pure water, it will be fouled and not work. For reasons not understood, the perfume does not affect women. The perfume affects all men who can smell it for up to one day. The scent expires after one scene. A similar poultice is known to the mages and requires the poultice painted on the chest of men about to go into battle, increasing their resolve. They gain an additional two temporary Willpower points for the duration of the combat.

Ever-Present Pebble

This curse creates a constant pain in the foot of the victim, as though a pebble were stuck in his boot. No amount of effort can cause the pebble to be found or dislodged — even if the victim travels barefoot. It will persist any time weight is placed upon the foot, until sufficient time has passed. When they still practiced in secret, the Christian progenitors would commonly create a salve that, when placed on the underside of a horse's bridle, would convince the animal it had a burr or similar affliction. The salve was created with both the bristles and sap of an aloe plant, carefully ground for four hours. Once each hour, a prayer is said, begging forgiveness for the falsehood needed for the greater good. Each hour, two successes are needed. Mages create this inconvenience with a small stone washed smooth by a brook. The stone is dotted with hare's blood from the end of a porcupine's quill. One dot is placed for each day the effect will last, requiring one success each. To take effect, the stone must strike any portion of the victim's body below the knee, thus inflicting the phantom injury on that extremity.

Look of the Wolf

Few animals react well to the presence of the wolf. Its wild nature and thirst for blood make even the most calm uneasy in its presence. This ward, painted on a saddle in fresh wine, inflicts a similar condition upon the first to sit upon it. Animals become uneasy, even skittish in that person's presence. Horses will refuse to carry her, become hostile, and attempt to defend themselves if she comes too close. This unfortunate condition persists until the next full moon or the victim is killed. Priests paint this glyph in a mixture made with the urine of a wolf, fresh from marking its territory. The urine is mixed with water wrung from a poisonous mushroom cap and the fat drippings from the leg of a lamb, let to set overnight. Mages have a similar charm made from the incisors of a wolf. The incisors are left to sit in a bowl of the mage's blood from sundown to sun up while he casts the spell.

Magical Places within the world of Dawn

Fonts

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There are many places within the world of dawn where the casting of magic and spells is easier. Some say that these areas are natural Fonts of essence, where raw essence wells up out of the ground like a fountain or spring. It is at these special places in the world where the greatest magics can be performed without the exhaustion or depletion of essence. They could be a waterfall untouched by man, or perhaps a pool deep within the earth. Wherever they are, they are few and far between. If a mage finds one of these, all the difficulties for casting are lowered, and essence is used from the spot instead of the caster's pool.



Dawn

Game Mechanics

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Let's talk a bit about game mechanics, what all the numbers mean and how to actually play the game. Dawn is a game based off of the storyteller system, and as such, has rules. These rules are not meant to limit anyone's behavior, or to keep anyone in line, per se, but more to provide the characters with challenges, and to provide the storyteller or game master with simple ways in which to adjudicate those challenges. In a larger sense, they help to tell the story. Because players are both participants and audience, it's critical that they identify with their characters and experience the thrills and chills of the unfolding tale. Just like when you hold your breath when reading about a hero who is about to be done in, you'll hold your breath when your character does something risky. So we need to have an impartial way to resolve the situation.

For example, does Donatelo make it out of the burning building, or Does Anita rescue the child in time before she is killed? These help to maintain the tension. The storyteller can always just decide if your character fails or succeeds, but that's usually less fun for everyone, because it leaves things open to favoritism. Truly unbiased rulings need some sort of standard, so that everyone's getting the same treatment. Henceforth, here are the rules, as best I can explain them, and as always, the game master or storyteller has the final say. Also, if you decide that something needs to be changed, or you don't like something, then change it.

Time

Over the course of the game, it is assumed that time passes, as it would in the normal world. Tuesday follows Monday, month after month, and so on. There is no reason to role-play out every second in your character's life. That being said, there is a huge difference in the speed in which game time passes, as compared to real life time. Over a four hour gaming session, a day, a week, a month, or maybe even a year may pass, or the entire 4 hour session might detail a small half hour in a character's life. You can play out combat turn-for-turn, taking it in 3 second intervals, or you can let months pass away in a few minutes of real time. The passage of time without players taking any real actions is called downtime To help maintain a sense of passage of time without resorting to tedious charts and such, Dawn uses 6 basic units to describe time.

Turn

The amount of time needed to take a simple action a turn. This can range anywhere from 3 seconds to several minutes, depending upon the pace of the current scene.

Scene

Like the basic division of plays and movies, a scene is a compact series of action and interaction that takes place in a single location. This could be anything from a sword fight along a moonlit parapet, to the summoning of a demon from the pits of Hell. There are exactly as many turns within a scene as a scene needs. A scene might not even have turns if it consists of nothing but dialogue and character interaction.

Chapter

An independent part of the story, almost always played out within a single gaming session. It

usually consists of a number of scenes intertwined by downtime. Essentially, a game chapter is much like a chapter in a book, or an act in a play.

Story

A full tale, the complete book, complete with introduction, rising action and climax. Some stories can take several chapters to complete. Some can be completed within one.

Chronicle

A series of stories, interconnected by the characters themselves and their ongoing narrative, possibly even by a common theme or overarching plot

Downtime

Time that you gloss over with description rather than playing it out turn by turn or scene by scene. For example, the game master or storyteller may say “You await within the courtyard for several hours before the king’s guards escort you to his audience chamber.” Rather than actually letting you act out those several hours, he is considered to be invoking downtime. It allows the passing of trivial time to go by quickly. One can even use it to allow months and years to pass, as well.

Actions

Over the course of the game, your character will do many things, some of which are considered actions, while others may not be. Speeches and conversations aren’t usually considered actions, however, depending upon circumstances they may be. An action is anything from throwing a punch in a barroom brawl to trying to decipher a code on a piece of paper. Many actions, such as crossing a field, or donning a suit of armor, are considered automatically successful, and no roll is needed. However, crossing a field filled with pits while being chased by a knight upon horseback, or trying to don your suit of armor in a hurry while being attacked are both actions that will require dice rolls, as there is a chance that you may fail. So, when in reasonable doubt as to whether an action will succeed or fail, you will have to roll the dice to determine the results.

Rolling dice

In some cases, the storyteller is perfectly within his rights to declare that you have succeeded or failed, for dramatic purposes, however, chance should enter into most cases. The way we accomplish this is by rolling a series of dice. In the storyteller system you use all 10 sided dice. The storyteller or game master may require quite a few 10 sided dice, while you, as a player, should only require 10, at the most, starting out. You roll the dice to simulate chance, or whenever the outcome of an action is in doubt, or the game master or storyteller thinks there is a chance that you might fail. Your character’s strengths and weaknesses affect the number of dice you roll, thus directly affecting your chances of success. The base difficulty number for almost any roll is 6.

Ratings

Although your character’s personality is limited only by your imagination, his capabilities are defined by his traits, which measure his attributes and abilities, and appear on his character sheet. Most attribute ratings are described as a rating, or dot, between 1 and 6, with 1 being feeble, and 6 being superhuman. Everyone starts out with 1 in every attribute. Most abilities are described between 1 and 4. A 1 in an ability is considered barely competent, while a 4 is the pinnacle of human achievement. The average person’s ability range is between 1 and 2. Whenever you roll dice, you roll one die for every dot you have in a attribute or ability. For instance, if your character is trying to find something, and he has 3 dots in perception, he would have 3 dice to roll. However, you almost never roll just the attribute dice.

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Usually, you add ability dice to the attribute dice, then roll the total. In the above example, your character is trying to find something in a room by searching for it. He has perception of 3, and the game master rules that investigation is used, and your character has a rating of 2 for that ability, so he would roll 5 dice total against whatever difficulty number the game master tells him. In some instances, there are no abilities needed to help your character. For example, to lift a chest would only require strength.

Difficulties

There's no point in rolling dice unless you know what results you're looking for. Whenever you try to perform an action, the game master or storyteller will decide on an appropriate difficulty number, and tell you his/her decision. Difficulty is always a number between 3 and 10. Each time you score that number or higher on your die roll, you are considered to have gained a success. For example, if the difficulty number is 6, and you roll a 4, 8, 2, 6, and a 4, you would have 2 successes. The more successes, the better. Only scoring one success is considered succeeding marginally, while scoring 3 successes is considered succeeding completely. Naturally, the lower the difficulty number, the easier it is to succeed, and vice versa. Six is usually the default difficulty number, however the storyteller game master has the final say on how difficult an action is.

Here is a sample chart with some examples for difficulties and there degrees of success.

<u>Difficulties</u>	<u>Degrees of Success</u>
3 easy (sharpening a blade)	one success - <i>Marginal</i> (landing a glancing blow)
4 Routine (calming a trained dog)	two successes - <i>Moderate</i> (making a wooden mug that's ugly but useful)
5 Straightforward (someone that's already in the mood)	three successes - <i>Complete</i> (fixing something so it's as good as new)
6 Standard (swinging a sword)	four successes - <i>Outstanding</i> (making a perfect translation of an obscure text)
7 Challenging (firing an arrow at long range)	five or more successes - <i>Phenomenal</i> (creating a masterpiece)
8 Difficult (forging a fine blade)	
9 Extremely difficult (fighting blind)	
10 Impossible (throwing a knife while blindfolded at a women who is running through a crowded noisy room.)	



Failure

If you score no successes on a die roll, your character fails his attempted action. He misses his punch. His attempt to persuade the prince falls flat. Failure, however disappointing, is not as catastrophic as a botch.

The rule of one

Bad luck can ruin anything. One most basic rule about rolling the dice is the rule of one. Whenever one of the dice comes up as a 1, it cancels out a success completely. Take the die showing the one and one of the dice showing a success and set them aside. In this manner, an otherwise successful action may be reduced to failure. For example, you roll 5 dice against a difficulty of 6, and you get a 2, 6, 4, 3, and a 1. You would take the 1 and the 6 and set them aside, and you would wind up with 2, 4 and 3, or no successes.

Botches

Occasionally, truly bad fortune strikes. If a die roll garners no successes, and one or more 1's show up, it is considered a botch. A botch is much worse than a normal failure; it's outright misfortune. For example, you attack someone with a sword and you roll a botch. Perhaps, with only 1 botch, your sword might have been thrown across the room, to stick in the wall, or with 4 botches, perhaps the sword broke.

Automatic successes

Let's face it, sometimes rolling dice gets tiresome, particularly when your character could perform a given action in his sleep. Anything that streamlines play and reduces distractions is a good thing. Therefore, Dawn uses a simple system for automatic successes, allowing you to skip die rolling for tasks that your character finds, frankly, child's play. Simply put, if the number of dice in your dice pool is equal to, or greater, than the task's difficulty number, your character automatically succeeds. No die roll is needed. Mind you, that this does not work for all tasks, and it never works for combat, or under stressful situations.

Trying it again

Failure often produces stress, which often leads to further failures. If a character fails at a action, he may usually try it again; after all, failing to pick a lock doesn't mean you may never try to pick it again. In such cases, the storyteller simply increases the difficulty by one. After numerous failures and re-attempts, the difficulty could become so high that the character has no chance at succeeding. Some examples would be climbing a wall and interrogating a prisoner. After all, if you couldn't find a handhold or get the prisoner to talk the first time, there is a reasonable chance that you won't be able to do it at all. Sometimes, the storyteller shouldn't invoke this rule, since some actions, such as failing to hit someone with a sword, to detect an ambush, or to track a fleeing victim, are to be expected in stressful situations. Such failures does not automatically lead to frustration and failed future attempts.

Actions

There are several types of actions involved with Dawn. I'll list them, then try to explain them, as well as give an example of them. There are *Multiple actions*, *Extended actions*, *Resisted actions*, *Simple actions*, and *Extended and Resisted Actions*.

Multiple actions

Occasionally, a player will want his character to perform more than one action per turn. In such situations, the player can attempt the actions normally, but with a penalty. The player declares the total number of actions he wants to attempt. He then subtracts a number of dice from his first dice pool equal to the total number of actions. Additional actions beyond the first one receive an additional one die penalty for each action from his die pool. If a dice pool is reduced to zero or below in this manner, the character may not attempt the action.

Chapter 14

Game Mechanics

For example, Justin wants his character, Hall, to attack 2 thugs in an alley at the same time. First, he is going to hit the first thug, then kick the second one. His first dice pool is normally dexterity + brawl, which is Dexterity 3 Brawl 3, so his dice pool is six. Now, since he declared he is attempting 2 actions, he subtracts 2 from his dice pool of 6, for a total of 4. He rolls and succeeds, adds damage, and the storyteller rolls for soak and subtracts health levels as needed. For Hall's second attack this turn, he rolls his dice pool of 6, minus 2 for the 2 actions he is doing this turn, and subtracts an additional one die for this being his second attack, for a total of 3 for the second action, or a dice pool of 3 to kick the second thug. Combat would continue.

Extended actions

Sometimes, you need more than one success to accomplish a task. If you only need one success to accomplish an action, it is called a simple action. But, when you need multiple successes to score even a marginal success, you're undertaking an extended action. Simple actions are the most common ones in Dawn, but you will have ample opportunity to perform extended actions, as well. Some examples are researching a book and climbing a cliff face. In extended actions, you roll your dice pool over and over, turn after turn, trying to accomplish a task.

For example, Hall, from above, is trying to research about a certain religion from a book. He would roll his Intelligence + Investigation, and he would continue to do so until he gets the number of successes that the game master or storyteller decides is needed. If you botch a roll during an extended roll, you will have to start all over, and lose all of your prior successes.

Resisted actions

A simple difficulty number might not be enough to represent a struggle between characters. For instance, you may be trying to batter down a door while an NPC character is on the other side, attempting to hold the door. (NPC means a Non Player Character, which the game master or storyteller controls.) In such a case, you would be making a resisted roll in which each of the characters rolls dice against a difficulty, often determined by one of your opponent's traits, and the person who scores the most successes, wins. However, when determining the degree of success you're considered to score only as many successes as the amount by which you exceed your opponent's successes. In other words, the opponent's successes are subtracted from your successes, and whatever is left over is the actual number of successes. If you scored 4 successes, and your opponent scored 3, then you are considered to have only scored 1 success.

Extended and Resisted

Some actions, such as arm wrestling contests, debates, and chases, may be both extended and resisted. In such a case, one or more of the other opponents may achieve a certain number of successes to win the contest. In each turn, the opponents who achieve successes add them to a running tally of successes. The first to achieve the total number of successes wins, or achieves his or her goal.

For example, Hall is in a tavern, and wages a full mug of ale that he can best a rather big guy at arm wrestling. They would both start by rolling their strength against a specified difficulty number chosen by the game master or storyteller, who has decided that they need 7 successes to win. Hall rolls 2 successes, and the big guy rolls 4. Next round, they roll again. This time, Hall rolls 1 success, but the big guy botches, so at the end of the second round, Hall has 3 successes (2 from first round plus 1 from second round) and the big guy has 0 successes (remember that a botch makes you start over from scratch). The contest would continue on until either Hall or the big guy gets 7 successes, and wins at the contest.

Below is a list of some common game terms

Ability

These are traits that describe what a character knows and has learned, rather than his/her physical and psychological make up.

Action

An action is a consciously willed physical, social or mental activity. When a player announces that his character is attempting something, or doing something, he is attempting an action.

Attribute

These traits describe what a character inherently is, such as strength, charisma and intelligence

Botch

A disastrous failure, indicated by rolling more ones than successes on a 10 sided dice roll for an action.

Character

Each player creates an alter ego - a character an individual plays over the course of the game.

Dice Pool

The amount of dice you have in your hand after adding together your different traits. Each die represents a point from a relevant trait. It is the number of dice you can roll for an action.

Difficulty

The number from 3 to 10 that measures the difficulty of an action a character takes. The character needs to roll that number or higher on at least one of the dice in his or her dice pool.

Dots/Points

The system by which the score of an ability, attribute, merit or flaw is measured.

Downtime

The time spent between scenes, where no role-playing is done and turns are not used. Actions might be made, and the storyteller or game master might give some descriptions, but time generally passes quickly.

Extended Action

An action that requires a certain number of successes accumulated over several turns for the character to actually succeed.

Health

This trait measures the degree to which a character is wounded or injured.



Net Successes

The number of successes the victor of a resisted action has above those of the loser. Also called effective successes

Rating

A number describing a trait designated in dots or points

Reflexive Action

A situation in which dice might be rolled, but that does not count as an action for the purpose of calculating dice pools. Examples would be soak rolls and willpower rolls.

Resisted Action

An action in which 2 different characters are in direct competition. Both compare their number of successes, and the character with the most successes wins.

Scene

A single episode in which actions and events take place, moment by moment.

Score

The value of traits used in a single roll

Simple Action

An action that requires the player to get only one success to succeed, though more successes indicate a better job or result.

Storyteller or Game master

The person who creates and guides the story by assuming the roles of all the characters not taken and controlled by the players, and determining all events beyond the control of the players.

System

A specific set of complications used in certain situations. Rules which help to guide the rolling of the dice, to create a dramatic effect.

Trait

Any attribute, ability or other character index that can be described as a number, or in this game as dots.

Willpower

A measure of a character's self-confidence and internal control.

Combat Systems

Combat and warfare are likely to be central to many Dawn chronicles and stories. This section is intended as a guide for martial matters, with emphasis on rules more than mood. The following mechanics attempt to capture the drama and feel of combat, without bogging down the game with excessive dice rolling. They are by necessity somewhat abstract, but they are intended to be true to the limitations and dynamics of combat. As with all aspects of the game, if you find something that you think would work better, then change it. Combat systems are meant to add depth to a game, not to detract from it.

Types of combat

There are 3 basic types of combat: Close combat, Ranged Combat and Magic Combat

Close combat

This system covers unarmed combat and melee. Unarmed combat uses dexterity and brawl primarily as its main dice pool, and it can cover anything from down and dirty barroom fights to honorable duels. Opponents must be within touching distance of each other - one yard or so - to engage in unarmed combat. Melee involves any hand held weapon combat, whether it be swords, daggers or maces. Opponents must be within 2 yards of each other to engage in melee. Players usually roll dexterity and the particular weapon type during melee

Ranged Combat

Armed combat using thrown projectile weapons, such as daggers, knives, darts, rocks, bows and crossbows. Opponents usually must be within sight and weapon range of each other to engage in ranged

combat. Dexterity and Missile Weapons or Thrown usually fall into this category.

Magic Combat

Usually, this form of combat occurs whenever a mage or priest casts a spell, either as a close combat spell or ranged spell.

Combat Turns

Combat is often fluid, with multiple things happening at the same time, or overlapping with each other. For simplicity of the game, a more rigid structure is applied to timekeeping during combat. A series of 3 second combat turns is used to regulate matters. Each combat turn has 3 distinct stages: Initiative, Attack and Resolution.

Stage One: Initiative

The first step determines the order in which characters act in each combat turn, preventing disputes over the sequence of events. The action may be anything from an attack, to movement, to yelling out a short message. Each action should be described to the storyteller or game master in as much detail as necessary, and some may even take multiple combat turns to accomplish.

Every character has an Initiative rating equal to his/her Wits + Alertness. To determine the order of actions, each player rolls one die and adds the result to his/her character's Initiative rating. The character with the highest score acts first, then the other characters act in decreasing order of their score. If 2 characters have the same score, the one with the highest basic initiative score (Wits + Alertness) goes first. Wound penalties subtract directly from a character's initiative rating. If 2 characters' basic initiative scores are also tied, the characters act simultaneously.

Actions may also be held until later in the turn either until after a certain point ("I swing at the thug with my sword after Hans attacks the leader.") or conditional ("If Hans misses the leader, I'll throw my dagger at him.") Such delayed actions may take place at anytime after their designated order in the initiative, preempting or following the actions of a slower character. If 2 characters delay their action until the same point, the one with the highest initiative score reacts first. In most cases, characters act in Initiative order, from highest to lowest respectively. Delaying actions as outlined here is one exception to this rule, but there are others, such as defensive actions and multiple actions. A character may undertake defensive actions provided she or he has actions remaining to use.

Multiple actions occur at the end of the turn, after all characters have had the opportunity to act once. If 2 or more characters take multiple actions, they take place in order of initiative, save for defense actions, which happen as needed to avert an attack. All second actions must take place first before any third actions, and so on.

Stage Two: Attack

Although they are not the only actions that one can take, attacks are at the heart of every combat turn. As with general skill use, each attack requires the player to roll dice equal to an attribute plus ability combination, dependant on the type of combat.

Close combat - Use Dexterity plus brawl (unarmed) or Dexterity plus weapon proficiency (armed)

Ranged combat - Use dexterity plus archery weapons or dexterity plus

thrown weapons.

Magical Combat - Use Arete and whatever sphere the spell, or Faith and whatever sphere the prayer requires.

Don't forget, if you're a Man of Magic, you must roll the fate die anytime you cast a spell or incantation. You simply roll an odd colored die against a difficulty of 6. If you succeed, nothing happens, but if you fail, something bad happens, and if you botch, you also gain a point of temporary scourge.

If characters don't have points in the necessary ability, use the rules of acting without an ability. See Chapter 6 on abilities, but basically, you use the base attribute plus the following modifiers.

Missing Talent - +1 to difficulty number

Missing Skill - +2 to difficulty number

Missing Knowledge - +3 to difficulty number

The difficulty for most attacks is 6. It can be adjusted for situational modifiers, such as long range, fighting up a staircase, etc. If the player rolls no successes, the attack fails and inflicts no damage, misses, etc. If the attack botches, then something bad is likely to happen, and the character is subject to adverse side effects; a bowstring breaks, a blade shatters, the weapon slips from your hand towards an ally, etc. On the off chance that, during a contested roll, such as your hero attacking a villain, you both get the same amount of successes, then the defender wins all ties.

Stage Three: Resolution

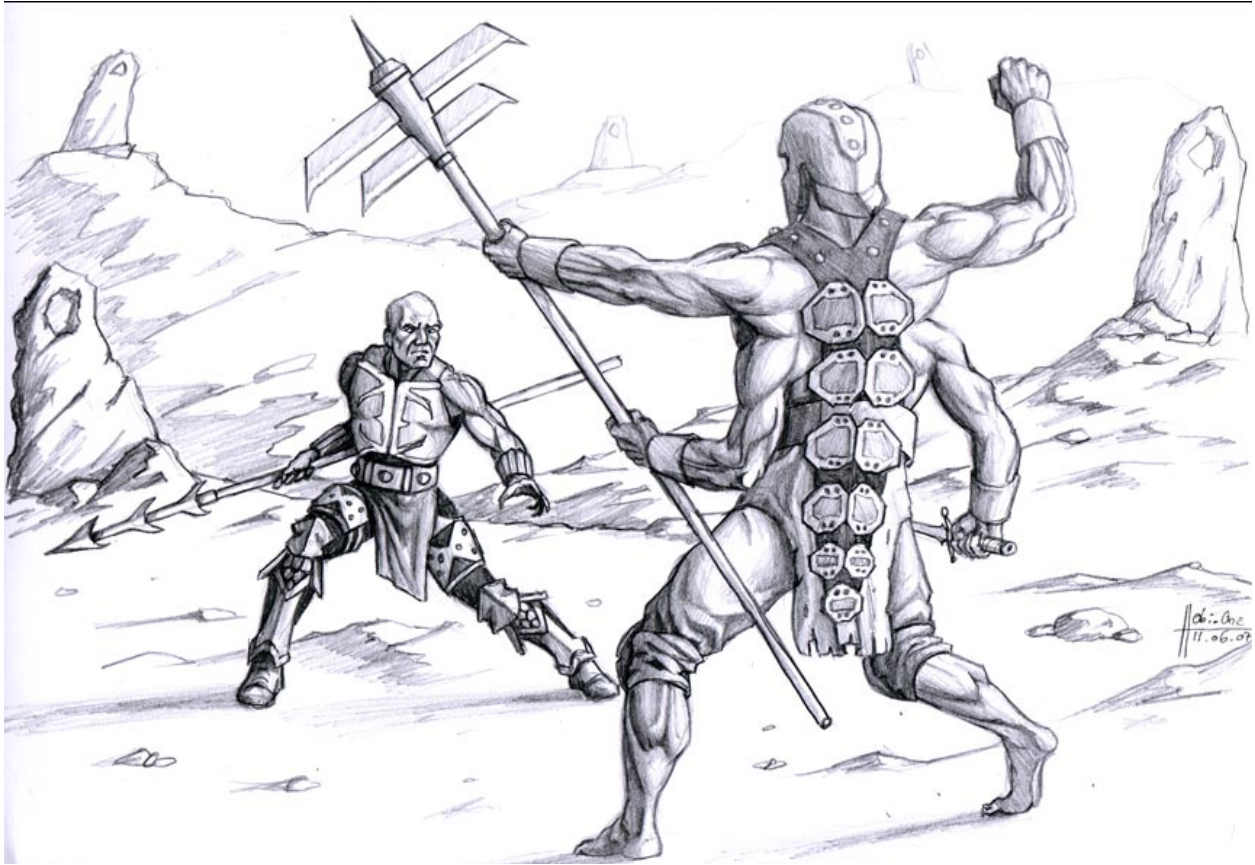
The final stage of a combat turn determines the outcome of each character's attacks or other actions taken during combat, namely the damage inflicted and its nature. The basic ideas of this system are expressed here in mechanical terms, such as number of health levels of damage inflicted on the target, but it is generally more interesting for the storyteller or game master to handle this in a more narrative manner, such as "Your broad sword carves a deep gouge into the ghoul's chest, and he leaps back screaming as blood pours from the wound" is better than "You hit and the ghoul takes 3 wound levels"

The base damage for each attack depends on the character's strength and the weapon or maneuver being used, but it may be modified by the number of successes rolled in the attack. Each success above the first success scored in the attack adds one die to the damage pool. The damage pool dice are then rolled against a difficulty of 6, with each success inflicting one health level of damage on the target. Damage rolls cannot be botched, though rolling no successes indicates no damage is inflicted, meaning the blow glanced off the target. For magic and faith based damage, damage is always considered Lethal. When a mage attacks someone and succeeds, the damage done is the number of successes plus how many extra essence spent on the spell for the purpose of damage.

Damage Types

There are two different damage types, *Bashing* and *Lethal*. They are further detailed below, along with some rules detailing complications of damage.

Bashing - Bashing damage comprises punches and other blunt trauma that are less likely to kill a victim instantly. All characters use their full stamina ratings to resist bashing effects, and the damage heals fairly quickly. Bashing damage is applied to the health circles on the character sheet with a slash through them (/).



Lethal - These attacks are meant to cause immediate and possibly fatal injury to the target, and they include strikes from swords, spears and other weapons of war. All characters use their full stamina ratings to resist lethal damage, and the damage takes quite a while to heal. Like bashing damage, lethal damage is applied to the health circles on the character sheet, however, with lethal damage, you place an "x" over the circle (x).

Dazes - After soaking, if the character suffers a number of health levels greater than his stamina, he is dazed. For example, if you have a stamina rating of 3 and you suffer 4 wound levels of bashing, you are considered dazed. When a character becomes dazed, he or she must spend their next available action shaking off the attack's effects. Characters with more than one action per turn, for example, those taking multiple actions, lose all their actions remaining in that turn, but may act normally in the next combat turn.

Knockdown - Some attacks, such as tackles or leg sweeps, are intended to knock a character to the ground, and a massive blow from a more conventional attack may have a similar effect. This occurs at the game master or storyteller's discretion, but a number of attack successes greater than the target's Stamina + Brawl is a good rule of thumb. If a character is knocked down, a player should immediately make a reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll. If successful, the character may immediately get to his feet, but suffers a -2 penalty on his next initiative roll. If the roll fails, the character must spend their next action getting back on his feet, and still suffers the -2 penalty. On a botch, he must spend the next turn getting to his feet, suffers the penalty to initiative and suffers a level of bashing damage.

Soaking

Everyone can endure a certain degree of physical punishment without sustaining serious injury. In game terms, doing so is called soaking damage, and each character has soak dice equal to his stamina pool. Soaking damage is reflexive and requires no expenditure of an action, nor can it have its pool reduced by other dice pools or wound penalties, for that matter. The base difficulty of a soak attempt is 6, though weapon and situational modifiers may modify it. Each soak success subtracts one from the total damage inflicted. Like damage rolls, soak rolls cannot be botched.

Armor

Armor provides additional protection against injury, adding dice to the character's soak pool. Add the armor's rating to the character's base soak pool for the purpose of reducing damage. Some protective equipment, such as a shield, only adds to the soak pool under certain conditions. Light armor, such as leather and padded cloth, has little impact on the character's movement and dexterity rolls. Heavier armor provides greater protection, but also hinders the actions of all but the strongest and most skilled of characters. Armor can only sustain a certain amount of damage before being rendered useless. If the damage rolled during a single attack is more than 5 points for light armour, or 10 points for heavy armour, then the armor is destroyed.

Combat Complications

The basic system of initiative, attack and resolution can be used as-is for most combat. A quick scuffle or tavern brawl really does not require any more detail. However, as Dawn takes place in a mythic world of magic and mystery, you can expect to deal with damage more often than normal. When dealing with more complex situations, such as skilled combatants in a tournament, a pitched battle, or dueling archery squadrons, it can be useful to have some sort of system to fall back upon and to keep everyone honest. The following should get you through any combat that comes up. Many of these complications appear in the form of maneuvers which have several plusses and minuses which can be described here as well.

Accuracy - This indicates how many dice, if any, are added to or subtracted from the dice pool for the maneuver. A +2 adds two dice to the pool, while a -1 subtracts one die from the pool.

Difficulty - The basic difficulty for most combat situations is 6. This entry denotes any additions or subtractions from this base number. For example a +2 adds two to the difficulty, making it an 8, while a -2 subtracts two from the difficulty, making it a 4.

Damage - This entry indicates the damage pool for the maneuver.

Basic Modifiers

Ambush - Any combat in which one combatant is clearly caught unawares by another is an ambush. In such surprise conditions, the attacker who set the ambush automatically wins initiative. The players of ambushed characters can each make a Perception + Alertness roll against a difficulty of 8. The number of successes indicates the number of dice available for actions that first time, not to exceed the character's original dice total. Preparing an ambush usually requires a Wits + Stealth roll, with a difficulty of 6, as well as proper cover.

Blind Fighting - Darkness, or fighting with impaired vision, such as blindness, dirt in the eyes, etc., imposes a +2 penalty to the difficulty number on Brawl and all weapon proficiency attacks. Ranged attacks cannot be made while one is blinded.

Blindsiding - Attacks from the flank or rear are harder to defend against. Players whose characters attack from the flank gain an additional attack die, or two dice if attacking from the rear. Shields provide no protection against rear attacks and only protect one flank. Storytellers or game masters may allow a character to make a Wits + Alertness roll to avoid being blindsided, against difficulty of 7 for flank and 8 for rear. To avoid giving the attacker this advantage they must get a number of successes equal to the attacker's Stealth ability, with a minimum of one success.

Immobilized Target - If the target is immobilized, but still struggling, add 2 dice to the attack roll. If target is totally immobilized, such as unconscious, asleep, etc., then add 5 dice to the attacking die roll.

Movement - A character may move his or her walking distance (seven yards per turn) and still take an action in a turn. More complex actions, such as jumping, diving or balancing, may be distinct, separate actions, or may impose a difficulty penalty on actions, depending upon their complexity and the storyteller or game master's discretion.

Multiple Opponents - A character who finds himself fighting multiple opponents in close combat has to keep an eye on each one. His character suffers a cumulative +1 difficulty penalty to attack and defense rolls for each opponent after the first, to a maximum of +4. So if Hal is fighting 3 opponents, he would roll as normal for the first one, receive a +1 penalty for the second one, and a +2 penalty for the third one.

Targeting - A skilled Archer can target a specific location, accepting increased difficulties in favor of heightened damage or targeted effects. The difficulty and any additional damage is dependant upon the size of the target, and the storyteller or game master should consider additional effects, depending upon the attack and the target.

Some examples are listed below.

<u>Target</u>	<u>Difficulty Penalty</u>	<u>Bonus to Damage</u>
Large (such as a door or wall)	0	0
Medium (limb or chest)	+1	+1
Small (hand or head)	+2	+2
Tiny (eye heart or lock)	+3	+3

Defensive Maneuvers

Soaking damage is all well and good, but it's better to get out of harm's way altogether. Combatants who are under attack can do several things to escape damage, from ducking out of the way to limiting an enemy's options of attacks, or using a shield

to block his attacker's strikes blow for blow. Below, you will find several possibilities.

Blocking and Blocking with a Shield - Blocking (Dexterity + Brawl) if unarmed combat, or Blocking with a Shield (Dexterity + Shield), for armed combat, is an attempt to block an incoming attack. Only bashing attacks for unarmed combat can be blocked, and only characters with a shield can block melee attacks with weapons or arrows. Missile weapons can only be blocked with shields, but with a penalty to their difficulty number to do so. A successful block with a shield does not use an action, but it does apply a +1 to the difficulty number the shield user must roll against for each subsequent block, after the first block, within the same turn.

Dodging - A dodge is an attempt to move out of the way of an unarmed combat roll (Dexterity + Brawl), or against melee attacks and objects etc (Dexterity + Athletics), and is useful against any attack the defender can sense coming. Even missile weapons, such as crossbow bolts and arrows, can be dodged, providing that there is ample coverage available and the character can see the archer taking aim. The base difficulty is 6, which assumes a typical combat situation, such as fighting a single armed opponent in close combat, or having access to cover from arrow fire not very far away. A player whose character is suffering multiple simultaneous attacks can divide successes from a single dodge roll between the attackers, but the difficulty number to attempt each subsequent dodge roll after the first suffers a +1 penalty. Use the following chart to help with various situations about dodging. The modifiers apply to the difficulty number of the person attempting to dodge.

Situation	Difficulty Number Modifier
Multiple attackers	+1 to difficulty number per attacker past first one
<i>Close Combat</i>	+1 to difficulty number
Attacker unarmed	-1 to difficulty number
Limited mobility	+1 to difficulty number
<i>Ranged Combat</i>	
Full cover within half a step	-4 to difficulty number
Full cover within diving distance	-2 to difficulty number
Partial cover only within three yards	-1 to difficulty number
Flat and featureless terrain	+2 to difficulty number

Parrying - A parry is a block using a melee weapon. It is useful against bashing and lethal attacks. Whenever using a weapon to parry an attack, you are at +1 difficulty penalty for the first parry, and add another +1 difficulty for each attempt to parry, to the maximum of +4 difficulty penalty. It is generally not possible to parry incoming missile attacks, but it is left to the storyteller's discretion.

Defense



In Europe, shields are the most common piece of equipment, used for blocking attacks or parrying, but a second weapon sometimes also serves the purpose, most notably the hand axe with the moors. Shields are favored not only because they are effective at actively intercepting incoming attacks, but also because their size allows them to reduce an attacker's effective options, and even protects against unseen missile attacks. This passive use of a shield or other parry weapon simply adds extra dice to the shield wielder's defense dice pool. You must have a score of at least one in either shield, for blocking, or weapon proficiency, for parrying. Most items have differing scores for missile attacks and melee attack defenses. Shields and other parrying devices can only be used to block or parry an attack from the front or the side that the shield is carried on. They provide no protection from rear attacks.

Full Defense

Especially skilled combatants (those who have chosen to specialize in a particular type of Shield) can choose to dedicate themselves entirely to defense for a turn. This means the character can do nothing but take a single defensive action over and over again, but she can intercept a surprising number of blows in this manner. The player must make a Dexterity + Shield roll against a difficulty of 7, and reduces his dice pool by one for each subsequent block that turn. When he runs out of dice he can no longer defend that turn. The attackers subtract a number of dice from their pools equal to the defender's shield skill, and the usual penalty for multiple opponents doesn't apply. However, if the attackers' penalties take them to zero dice or less, they still get at least one die each to attack with.

Example: Hal has a medium shield and a long sword. He is attacking a thug when 3 more thugs run up to attack him. The next turn he decides to go full defense, so he does not attack any of them, but he gets to roll his weapon proficiency Shield (3) plus Dexterity (3) plus 1 extra die for using a medium shield, and the thugs must each take away 3 dice from their attack dice pool. For the first thug, Hal rolls 7 dice to block. Hal takes one die away for the second thug when he blocks his attack, and for the third block he takes 2 dice away from his pool, and so on with each of the thugs, rolling against a difficulty number of 7. However, since Hal has a 3 in shield, the thugs take away 3 dice from their pools to attack him while he is in full defense, meaning if the thugs had Dexterity (2) plus weapon proficiency (2), they would only get to roll 1 die at a difficulty of 7 while attacking Hal in full defense. This penalty only occurs when a defender is in full defense.

In the above scenario, if Hal had 4 in shield and the thugs each had 2 in Dexterity and 2 in weapon proficiency, they would take away the 4 dice for Hal's shield specialization, down to a minimum of 1 die, instead of the full 4 dice. Remember this only occurs in full defense, meaning that you cannot even smack them in a full defense maneuver. So, a skilled shield user could defend himself for a very long time.

Hand to Hand Combat

Those who fight bare handed have more than the basic punch and kick at their disposal. Wrestling was a specialty of the ancient Greeks, and grappling is a staple of most unarmed combat. The following maneuvers covers most standard attack types.

Bear Hug - The attacker attempts to wrap her arms around the opponent and than to attempt to crush the life out of him. This maneuver requires the attacker to first get a hold of her target (Strength + Brawl). Damage is determined by rolling the attacker's Strength pool. In each subsequent round, the attacker and defender make a resisted Strength + Brawl roll. If the defender gets more successes, the bear hug ends, otherwise the attacker can choose to continue or end the bear hug. A variation of the attack is a clench, and it involves both characters sustaining damage, and the one with the most successes decides if the attack continues or ends.

Difficulty: normal

Accuracy: normal

Damage: Strength based bashing

Claw - Claw attacks, whether by some sort of constructed metal, wooden or bone claw, or natural claws. They can be used on one or both hands, but if used on both hands, the attacker must have a weapon proficiency in paired weapons. The attack can be blunt, perhaps wooden miniature bats, as an example, or use metal claws like the comic book hero Wolverine.

Difficulty: normal

Accuracy: +1

Damage: Strength +1 bashing or lethal

Grapple - Rather than inflicting damage, a grapple is intended to immobilize an opponent. The initial grapple is a Strength + Brawl roll which, if successful, indicates that the attacker has grabbed his opponent, and immobilized her for at least that turn. On the next action turn, the combatants make an resisted Strength + Brawl roll. If the attacker has more successes, the grapple continues. If the defender has more successes, then she breaks free. In the event of a tie, the defender always wins.

Difficulty: normal

Accuracy: normal
Damage: none

Kick - Kicks in Dawn are not the roundhouses and spinning kicks of the east; they are straightforward, simple front kicks. The base difficulty of a kick is one higher than normal, and inflicts Strength +1 Bashing damage. Though the storyteller or game master can modify this as needed with different types of kicks modify the difficulty and damage as needed as appropriate. As a rule of thumb the complexity and thus difficulty of a kick increase in parallel with its damage rating.

Difficulty: +1
Accuracy: normal
Damage: Strength +1 bashing

Punch - A simple attack with a curled up fist is a punch attack. The base difficulty and damage values are for a standard punch. Those characters wearing heavy plated or chain gauntlets may inflict greater damage but at a disadvantage (+1 damage, +1 difficulty)

Difficulty: normal
Accuracy: normal
Damage: Strength bashing

Sweep - In a sweep, the attacker attempts to knock his opponent to the floor by sweeping their legs out from under them. This may be carried out with the attacker's own legs or he may use a staff or other weapon. If the attacker's roll is successful, the target takes Strength bashing damage, and must make an immediate Dexterity + Athletics roll, or suffer from a knockdown. If a weapon is used in lieu of the attacker's own limbs, the weapon's damage statistics are used instead of Strength.

Difficulty: +1
Accuracy: normal
Damage: Strength bashing or weapon damage, knockdown.

Tackle - In a tackle, the attacker charges at his opponent and attempts to use momentum to bear them to the ground. This maneuver requires a Strength + Brawl roll, difficulty 7, and if successful, it inflicts Strength +1 bashing damage, and both combatants must roll a Dexterity + Athletics roll, difficulty 7, or suffer a Knockdown. Even if the defender is not knocked down, he or she is unbalanced for the next turn, and suffers a +1 difficulty to any actions

Difficulty: +1
Accuracy: normal
Damage: Strength +1 bashing and knockdown

Melee Maneuvers

The dark, medieval times of Dawn are not a time of artful fencing and fine rapiers, but that doesn't mean that armed combat consists of just hacking away at each other. Listed below are some simple melee maneuvers.

Disarm - With this maneuver, the attacker attempts to deprive his opponent of his or her primary weapon, via strength or finesse. To try a disarm the target, the attacker must specialize in the

weapon he is using, then he makes an attack roll (Dexterity + the specialized melee weapon skill) against a difficulty of 7. If successful, the damage is rolled normally, but neither applied nor soaked. Instead, the number of the attacker's damage successes is compared to the opponent's strength score, and if the successes exceed the opponent's Strength, the opponent is disarmed. Failure on the attack roll or insufficient successes means the disarming effort failed, while a botch indicates the attacker is disarmed by the defender.

Difficulty: +1
Accuracy: normal
Damage: special

Paired Weapons Strike - Although it is not common in the Dark Ages, fighting with 2 weapons is an old concept. A second weapon is almost always smaller than the primary weapon, usually a dagger or hand axe, and may be used as a parrying device, for attack, or a combination of the two. Directing two weapons is not easy, and it requires considerable skill and determination. The character must take a weapon specialization under miscellaneous "paired weapons". The weapons can be used together to attack, with a penalty of adding +1 difficulty to the main weapon and +2 difficulty to the off-hand weapon, but gains a +1 to the most damaging of the 2 weapons.

Difficulty: +1 to main weapon and +2 to off hand weapon difficulty numbers
Accuracy: normal
Damage: +1 to the most damaging of the two weapons

Shield Bash - Though designed for defense, a warrior will occasionally use a shield as an ad hoc weapon, bashing his or her opponent, often times in the face, as an attack opportunity, or out of desperation. Such an attack may only be made if the shield proficiency is taken. Such an attack is difficult and awkward, and inflicts less damage than a regular attack, but the target of a successful shield bash is considered stunned for the next action.

Difficulty: +2
Accuracy: normal
Damage: -2 strength bashing special

Weapon Bash - Disarming an opponent is a tricky proposition, and in many cases deflecting the enemy's weapon is sufficient to give an attacker the decisive advantage. The attacker may deliberately target his opponent's weapon difficulty 8. If successful, damage is rolled normally, but rather than being applied against the target, each success increases the difficulty of the enemy's next attack by one, to a maximum of 10.

Difficulty: +2
Accuracy: normal
Damage: special

Backstab - This devastating maneuver can only be done by someone skilled in the art of combat, but is considered a coward's move. The attacker must have adequate cover to hide and move silently (meaning either hiding in a dark place and waiting for his victim to walk by, or staying concealed in a crowded marketplace). The attacker makes a Stealth roll against a difficulty of 6. If successful, he then lays in wait and prepares his backstab for 2 melees, rolling his Stealth each melee round and accumulating any successes. The victim gets to roll his Perception + Alertness roll against a difficulty of 5, with any successes the attacker got adding to the victim's difficulty number. If the victim fails, the

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attacker rolls his attack as normal, but bypasses armor and does double damage. If the victim succeeds, then the attacker's surprise attack is blown, and he attacks as normal. If at any time the attacker botches, the intended victim automatically notices him. For example, our hero Travis sees a hated rival in a busy marketplace. He rolls his Stealth against a difficulty of 6 and scores 2 successes. He sneaks up on his victim by staying unnoticed in the crowded marketplace. He then tells the game master that he is going to attempt a backstab. For the next 2 melee rounds, he has to roll his stealth against a difficulty of 6, the first time he gets 2 more successes, and the second time he gets 1 success. Travis's victim then rolls his Perception + Alertness against a difficulty of 5, plus Travis's 3 successes, for a total difficulty number of 8. He fails. Travis rolls his attack and succeeds. Next, he rolls his damage, and doubles it for a successful backstab. He is using a knife and has a strength of 3, so he rolls 3 dice for his Strength and 1 die for the

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knife, against a difficulty number of 6. He gets 3 successes, which is doubled to 6 because of the backstab. His victim is wearing chainmail, but because the attack is a backstab, it bypasses the chainmail's protection, so his victim doesn't get the benefit of adding the chainmail's soak dice to his soak roll. Travis's victim has a stamina of 3, so he rolls 3 dice against a difficulty number of 6 to soak the devastating 6 dice of lethal damage. He gets only 1 success, and so takes 5 levels of lethal damage.

What to do with abilities

Whenever, during the course of Dawn, you are asked to roll an ability, it is usually paired with an attribute. Most of the time it will be fairly easy to decide which abilities to pair with which attributes, but if there is any indecision, the game master has the final say.

For example, Steve's character, Hal, has been caught trying to sneak into the castle grounds by the castle's guards. Rather than an outright fight, Steve has decided that Hal will try to explain to them that he is a royal pest controller, here to scout out a rat problem. The storyteller then asks Steve to roll a resisted, or opposed, Wits + Subterfuge roll against a difficulty of 7, and the game master or storyteller will make his own roll for the guards, with an Intelligence roll. Hal rolls Wits (3) + Subterfuge (2) for a total of 5 dice, against a difficulty of 7, and gets a 5, 10, 8, 4 and a 9. Hal has 3 successes. The game master then rolls the guards' Intelligence of 2 against a difficulty of 7, and gets 6 and 3 for guard one, and 8 and 3 for guard two, for a total of 1 success. So, Hal has fooled the guards by getting 2 more success than the guards, and they let him go on about his business.

In another example, Hal wishes to charm a few local wenches at a local tavern. The game master asks him to roll Charisma (1) + Etiquette (1) against a difficulty of 6 (this is a tavern after all) and he gets a 5 and 6. He barely succeeds, so for the most part, he has charmed them, but they may need some more persuasion for him to do any real wenching.

Most of the abilities will be fairly self-explanatory as to which attributes they pair with, but remember, the game master has the final say on these matters. For most Knowledge abilities you will use mental attributes, for most Skills abilities you will use Physical attributes, and for most Talents abilities you will use Social attributes. Remember, however, that there are almost always exceptions to just about every rule.



Dawn

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Come, follow, follow me, You, fairy elves that be:
Which circle on the green, Come, follow Mab your queen.
Hand in hand let's dance around, For this place is fairy ground.
— Anonymous, "The Fairy Queen"

Mythological creatures. Legendary animals. Flights of fancy. Abominations. Monsters. The greater beasts, the animals and creatures of the fabled past and present, are all of these things and more. They are living creatures that have faded almost completely from the world, or are complete fiction dreamed up by over-imaginative tale-tellers — or both.

Humanity has sought to identify and understand the animal kingdom throughout history. Our imaginative interpretations, exaggerations and unflinching lies about nature's creatures have created legends of all sorts of amazing and impossible animals and demons. Yet what is the truth about a beast when assumptions about it are believed? If Manticores are the products of human sins unchecked, or the seas are alive with races similar to humankind, who can claim these legends are false when no proof exists to say so? The medieval and mythic ages are rife with tales of monsters and magical creatures. Legend and tale holds that these creatures are real, and whether anyone has ever actually seen one doesn't matter. To the common citizen or peasant whose life is confined by four walls or four fields, who's to say what lurks in the wilds or over the next hill? Monsters and great beasts are just as plausible as God, angels and the Devil — because so many people believe in them.

Even in the modern information age, communication, data and reports do not necessarily convey truth or insight. Information can be shared about only what we know, what we've discovered and what we theorize. Unless we have categorical proof that unicorns do not exist, how can we truly say they do not? We haven't discovered the pegasus, but not long ago, we hadn't discovered atomic energy, either. Before that discovery, how would expecting to harness the building blocks of reality have been any different from expecting to find a winged horse? And as for theories, modern man can insist that gryphons are not real, but that claim is no more valid than our conviction centuries ago that gryphons did indeed soar the skies. So where did the great beasts come from? They all have their origins and backgrounds. Ultimately, where they came from is less important than that we have believed in them and, in some cases, still do. As long as people have faith in the krakens, dragons and hippocampi of the world, those creatures originate from us and we can find them anywhere we look closely enough.

As characters, great beasts are much like normal humans. Many of them are intelligent, creative, caring, vengeful and insightful — or more so than any person could ever hope to be. These fantastic creatures offer a chance to explore roleplaying realms that normal characters simply cannot tread. What does time mean to a centuries-old drake? What is wealth to a unicorn who seeks only peace? What is love to a manticore who seeks seclusion and a full belly? Imagine the character conflicts that arise when a sea bishop has to choose whether to save a drowning man or the hippocampus that the man sought to capture. The seahorse's freedom may mean much more to the bishop than any landlubber's life, even if that human is another player's character. Playing an inhuman character, therefore, forces you to ask questions of your character that playing a human never would. Great beasts also allow you to throw off human trappings and bring new insights to the stories you tell.

Whereas humans might pursue a goal to attain power, a hippogryph might scoff at that agenda

when revenge is to be had. What then, is more important in life — self-glorification or selffulfillment? Is there even any difference? These questions and more will take your roleplaying to new heights as you question human values through bestial eyes. Remember that the beasts presented here are simply representative of their kind. Not all gryphons seek respect through accomplishments and names. Not all harpies are women who have hidden their sins. Feel free to alter these creatures' powers and natures for your own purposes, as long as the Storyteller approves. Perhaps a gryphon would deign to cooperate with humans in order to help them understand their hubris. Perhaps the grand names that he would normally take might encourage pride rather than teach humility. Maybe a harpy was not a murderer but was grief-stricken in human life, and her despair drove her mad and caused her to assume her monstrous form. Her predation of humanity might therefore be directed against those who would harm innocents, rather than against any living thing. Ultimately, a great beast should be as fully developed and fulfilled as any human character. After all, these creatures are the stuff of legends.

Brownie

These helpful creatures live in and about households all over Europe. They come out only at night, performing needed chores around the household, from cleaning and scrubbing to polishing and darning. The moment just before they are spotted, they vanish without a trace, leaving most to wonder exactly how that boot was repaired or who refilled the wood box. Those aware of their nocturnal visitors must take great care. Brownies expect nothing in return, nor desire compliments, thanks or other rewards. The unwary host who inadvertently leaves a gift in exchange will find the gift refused, left untouched or cleaned up with the rest of the refuse. If this persists, the brownie will take great offense and may leave, never to be heard from again. Some even take such exception to the insult that they turn upon their hosts in the dark of night, a grim testament to those who later discover the carnage.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Craft 5, Dodge 5, Stealth 5

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -2 x 2, -3, -4, Incapacitated **Armor:** 0

Attacks: Brownies attack with animated or controlled household items.

Powers: Animate Objects (by spending a Willpower point, a brownie can telekinetically control a number of objects at once equal to his Wits rating; he can attack with these or simply use them to aid his crafts, and can manipulate them from up to 10 yards away)

Weaknesses: Brownies cannot hear compliments for their selfless deeds. Sufficient compliments will drive a brownie into the night. Brownies cannot stand the light of the sun — it transforms them into mushrooms for seven days.

Essence: A brownie's magic is in its bones. Acquiring the bones is difficult; the mage must find a brownie who was struck by the sun's light, then cremate its mushroom form, after which it will transform back into its original parts. Powdered brownie bones provide three Essence points, which can be spent to reduce spellcasting difficulties for spells of construction or reinforcement. Brownies have an innate sense of who has used their brethren to fuel such magic, and will never render that person aid.

Child Stealer (Night Elf)

The dark elves of Bavaria have long terrorized local villages. Their habits and habitats are largely unknown. Only the deranged tales of those who have discovered their treetop villages speak of them. Few men survive this experience with mind intact, damaging the credibility of these tales. New parents live in constant worry of night elves. One moment spent too long away from the child and it is gone,

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spirited away and replaced with a malformed, dead elf baby. In truth, the Child Stealers cannot have children of their own. They steal those of men. and reshape them in their own image. The dead elf child left behind is just an illusion given flesh, lasting only so long as the parents grieve. The broken-hearted parents' shattered happiness is channeled through the illusion to the stolen child, and then used to twist the once human child further away from the form of man.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma), Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Melee 2, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 3, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated

Armor: Light chainmail +3B/+4L

Attacks: Fae Bow (3L; if any damage from a Fae Bow's arrow is actually inflicted after soak, the victim must make a Willpower roll against difficulty 6 or be dazed for one turn per wound inflicted, during which time he cannot act)

Powers: Mimic (by spending a point of Willpower, the Child Stealer can expertly mimic any sound and make it seem as if it came from anywhere else within 10 yards)

Weakness: Child Stealers are so strongly attracted to the happiness of a giddy child that it blinds them to potential danger. Small bells and similar sounding instruments, such as a tambourine, reminds them of the laughter of childhood, a pleasure lost to them when their humanity was stolen. Such sounds fill them with so much rage that they flee into the wild.

Essence: The life-blood of a Child Stealer carries with it grief and sadness and the power these emotions have over people. If collected from the still-living body of a Child Stealer, the blood may be distilled in the same fashion as brandy into doses the size of a soup spoon. Each contains power when used for emotional manipulation, decreasing difficulties by one and providing three points of Essence.

COCKATRICE

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. -Isaiah 11:8

Amidst the desert's shifting sands, there lived a serpent most foul, whose breath and gaze killed many a valiant warrior. It slithered into tents to poison children at play and chased crocodiles from riverbeds in pursuit of their eggs. The people called it basilisk. Its legend spread across the Middle East, and from it came the cockatrice. Evil of the most malignant kind lurked in the basilisk's heart. Such a vile soul could not merely die but sought out a new host through which to continue its fetid practices. During the dark days of the Djinni Plague, when evil spirits fed on the land, the basilisk spawned 39 times, each time creating another like itself. Together they created a great desert, and 10,000 men died before them. Finally, the great courage of warriors, the Arts of sacred wizardry brought an end to the plague. The great rooster, bearer of the sun and messenger of God's will and mercy, was blessed with the power to overcome the creature. In time, the crowing of a cock signaled the death of a basilisk, and the people rejoiced. Each day, the great rooster went forth as the sun rose, searching for the evil serpents. His crow held his victim like stone, and there the blessed light of Allah turned the monster to ash. Thus, when the last of the basilisks heard the cock's crow, it froze. Knowing that its blasphemous pleasures were at an end, it pleaded with its underworld gods for mercy.

The apothic powers saw what transpired and understood the basilisk's despair. They granted the creature one last chance to strike so that it could eat the cock. So blessed, the basilisk writhed and

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squirmed on the ground. The movements enticed the hungry rooster, and he sought his morning meal. But, like all gifts granted by the Adversary, its blessing did not prove as fortuitous as the basilisk hoped. The basilisk's writhing exhausted him. The cock, too clever to stand still, pecked and poked at his meal, evading viperous tail and poisonous breath until the basilisk's blood thickened like pitch on the earth. Yet vengeance was the Evil One's. As the cock consumed the basilisk, so the basilisk's soul consumed the cock. In one horrible moment, the creature's body was transformed, and the great rooster, corrupted, changed to suit his new soul. Thus was the cockatrice born.

DESCRIPTION

Basilisks roamed Libya in ancient times. Foot-long snakes whose bite, tail and look could kill, the creatures scoured the land. A basilisk's breath scorched plants and burst rocks, creating the Libyan desert. With each man, woman or child it victimized, the creature's evil reputation grew. Only two enemies threatened the basilisk: The weasel could overcome it with its stench and bite, and the rooster could paralyze it with its dawn-bringing crow. An ill-fated cock ate the last known basilisk long ago. Crawling away into the weeds, the doomed bird transformed to suit the soul it now bore. The newly born cockatrice could kill with a glance or with vaporous breath, and it could strike with the poison that oozed from its snakelike tail. Unmitigated malice lurks in the heart of a cockatrice, and its venom has no antidote. The poison boils through veins and sears flesh. When this vile brew reaches the heart or brain, the victim dies. Until then, he falls into spasms and screams in torment, his eyes wide and white. Even after Death drapes his merciful veil across the victim, the body twitches and flails, thrashing with seizures

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and turmoil within.

All cockatrice are neuters, neither male nor female. The cockatrice reproduces by stinging a mundane rooster. When one does so, the venom pools in the cock's body and forms an egg, which the bird then lays from the pits of its bowels. Although the abomination still prefers to find roosters to bear its eggs, it has been known to sting other animals — even humans -- with its eggspawning barb.

While the egg grows in the victim's body, the host becomes quite ill. Once the egg is laid (often through the bowels, but sometimes through other orifices or even fresh wounds), the host returns to health. However, it is tainted forever after, stained by its incubation of evil and haunted by terrible dreams. If, by bad fortune, the egg bursts inside its host, the poisonous embryo spills throughout the body. No mortal fate could be worse than that agony.... Extremely territorial, the cockatrice guards its chosen host with a vengeance, just as the rooster guards its hens. Once hatched, a cockatrice seeks out dark, damp, subterranean places. Nocturnal, it abhors the sun, though sunlight does nothing more than irritate it. The vitriolic creature lurks around farms and pastoral spirit Realms, plaguing magi in their sanctuaries and hidden places.

A young cockatrice must range out and find its own den or challenge its sire for ownership of its birthplace. A hatchling has little chance of winning such a challenge until maturity, unless the reigning cockatrice is old and dying. Despite its foul nature, a cockatrice rarely attacks unless it is cornered or its territory is threatened. An intruder hears a sharp rattle-hiss warning; anyone who recognizes the sound should flee immediately. Like a snake, the cockatrice prefers to swallow its prey whole and digest it slowly. A hungry creature pecks at carrion, but only when it can find no other sustenance. Much to mankind's chagrin, the cockatrice can speak. Its squawking voice is harsh and dissonant, and it gleefully profanes anyone or anything nearby. Scatological humor, multilingual insults, lewd innuendo, crudity and vitriol of all sorts are the preferred banter of cockatrices. The only benefit in speaking to them is that they never lie — though most would rather not know the truths a cockatrice is likely to tell! If the creature does not know the truth, it states so loudly and insults the questioner in the most foul ways.

IMAGE

Strutting and pecking, slithering and swallowing, the cockatrice has a frightful appearance. When startled, it shakes ochre-yellow feathers and stretches its wide, thorny wings. The beast's bottom jaw unhinges, dropping to display the black interior of its beak. When calm, a cockatrice struts on its odd chicken legs — wrinkled and gray, dappled with spots like the hands of an old woman. Slithering out from its hind end, the cockatrice's tail has serpentine skin, shiny and smooth like liquid ebony and tipped with a poison-dripping hook. Eyes of centuries-old amber shine cold and wicked, darting this way and that. One look at a cockatrice is enough to make a person flee — or freeze in terror while the monster lays its egg. Making its lair, as it does, in foul, hidden places, the average cockatrice is invariably covered with dung or a greasy film of fat from its last meal, which makes it easy to smell well before it becomes visible. A cockatrice's strange build renders it clumsy, but the beast is no less dangerous for its lack of grace.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You are your own bird. If others don't like it, they can fuck themselves — preferably with a sword. You won't be told what to do by Saracens, whores, fops, blackguards, hermits, syphilitics, simpletons, dandies, Moors, buggers, lack-wits, wenches, scrofulous beast-men, leeches, troglodytes, lepers, princes or kings, and you haven't the slightest intention of mitigating a single goddamned word for their timid little ears. They won't suffer you? There's always room in the world for one more cockatrice...

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 1, Stamina 3, Charisma 0, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

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Abilities: Brawl 4, Athletics 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3

Willpower: 6

Health Levels: -1, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated

Armor Rating: 0

Attacks/Powers:

Claws for 4 dice, stinger for 2 dice; Hazardous Breath (5 Health Levels, normal), Human Speech, Mesmerism, Venom (1 lethal Health Level of damage every other turn; no antidote), Wings

Constructs

Priests of powerful orders, secret wizards of great strength and even the occasional hedge witch are known to place power upon normally inanimate objects to guard their sanctuaries. These commonly take the form of decorative statuary; the more creative mages make use of dead flora, gates, and even their abode itself. It is unusual to find more than a handful of these creatures in any one place, as they are taxing to create. Rarely can these guardians leave the area where they were brought to life. Many mages chantries contain a number of decorative columns in the shape of men or women (primarily women) supporting washbasins, oil lamps, or even the rooms themselves. Sometimes, these columns have been gifted with a semblance of life, making them stone watchdogs, hidden in plain sight from the unknowing. Creating such a **Caryatid** (or **Telemon**, if male) takes great personal investment. The figure must be exquisitely crafted.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 0, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 1 , Wits 1

Abilities: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Melee 3

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -2 x 3, -3, Incapacitated. **Armor:** +3B/+5L

Attacks: As per weapon. Treat any oil lamps it holds as torches.

Powers: Immune to Fire

Weaknesses: None

DRAGON

O to be a dragon a symbol of the power of Heaven. — Marianne Moore, "O to be a Dragon"

In the time before time, long before the light of civilization fell across the land, most of the world was wild and formless. At that time, a now-forgotten power held sway — a potent force of chaos whose very passing scattered the golden fruits of knowledge and power that nurtured our kind through its infancy. This power was called "Modus" and he reigned for ages in his Courts of Silence before ever a creature walked the face of the Earth. And his children attended him, and were to him a great comfort. Certainly no one could have foreseen the tragic consequences when Ellisere, the daughter of Modus, Goddess of Inspiration and Invention, brought her latest plaything into the Courts of Silence. She called this strange device "the Necronome." Its eternal ticking seemed to echo the beat of her heart. In it she found the subtle hints of a pattern that opened up great vistas of inspiration. Unfortunately, the infernal ticking drove everyone else to distraction and the Courts of Silence were no longer a place of refuge. Something had to be done. After much deliberation, Modus banished the object from the courts. After that, Ellisere was seen less and less. She sequestered herself on a remote mountain in the midst of

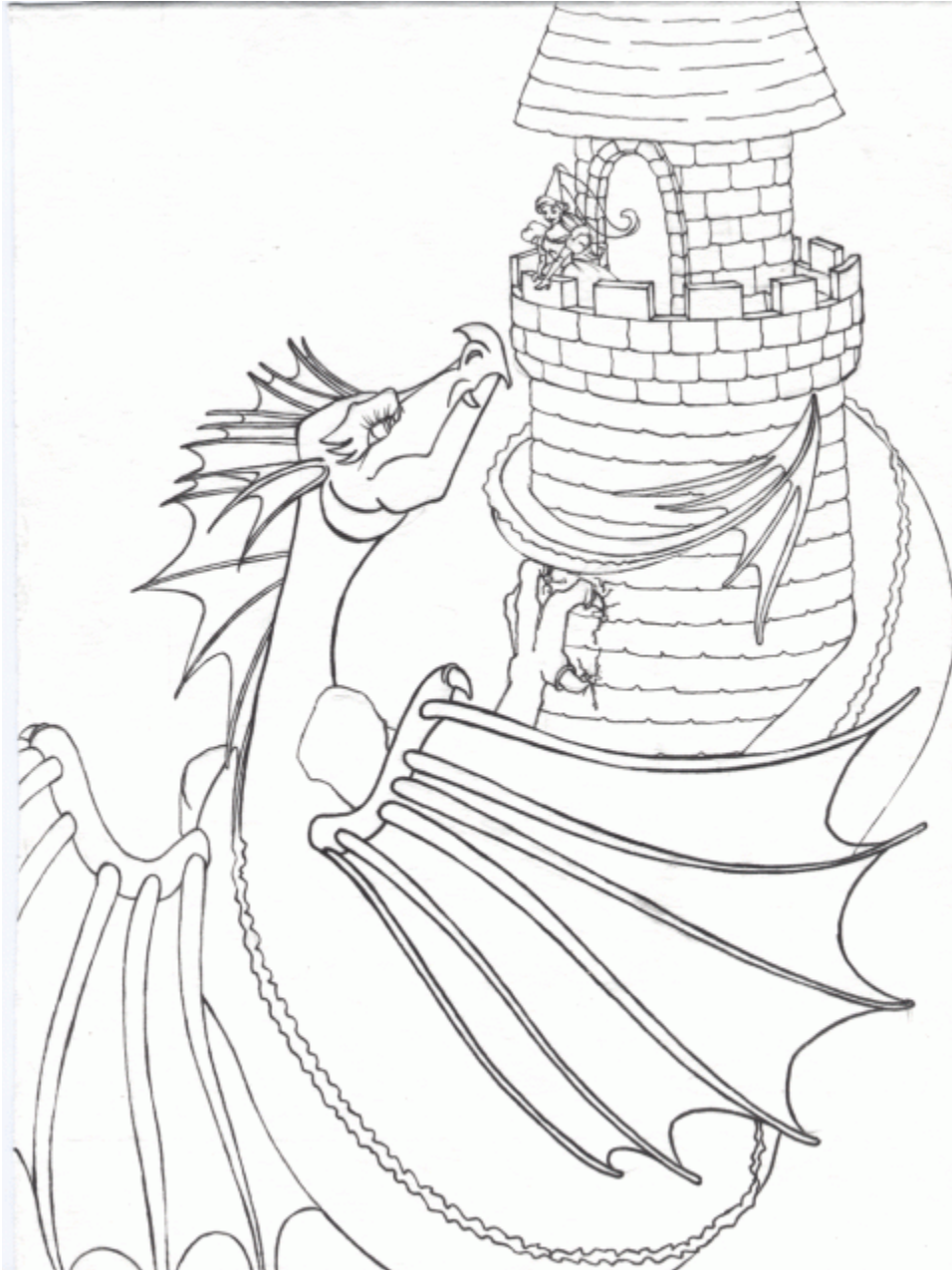
swirling creation to pursue her vision and the new art — music — that was taking shape with the aid of her Necronome. The strange and wondrous sounds of her emerging art called forth many and varied creatures from the crucible of creation. They came to her and loved her, and she taught them her way. The Firstborn were the great wyrms, masters of air and flame. The raw, primitive tones of the newly discovered art formed their magic and might. In time, all creatures who now know music, and many different races—including those who are now known only through ancient songs — came to sit at Ellisere's feet and receive her gift. At last, man overcame his fear of the wild things that haunted the world's end and came to Ellisere to learn from her. By this time, the Art had changed. Music was no longer a simple means of expressing Ellisere's vision of harmony. In each successive teaching, it swelled to encompass new emotions. The great wyrms, for instance, eagerly gathered shining notes of power and crafted them into scales — of hoarding, of greed, of snares for those who would steal their treasures. The arrival of men also wove many complex emotions into the score, not the least of which was jealousy. It is doubtful that even Ellisere herself knew who it was that stole into her chambers one day. Some gossips speculate that the trespasser's motive may have been jealousy for the singleminded devotion a lover paid to the goddess. Others suggest that the intruder acted out of fear—that some other race might learn a more complete form of the Art than man himself had. All that is known for certain is that on that day, someone reached up to the Necronome and stopped its swinging arm midcourse. The silence that followed was complete. No scream sounded the moment the Necronome and the goddess' heart ceased to beat. In their sorrow, the great wyrms gathered their treasures, music and precious scales, wrapped them in grand and leathery wings and took flight. They passed over the Earth on mournful winds, landing when fatigue claimed them, and dug titanic burrows into the mountainsides. There, it is said, they listen for the echoes of Ellisere's art in never-ending caves. In the heart of the Earth, the dragons claim, you can still hear refrains of the first songs in mournful rhythm with the final ticking of the goddess' Necronome.

DESCRIPTION

Here be dragons. The inscription inevitably marks the farthest, most inaccessible, least hospitable corner of the map. The wise navigator never reads the phrase aloud, although he might tap ominously at it with the tip of his spy glass. A certain power clings to the very syllables — not only fuel for mutiny, but something more grand — words to conjure with. Their very whispering evokes nightmare images of primal fury, avarice, cunning, chaos and destruction. The Illuminated, however, must learn to see beyond the nightmare. The first step in penetrating the veil of secrecy surrounding the great wyrms is to realize that a dragon is a paradoxical creature. The arcana handed down across the generations reveals a very different side to these complex beings. The mystic writings return constantly to the dragon's unrivaled majesty, wisdom, sophistication and artistry. The great wyrms embody all the terrible beauty that nature has to offer. In the dragon, we find reflected all that is darkest within the breast of man. The dragon is pure desire run amok. Our lusts, our greed, our ravenous hungers find their ultimate expression in these grand beasts. There are probably as many stories about the creation of dragonkind as there are dragons themselves.

Each of the great wyrms is a veritable force of nature with a life span stretching back into the dim reaches of time. Only the very foolish or presumptuous would even think to question a dragon's account of its own origins. The fact of the matter is that each of these legendary beings has the longevity, power and conviction to craft history in his own image. Most of the great wyrms, should they feel moved to give any account of themselves whatsoever, would recount tales of how their race arose directly from the Primal Chaos. This assertion may not fall far from the truth. Even the legends of mankind's own devising tend to recognize dragons as the Firstborn. Some scholars suggest that dragons are not, in fact, mortal creatures at all, but incarnations of Creation's own passion, harnessed by intellect and glowing with the power of the elements unbound. It's possible that the great wyrms are creatures of pure Essence, loose threads of the Tellurian's Tapestry crackling with raw, undifferentiated power. One myth goes so far as to claim that dragons are not of the Tapestry at all, but rather arise directly from the dark spaces between the weft and warp, where the hidden chaos of the universe is exposed. The very existence of a dragon is an accusation hurled in the face of mankind. Meeting one of the great wyrms is like facing our own

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reflection in a dark mirror. At the same time, the dragon embodies all the unchecked power of Nature. Throughout the world, dragons are credited with creating storms and lightning, fire and flood, famine and blight, typhoons and hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, maelstroms and tidal waves. The dragon is the unreasoning enforcer of the natural order. It is quite literally the scourge of the Earth — the lash of Her displeasure with presumptuous humanity. A great wyrm embodies man's relation with nature. Within its glistening coils, we do not find a natural order to be conquered, catalogued and cultivated, but rather the wild fury of nature that must be appeased to ensure survival.

DRAGON LORE

As one of the most promising scholars of his age, it is certain that Ynnis Wythren had more than a passing familiarity with dragon lore before he ever set foot on the Isle of Lamentations. What he found there, however, led him to cast aside the mantle of learning for the sackcloth of mysticism. Regrettably, no hand has ever recorded Wythren's story in its entirety. Only vague and unsettling hints may be found amongst the mystic's cryptic verse, which is praised mainly for its complex, labyrinthine structure. A volume of his work is often the prized possession in the private library of a well-to-do cryptophile. In his pivotal *Librium Draconis*, Wythren opens with this startling revelation:

"The Dragon accomplishes the ends of the Earth."

With this simple assertion, Wythren throws down the gauntlet to challenge centuries of established dragon lore. He reveals that the dragon is not merely the hooded executioner of Nature's will, but rather the Earth's champion — the knight who defends Her, the hero who redeems Her, the magus who awakens Her. The dragon is not some generic monster, a potential notch in the belt of the treasure hunter. Rather, each of these magnificent creatures is a fully realized character, a unique being, a force of nature animated by a powerful individual will. Dragons are fiercely protective of their individuality. Solitary and aloof, they place great value on their independence and privacy. It is said that they cannot long abide even the presence of their own kind — it's a rare occasion when two or more of the beasts deign to share a hunting ground or lair. Ancient sagas, however, do allude to a time when the great wyrms were more populous and were occasionally seen hunting or warring together. Just as we might speak of a pride of lions or a murder of crows, the magi of old tell of a desolation of dragons. Anyone who has witnessed the insatiable appetites of these magnificent terrors can understand why. Wythren's cryptic assertion, however, establishes much more than the individuality of each dragon. It presents the foundation of what has become known as the "Doctrine of Circumference and Center." According to this theory, the dragon "accomplishes" the ends of the Earth in the sense that it "encompasses" them. The dragon's coils encircle the entire world. It is the horizon, the border of the unknown, the Circumference of Creation.

The Vikings understood this mystery perfectly. In Norse mythology, the great wyrm Jormungandr encompasses the entire world (Midgard). This Midgard Orm lies in the frozen depths of the ocean, its own tail clasped firmly in its mouth. The elaborate figureheads on Viking dragon ships pay homage to this terror of the deep. The serpent swallowing its own tail is one of the mage's most potent symbols — the alchemical sign of infinity. The Midgard Orm is infinite, not only in that it encompasses all of space, but all of time. It was imprisoned in the icy depths at the dawn of time, and prophecy maintains that the Orm cannot be slain until time itself is unmade.

Thor, god of thunder, once sought to slay the Orm. He accomplished the Herculean task of fishing it from the ocean using a great chain baited with an ox's head. His efforts, however, proved to be in vain as even he, the very incarnation of battle, could not best his rival. It is told that in the final battle, Ragnarok, Jormungandr will rise up and slay his ancient enemy. The great Orm will itself be slain and its death-throes will crack open the world like an egg, destroying all of Creation and closing the circle, once and for all. The serpent devouring its own tail is a potent symbol of the Great Cycle of life, death and rebirth. Nowhere is this image more apparent than in the steaming jungles of the New World. Here, no life is wasted — the jungle floor is a broiling crucible of creation. From every plant or creature that dies in that crucible there erupts a teeming multitude of new life. This fecund cycle is observed and governed by the plumed serpent of the Aztecs and Toltecs, Quetzalcoatl. Like the serpent, the dragon sheds its skin, casting off the detritus of its old life and being born anew. While the serpent is "reborn" each year, the dragon's life rhythm encompasses the Great Cycle of 360 years. Each great wyrm, it is written, lives 10 such lifetimes (or 3600 years), unless some disaster or murder cuts that life short. At the end of this perfectly contained cycle, the dragon's soul enters the Great Wheel of Creation to be remade again in fresh, elemental clay as new souls or primal forces.

In Egyptian mythology, the dragon Apep is the Lord of the Underworld, who holds the reigns of

life, death and rebirth. His consuming passion is his enmity with the sun god Ra. Each day, Apep does battle with Ra, trying to prevent the sun-boat from rising to its zenith. Each evening, Apep devours the sun, dragging his ancient enemy into his domain, the world of the dead. The battle continues there as the solar disc navigates its way along the Celestial Nile — the very bowels of Apep. Thus, for the Egyptians, each day is a mythic struggle in which the rebirth of the sun and the gods themselves depends on the dragon's gift of life, death and resurrection. Egyptian dragon lore reinforces and expands on some important points raised in Norse legends. Apep is also a dragon of the Circumference. While Jormungandr coils about the Earth beneath Her mantle of oceans, Apep encompasses the world in two great arcs — one above (the Celestial Nile) and one below (the Underworld). When the Egyptians speak of the Celestial Nile, they refer to the starry swath of the Milky Way that dominates the night sky. Apep's domain over the night sky is strengthened by its close association with the moon. This link between the dragon and the moon is implicit in Egyptian legend. Just as Apep opposes Ra, the moon opposes the sun — rising when it sets, setting when it rises. Like the dragon, the moon also sheds its skin every 28 nights. It is the dragon's kinship with the moon, as much as the creature's own prowess, that makes it the uncontested lord of the night sky. In general, dragon-as-moon holds dominion over all that transpires beneath the cover of darkness. Tales of great wyrms return constantly to the exploits of thieves and lovers. In this role, the dragon is not only a hoarder of fabulous treasures and of virgins, but is also the guardian of spiritual treasures — of secrets, mystery and initiation.

HABITAT

Uncontested masters of land, sea and air, dragons inhabit the four corners of the Earth and have made their presence felt in the heart of the Old World and on the shores of the New. Explorers carry back tales and sightings of the dragon from such far-flung locales as Cathay, the Americas, India, Ethiopia and Arabia. Truly it is said that the dragon encompasses the ends of the Earth. A dragon's Beysta, or lair, can be found atop (or within) some ancient place of power. These dragonsites are Crays of the greatest kind, focal points of earthmight, the raw unchecked power of Nature — that which mortals call Essence. A great wyrm draws on this vast energy reserve to feed his ravening hungers, to fuel the raging furnace within. In most cases, a Beysta is some remote and forbidding cavern. Such isolated subterranean surroundings appeal to the great wyrms' serpentine nature. These "dragonholes" are private, roomy and easily guarded important considerations for anyone with the dragon's reputation for vast wealth and equally boundless suspicions. For similar reasons, many dragons, such as the legendary Lambdon Worm, make their lairs in abandoned wells or cisterns. to a nearby town — and thus, a steady source of human prey — so much the better.

Other dragons make their lairs in high mountain eyries. These fierce predators rely on their keen eyesight to pick out prey far below and swoop down for the swift kill. The Tatzlwurm of the Swiss Alps is one such mountain-dweller who considers human children a great delicacy. Still others prefer aquatic lairs. Seas, lakes and rivers provide a steady diet of fish, while boat traffic serves as an important supplementary food source. Water also provides the ultimate camouflage for the fantastic Bygones, allowing aquatic dragons to take boats or even entire ports unawares. The Gargouille is one such sea dragon who belches forth torrents of water. A titanic creature who preys on medieval mariners, this creature is the inspiration for the waterspout gargoyles that adorn French cathedrals. Swamps tend to combine the advantages of both the watery and the subterranean lair. Swamp dragons, or knuckers, dwell in reportedly bottomless pits in the heart of great marshes. The presence of such a knuckerhole is often revealed by eerie vapors, incessant bubbling or icy cold waters. Regardless of their location, all dragonsites are interconnected, linked by a vast network of energy lines. Some of these dragonlines run beneath the Earth's surface like magma. Others surge along the course of the ocean currents. Still others follow the paths of the winds. The great wyrms refer to these ever-flowing conduits of power as the dragonsblood — streams of mystickal energy that come to be called "ley lines" in latter days. If the Beysta is convenient Tending the dragonsblood is an almost religious devotion for the great wyrms, and a dragon often sits for days on end doing nothing but communing with the call of the blood. In its song, they can pick out the soft strains of news from distant lands. They whisper to each other across the miles. They read omens. They often

rely on memories or share devotions from halfway across the world. The dragonsblood is also the raw material from which dragons construct their Proterus—their inner sanctums. Just as the Beysta is the dragon's physical home, the Proterus is his spiritual dwelling.

Both Beysta and Proterus share the same spatial location. One can be thought of as overlaying the other — separated only by the most tenuous layer of perception. The great wyrms call this invisible membrane the Veil, but magi know it better as the Gauntlet. The master of the lair can part the Veil at will and step directly from the physical into the spiritual realm, passing from Beysta to Proterus. This power, which makes dragons nigh invulnerable on their home ground, is considered one of the greatest gifts the Lady bestowed on dragonkind. Dragon lore presents some ambiguity about the Veil. On one hand, stepping through it represents the passage between the physical and the spiritual, between life and death. The Lady passed beyond the Veil by dying. In so doing, she made the way clear for her faithful to travel back and forth between the two realms. The great wyrms, however, do not experience the area beyond the Veil as a land of the dead — there are no thronging shades of the deceased awaiting them on the far side. Instead, the dragon's Proterus resembles an exact duplicate of his lair — with one significant difference.

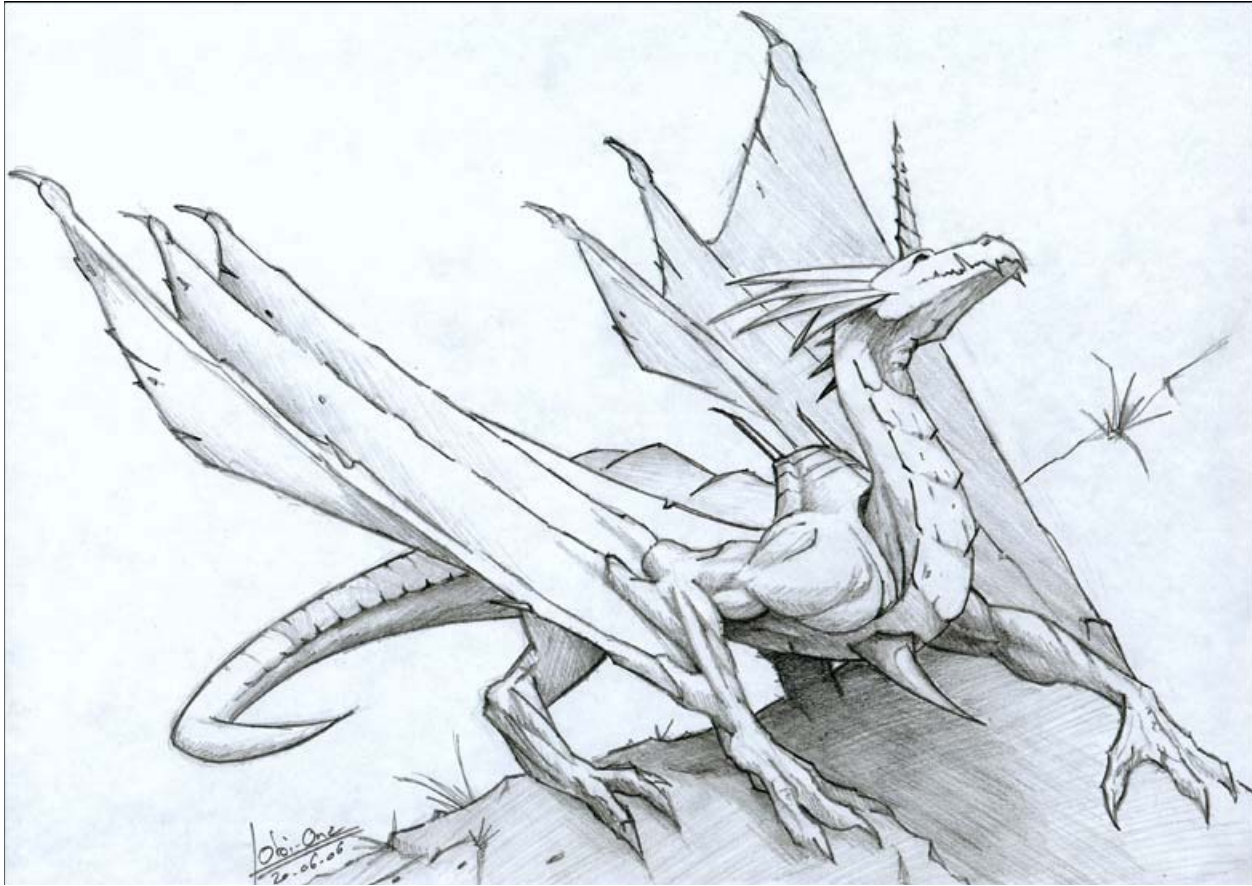
In the Proterus, there are no physical objects, only the shadows of objects — symbols, meanings, relations, implications. Where a dragon's lair might be filled with physical treasures — fine carpets from the Orient, a mask collection from darkest Africa, brightly colored tapestries, a peerless wine collection, ivory tusks, ancient tomes, delicate scientific apparatus, magnificent bronzes, rare coins, artful clockwork automatons, a chess set fit for an emperor, crates of coffee, sacks of poppy and many other such things — the dragon's Proterus is a spiritual landscape. A dragon never allows visitors, even favored ones, to enter his Proterus. In the material world, a dragon's lair resembles a gigantic burrow, often wound with elaborate tunnels, trickling with fresh water and seeded with fabulous treasures and gleaming bones. In the Penumbra of the place, the Proterus spins out like a gargantuan web, a luminous weave of interlocking strands. Each line is a link of distance or proximity anchored to the objects on the physical side of the Realm. The more cluttered the cave, the more elaborate the web in the spirit world. If an intruder were to look closely at the strands, she might notice tiny arcane runes in no known language. Wythren attests that dragons capture their histories, genealogies and poetry in these intricate scribings. According to his chronicles, the runes seem to sing in a tune that transcends human scales — a tune that may well be the echo of the songs composed by the elder wyrms, who first melded the elements together.

Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.
— William Shakespeare, Richard II

NOTED DRAGONSITES

THE BONEYARD

Even among dragonsites, some locales have grown so famous (or infamous) that they stand out clearly above the rest. These are the mystic places of dragonkind -- the pilgrimage sites and realms of nightmare that occasionally wind their way into human folklore. Perhaps no dragon site has fired the imagination of mystics and treasure-hunters alike as greatly as the Isle of Lamentations. Kingdoms and fortunes have been squandered in the quest for the legendary isle. In the cryptic verse of Ynnis Wythren, the desolate place is called "The Boneyard." Simply put, it is the dragons' graveyard — the place where the most ancient and world-weary of the great wyrms come to die. No map has ever fixed its location, yet old tales place the isle somewhere in the midst of the Sea of Dust, a vast ocean of rolling breakers that crackle like old parchment as they wash to and fro. Stately funeral barges ply these waters in lieu of fishing boats. The seas are also rife with treasure seekers and ghoulish bloodthirsty pirates, men who have lost their minds and souls trying to find the elusive island. A traveler who manages to win past the many hazards of the Sea of Dust might beach himself on the Sighing Stones, jagged granite teeth that jut from the waves like a titan's maw. The island rises beyond this reef on gleaming white sea cliffs that are



circled by wailing black gulls. The Isle of Lamentations offers neither shore nor harbor. Those who would ascend its cliffs must either fly or climb the dizzying heights. The bowl of the island is a blinding, bleached, white landscape. Everywhere a visitor turns, she is confronted by the remains of the dead — the entire surface of the isle is a shifting jumble of bones. Jagged spars thrust skyward like obelisks. Vaulted ribs arc overhead like the roof of a cathedral. Wind whistles through the remains with the sound of some vast untuned pipe organ. Otherwise, the isle is grim and silent. Despite the barren visage it presents to intruders, the island actually teems with life. Millions of unseen scurrying insects — rumored to range in size from that of an ant to that of a wild boar — pick clean the undersides of shifting bones. A trespasser must wind her way across the remains. The slightest misstep is certain to plunge her into the subterranean realm of the insect-creatures. If a great wyrm is actually present on the isle, it is certain be found at the very center, coiled around the cairn at the land's heart. This cairn is constructed not of piled stones, but of ancient weathered eggs — all the stillborn children of dragonkind, brought here by bereaved parents throughout the ages. It should be noted that even a dying dragon can be terrible in his rage, and no member of wyrm-kind would suffer the footfalls of another beast — least of all man — on this most sacred island.

THE CITY OF BRASS AND FLAME

The dragon is without a doubt the mightiest of all enchanted creatures. Not all of the great wyrms, however, are allied with the forces of magick in the Great Conflict. Dragons champion each of the three sides in the unceasing battles between faith, science and magick. However, although the Daedaleans openly forswear affiliation with such beasts, desperate men must find allies where they can.... Perhaps the most notorious example of a dragon opposed to magick is a being of legendary power called

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Caduceus. A titanic spirit of logic and complexity, this dragon sends inspiration-dreams to his chosen: the High Artisans of the Order of Reason. Where other dragons embody the wild, unappeased forces of Nature, Caduceus is an avatar of civilization. A pervasive worldview radiates outward from him in concentric circles. Just as the very presence of other dragons brings blight, pestilence and devastation to the surrounding countryside, Caduceus is the harbinger of order and logic. Like a gargantuan spider-wyrm, he spins a complex, circular web in his Realm of sublime technology. Unlike the men he favors, this dragon makes no distinction between the works of rational creatures and the works of Nature. To him, a cathedral and a beaver dam are of a single substance — each a perfectly natural construct, envisioned and created by perfectly natural creatures. There is no conflict between man and Nature in Caduceus' Realm. Anything man might accomplish, he does on the behalf/behest of the Earth that bore him. The epicenter of Caduceus' influence is the City of Brass and Flame — a testament to Nature's ability to feed on itself. Suspended in the center of the dragon's cyclopean web, the city is a preindustrial nightmare Realm of steam, gears, oil and levers. This city, like all dragon works, lies within the spirit worlds, separated from mortal lands by the narrow ribbon of belief between this world and the next. The dragon's city is populated with a stunning variety of elaborate clockwork automatons. These subjects can sometimes be found in the cities of men, carrying out the inscrutable ends of Caduceus' far-reaching agenda. Unknown to most mortals, these beings even serve occasionally in Daedalean ranks as Brethren, Sisters or mechanical creations. The shrill metallic wailing of the City of Brass and Flame is a siren's song to those mortals unfortunate enough to stand within earshot. Visitors who do not fall under the spell of technology are invariably driven deaf or mad. Those who manage to survive this peril and actually come within sight of the City of the Great Work can be undone, captured or rooted to the spot by a nightmare vision of science gone utterly insane. The city scrambles heavenward on its own shoulders. New domes, towers, cupolas and minarets, rising from the womb of the city, claw their way into existence before the spectator's very eyes. The cityscape also seems to rush toward the onlooker as it expands concentrically and continually. The towering walls are carried forward in a flurry of levers and scaffolding, all waving madly and independently like dancing spiders' legs. The inhabitants scurry like mites on a dog's ear, rushing in an endless attempt to build things faster, better and bigger than before. It is said that the heart of the city, Caduceus' palace/ factory, is buried beneath the ascending metallic jumble. Supposedly Caduceus himself can be found in the deepest sub-basement, wrapped about the monstrous boiler that drives the ever-expanding city, spinning his endless web of machines and reason.

TYPES OF DRAGONS:

IMAGE AND ROLEPLAYING HINTS Dragons come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. The smallest are said to be no larger than a house cat, while the largest have been known to coil themselves around mountains. Despite several overall similarities, however, each dragon is an individual. Mated pairs produce children who resemble neither partner, and "litter-mates" born of the same hatch-brood can differ in profound ways. Some are witty and urbane, collecting works of art and crafting grand lairs with fire and claw. Others are simple brutes, as smart as the average human and far less cultured. A handful are little better than animals, living for centuries on nothing more than instinct, and dwelling in filthy, fouled caves. Innately magical, all dragons possess elemental gifts. Their ties to the spirits of Creation, the powers of the mind and the arts of humanity breed dizzying talents. Some dragons can transform themselves into unassuming guises. Others hypnotize their prey, fly, command the weather or live beneath the sea. Nearly every great wyrm possesses some form of vile breath. It is said that the elements themselves boil up from within a dragon's heart. When he rages, the elements spill out in devastating form, manifestations of the universe's anger. The "traditional" dragon trades in fire, but others exhale storms, poisons, water, even rains of hot mud or sand. When the Industrial Age turns skies to ash, some young dragons are born breathing clouds of smog or toxic waste. As the elements rage, the dragons breathe them into form. In general, dragons can be divided into three main types: celestial dragons, which embody the elements in epic form, grow to amazing size and command vast powers; greater wyrms, the "Classical" dragons, which walk and fly across the land, occasionally brushing their wings against the worlds of man; and lesser dragons, which attain modest size and moderate power, but live for centuries regardless. According to dragon-lore scholars, the dreams of gods, men and the elementals shaped the differences between these creatures and bound them to the lands

that they inhabit. Celestial dragons are best known in the remote corners of the Far East, although titanic creatures such as Jormungandr appear in the tales of other lands. European and African legends resound with the clamor of the greater wyrms, whose taste for cattle, virgins and piles of gold epitomize the word "dragon."

Lesser dragons are known worldwide: Fu guardians watch over Buddhist and Taoist shrines, amphipteres coil in African and Mediterranean trees, and sphinxes ambush travelers from the woods of England to the deserts of Arabia. Certain dragons seem to "favor" certain lands, but on the whole, these magnificent beasts are universal. Dragons typically prefer solitude. Nevertheless, scholars maintain that a "dragon court" exists somewhere in the spirit world. While it is true that, every millennium, all living dragons gather in an Otherworld called Midrealm, the mortal "dragon courts" are largely fantasy. The exceptions — the mighty councils of great celestial dragons and the more humble meetings of ambitious drakes — occur sporadically, when some issue demands the wyrms' attention. Most times, these elemental creatures prefer isolation or the company of lesser beings. Even mating dragons rarely stay together for long. The fractious natures of wyrmkind are simply too diverse for near-immortals to bear.

ELEMENTS INCARNATE: GREAT CELESTIAL DRAGONS

More spirit than matter, great celestial dragons typically grow hundreds of feet in length, and rarely appear before man. The young dragon spends a full 1000 years in its egg before emerging as a small snake. Over the next 2000 years, the dragon wins, in turn, its carplike head, its claws, its horns and finally its wings. As it grows, the dragon attains mastery over shapechanging and the elements. When it reaches adulthood, the creature is assigned certain duties by the celestial powers — some benevolent, others dire. To fulfill its purpose, the dragon ascends to the Otherworlds and functions as an emissary between Heaven and Earth.

(Chronicle Note: These entities are more forces of nature than beasts; while a Storyteller could feature one as a plot device, no player should take one as a character. Celestial dragons might occasionally wear human guise, but even then, they are alien, godlike things.)

- Celestial (fire) dragons are majestic creatures with five taloned legs and scales wrought of purest gold. Vast enough to carry the palaces of the gods on their backs, these dragons are unbearably fierce of countenance and severe of temper. Only meat and coal can feed these beasts, and they are terrible when hungry. Like the grim sages of Legalistic traditions, these mighty demigods council rigid honor, right action and personal perfection. Patrons of the Akashic Arts, these creatures occasionally manifest in huge storms. During the Dragon River War, three fire dragons reduced an army of minor demons to ash—and boiled the Qui River into steam. A celestial dragon speaks in thunderclaps and displays little patience with humanity. Unless summoned for some great need, he resides in the Heavens or crafts great palaces in the hearts of volcanoes.

- Weather (air) dragons shimmer in tones of everchanging blue and dance across the sky on six pairs of slender legs. The realms of cloud and open sea are playgrounds for these spirit-beasts, who bring both life-giving rain and deadly storms. These dragons fly effortlessly without benefit of wings. Their coming is as swift as the wind and their assault is just as piercing. In contrast to their flaming cousins, these sedate creatures respect harmony and balance over raw force. When provoked, an air dragon can devastate an entire valley. More often, however, the divine beast prefers to teach friends humility, song and patience. In her palace of winds, a weather dragon coils about her fountain, listening to the droplets of water falling into the basin, lifting upward and falling again. To her, the endless cycle of water and air epitomize the rains that are

- Terrestrial (earth) dragons govern the inland waterways. Their dominion over the earth stems from the gift of fertility they bring to the fields and from their authority to divide the land into separate provinces. Each river has its own dragon-king who rules the waters from his submerged palace. These rulers are terrifying and irresistible in their wrath. Sinuous and muscular, an earth dragon sheds four sets of scales—earth red, mud brown, dull green and bright emerald — as he grows to maturity. He picks his way across the land on six massive legs, feasting on forests and trees. In his youth, a terrestrial dragon is

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sturdy, steadfast and conservative. Although not harsh as his fiery cousin, this patron of Taoist mystics is a taskmaster. In human guise, he often wanders the countryside dressed as a monk and offers enigmatic platitudes. For sustenance, this exclusive vegetarian consumes huge amounts of foliage, than raises the plants again with the power of his magic.

- Subterranean (metal) dragons are great hoarders, dwelling in the hidden places of the Earth. These entities are guardians of spiritual as well as physical treasures, and are jealous of their Heaven-ordained duty. Poised at the gates of the Elemental Courts of Earth and Metal, these grand beasts can see the greed or generosity in human hearts. A metal dragon glitters like diamonds and walks with a shambling gait on four leonine paws. Wise in the ways of science and mysticism, metal dragons are nonetheless creatures of caprice and ambition. Once, according to Akashic doctrine, they sought to overthrow the gods themselves. Five rebels were rounded up, branded with the seal of the Celestial Emperor and cast into cells beneath Mount Meru. Every so often, they stir and shake the foundations of the lost mountain, rippling the great Pool in the center of Akashic society. Two metal dragons refused to rebel. These entities, Wan Ko and Han Qwa Shen, now guard the Elemental Courts. Both are personable enough, but often forsake their posts to travel the Earth in humble forms. Wan Ko favors birds, in which form he snatches up fascinating t r i n k e t s and carries them back to his post. her stewardship. If asked, she might reply that no other study is essential to one who under- stands that flow. Han Qwa Shen takes the form of a woman with golden hair. Seducing mortals and spirits alike, she gathers the gifts they give her, puts them in a basket of reeds and carries them back to the Court of Earth.

- Great sea dragons are mottled green and deep blue in color, and they often reach three to four miles in length. Wingless and legless, these enormous serpents travel exclusively by swimming. These are the beasts called Leviathan, Jormungandr, Lung Yu and other, hidden names. In the sunless depths, they hold courts that would drive a mortal man mad. No force on Earth can resist such a beast, for, angered, it raises typhoons, earthquakes and tidal waves. Krakens and whales provide food for these dragons, and huge sea-Realms bleed into their domains. Every so often, a sea dragon takes a lesser form, swimming among the fish or hauling itself onto dry land to walk among men. If you pass a woman with dripping hair and eyes like a stormy sea, some folk say, you have seen a great sea dragon in the flesh. In later days, when the seas have been sullied and its great beasts slaughtered, sea dragons occasionally come to land to reason with the annoying creatures who dwell there. It is not the will of Heaven that humanity should be expunged, so the dragons forbear their wrath. Still, that woman with tossed-ocean eyes has a hard edge to her smile, and her hands twitch nervously, as if she were poised to strike.

CLASSIC DRAGONS: THE GREATER WYRMS

Greater wyrms, while quite powerful in their own right, are far smaller than their celestial cousins (they're typically several dozen feet long by maturity). Carnivorous and hungry, they embody the wrath of Hell or Heaven, and occasionally appear as agents of a huge Scourge backlash. While intelligent in the human sense, these dragons perceive the world through powerful senses and centuries of experience. Even the young ones are hundreds of years old and can remember when things were quite different — and far simpler.

These "Classical" dragons include:

- The drake has a heavily armored, serpentine body that is all but impervious to the efforts of bow and sword. A ridge of sharp spines runs along his back, and his four legs boast wicked claws. The drake has membranous, batlike wings and his tail terminates in a venomous barb. A forked tongue darts in and out of his horrible maw — a mouth equally capable of swallowing prey whole or belching forth fiery death. This dragon's eyes are luminous and hypnotic, able to mesmerize or cut through deception at will. A mountain-dweller of temperate lands, the drake embodies all the raw, unchecked fury of nature. Neither especially wise nor reflective, he's direct, aggressive and often cunning. Humans fascinate him as a rule; in his youth, the drake goes out of his way to examine them. Perhaps he's a fire-drake, devourer of virgins and slayer of knights. Maybe he is a brave wizard-ally, bridled for riding and devoted to his friends. He could take the role of the treasure-hoarder, secluded and



grouchy in his trove of artifacts. Most likely, he's all and more. Drakes play all of these roles in a single lifetime, then join the pile of bones on the Isle of Lamentations and return to the Great Wheel again.

- The wyrm (alternately orm) lairs in cold climes and closely resembles a giant serpent or eel. This beast is wingless and legless — only her draconian head, bearded and horned, gives outward sign of her true nature. Wyrms are equally at home in the secret places of the earth and in the depths of the sea. Aggressive and spiteful, a wyrm can strike with her deadly fangs or constrict with her coils. The blood of a wyrm is a virulent acid and toxin, capable of eating through the strongest mail and slaying with a touch. Of all dragons, wyrms are by far the least mannered and most malicious. They want nothing to do with humans or their ilk, except perhaps to savor a choice few as meals.

- The wyvern is a coiling, winged serpent whose hunting grounds extend from the very northern reaches of Europe all the way to Greece and Ethiopia. Although he's a huge beast — often 50 feet or more from

tip to tail — the wyvern's features are birdlike, right down to a single pair of legs that boast eagle talons. Among dragonkind, these beasts are regarded as the least intelligent (a favorite wyvern tactic involves laying along a riverbank with his mouth open in order to ambush unwary prey). Although a wyvern does not hesitate to eat humans, his favorite dish is elephant flesh. Tales speak of ferocious battles between bull elephants, but it's a rare one that can best a dragon.

SMALL COUSINS: THE LESSER DRAGONS

Creatures of a small world, lesser dragons are rarely considered dragons at all. Hardly larger than a horse or lion, they nevertheless share the magical characteristics of their relatives. Hatched from small, plain eggs, the lesser breed grow to maturity in 100 years or so, and then they remain more or less the same for human ages. As young beasts, many lesser dragons aspire to become greater ones. However, when the ages pass and no change occurs, the poor things slide into disappointment, unless some other dragon takes them in as his charges. Of all wyrmkind, the lesser dragons are the most sociable and most likely to walk beside a human for any length of time (in short, they make ideal monster characters...).

These beasts include:

- The elusive lindworm, which stalks the barren wastes. Although native to the cold mountains of northern and eastern Europe, these wingless dragons have been seen as far away as the steppes of Central Asia. Incapable of flight, a lindworm achieves incredible speed by running upright, propelled by its two powerful saurian legs. The creature's head, counterbalanced by a thick, lashing tail, snaps forward to breathe a cloud of poison or to gnash its prey between thick, sharp teeth. In later days, it could be said he is a dinosaur. Were it not for his intellect, flaming breath and occasional magic powers, that would be exactly what he is.
- The amphiptere is a winged, but legless, serpent that travels exclusively by flying. A greedy, selfish creature, she enjoys spending time in the upper reaches of the frankincense-bearing trees of her homeland, and jealously guards the precious resin from all who would harvest it. The amphiptere has a fierce disposition; her cry alone has been known to fell great warriors. In the Apocrypha, these dragons are depicted skimming across the plain, leading the chariots of Arabia into battle. The amphiptere is clever and insightful in temperament. Her words, while spiteful, often ring true. A prophet of sorts, she adores magi and puts on her best manners to impress them. Although most of her kind are strictly reptilian, several tales speak of amphipteres in human form, striding alongside magi like the proud, sensual creatures they are. Angered, these pretenders explode into dragon form, often laying waste to everyone around them before regaining their shallow tempers.
- A sphinx or dragon-cat resembles nothing so much as a tiger or panther with membranous wings, huge fangs, serpent's eyes and smoky breath. Some tales place a human head on the sphinx's shoulders, but such beasts are freaks at best. Native to India, the Americas and certain parts of Africa, this small but agile dragon shares the ferocity of its feline cousins and the mystic imagination of the celestial servants. Restless and solitary, she roams the forests, jungles and cliffs. The settled nests of greater beasts are mysteries to her. Why would a dragon wish to settle down? What she lacks in power, the sphinx makes up for in intellect. Perceptive and curious, she peers into pools of water and silvered glass to see places no mortal cat could. Like a kitten, she plays on the ground — or in the air! — with a predatory gleam in her eye. She occasionally makes friends with shamans or priests who can feed her deep hunger for riddles and lore. If motivated sufficiently, a skillful sphinx might take human form — such secrets are easy to learn if you've mastered the arts she has!
- The fu guardian waits at the entrance of Asian temples and Hermetic libraries. A watchdog of order and civility, this minor dragon resembles a cross between a lion, a dragon and a dog. Stocky and thick-maned, he glares at all comers with baleful eyes and solid teeth. His four muscular legs end in massive paws that hide two-inch claws capable of swiping holes in stone walls. Yet despite his fierce mien, this beast is the friendliest of his kind. Charged by the Heavens to safeguard virtuous folk and holy places, he

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upholds his duty with vigor and good nature. As bestial as he appears, the fu is quite smart. He lacks the wiles of the dragon-cat or the vision of the celestials, but he learns human languages with little effort. Like any good templegoer, he's polite and reserved, quiet unless spoken to. When he replies, the fu's voice thunders deep and resonant, like a drum with a rattle inside. It is said that no fu can break a promise. Such may be folklore, but most mystics consider it fact.

TRAITS

Note: Attribute Traits and Armor Ratings cover hatchlings, young, mature adult and elder dragons, respectively. The listings for Abilities, Willpower, Health Levels, and Attacks/Powers (which covers Merits, Flaws, and Special Advantages) represent a mature adult dragon.

GREAT CELESTIAL DRAGONS

The majesty of great celestial dragons goes far beyond the limitations of Storyteller Traits. Should such a creature appear, assume that he can do more or less whatever he wants, bending the elements to his will like an archmagus. Hundreds of feet (or even several miles!) long, this spirit-titan manifests as a great storm, dragon-shaped clouds or as a humble traveler (sometimes human, sometimes not) with the talents of a god — and the wisdom not to use them.

DRAKE TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 2/6/12/12, Dexterity 4/7/10/9, Stamina 3/5/10/10, Charisma 2/5/5/6, Manipulation 2/4/8/10, Appearance 6, Perception 4, Intelligence 2/4/6/7, Wits 5/5/6/7

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 6, Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Beast Lore (Dragons) 4, Culture 2, Intimidation 9, Wild Hunting 6

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** OK x 7, -1x7, -3x5, -5x3, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1/3/4/4

Attacks/Powers: Bite or claw for Str. + 3 dice, tail-lash for Str. + 2 dice; Acute Senses, Armor (4), Fearlessness, Hazardous Breath (fire; 5-10 dice of lethal damage)

WYRM TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1/5/13/12, Dexterity 4/8/11/10, Stamina 2/6/10/9, Charisma 2/2/1/1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 3/6/7/7, Intelligence 3/4/6/6, Wits 6

Abilities: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 2, Intimidation 7, Wild Hunting 6

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 6, -3 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1/3/3/3

Attacks/Powers: Bite for Str. + 3 dice, constrict for 8 dice; Acute Senses, Armor (3), Fearlessness, Flexible, No Dexterous Limbs, Venom (acid; 3 lethal Health Levels of damage per turn of contact)

WYVERN TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1/5/9/9, Dexterity 3/5/9/9, Stamina 2/5/6/7, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3/4/5/8, Perception 2/3/3/4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 5, Brawl 6, Flying 5, Intimidation 6, Wild Hunting 4

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1x5, -3x3, -5x3, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 4

Attacks/Powers: Bite or claw for Str. + 3 dice; Acute Senses, Arcane Background (1), Armor (4), Bizarre

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Hunger (elephant flesh), Fearlessness , Homing Instinct, Nightsight, Offensive to Animals (a successful Perception + Alertness roll to notice a predatory wyvern causes elephants to stampede), Weak Spot (under the scales where a wyvern's neck meets its wing-joints), Wings

LINDWORM TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 2/3/6/5, Dexterity 2/4/7/6, Stamina 2/3/5/5, Charisma 2/4/5/5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Foraging 3, Intimidation 6, Survival 3, Wild Hunting 3

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 3, -3 x 3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 2

Attacks/Powers: Bite for Str. + 3 dice; Acute Senses, Armor (2), Extra Speed, Fearlessness, Hazardous Breath (poisonous vapor; subtract two dice from all Dice Pools for two turns), Perfect Balance

AMPHIPTERE TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1/2/4/5, Dexterity 2/5/7/7, Stamina 1/3/4/4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Flying 5, Intimidation 3, Linguistics 1, Wild Hunting 2

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 4, -1 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1/2/3/3

Attacks/Powers: Bite for Str. + 2 dice; Armor (3), Compulsion (Defend Your Territory), Feast of Nettles (3), Human Speech, Information Font, No Dexterous Limbs, Shapechanger , Soul-Sense/Death-Sense, Wings

SPHINX/DRAGON-CAT TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1/2/3/3, Dexterity 2/5/6/7, Stamina 1/2/3/3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 3/5/9/10, Wits 6

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Enigmas 6, Foraging 4, Flying 2, Intimidation 4, Lore (Regional) 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Wild Hunting 3

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Bite for Str. + 2 dice, claw for Str. + 3 dice; Acute Senses, Compulsion (Collect and Solve Puzzles), Enhancement, Fearlessness, Hazardous Breath (4 dice of fire damage), Healing Lick (3), Human Speech, Mesmerism, Nightsight, Shapechanger , Shy, Spirit Vision, Wings

FU GUARDIAN TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 2/4/7/7, Dexterity 2/4/6/6, Stamina 2/3/6/5, Charisma 3/5/6/7, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Culture 1, Intimidation 4, Linguistics 3, Wild Hunting 3

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 3

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Attacks/Powers: Bite for Str. + 3 dice, claw for Str. + 2 dice; Acute Senses, Acute Smell, Armor (1), Bond-Sharing, Compulsion (Uphold Your Word), Enhancement, Healing Lick (3), Human Speech, Mystick Shield (1), Spirit Vision



Great Drake

There are many tales concerning the origins of these awesome beings. One such tells of how, when Creation spilled forth from the Garden of Eden, man was not the only wicked beast expelled. The Deceiver's silvered tongue whispered temptation into the hearts and minds of many of God's creatures. Poisoned thoughts caught the beasts of Eden as well, turning them from the path of God to ways of evil. The foul ideas planted included notions of violence, theft, murder and unnatural selection. But man was not alone in his theft from the Tree of Knowledge. The gliding lizards were not the most intelligent of God's creations. Tempted by sweet fruits and fat insects, Lucifer seized their attention with ease. "You could be as wise as man. Wiser still!" He spoke. It was true. The forbidden fruit did have that power. "We are too small!" protested the lizards, unsure they could even sink their teeth into the apple's flesh. Lucifer produced a small basket of berries in response. "Eat these and you will grow large enough. In time you will continue to grow in proportion to your wisdom." Happy with this proposition, the basket was quickly emptied by the dull-witted beasts. In moments they had grown: from butterflies to rats, from rats to dogs. And they were pleased. En masse they swarmed the Tree, dining on the fruits' forbidden flesh, staining their maws with the sweet juice of wisdom and swallowing the seeds of wisdom. In that moment, they knew what they had done: They had been fooled and had lost paradise. Rage overtook them. They took flight, fleeing God's paradise in shame. Why it was not simply enough to cast them from Eden is uncertain even to them. Like all his gifts, Lucifer's had its price: a hidden cost and unmentioned effect. In time, the beasts would learn of it. They were the first and would be the last of their kind. They would grow with age, unable to die of causes natural. Violent death resulted in rebirth in their original form. This was not initially seen as negative. The toll of violent deaths, however, addled many of the great beasts' minds. Some retreated to sleep, hoping to awake to God's forgiveness and find their place in Heaven. Others raged against creation, punishing sinners and pious alike for perceived slights. Madness took its toll.

Other legends concerning the drakes, ones told by pagans, proclaim the creatures the oldest living beings, leftovers from some previous age of the world, or perhaps the rulers of the now-long gone Golden Age, when men and beasts walked as one and spoke the same tongue. These deposed kings now slink off to live in the abandoned or hidden places of the world, waiting to finally die when the Winter Without End descends once more, as it did in the past. Dragons are not just magical creatures; they are mages in their own right. Their magic comes through an ancient affinity with the world one which slowly fades as the Mythic Age dies, making way for reason, which has no room for dragons. As a Greater Drake progresses through its life, its affinity with seasonal magic comes of age: When young, it is strong in Spring magic, but as time passes, its Spring affinity fades, giving way to greater Summer, then Autumn, then Winter. There are no longer any Great Drakes in the world who are not now in their Winter phase. Soon, there will be no dragons left in the world at all.

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 10, Stamina 10, Charisma 7, Manipulation 9, Appearance 0, Perception 5, Intelligence 12, Wits 10

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Cosmology 7, Enigmas 5, Intimidation 9, Occult 7, Subterfuge 5

Willpower: 10

Essence: 20 **Health Levels:** OK x 8, -1 x 8, -3 x 6, -5 x 4, Incapacitated **Armor:** +6B/+6L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +4L), tail-lash (Str +5B), fire-breath (8A)

Powers: Fearless, Immortal, Spellcasting

Weaknesses: Unknown

Essence: When ground into a fine powder, a single Great Drake scale may be ingested for up to 10 points of Essence. The powder may be divided into tenths and mixed with food. It will retain its power for

any length of time so long as it is not cooked. This Essence is especially sympathetic with the working of any primal magic, or in the making of longevity elixirs. What's more, the fires from a Great Drake's belly can be used to forge items of incredible power. This requires the cooperation of a living Great Drake, however — magically compelling these beings is a nigh impossible task. Items forged with such fire — swords, wands, rings, etc. — become sources of Essence, that can naturally regenerate any Essence drawn from them.

Lesser Drake

When the youngest of the Greater Drakes grew lonely in the early years of his first life, he found no comfort among his own kind. Desperate for companionship, he turned to his lore of creation. Taking clay of the earth, breath from the sky, and a scale from his hide he combined these with the lightning and fire of creation. In that moment, the first pair of lesser dragons was born. So pleased was he with his creation that he did not see the hunger in their eyes. Within moments of their birth, they fell upon him, devouring him and all his knowledge. The pair took to the air and soon found a new lair. They produced a treacherous brood of their own. The wisdom gathered from the Greater Drake was passed on to the hatchlings, though not completely. With each successive generation, these dragons have grown less intelligent until those found today, ones barely brighter than the village idiot.

These dragons of knightly lore can be found in a handful of remote lairs in several parts of the civilized world. With rare exceptions, they are the color of spilt blood, sporting wings attached firmly to their forelimbs. They stretch the length of several horses and measure untold stones in weight. Most are quiet, save during mating season and the occasional feeding frenzy. Do not take this to mean they aren't vicious beasts -- they will gladly swallow a man whole while he is still a horse. A few of them take to a form of banditry, stealing from travelers, occasionally eating them and their horses as well. The legends or their love of gold are true, but misunderstood. Anything shiny grabs their attention.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 8, Stamina 8, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0, Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Intimidation 6, Occult 2

Willpower: 6 **Essence:** 10 **Health Levels:** OK x 6, -1 x 5, -3 x 4, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L/+2A

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +4L), tail-lash (Str +4B), fire-breath (5L)

Powers: Fearless, Immortal

Weaknesses: With each death it suffers, a reborn Lesser Drake loses one die in an Attribute and one in an Ability. The traits above represent a strong Lesser Drake. Once all Attributes reach 3, only skills are lost until none remain.

Essence: Like their elder brethren, the scales of a Lesser Drake may be ground for a Essence-yielding powder. The difference in size and magical potency between the two beasts reduces the effectiveness, giving only three points of Essence per scale. The eyes of a Lesser Drake, when pickled like an egg, provide five Essence points apiece.

Sin Dragons

The codification of sins by St. Gregory the Great spawned a small number of sects in the late 5th

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century. Believing they could achieve spiritual and moral purity by expunging themselves of these sins, they spent years searching for ways to live better in the eyes of God. When the years proved that human nature made it nigh impossible to avoid the seven deadly sins, the course of their path changed. Members of more than one sect ended their lives in sacrifice, certain that the sins of the flesh could be absolved once the body was left behind. Others fell to darker paths, believing it was not their own failure, but that of mankind. They destroyed entire villages in the name of expunging sin, never once seeing the irony of their own acts. Ultimately the movement dwindled and became a distant memory to all but the peoples of a remote village nestled on the edges of the Black Forest. The priest of the village, a borderline heretic, had a vision of a great magical rite capable of ripping the very sins from human flesh and banishing them from the world.

For forty days and forty nights, in accord with God's punishment for sins, the flock fasted. On the forty-first day, amid the prayer and song of service, an angel entered the church doors. "You have done well," he said. "Your sins are absolved and will be nevermore." Blue-white light filled the church, drowning out even the sun. When the light faded, seven vicious beasts stood before the congregation howling for blood. They found it. Once the last of the congregation fell to the new-formed beasts, silence reigned. Each creature looked to the others with innate knowledge of their place in the world. The time to find it had come.

Envy

Envy's natural form is a great sea serpent, far longer than any vessel. A green-fanged dragon's head sits at the top of a vast, serpentine body, with two pairs of clawed fins. Sleek and supple, Envy delights in wrapping his body around ships multiple times before depriving them of their crew and cargo, then consigning all to the depths. The green-eyed monster makes his home swimming the northern seas between England, Iceland, and the Northlands. For centuries he was able to encourage raiding parties to cross the vast waters to steal from neighbors. Now that his primary agents have retired from their raiding ways, he seeks new agents to infect with the mix of jealousy and anger that he finds so entertaining. He delights in tempting men to try to steal his treasure or that of others. By deliberately leaking tales of a hidden grotto filled with the treasures of piracy, he passes time in wait to catch thieves within his lair. These unfortunates he then compels to steal on his behalf.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Expression 5, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 6

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +3L), tail-lash (Str + 3B), constriction (Str +5L)

Powers: Aura of Envy, Fearless, Immortal

Weaknesses: Tales of treasures more spectacular than any Envy possesses can be used to lure him from his lair.

Essence: Envy's possessions hold his power. The very act of thieving even the smallest trinket from his collection yields a point of Essence to the thief.

Aura of Envy: Unlike some of his fellows, Envy cannot take human form. He can, however, speak human language with silvered tongue. His very words induce envy in those who hear them. Roll Envy's

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Manipulation + Expression (difficulty 7) opposed by the listeners' Willpower (difficulty 7); if the serpent wins, the listener is overcome with envy toward whatever or whoever Envy speaks of, whether it be a rage to destroy a newly perceived rival or a need to steal something from someone. Note that Envy rarely shows himself to those he speaks to; he most often slips near to the shore or a vessel and whispers

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loudly enough for people to hear him. Those who fall for his honeyed words assume it is their own inner voice goading them on. Those who resist may assume it's the Devil speaking, even if they do see the serpent himself.

Gluttony

This great, fat snake coils in the northern Black Forest, not far from the location of his birth. The coal-black lizard didn't need to travel far to find a home suitable to his needs. Unlike some of his kin, he has no wings and thus cannot fly. His ground speed in serpent form, however, more than makes up for the loss. He can speed through vast tracts of land in mere moments, leaving huge clouds of dust and a trail of debris in his wake. Shortly after his birth, he struck a pact with a farming village. For three sheep a week, he "protects" the village from the neighboring monsters. Four other villages also fell prey to this bargain, no one realizing that the only creature to fear in the area had become far too content to raid them.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 9, Stamina 8, Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0/2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 7, Awareness .3, Brawl 5, Expression 3, Intimidation 5

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 1 -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +3L), tail-lash (Str +2B), poison mist

Powers: Fearless, Immortal, Shapeshifting {into a human or a four-legged, twelve-foot long serpent form}

Weaknesses: Gluttony is easily distracted by food fresh, stale or still kicking.

Essence: Gluttony's venom can be mixed into olive oil and burned, slowly releasing Essence in the resulting smoke. If inhaled, the vapors from one draught of venom will release three points of Essence.

Poison Mist: Gluttony is able to produce a fine mist of paralyzing contact poison, that can quickly disable any in his path. The poison is potent, rendering those failing a Stamina roll (difficulty 6) instantly unconscious. Those with two successes or fewer are dazed, performing all tasks at +2 difficulty for the remainder of the scene. Gluttony may use this attack only once per scene. The mist dissipates after five turns.

Greed

The Serpent of Greed fled into the mountains of Italy to search for a new home. Few saw the great black beast cut through the night. None saw his arrival, in the guise of a beggar who asked for what gifts he could get, his silvered tongue always loosening even the tightest of purse strings. Soon, he had amassed enough of a fortune to set up business. Again, his honeyed voice persuaded the unwitting, this time to attract partners for his Gluttony Envy ventures. Their fortunes added to his and grew at the same time. It was not long before he was a business force. For decades, he has manipulated the local mercantile houses. Minions perform his bidding, building the routes, competing, and otherwise growing wealth - not to distribute to others, but to collect for himself. He appears to be a corpulent, wealthy Italian merchant with villas throughout the peninsula. Only those highly attuned to magic may catch a glimpse of his true, serpentine form — unless he chooses to throw off his disguise and unleash his full powers.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6, Charisma 7, Manipulation 8, Appearance 0/3, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

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Abilities: Academics 2, Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Finances 5, Brawl 2, Expression 5, Intimidation 4

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +3L), tail-lash (Str +2B)

Powers: Fearless, Immortal, Shapeshifting (into a human or a four-legged, twelve-foot long serpent form)

Weaknesses: Greed is attracted to valuables, though not to the point of stupidity as many assume. He can be bargained with, even if he has caught you stealing from him.

Essence: Greed's power is in his wealth. A pound of precious coins stolen from his coffers, when melted down and used in the creation of a talisman or other magical item, reduces the difficulty of creation by two.

Lust

This great red beast took to the sky after its birth, flying across the waters to the British Isles. The Serpent of Lust is a slim and supple drake, not so large as some of its kin, but still of formidable size. Its wings stretch half again its length. Its shimmering scales are as red as rubies, making for an attractive creature, were it not for the man-sized fangs and spear-length claws. Finding a great many people to amuse itself with among the mountain tribes, Lust took the shape of a comely girl and began a trail of mischief that has broken hearts, marriages and lives. As "she" (the true serpent is hermaphroditic) travels from village to town, she sloughs her form as a snake sheds, changing size, features, and even gender, as befits his mood. In each form, the creature carries one bit of vanity: Its ruby scales take the form of red garnet adornments. It cares not a whit for completing the game, only in its playing. So long as there is someone to tempt....

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8, Charisma 8, Manipulation 6, Appearance 1/8, Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Expression 5, Intimidation 5, Seduction 5, Stealth 3, Subterfuge 5

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +3L), tail-lash (Str +2B)

Powers: Aura of Lust, Fearless, Immortal, Shapeshifting (into a human or a four- legged, twelve foot long serpent form)

Weaknesses: Lust lives for the mating dance, the tempting of men and women to succumb to their more bestial urges. Nothing tempts the creature more than a happy couple, clearly in love and dedicated to one another. Anyone in possession of Lust's garnets is immune to its wiles.

Essence: Lust's garnets hold a small portion of her strength. Each holds two Essence points and is capable of containing up to 10 more points, should a mage choose to use it as a focus for matters of the heart and loins.

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Aura of Lust: The serpent can evoke extreme, unthinking, and even bestial lust in others with but a wink and a smile. They will go to any length to have him or her (regardless of gender), even to the point of killing loved ones who stand in their way. Roll Lust's Charisma + Seduction (difficulty 7) opposed by a chosen target's Willpower (difficulty 7).

Pride

The scaled Serpent of Pride makes his lair beneath the catacombs of Rome, in tunnels long sealed off by his own servants. A heavy, locked door is the only useable entrance or exit; the corridor outside it leads to the palatial residence of his current human form. He spends time here among high society, always careful to be just a little more handsome, a little better dressed, and surprisingly, a little better mannered than anyone else. He leaves most of his mock mortal affairs in the hands of trusted — and usually duped — human servants. He keeps a persona for decades at a time, shedding it only as the disguise grows too old. Eventually, the old guise "dies," witnessed only by his "heir," a handsome boy recently adopted. Pride's dragon form features a confusing, vibrantly patterned series of blue and green scales, with feathered wings and the tail plumage of a peacock. It is thought that he is now somewhat embarrassed by his native form, which is perhaps why it is rarely seen.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5, Charisma 7, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0/6, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Etiquette 5, Expression 4, Intimidation 6, Performance (Acting) 5, Subterfuge 3

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str + 3L), tail-lash (Str +2B)

Powers: Fearless, Immortal, Shapeshifting (into a human or a four-legged, twelve-foot long serpent form)

Weaknesses: Pride is particularly fond of his appearance. If wounded, the very prospect of a scar will enrage him enough that he reverts to dragon form and goes on a rampage.

Essence: A lock of Pride's hair in human form can be burned to release a single point of Essence. Similarly, if one can be found, a tail plume used as a focus reduces the difficulty of illusion or shapeshifting spells by one.

Sloth

Sloth is a great, dirty-brown wyrm, completely unconcerned with his appearance. Unlike his kin, he has no wings or limbs. He is a huge, fat snake with a dragon's head. As his name suggests, his body is a solid coil of reptilian rope, its smooth surface broken only by the occasional lump of a still-digesting meal. Sloth still lives in the Black Forest. True to his name, he never left. He spends the majority of his days sleeping under a coating of earth, rock and leaves. When he feels the occasional urge to eat, he shifts about slightly and opens his toothy maw. A scent drifts from the depths of his throat to attract local fauna, convincing them that his mouth is a fine, warm, safe place to sleep.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Animal Ken 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Intimidation 4, Subterfuge 3

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Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str +3L), tail-lash (Str +2B)

Powers: Aura of Sloth, Fearless, Immortal

Weaknesses: Lazy. So much so that his very presence makes anyone near him fatigued for no reason whatsoever.

Essence: There is no valuable Essence to be gleaned from the Serpent of Sloth.

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Aura of Sloth: Sloth emits a palpable aura that forces an imbalance in men's humors, evoking a feeling of malaise and general apathy. So long as one is within an hour's walk of him, one suffers this effect, though it causes no game effects until one is within 30 paces. Once a person is this close, any activities requiring moderate exertion require a Willpower roll against difficulty 5. The closer to the beast one is, the stronger the effect; the difficulty increases by 1 for every 10 paces closer one gets. Once in the beast's open mouth, a Willpower roll against difficulty 9 is required to avoid falling asleep.

Wrath

When the Serpent of Wrath burst forth into the world, her hostility shook the very ground. Her thoughts of aggression and revenge rippled out until a willing host was found for her anger. The Huns crashed through Europe, sating the beast's temper. She dwells in sleep beneath the frosts of western Russia. When next she awakes, it will surely be at the scent of slaughter. Her slumbering form is nonetheless frightening. Deep blue scales protect the few parts of her body not covered in sharp, bone spikes. The floor below her is littered with sloughed spikes from previous years' moltings. Two rows of sharp teeth fill her maw, though only the great fangs extending beneath her snout are visible in her current position.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 8, Stamina 8, Charisma 2, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0/2, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Intimidation 7

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, -1 x 5, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: +4B/+4L

Attacks: Bite or claw (Str+4L), tail-lash (Str +4B), fire-breath (5 L)

Powers: Aura of Anger, Fearless, Immortal, Shapeshifting (into a human or a four-legged, twelve foot long serpent form)

Weaknesses: Wrath has the temper she'd be expected to have, as well as a fondness for the spoils of war. A sufficiently cowed and suppliant person can escape her anger with the proper show of respect and gifts. Anyone who becomes the creature's direct target will find himself pursued by man, woman and beast (servants of the serpent), as well as the serpent herself, until all are dead, including the offender.

Essence: A spike from Wrath's hide (shed through molting or plucked from its skin) can be ground and mixed with a small bucket's worth of water to provide two Essence points.

Aura of Anger: Wrath projects a force of will that makes all within a day's walk of her irritable. Within an hour's distance, tempers flare, erupting into petty arguments over seemingly important issues. By the time one is within 30 paces, all but the most resolute are nearly constantly squabbling. Only fear of waking the beast can stop the aura's victims from attacking her. At 30 paces, a Willpower roll against 5 difficulty is needed to retain composure; add one to the difficulty every 10 paces closer to the beast.

FENG-HUANG

One fire burns out another's burning, One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish.
— William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet

The feudal lords had turned their authority over to Emperor Shih Huang Ti. The common people

worked on building the Great Wall to keep out invaders from the north. Shih Huang Ti ordered the construction of roads and canals to bring the people together. He was a fair and just ruler — or so it was often said. He was a god among men when even the great Buddha did not yet walk the land. Shih Huang Ti's people mourned his death deeply. They laid him out on a dais made of jade and gold and wrapped him in the finest silks. That very night, the invaders came. Shih Huang Ti's soldiers, weakened by their wailing grief, let their defenses down. The battle raged all night. Shih Huang Ti watched from behind death-jellied eyes. He listened through frozen ears to the clashes, the cries of fear and pain, and to the death-rattles. His still heart ached.

Finally, at dawn, when it seemed that the invaders would prevail, a spark from a burning hut set fire to Shih Huang Ti's robes. Unnoticed, his body went up in flames. A single aching note arose from the fire, a bird call so pure and wondrous that it stopped the fighting. Everyone turned to watch as a great plumed bird rose from the flames. Blazing like a burning parchment, it flew up on rainbow wings into the morning sky and circled overhead. The invaders fled. As the barbarians were chased down and slaughtered beneath the gaze of Heaven, the fenghuang sang its grief for the fallen soldiers, then disappeared into the clouds to live among the gods.

DESCRIPTION

Like the phoenix of ancient Egypt, the feng-huang arose from the flames, reborn and renewed. Many cultures have similar stories, though all think that their own feng-huang is unique. In truth, several of these wondrous creatures exist, and they continue to be born. Rarely do the proper conditions coincide to create one, however — it takes a special combination of death, extreme human passion and fire to reincarnate the human soul in this fantastic form. The rebirth, it is said, is reward for a life boldly lived. Firebirds occasionally feature in witch-tales, rising from the corpses of executed sorcerers and taking vengeance. Revenge, however, does not seem to be a feng-huang's calling. Although some stories tell of angry firebirds, the majority of them tell of hope, not horror. By the reckoning of sages, the burning purifies a soul, allowing it to rise upward to a better state. Perhaps the holocausts that follow some feng-huang sightings are necessary sacrifices, purgations of some great evil that must be cleansed before the soul-bird can rise.

By all accounts, a feng-huang is immortal. Nothing can wound it, and few obstacles can keep it from rising to the sky. Firebirds are too exalted to remain earthbound for long. Even those who remain long enough to finish their tasks eventually take flight and disappear. A creature of elements, form and spirit, a feng-huang needs no food. It cannot reproduce, nest or flock with others of its kind, for obvious reasons. Occasionally, though, a human mystic or a seeker of truths forms a short but loving bond with a flaming bird. When that person is inconsolable, trapped or otherwise in need, the feng-huang appears. When it speaks — which it rarely does — the bird crackles like a hearth-fire or sings like trickling water. Sages who have tried to decipher the words cannot capture their essence. After all, how does one transcribe a flame? Nevertheless, a person who hears these fire-words or water-songs is filled with sudden comfort and peace. The feng-huang has spoken and things will be right in the end.

IMAGE

Ecstatic color marks the plumage of a feng-huang. A welter of tail feathers ripples behind the bird, glowing like a comet dripping rainbows as it flies. A crest of quills at the back of the firebird's head blazes with scarlet intensity. Its cerulean eyes have no pupils, but motes of gold and silver glitter within. Fans of midnight-blue lashes fringe the fenghuang's eyes, and its wings strike sparks on the empty air. Sleek and long-bodied like the soul, this mystic avian displays a rare grace. On the ground, it flows, bright and liquid, rather than hopping and thrusting like a common bird. Silent save for the crackling of its voice, the fabulous creature regards all things with a wide, encompassing gaze. Each sound it makes carries the passion of a spirit that has glimpsed Heaven and finds it glorious.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You may have seen the shores of perfection, but there are things you must do before leaving this world. In life, you embraced existence with vigor and wonder; now you see what all the fuss was about. As dark as the world can be — and you have seen how dismal that darkness is — infinity spins promises that no mortal mind can comprehend. Perhaps you speak in elemental sounds because no human thought or word can encompass the truths you have glimpsed. Despair comes from a trapped and narrow view. You have transcended that pit and no disaster can extinguish your flames now.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 6, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 6, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2 **Abilities:** Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 1, Brawl 1, Elusion 2, Empathy 2, Flying 4, Intimidation 1

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** N/A **Armor Rating:** N/A

Attacks/Powers: Claw for 2 dice, swoop for 3 dice; Bond-Sharing, Fearlessness, Immunity (Death), Loyalty, Mesmerism, Rapid Healing (Instantaneous), Soothing Voice, Soul-Sense, Wings

GHUL (GHILAN)

View yourselves In the mirror of self-love. — Philip Massinger, "The Parliament of Love

And so the ghul said goodbye to its father and left the Darkness to wander the world in search of man-flesh. It kept to the lonely places where man's wrath could not find it, and it ventured out only when the hunger became too much to bear. In time, this eater-of-dirt came on a traveler skirting the green river-land. The ghul could smell his sweat and hear the rumblings of his voice. It followed the scents and sounds and watched from the shadows as the traveler set up his tent. Dressing itself in the raiment of a nubile, perfumed woman, the ghul wept so that the traveler would hear and come out to comfort "her" with caresses and tender words. So perfect was the ghul's disguise that the man did not see its hooves. Impassioned, the traveler knelt beside the ghul and implored her to cease her tears. The deceiver spoke of dead husbands and lonely, fearful nights. The traveler beseeched God Himself to grant her comfort. At length, the "woman" bent to kiss the man and his heart melted like butter at her caress. As he rose to his feet, the ghul drew the human close in an oaken embrace. When the ghul returned to its father, there was naught but bones to mark where the traveler had stood.

DESCRIPTION

A mortal and his companions went to the Underworld in search of one they had lost. They foolishly trespassed where the living should never go, and the creatures of the Darkness descended on them. Once they had tasted mortal flesh, the ghilan were no longer satisfied with chewing on the souls of the damned. These children of Iblis, Prince of Darkness, went out among men to tempt and feed. At first, these spirit-things wore the skins of the mortals they had slain. In time those disguises rotted, so the ghilan procured other, finer garments. They roved the land on a killing spree that took many lives. Soon the shah sent his warriors to capture the ghilan, thinking they were merely men with dark hearts. The warriors never returned, but the ghilan learned that they must hide their natures and stalk their victims with secretive care. A ghul knows that emotions drive men. With cleverness, it changes its form, creating a disguise that lures a victim by preying on his passions. The creature can become anything, though its body mass remains the same, and it can never transform its mule's hooves. The night-beast cleverly hides them with flowing cloth or strapped - on shoes, but cannot change them as it can the rest of its body. This pestilential thing survives by eating flesh — any kind of flesh. It is the succulent taste of betrayal, however, that makes the grandest meal. To prepare such feasts, the ghul creates a disguise, fosters trust in its victims, then tortures them when they're at their most vulnerable. These connoisseurs

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of misery seem to enjoy the emotions that seep into the flesh of their victims. A ghul can often be recognized by the distinctive killings associated with its favored "flavor." A ghul sometimes stalks its victim for weeks or months in advance, breaking into the victim's home and looking through his belongings. A methodical predator, it seeks to learn everything it can about its target in order to perfect its intended disguise. It may steal a picture of the one it plans to emulate — a lost love, a dead relative and practice until the illusion is perfect. With sadistic pleasure, the ghul chooses the person its victim would most like to see, then begins its dance.

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A ghul's patience has no bounds; the creature takes its time, giving its victim glimpses of itself, leaving hints, smells and memories to taunt the victim. Gradually, it spins its betrayer's web, drawing the victim in, making him believe that his beloved has returned. Then one day, the ghul shows itself in its disguise and spins the final strands of the trap. It says all the right words and does all the right things. It has prepared. Once the victim is caught, the ghul toys with him for a while, extending its own anticipation, delaying its satisfaction. In the end, however, the ghul reveals itself for what it is. With bony, pitted claws, the spawn of Iblis turns its web of deceit into a cradle of pain. The longer the dying, the sweeter the feast. As a creature not of this world, a ghul has special regenerative abilities. The only way to kill one is with a single blow. If the attack takes more than one strike, resistance has come too late. The ghul's powerful connection to the Underworld invests it with new life and the hunt begins again. Only by incinerating the body can the curse of the ghul be denied. Though originally hailing from the lands of the dead, ghuls have adapted to the demands of survival and expansion in the living world. The foul things procreate by lying with a recently dead woman. In three days, a new ghul emerges from the corpse. Three days after that, the "child" has grown to maturity. Fortunately for the world at large, a single ghul may reproduce only once each century. Allah is merciful indeed.

IMAGE

A ghul's shapechanging ability allows it to take any form, though its hooves—symbols of its demonic origin — never change. In its natural demeanor, a ghul has ruddy skin lined with pulsing veins. From the creature's waist down, thick coppery hair covers the legs of an ass; those limbs end in hooves that shine like razorsharp obsidian. Whether it be male or female, a ghul's sexual organs stand out, bloated and vulgar, in the midst of all that hair. Even the female of the species has a penis of sorts (though smaller than the male's) that it uses to impregnate dead bodies. Tall, pointed donkey ears frame the creature's sculpted, angular face. Gleaming red eyes, irised like a cat's, see through the darkness and into the hearts of men.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Stolen back from the edges of Hell, you walk the night feeding on the passions that led you to that realm in the first place. You could call it revenge, I suppose, to feed on the bodies of sinners like yourself, but such pathetic rationalizations make for a poor repast. The fact is, your brief stay in the Underworld taught you of the appetizing banquet to be had from human passions. Like any connoisseur, you have learned that the most savory dishes mingle the spices. Judging by your foul habits and grotesque appearance, a bystander might call you crude. The truth is quite the opposite. Not ghost, demon or man, you take the best and worst attributes of all three. In the beginning, it's true that you may have been a sewer-rat and a fucker of corpses, but these days you have learned the joys of sophistication. One cannot eat all the time, and the hunt (and its attendant dance steps) has taught you the joys of masquerade. Oh, some of your kind may leap out and gnaw the faces off their dinners, but you have cultivated a sense of human achievement. It's fascinating what you learn when digging about in the remnants of a human life. Perhaps the real charm in becoming another person lies in the assumption of identity — in taking on, if only for a little while, the trappings of a new life. Or in submerging your dream-memories of Hell and the horror of your own reflection beneath an endless tide of new faces, stolen passions and fresh, deluded meat.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 7, Charisma 1, Manipulation 5, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 1, Subterfuge 5, Survival 2

Willpower: 4

Armor Rating: 0

Health Levels: OK x 2, -1 x 3, -3, -5, Incapacitated (An attack must do all 8 Health Levels of damage at

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once, after soaking, to Incapacitate a ghul — otherwise, it remains at -5 as long as it continues to consistently take damage. An Incapacitated ghul will rise at the -3 Level once combat is over if it isn't destroyed.)

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 3 dice, kick for 4 dice; Bizarre Hunger (Human flesh), Human Speech, Rapid Healing, Shapechanger, Soul-Sense/ Death-Sense

Goblin

These fiendish beasts live in the darker forests of most of Europe. They look like misshapen childrens' dolls grown large, left in the peat for months then brought to life, complete with a taste for human flesh. No two are precisely alike; only their foul stench, poisoned claws, rotted yellow teeth, and boil-infested green skin are common features. Stories describe them as having noses (and not), possessed of extra limbs, hairy, bald, vocal, mute and countless other variations. They fight with abandon, having little fear of death — or at least lack the sense to fear it. They seem perfectly happy with their own martial prowess, crude as it may be. It is not unheard of, however, for the presumably elder members of a motley pack to sport armor or weapons gained from previous encounters with knights.

Attributes: Strength .3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 0, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Athletics (Running) 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 3, -2 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated

Armor: + 1B/+1L, or as per scavenged armor

Attacks: Claws (Str +2L), or as per scavenged weapon

Weakness: Goblin weaknesses are always spectacularly fatal. This is small comfort, for these weaknesses are as varied as goblins are. The most commonly known are fire, sunlight, holy water, and fresh flowers.

Essence: Goblins are imbued with no Essence desired by a sane mage, for their forms are not the only things twisted beyond the natural. A goblin heart pulped to a thick paste in a marble mortar and pestle is a potent source of Essence (providing up to five points), but highly dangerous — each point spent during spellcasting is considered two points for the purposes of determining Scourge effects. Goblin-heart Essence must be prepared in a marble bowl, lest its potency seep away.

Golem/Embodied Vengeance Curse

The curse of vengeance is a powerful one, so strong that, once unleashed, it cannot be undone except through someone's death. Certain powerful curses can give form to this urgent vengeance, enlivening a body to destroy those who did someone wrong. The constructs' unique shapes are often determined by local custom, local materials, and even magical tradition. Tales of monsters made of sticks, stone, clay, earth and even wheat litter local legends across Europe. The curse of Nature's Vengeance is known only to the more learned practitioners of the Old Faith, trusted only to those who have garnered enough wisdom to avoid using the curse in haste. It is fortunate that this is so, for the curse calls forth an angry spirit of the land, embodied in native foliage, given the shape of a man. The spirit cannot be destroyed, only delayed. It will not rest until the curse's victim or its issuer is slain. The curse is equally dangerous for the creator, for a Backlash on the casting may cause the embodied curse to hunt her down instead of its intended victim. (Golem) This creates a creature of living mud or clay to

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punish the wicked. It can be stopped only when the caster destroys the scripture placed within the golem's body.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 8, Charisma 0, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Abilities: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 5, Stealth (wilderness) 4

Willpower: 1 **Health Levels:** OK x 4, -1 x 4, -3, Destroyed. Once destroyed, the golem's body dissipates to re-form at a later time until the curse is resolved.

Armor: +3B/+5L

Attacks: Limb bash (Str +3), charge (Str +5)

Weaknesses: None

GRYPHON

Yes, I am proud; I must be proud to see Men not afraid of God, afraid of me. — Alexander Pope

Bakhati Rugitti Sokto Pathor Rhyane Akkallah Rez, a wealthy and renowned gryphon, guarded his treasure in the mountains, his nest perched on a shelf overlooking the valley where the river carried gold and gems. When he flew, the expanse of his wings would hide the sun and cast a great shadow across the land. In this way, Bakhati reminded thieves of his power and might. A wealthy woman from Susa, in the ancient kingdom of Elam, brought her young son to Bakhati and bade him to guard the boy, who was to be king one day. She offered the gryphon a golden chalice in exchange for his aid, and Bakhati agreed. For three days and three nights, the gryphon fought back those who would steal the boy from him. He did not sleep, ever-vigilant and loyal to his promise. Wave after wave of warriors and dark creatures assaulted Bakhati's nest, but the gryphon turned them all away. In the afternoon of the third day, the attacks stopped and a beautiful young man came up the mountain, calling for an audience with Bakhati. The gryphon met the man and heard his offers of wealth — offers more glorious than any the woman from Susa could ever make. In the end, however, he refused the man's promises of riches in exchange for the boy.

Bakhati's loyalty proved greater than even his own greed. That night, the woman returned and revealed herself to be a messenger of the god Ormuzd, and the boy grew to his full height and maturity so he could speak with Bakhati as a man. The boy-become-man said his name was Ahriman, god of the Underworld. He bowed his head to Bakhati and then sunk down through the earth into his realm. The woman explained that this had been a test to see if Bakhati was a good creature or an evil one. Bakhati had proven his goodness. As reward, Ormuzd proclaimed that Bakhati would never again cast a shadow on the land, and granted him the ability to hide from mortal eyes.

DESCRIPTION

Artifacts pre-dating the glories of Egypt depict the gryphon, the half-lion, half-raptor that soars on the wings of dawn. Many cultures, including the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Myceneans, Indo-Iranians, Syrians and Greeks all acknowledged this glorious beast, and granted it suzerainty over the skies. In the 7th century B.C., the Greek chronicler Aristeeas of Proconnesus wrote of the sky-lion. At that time, a gryphon lived in the Ural mountains, guarding rivers believed to bear gold. The gryphons' attraction to gold and gems causes such beasts to hoard great treasures, which they guard with a vengeance. In their giant nests, built in high places like mountains or the rooftops of tall buildings, these magnificent beasts keep rich caches, collected over the centuries. Gryphons, being highly intelligent, make excellent companions. When bored, a sky-lion often seeks out magi or other night-folk and engages them in long discussions about morality, divinity, the nature of Creation and other related subjects. Once a gryphon has made a friend or two, his loyalty has no bounds.



Like the lions they resemble, these beasts protect their loved ones as readily as they protect their own offspring. Both male and female gryphons exist. They mate for life and breed every 10 years, producing one egg and one chick each time. A gryphon egg has an incubation period of nine months. Once the egg has hatched, the baby gryphon lives in the nest for a year and a day before it has matured sufficiently to fly on its own. During this time, one of the two parents remains constantly in the nest, protecting the chick. Both take turns gathering food. The young gryphon requires large quantities of meat to grow to full strength, as much as an entire human (or the equivalent) each day. As it matures, its appetite subsides until it ingests the weight of a horse once or twice each few weeks. Like birds, gryphons chew food for their young during the first three months, regurgitating partially digested meat for a chick. Once the chick has its feathers and its beak has grown strong, it weans onto solid food and can tear the flesh from its meal by itself. The care that gryphons give their young testifies to their essentially good natures. Mated beasts cuddle and snuggle, cleaning and preening one another. Even after a chick has left the nest, a deep familial affection remains among the gryphons. A chick visits its parents often, and comes to their aid immediately if needed.

Known for their strength and vigilance, gryphons have been called "The Hounds of Zeus." When entrusted with guardianship, they display protectiveness to the point of obsession; as avengers, they pursue their enemy with relentless determination. However, a gryphon's honor is matched (and often exceeded) by its greed. While sky-lions have little use for human currency, they love pretty things like gold, gems, sculpture and even paintings. Any gryphon worth the name has a trove of some size, and hounds a thief endlessly to avenge a trespass. Gryphons are immensely territorial, even under the best of circumstances. On reaching maturity, a gryphon lays claim to a possession and guards it vigilantly thenceforth. "Mine" is the most popular word in the gryphon vocabulary. A skylion's domain typically

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consists of a large hunting ground that she guards against despoilers; it's not unheard of for one of these beasts to claim a special item, edifice or person as her charge. While it can be relieving to have a huge, ferocious protector, a gryphon's tendency to define protection in the broadest possible terms can be problematic. Overzealous gryphons have been known to kill a charge's suitors or to imprison a charge "for his own good."

A gryphon's name is nothing less than a verbal display of ego. The creature chooses her first name soon after she leaves the nest. Significant events — duels, prizes, great occurrences, even tragedies — add to that name as the gryphon sees fit. Like a magus, a sky-lion considers her name to be an extension of her adult self, a badge of honor among other beings. Like a Hermetic magician, the typical gryphon crafts a name out of a hodgepodge of impressive words in whatever tongues the beast considers "native." Given their limited vocabulary, these creatures consider long, difficult names to be more impressive than short ones. An adult gryphon (15 to 40 years old) often possesses a name of six to eight syllables in length. Elder gryphons (40 to 60 years old), particularly in the Iberian and Mediterranean regions, can have names in excess of 15 syllables. Any gryphon whose name extends more than 20 syllables is likely to be famous among its kind and feared by just about everyone else.

Food — or a lack of — is a gryphon's greatest weakness. A sedentary beast eats less than an active one, but no gryphon can go long without freshly killed meat. No other food suffices. Long ago, gryphons learned that human beings provide the most easily acquired meals for their young. Cattle are missed; many humans are not. A gryphon parent selects and kills mortals for sustenance, and without malice. The gryphon chooses carefully, taking her prey from the underbelly of society or from travelers whose disappearance is attributed to the hazards of the journey. For this reason, many gryphons have migrated near cities, where the food supply is ample. Naturally, a mated pair must defend its territory — even the largest city can conceal only so many disappearances before the prey looks to the skies. Once a gryphon (or a clutch of them) has established a hunting ground, it defends the area against all others like it. The resulting duels (occasionally waged with help from other creatures who've allied themselves with one or both of the gryphons) have driven the sky-lions to the razor edge of extinction.

The gryphon is the standard of modern changelings' High King David and so gryphons, both real and chimerical, are very important to members of his court. Desperate events could revolve around the discovery of a living, breathing gryphon and the subsequent attempt to save it from destruction. It is claimed that the High King himself is under the protection of a great chimerical gryphon that aids him in times of need.

IMAGE

One of the world's most wondrous creatures, the gryphon has the twitching tail, golden fur, lean haunches and expressive ears of a lion. Its graceful head, taloned front legs and broad wings are those of an eagle, covered with velvety feathers. A gryphon is frighteningly fast for such a huge beast. It can fly or run at speeds of over 40 miles per hour in short bursts. Its claws, huge and thick, can rend steel with little trouble, and some warriors would craft drinking horns from a gryphon's talons in the days when such beasts were plentiful. Gryphons communicate through an enchanting language of purrs, growls and rumbling consonants. Most of them seem to speak several mortal languages as well, although they tend to use small words and speak with odd, rolling accents. Social and thoughtful, sky-lions prize riddles, histories and debate. Many gryphons, being somewhat philosophical, prize artwork above all things. Human craftsmen can accomplish things that a gryphon, with just beak and talons, can only admire. To many sky-lions, the desecration of art is a killing offense — although other gryphons take the opposite view and demolish artwork for the perverse joy of annihilation.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Neither land nor sky is large enough. You must have them both, and you sweep between them with a rush of wings and a throaty cry. A living incarnation of the crowns of three kings — lion, eagle and man — you strive to be worthy of your birthright. Not that you're concerned with

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rulership. What does sovereignty matter to a hereditary king? Rather, you prize honor, philosophy, debate and art. Once given, your word is stone, your love is an ocean and your anger is the lightning of a thousand storms. True, you are what humans would call a "beast," but what do insults from their genocidal kind matter? You are as far above their petty distinctions of "man" and "animal" as a lion is above the peepings of a mouse. Still, Creation is too dangerous a place to allow complacency. Protect what you prize or watch all that you value retreat like the setting sun.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Enigmas 2, Flying 3, Linguistics 2, Wild Hunting 4

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 4, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 8 dice, claw for 9 dice; Arcane Background (5), Armor (1), Compulsion (Gather/Defend Treasure), Enhancement, Mystick Shield (2), Offensive to Animals (Horses flee on sight of a gryphon, barring a Willpower roll [difficulty 8]), Wings

HARPY

Life is a jest, and all things show it; I thought so once, but now I know it.
— John Gay, "My Own Epitaph"

The three harpies swooped down from the sky to terrorize the unsuspecting revelers. Their piercing cries chilled the men's hearts and made the women shudder in fear. Peolos stood at the center of the group, his eyes lifted toward the evil creatures. He alone showed no fear, though he alone was the one who should have. The harpies descended on him, their target, the one the gods had sent them to retrieve. He waited, sword in hand. Perhaps he knew it would do no good to run, though the others shouted at him to do so. Perhaps he knew his time had come. The harpies howled through the air, trailing a foul stench. Covering their faces in disgust, the revelers fled in all directions. With ragged vulture claws, one harpy took Peolos by the arm, another by the face and the third by the leg. Together they lifted him into the air and carried him away. By the time his feet had left the ground, Peolos had joined the grim ranks at the mouth of Hades' realm. Some days hence, two travelers found his body. Even maggots had not been hungry enough to touch it. Choking, the two men covered the corpse then retreated to the shrines of their respective gods — and to the bath houses. Both souls and skin were cleansed raw before either man went to bed. Even then, neither one could rest easily. The harpies befouled the travelers' dreams as they had befouled Peolos' body. Trembling at the edge of morning, each man swore he'd never anger his gods again. No sin, no matter how glorious, could be worth the harpies' touch.

DESCRIPTION

Originally documented in Greek lore, harpies were the harbingers of death and the punishers of pride. If they appeared — and they always came in flocks — someone near was sure to die. Originally, chroniclers believed that harpies themselves caused deaths, but priests and philosophers demurred, insisting that harpies follow death, rather than bring it. Living deep in sordid wildlands or barren mountain caves, harpies display more instinct than intelligence. Food and shelter appear to be their only true motivations, although it is said that the Old Gods still use them on occasional errands. Filthy creatures, harpies allow dirt and excrement to coat their feathers and skin, unlike most animals. The resulting stench is enough to nauseate most mortals and drive away all but the most pestilential beasts. Harpy nests are noxious places strewn with fecal matter, urine and leftover carrion. Flies and beetles are the only things

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that can tolerate a harpy's presence for long.

Old tales claim that these wretched creatures were once women whose pride, sloth or slovenliness marked them beyond salvation. Rumor claims that each harpy was a secret murderess whose crime was hidden to men but not to God. Rather than dying and descending into the Underworld, these debased wenches attained a sort of foul longevity. Midwives to death itself, harpies now wallow in misery, their minds long since gone. Such madness is preferable, it is said, to truly comprehending what they have become. In its own way, this insanity is a form of God's mercy. Harpies can sense when a death is imminent, and they often follow armies or perch near places of violence. People who look up once too often spot them circling crossroads as crows do. On more than one occasion, the sighting of a harpy has caused a death. At other times, the sighting has actually averted one. A wise person is one who understands the warning inherent to the harpies' presence and knows to take extreme care. Like vultures, harpies eat dead meat. A single body can feed three corpse-viragos for a week. They carry it to their nest, leave it there and feed on it for the next few days. Once they have consumed the body, they foul it with droppings, then strike out in search of another. It is part of their curse to be perpetually starved. According to common lore, the wretched things are nearly immortal; they die only if starved to death, burned or hacked to pieces. Desperate harpies can survive on the remains of other animals as well, though they prefer succulent human flesh.

Although they lack even rudimentary social graces, these odd creatures tend to travel in threes. Teamwork, after all, makes it easier to lift heavy bodies. These "weird sisters" share their dinner evenly and never seem to fight amongst themselves. Furthermore, they never attack or kill their own for food, even when they haven't eaten for some time. Harpies are scavengers, as opposed to hunters, and death always provides for them.

IMAGE

From a distance, flying harpies look just like regular vultures. Once they descend to the ground, the differences become apparent. Larger than most vultures but smaller than most humans, harpies live a birdlike existence. No bird, however, carries the stomach-roiling stench that a harpy does. Even the most shit-bedraggled drunkard is a rose beside a corpse-virago. Savage and crude, a harpy has the chubby body and long wings of a black and ragged vulture. Sharp, curved claws extend from her feet. All harpies are female, with flaccid breasts and hawkish human faces (usually dirtied and stained with whatever they've been eating). These ties to humanity are the beast's most disconcerting features. It's quite disturbing to see a carrion-bird madwoman with her face in a corpse, tugging out its innards with her craggy yellow teeth.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Where there's death, there's food. And where there's food, there's life — your life. Eat to live. Live to eat. Dead things don't know any better. They're dead. They taste better that way. Death. Food. Life. Nothing else matters.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 0, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Foraging 2, Intimidation 3, Flying 1

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 1 die, claw for 5 dice; Bizarre Hunger (dead flesh), Compulsion (Vengeance; optional), Homing Instinct, Offensive to Animals, Soul-Sense/Death-Sense, Rapid Healing



HIPPOCAMPUS AND KELPIE

If all the creatures of the seas were wondrous as the hippocampus, I would gladly brave the krakens of the deep. — Niklos Kazantzakis, Sahajiya poet

When the world was free of the barriers that now bind it, spirit and matter mingled freely. Horses, running along lakes and oceans, would join with the protean spirits of the waves and water. On occasion, their games would culminate in love-play. The spirits of the water would care for and see to the protection of foals born from such unions. Hippocampi arose when the sea-kind took their foals into deep currents and hidden caves. There, the fish-kind taught the horse-children to swim and bestowed them gifts of fins and scales. Safe and happy, the hippocampi acquired a good and trusting nature. Kelpies were spawned when the babes were foaled during storms. In a tempest, angry spirits would take a babe and toss it to and fro until its nature was jangled and its heart was awash with spite. Half-drowned, it would always remember the terror of the sea and desire to show others what it had endured.

DESCRIPTION

Hippocampi love to play and are willing to befriend any creature that doesn't seem hostile. Should the notion amuse them, these creatures may even allow themselves to be ridden. Much to the chagrin of many magi, these animals are just as capricious as they are helpful. Many a magus has been tossed unceremoniously onto a strange beach when she bored or annoyed the hippocampus she was riding. To their credit, hippocampi have never been known to drown a rider deliberately. Those that have killed are kelpie, and riders who can not discern between the temperaments of their would-be mounts deserve the fate they receive. Hippocampi exert tremendous control over the

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element of water, and it is simple for them to impart the ability to breathe water to their riders. Likewise, they can remove the ability to breathe water from sea creatures; while they typically reserve this harsh treatment for overly persistent sharks, at least one kraken has died this way after trying to devour an entire herd of hippocampi in one gulp. Kelpie, on the other hand, would deny a fish or finned creature the right to breathe simply because it was "bothersome."

Greatest among the talents of hippocampi and kelpie is their ability to quell (or cause) huge waves. With sufficient motivation, the sea-horses can create tremendous currents of water resembling storm-surges, which they ride onto land. Even a small herd of four or five angry creatures can bring the ocean well inland to destroy structures and drown enemies. Such an event has been observed only once. The subject of the creatures' ire was a butcher in Lyon who had been pouring horse blood from an abattoir directly into the sea. Land-dwellers are largely ignorant of the existence of hippocampi and kelpie, but seamen see them as a matter of course and spend hours discussing them, competing to tell the most outrageous tales about the creatures. Any crew learns immediately if it passes through a hippocampi habitat; the majestic beasts rise to the surface to play, zigzagging through the crests and troughs of the ship's wake. Alert sailors know kelpie to do the same, but to lure a ship to jagged rocks or far off course. These beings are creatures of the oceans. While they prefer warm waters, they can be found anywhere. They avoid populated shores or highly traveled seaways, as the water in those places is typically dirty and foul-tasting.

IMAGE

The fore quarters of a hippocampus or kelpie are like those of a large horse — though a hippocampus has large fins where hooves would be. The hind quarters comprise a long agile, fish tail with which the creature propels itself through the water at spectacular speeds. The beast's equine portions are white, while its piscine remains are iridescent blue and green.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

What a wonderful thing it is to be curious, whether for its own sake or to see what kind of harm you can do! Go where your sense of wonder or frustration takes you! Be friendly or bitter toward landdwellers; they have to be absolutely fascinating (or amusing to harm) to hold your attention for long. You fear nothing in the ocean because you can out-swim anything. Besides, life isn't about fear, it's about fun — no matter what form it takes!

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3/4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 5/6, Charisma 4/3, Manipulation 1/2, Appearance 5, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Acrobatics (Water) 2, Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 2/3, Dodge 2, Elusion 3

Willpower: 3/4 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 2 dice, ram for 5 dice; Armor (1), Bond-Sharing , Elemental Touch , Spirit Travel , Water-Breathing

HIPPOGRYPH

So saying he caught him up and without wing Of hippogrif, bore through the aire sublime
O'er the wilderness and o'er the plaine. — John Milton, Paradise Regained

I speak of the love of Ban'ha Rajmach Ka Hala Ben 'Ibm'n Ha, a gryphon of the greatest renown, and

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Cleophemus, a mare of great beauty and striking spirit. True, these two were bred of mortal enemies (for it is said that no beast loathes a horse more so than a gryphon, and no creature fears the gryphon as does a horse), but such a love did blossom and prosper despite all. From his great perch on the peak of Amadanthus, Ban'ha brought his beloved trinkets of most extraordinary worth. But she did shun them, not for their giver, but for the dust that made them. Cleophemus was ever the judge of nobility, and gold makes all men fools. "Put such pleasures far from thee," she said in the tongue of the horsefolk. "Give me that which is thyself, not thine vanity." Forsaking all other company, Ban'ha Rajmach Ka Hala Ben 'Ibmn Ha loved Cleophemus as a mate of his own kind, and she returned the ardor with a passion rare. He brought her to his mountain home and together they watched the waking dawn and the sleepy hand of dusk. In time, she swelled with the seed of their love.

But there the spirits played cruel jests, for that seed grew to such size and ferocity that Cleophemus was split from the inside as her child sought its birth. Crying her love to Ban'ha, the mare died a dire end. In his rage and sorrow, Ban'ha threw the child from the top of Mount Amadanthus. As it fell, the matricidal hatchling did unfurl its tiny wings and catch the air. As Ban'ha wept for his beloved and tore the very wind with his howls, the child of their love did ride the gusts of his father's cries. Such was the noble gryphon's sorrow that the hatchling was carried to the distant Mount Kri. There, it grew to a great and vicious size. Ban'ha Rajmach Ka Hala Ben 'Ibmn Ha perished from grief on Mount Amadanthus. The fruit of his broken love prospered in the faraway hills, breeding more like itself and making war on the people of its father and mother. A horse, it is said, falls dead from fright if the shadow of the hippogryph should catch it unawares. The gryphon, remembering the grief of Ban'ha, slays the thing on sight. And so the brood of Ban'ha and Cleophemus prospers in the mountains of the desert lands. Hippogryphs often fly to green peaks or nest in deep forests. Many a dark sorcerer or careless witch has chosen such a creature for a mount, and you can still hear the beasts' sadistic laughter from the skies. And sometimes, if you listen carefully, you might hear the echoing cries of Cleophemus and Ban'ha the gryphon.

DESCRIPTION

Like the dark legends of their origin, the eagle-horses known as hippogryphs possess a melancholic air and a vicious temperament. Less intelligent than either gryphons or mares, these odd beasts ride the winds of distant places, feeding on wild horses, cattle and deer. A magus occasionally seeks a glorious mount and ventures to the craggy habitats of such beasts. He might actually find what he seeks, but, unless he possesses great skill with animals and subtle magicks of command and taming, he might also find that his would-be steed considers him breakfast! Unlike the gryphon, the hippogryph is a natural animal with no magical qualities or abilities aside from its powerful wings. The beast's rarity ranks him among legendary creatures, but the gods neither created his kind, nor blessed it with special powers.

The hippogryph's ill humor may stem from his birth, during which he is born alive from his mother's womb. Slashing his way free with cruel talons, the beast murders his mother even as he is born. After drinking her blood for sustenance, the newborn flees the site of its nativity. The hatchling feeds on insects and tiny animals until it either grows strong or dies. Survivors are a harsh and hardy breed. Hippogryphs live on remote mountains and in large valleys, where their wings can stretch unhindered. Although solitary, they gather occasionally to mate or for protection from greater forces. When these creatures meet, males fight wild airborne duels for dominance. While rarely fatal, these fierce contests establish a hierarchy that holds true until the beasts go their separate ways.

Hippogryph "herds" number 10 or less and quickly strip the surrounding area of food. Like gryphons and other large beasts, a hippogryph eats a tremendous amount of meat. Although he can sustain himself on carrion, bushes and fruit, the eagle-horse prefers fresh prey — sometimes while it's still alive. Without meat — and lots of it — the beast weakens quickly. It is said that a hippogryph cannot go more than seven days without eating flesh before it dies. Intractable and belligerent, a hippogryph makes an unruly mount. The struggle for dominance never ends with such a beast. Although a skilled trainer or magus can tame an eagle-horse, the creature's natural

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aggression, survival instincts and voracious appetite makes him an expensive, difficult and unpredictable pet. Even so, kings and wizards who can tolerate the expense keep small stables of war-mounts. Pity the keeper of such quarters, for his is an endless chore of dominance, feeding and "accidents."

IMAGE

Lifted on the winds by great feathered wings, the hippogryph flies with a graceful ease that belies its bulk. It has the hind quarters of a horse, and the head, forelegs and claws of an eagle. Although it can walk well enough, the eaglehorse prefers to fly, since its short front legs and powerful rear force it to stumble along with an awkward, drunken gait. The beast's cry, an odd combination of a whinny and a raptorscream, sends any natural creature into a panic. Hippogryph masters train their mounts to shriek as they attack.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

A survivor since the day of your birth, you cannot tolerate confinement. To master you, a beast must defeat you head-on, and even then, seek your freedom. The open skies and bare mountains are your true home. With senses as sharp as your claws, you scan your domain for food — live prey, if possible.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 7 (air)/3 (ground), Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Abilities: Aerobatics 3, Alertness 4, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Flying 5, Intimidation 6, Wild Hunting 5

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 4, -1 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 7 dice, claw for 8 dice, kick for 7; Fearlessness, Wings

HOMUNCULUS

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, — Genesis 1:26

Hieronymous deToit, member of the Cosian House of Olympus, knew the sacred verse by heart: And the Lord God formed a man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. The verse was his guiding star. Of course, many of his brethren in the house chided deToit for his choice of such a superstitious maxim, but he liked the scrap from Genesis. It stated, cleanly and concisely, his life's work up to that moment. The fundamental pattern of the Creation was always clear to deToit: All species pointed ever upward to the divine. As simple as the words of Genesis were, they laid out in profound and vibrant strokes the nature of Creation. The creatures of the waters, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the flora of the earth — all had their places in the great and wondrous strata of the divine plan. Creation had not stopped on the seventh day, either. It continued throughout the millennia, building and tearing down civilizations once thought to have been immortal: Egypt, Greece, Rome. Humanity existed as a perpetual work-in-progress, striving to reach the highest and holiest state of being. Hieronymous deToit pledged the complete spectrum of his work to aiding his species in reaching that highest state. In secret he strove over countless nights to recover humanity's pure form, the uncorrupted and incorruptible compounds and energies that shaped the essence of the first human beings.

He knew what success meant — a race of individuals free of the sad scars of a capricious world. Pestilence and plague would vanish, unable to penetrate the pure essences. The blind would see again, the deaf hear, the lame dance... all through the rejuvenating powers of deToit's creation.

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As the hour approached, deToit observed the inert form in the human-sized crucible that was the centerpiece of his laboratory. He drew the final sigils and carefully recited the words of the last spell. His body quivered as he felt the current of what seemed like a hundred bolts of lightning pass through him and electrify the crucible. The room shook with a gale's force, shattering flasks and upending containers filled with eldritch compounds.... As quickly as it had come, the storm vanished. Slowly, composing himself, deToit approached the huge basin, half-afraid that the spell had failed. He was almost to the lip of the vessel when a sudden movement within startled him. A hand — a human hand — reached over the edge of the huge crucible. Hieronymous stepped back in awe as his creation pulled itself up from the bottom of the basin. The human form looked exactly like deToit, for the magicks had been concentrated enough to replicate his features exactly. The creature turned its head stiffly, its eyes taking in the shambles of the laboratory, until it came to the person of deToit himself. Suddenly the creature began to shake uncontrollably, as if

seized by an epileptic fit. Hieronymous felt a wave of intense nausea course through him. Something was very wrong. The creature shook more and more violently, falling over the wall of the crucible and onto the hard stone floor. It dragged itself along the ground toward deToit. Hieronymous wanted to back away, but the feeling of unearthly sickness was far too strong. He too dropped to the ground on all fours, his head spinning with the inescapable realization of crossing some great forbidden line.

Suddenly the creature and deToit were eye-to-eye. The mortal man swallowed painfully as everything in the creature's gaze communicated to him the folly of the experiment. Hieronymous was seized with the same shaking that his creation suffered, his very frame trying to fly apart and end the suffering. It was far too much for him. Hieronymous collapsed to the floor of his laboratory, his lifeless eyes fixed forever on the embodiment of his imperfect experiment. As life left deToit, his creature also collapsed to the cold floor, and dissolved into dust.

DESCRIPTION

Humanity embodies a paradox. Though men and women are drawn from the template of the divine, baseness and vulgarity flow freely underneath the surface. Such dichotomy in the human species has given rise to centuries of debate among both clerical and secular intellectuals. Some accept the present reality of the human condition as God's will. Others question whether humanity truly has reached its ultimate incarnation. For the Awakened, the paradox of the human species reveals the essence of Creation — that everything in the universe aspires to reach a higher state of existence. The steady but relentless drive to better, to purify and thus to Ascend, forms the core of the mage's world. That drive manifests itself in the initial epiphany that stirs a person from slumber, unfolds before her the vastness of Creation and sets her on the path to enlightenment.

For those dedicated to alchemy, this enlightenment comes in understanding the innermost nature of the prima materia — the basic material from which all things are created. The mastery of the element of life, contained in the clay of Divinity that molded man in Eden, permeates the alchemist's quest. To distill the essence of the prima materia is to solve humanity's paradox: to rid men and women of disease, deformity and defect. The quest for the solution of humanity is not confined to one camp. Sorcerers in both the Solificati and the Hippocratic Circle study and experiment tirelessly toward the goal of human purification. Though each group of mysticks approaches the riddle from a different angle, both camps dabble in the process of creating an ideal specimen of "human" out of the prima materia — the homunculus. Formed from the fusion of compounds and powerful magicks that their respective alchemist creators believe to be the elemental distillation of the prima materia, each homunculus ("little man" in Latin) is a signature work of its creator, possessing a real awareness of its creator's goals and wishes, and the magickal theories that have produced it. Yet in addition to such an affinity with their alchemist creators, homunculi exhibit amounts of sentience, intelligence and independent thought which make them beings far removed from simple, manufactured drones. In a sense, each homunculus is its parent's perfect and prized offspring.

Awareness of such status infuses homunculi with a sense of self-worth that might ordinarily approach pride in a human being. Ever eager to prove the soundness of its creator's theories, a homunculus invariably exhibits a fair amount of cleverness and creativity. Depending on the diligence of its creator in "raising" it, a homunculus can be well-versed in literature, poetry, politics and etiquette, comporting itself with a grace equivalent to nobility. In addition to what its creator deigns to teach it, a homunculus possesses an immense capacity for self-improvement. Homunculi created by the Cosians are known for reading and re-reading their creators' meticulous notes on the prima materia, searching for the secrets contained therein in order to find the path to a higher state of being of their own. The ideal homunculus is able to exist as a completely autonomous being.

However, the vagaries of both the science of alchemy and the road to Ascension often result in a finished product that fails to meet its creator's expectations. The historical corruption of the alchemical sciences influences the generation of homunculi, rarely for the best. The infusion of religious misinterpretations and irrelevancies — as well as human greed, megalomania and God complexes - -

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often filters down into the alchemist's creation. Many homunculi, through a combination of their creators' inexperience with the prima materia and an arrogant inability to see their creations as anything less than perfect, come into the world flawed. These flaws vary considerably, going so far as to include near-animal bodies and visages. Even if flaws do not manifest as physical irregularities, the relationship between alchemist and imperfect creation can turn unpleasant. An insensitive or vain mage who creates a homunculus for use as little more than a beast of burden, or who becomes ashamed and resentful of her creation's marred nature, often wounds the sentient being. How the homunculus responds to such abuse varies, but it is not unheard of for a creation to turn on its creator.

IMAGE

A homunculus embodies its creator's desire for Ascension. It (for despite the individual form a homunculus takes, it has no real gender to speak of) can be any size from several inches tall to a full-grown human, if its creator's alchemical and magickal prowess is sufficiently advanced. Homunculi generally have very plain, almost unfinished facial features, resembling nothing so much as the busts of ancient Greeks and Romans. An especially deft and focused alchemist can fashion his homunculus' features to look like anyone, even the alchemist himself. Homunculi may ingest food and drink as a normal human being for purposes of nourishment. However, many alchemists prefer to sustain their creations through the constant power of their spells. Reproduction for homunculi is essentially a non-issue, as many alchemists view sexual congress is an imperfect and impure mechanism and eliminate it from their creations.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You are, as far as you are concerned, the purest form of humanity. Radiate all of the best qualities of the human species. Strive to better yourself physically and mentally. Your progress toward and proximity to the perfect state of being is the utmost goal. Although you represent your creator's rendition of the ultimate human machine, you are still a product of your creator's magick, and thus subject to her use of those forces. You were created to stand alone in your quest for ultimate purity. Do whatever it takes to accomplish that goal, even to the point of going outside your creator's laboratory for knowledge and insight into your condition.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 2-4, Dexterity 1-3, Stamina 1-3, Charisma 1-3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1-2, Perception 2-4, Intelligence 2-4, Wits 1-3

Abilities: Brawl 2, Culture 2, Crafts 2, Empathy 2, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Expression 3, Hiding 4, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Research 4, Science 4

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Allies Background, Bond-Sharing, Compulsion (gain lore about own potential), Elemental Touch, Enhancement (variable), Flexible, Homing Instinct, Human Speech, Loyalty, Mystic Shield, Rapid Healing, Shared Knowledge, Shy, Size (variable), Soul-Sense, Spirit Travel, Spirit Vision, Unaging

Homunculus Guardian

A Homunculus is a magical construct created in the image of a tiny man, rarely standing more than three feet tall, and more typically only one foot high. It is meant to be both servitor and watchdog for the mage, fetching and gathering his magical materials and always on guard for danger or untoward circumstance. The problem is that Homunculi have no hearts, and thus feel no human emotion. They can become cruel and even spiteful against their master's enemies or even friends, and some are even known to turn on their masters. Once for each year of game time make a Willpower roll for the

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Homunculus against a difficulty of 6; should this roll fail, the creature loses one dot of Charisma. Should it ever lose all dots, the Homunculus has gone bad and will act maliciously toward anyone but its master. From this point on, failed Willpower rolls will drain Manipulation; should this Trait drop below one, the Homunculus turns on its own master. For this reason, few mages keep the same Homunculi around for more than five years at a time, destroying the bad ones and creating fresh ones anew.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Melee 2

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, A x 2, -2, -3, Incapacitated. **Armor:** +1 B /+ ! L

Attacks: Fist (Str B), dagger (Str + 1L)

Weaknesses: Homunculi cannot soak fire damage; they fear uncontrolled fire and will flee from any flame not contained by a firepit or fireplace,

Malicious Faerie

These spiteful creatures are the bane of the living. They can think of nothing better to do than create mischief, from harmless pranks to the destruction of villages, and are more than happy to send a lost traveler down the wrong road, conjure up a poison to "cure" the well water or even lead a band of goblins to a merchant's camp. They are fond of finding the desperate and making impossible bargains with them, gifting them magics in return for a firstborn child (a delicacy), or some other unthinkable demand. Common lore holds that they can be tricked into their own undoing or forced to dissolve a bargain by those who learn their true name. It is possible to force a boon from a captured faerie, one that generally comes with a price.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Subterfuge 4, Stealth 2

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK, -1x4, -3, Incapacitated **Armor:** 0

Attacks: As per weapon (typically, a dagger: Str +1L)

Powers: Illusion (by spending a point of Willpower, malicious Fae can create a false image or object, such as a pot of gold or glowing sword, that seems completely real to others; at the end of the scene, it fades into nothingness), Summon Animals (by whistling and spending a Willpower point, the malicious Fae summons local animals of ill demeanor, such as angry boars, bears or swarms of bees)

Weaknesses: As malicious Fae are unable to resist preying on those in need of aid, it is possible to trick one of them into a false sense of security. If captured, it will have no choice but to grant a gift within its capabilities. Such Fae are overconfident, far more sure of their mental faculties than is warranted, which allows them to be tricked with skilled wordplay. If called by their true name, they must release the caller from any bargains or pacts,

Essence: The blood of a malicious Fae, when boiled and skimmed, can be baked into a batch of 10 biscuits, each of which provides one point of Essence to its eater. Other Fae can smell such biscuits on the breath of anyone who has eaten them up to one full month after the meal, however. Needless to say, the Fae will become disgusted with the person, regardless of which Court they come from.

MANTICORE

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Fear is sharp-sighted, and can see things under ground, and much more in the skies.
— Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

When God created the world and all its creatures, He put the beast's under Man, and above all animals He placed Lion, the King of the Beasts. And so it was, and so all creatures knew their place. Mouse feared Bird, Boar feared Hound and all creatures feared Lion. So the order remained until Tiger heard the cold whisper of Serpent, the deceiver. At first Tiger turned a deaf ear, but in time the coiled one's words took on a truthful tone. "You are a great hunter, perhaps the greatest. Was it not you who ate Bird, so quick are you that he could not escape, and his lilting call was caught in your throat? So brave are you that you ate Scorpion and let her venom course through your blood without harm? So righteous are you that you ate Man who had sinned and fallen from God's favor? "As you are all of these things, why then are you not God's chosen one? Why are you not King of the Beasts?" Tiger listened and considered Serpent's words. Tiger was fast, brave and righteous, that was true. Lion was, too, but certainly not more so. Why then was Lion God's chosen, rather than Tiger?

Thus Tiger set out in search of Lion to voice his protest. Tiger found the king resting in a copse of trees and pleaded his case: "Lion, I am fast and brave and righteous, just as you. Why then are you King of the Beasts when I am not? Why am I not God's chosen?" Lion turned his dark gaze on Tiger and spoke the word of the Lord. "You are all these things, it is true, Tiger. But you are also presumptuous. While Christ is the son of God who walks as a Man, I am the son of God who walks as a Beast. The order is ordained and your pride defiles it. As a lesson in temperance, you shall forevermore bear the mark of your sin. You shall speak with the voice of Bird. You shall spit the venom of Scorpion. And you shall show the face of the sinner-Man. You shall be Tiger no more, but a reminder of what others shall become if they fall to pride. So Tiger was stricken and he hid beneath the earth to escape the mockery and infuriating pity of others. In time, when his hunger could no longer be resisted, he crept out at night in search of food. But now only the taste of the prideful could sate him. Learning Tiger's lesson, the other beasts respected their places in God's order. The only one who did not was Man, whose own sins drove him from God's embrace. Thus, Tiger feasted on the sinner and gained the name Manticore. Those sinners whom Manticore could not catch followed in his footsteps. They were marked by their flaws and became Manticores in turn.

DESCRIPTION

Though the manticore is a legendary creature, it does exist. As each animal has its place in the food chain and the cycle of life, the manticore is a living parody of that order. Comprised of the body of a tiger, a scorpion, a bird and a human, the creature embodies the results of law and penitence lost. Seemingly shameful of its appearance and crimes, the manticore lives a reclusive existence. It seeks subterranean shelter, apparently where it cannot be condemned, and perhaps where it can escape its own reflection. Similarly, the creature cannot abide the presence others of its kind, undoubtedly because each reminds the other of its tragic flaws. The abominations that have come in contact have been known to fight to the death, not so much of the other, but of themselves, perhaps as a desperate and fitting escape from their transgressions in life. Although the manticore would live out its mortal days in isolation, hunger demands that it go into the world in search of sustenance. Other animals that recognize the manticore mock it if they believe they can escape it, or offer their pity for its plight. The beast seeks neither and is driven into a rage by the jibes and sympathies of the animal kingdom.

Ironically, it would sate itself on these very creatures, but the beast finds no nourishment in the humble who mind their place. The manticore finds relief only in the flesh of humans who sin and defy the will of God. Perhaps their meat is closest to the manticore's own, and the beast would consume itself if it could escape its curse. Little does the manticore know, but it does have a place in the order of things, even in its punishment. God uses the beast as a reminder to all creatures of what befalls sinners. The manticore lives out that role by hunting the worst of the world's fallen, humans. Those people who escape the predation of the manticore — and who don't rectify their ways — are said to become manticores themselves, the living embodiments of their crimes. Since they are born of man, the creatures lurk in



hidden places on the fringes of civilization.

IMAGE

In the Mythic Age, the manticore bears the reminders of its heritage and its curse. It has the body of a tiger, the tail of a scorpion, the shrill voice of a bird and the face of a human. Its eyes shine with burning anger and frustration, and its three rows of teeth gnash feverishly in anticipation of rending

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sinners' flesh. Those who are confronted by a mantichore are undoubtedly its intended targets. Those who survive its hunt are doomed to join it. Any others unfortunate enough to witness a mantichore's passing are wise to pay penance for their offenses. The creature's appearance may be a warning about dubious practices and their consequences.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

So you wanted power and money. Who doesn't? If you don't get ahead in life, you get shit on. You weren't about to let that happen. Sure, a few people had to pay the price for your success, but it's survival of the fittest, and you survived. And you still do. Now you're something you don't understand — and you don't want to. You're still alive, but you're not what you were before. Darkness offers the only escape from what you've become, and excruciating hunger makes you watch and stalk the very people you once knew. God, what have you become?

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Intimidation 5, Wild Hunting 5

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2 x 3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 9 dice, claw for 10 dice; Tail for 8 dice, Acute Senses, Arcane, Armor (1), Compulsion (Hunt the Proudful), Enhancement, Extra Speed, Fearlessness, Mesmerism, Nightsight, Perfect Balance, Soul-Sense

PEGASUS

Thus it always is with winged horses, and with all such wild and solitary creatures.
If you can catch and overcome them, it is the surest way to win their love.
— Greek myth

Gazing into the flawlessly polished shield of the goddess Athena, Perseus crept on the gorgon Medusa, concentrating furiously on the vile reflection of the sleeping monster. He unsheathed his blade, waiting for the right instant to strike. Around him, Perseus could see the fates of those unfortunates who had tried, and failed, to slay her — horrid, twisted statues of men eternally frozen in their death-throes. The gorgon stirred and Perseus knew the moment was at hand. His eyes fixed on the visage in the shield, Perseus raised his sword and swung at Medusa's neck. The blade sliced through the monster's scales and veins, separating her putrid head from her shoulders. As the toxic blood of the creature fountained from her torso and spread over the earth, the fluid began to churn and boil like a potion in some infernal cauldron. Suddenly a form emerged from the roiling, viscous liquid. Out of the foulness of the gorgon's life essence arose a stunning creature: a horse of the purest white, with majestic wings the colors of a storehouse of precious gems. The creature stood to its full height, its jet-black hooves sparking the ground. It unfurled its great wings and leapt into the air, bound for places unknown....

DESCRIPTION

The most familiar derivation of the pegasus legend comes from ancient Greece, though many cultures have reported the existence of winged horses, including the Egyptians, Sumerians, Chinese (ky-lin) and certain Native American civilizations. The Japanese hold that their pegasus, the kirin, visits Earth only at the birth of a Sesin, or wise philosopher. Many of these wondrous creatures ceased to exist on Earth at the end of the Mythic Ages. Mages scrambled to save as many of them as possible, drawing them into their care through the various protected dimensions of the Umbra and

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Horizon Realms. Frantic activity to preserve such an animal from extinction underscores the value mages place on this impressive beast. The association of the pegasus with wisdom and intellect reverberates throughout the panoply of legends surrounding the creature. In the legends from ancient Greece, the pegasus' first deed, striking the ground of Mt. Helicon with its hoof, uncovered a spring that became sacred to the Muses. The pegasus became a favorite animal of the Muses, whose singular doting on the creature imbued it with the grace and wonder characteristic of mankind's highest intellectual achievements. Its soaring flights above the clouds symbolize the limitless nature of the mind and the immortality of the soul. Among mages, the sight of the pegasus inspires thoughts of Ascension as few other experiences do.

Pegasi are, by nature, a mixture of dignity and refinement coupled with mesmerizing physical speed and agility in the air. Creatures of poetry and reason, pegasi are deliberate and patient beings, always seeking to further agreement, compromise and peace. They adore the freedom and inspiration that accompanies flight, and become sullen if denied the air for long. Because of the premium they place on expanding their knowledge, pegasi tend to inhabit remote areas such as mountain tops or secluded woodlands. Despite such ascetic behavior, pegasi have been known to enter into dialogue and debate with those magi who also value such remote areas. Those mysticks fortunate enough to converse with a pegasus fondly recall a creature of dazzling intellectual force, brilliant and lucid.

However, those humans who understand and respect the complexity of the pegasus are few and far between. Most see the creature for what its outward appearance betrays: a creature of flight and a potential beast of utility. The name "pegasus" itself derives from the Phoenician pag sus, or "bridled horse." Greek myths speak of the goddess Athena providing the hero Bellerophon with a golden bridle to tame the Muses' pegasus, in order that he might use the steed in his quest to slay the chimera. Many other civilizations harnessed the creatures for their warriors to ride, allowing their troops to initiate aerial assaults on the enemy. The pegasus of Greek myth captivated all who set eyes on her. Even Bellerophon, heady with the rush of riding a creature of such graceful potential, fancied himself able to ride all the way to Olympus. Far less heroic individuals see the act of capturing and breaking one of these aviary steeds as the greatest challenge. To control such a wild and mysterious animal — to ride its winged body above the transitory world of mortal man — remains the ultimate triumph to be cherished by those who would bridle her. Pegasi are fully aware of such perceptions of their kind. Historically, the tragic impressment of a creature so closely linked to noble pursuits for the base, all-too-human motives of military tactics or personal status colors their outlook. Consequently, pegasi view nearly everyone whom they encounter as a potential threat. Confronted by an opportunistic human attempting to bridle it, a pegasus can be extremely truculent, and even deadly.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

The skies and legends are yours—or once were. Now that man has spread across the world and into the air, your favorite places are lost to you. The Otherworlds that you now soar suit your needs, but not your heart. To return to the world once more before you pass on completely would bring one final joy to your fading existence. Perhaps humanity must rekindle its faith in your kind if you are to find your place in the sun again. But then, man would probably seek to bridle you as he did before. Perhaps Bygones are better left Bygones.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 7, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Abilities: Aerobatics 4, Alertness 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Enigmas 3, Flying 4

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 4, -1 x 2, -3 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Trample or kick for 6 dice, bite for 3 dice; Bond-Sharing, Elemental Touch, Extra

Speed, Human Speech, Mystick Shield, Soul-Sense, Spirit Vision, Wings

PERYTON

If it were possible to heal sorrow by weeping and to raise the dead with tears, gold were less prized than grief. — Sophocles

Sicanus stared transfixed at the young woman's shadow coming from the heavens, growing larger as the creature that cast the silhouette continued its earthward descent. Squinting into the high sun, Sicanus made out the form of a bird, large as a full-grown person, with the head and legs of a horned stag. Whatever on Earth the creature was, Sicanus thought, it could not possibly cast a shadow of such human form. Sicanus glanced back at the darkened shape of the woman, its outline so detailed that he began to search his memory as to who she might be. Then it came to him — the young traveler from the week before. All Sicanus had wanted was her gold-purse. He hadn't meant to strike her with such force, but he had, breaking her neck and killing her instantly. The boy had robbed many people, but he had never resorted to murder. It was an unfortunate accident. In the past week, he spent not a single coin of his young victim's money. The bloody act had haunted him for seven sleepless nights. Somehow, Sicanus doubted that the creature cared a damn about his guilt. The beast glided to the ground, its hart-eyes searing vengeance through Sicanus' body. The shadow of the young victim stretched forward from the creature's hooves and enveloped Sicanus. He leapt away in fear, and his eyes widened in terror as the young woman's shadow grew larger and larger, casting a pall of icy darkness over everything.

The creature reared up on its haunches, steam billowing from its nostrils. Then it charged. Sicanus ran screaming, the beast close on his heels. He did not get far when the animal lowered its head and thrust Sicanus to the ground. The boy fell and rolled for several yards from the force of the blow. He scrambled to his feet as the stag swiped at him with its antlers, cutting a deep gash in his arm. Sicanus fell again as the winged stag bore down on him, its hooves cracking in the air.... The next morning a passing monk found what was left of the body by the side of the road. The chest had been split open from neck to groin, the vital organs mangled into a repulsive stew. The limbs and head had been trampled. Fragments of bones stuck out at horrifying angles. The monk crossed himself and said a short prayer for the repose of the poor soul who had perished so awfully. He continued down the road, silently invoking St. Christopher's protection from whatever fate had befallen the wretch. Behind a clump of trees, the creature watched as the monk rushed out of sight. Only then did it take to the air, its own shadow flickering briefly over the remains of Sicanus before disappearing.

DESCRIPTION

Murder leaves a scar on the soul. A person brutally cut down by the hand of another finds only frustration in the afterlife. Some murders occur with such suddenness that the victim's soul bellows for vengeance, refusing to move on until the person who inflicted the wrong is dead. The calls of these souls are heard and answered by the peryton. Tales of the lost city of Atlantis record the existence of perytons, creatures with the head and legs of a deer and the body and wings of a great bird of prey. Beautiful and lethal, these creatures were born from the chaos caused by the unjust severing of a person's lifeline. Intimately attuned to the anger and sorrow of a victim's soul, a peryton casts the shadow of the person in life as the creature hunts unceasingly for its charge's killer. When a peryton catches its target — and it always does — the end is savage and violent. On dispatching its prey, the peryton is released from its obligation and its shadow reverts to its own. Perytons reside deep within forests or atop remote mountain plateaus. They subsist mainly on dry earth, but when they hear the anguished cry of the innocent, perytons can go for weeks (or even months) without food, fueling themselves with the fiery single mindedness

of vengeance. The creatures are experts at camouflage. Depending on the environment, a peryton can transform the deer or bird half of itself to match its surroundings. A peryton speaks for the dead, and in a very specific, pointed manner. The creature acts as the vehicle for a murdered soul's revenge, and its most common interaction with human beings is as a harbinger of wrathful destruction. As a consequence,

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perytors view human beings warily at best, avoiding the great majority of human contact until a soul calls for service. Rarely is the interaction between a peryton and a human being uneventful. The few individuals who run across a peryton in its deer form on a trek through a forest (or, even more foolishly, on a hunting expedition) are lucky to survive.

IMAGE

The peryton is strangely compelling for such a lethal animal. Its deer's head has soft black, brown or gray fur. A set of full, saber-sharp antlers sits regally atop the creature's head, and is its main weapon. Two strong deer legs give the peryton unmatched speed on the ground. Its dark hooves have the capacity to shatter bone with a kick. Its avian body, with shadowy gray wings and plumage, allows the peryton to fly and dive with expert agility. The creature's doe-eyes, normally dark brown or jet-black, glow red with rage in the presence of its prey.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Vengeance is yours. Murder is incomprehensible — it remains the highest rejection of the divinely ordained plan of the universe. You must not rest until you restore the balance that has been overturned by another. Let no obstacle defeat you. Take an eye for an eye, then take the other for good measure.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Cosmology 3, Dodge 3, Flying 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3, Wild Hunting (Murderers) 4

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Trample for 5 dice, Bite for 6 dice, gore for 6 dice; Elemental Touch, Extra Speed, Fearlessness, Intangibility, Nightsight, Shadow-walking, Shapechanger, Soul- Sense, Spirit Travel, Spirit Vision, Wings

PHOBOROS

All the beasts of the forest are mine; and so are the cattle on a thousand hills.
— English prayer book

Beautiful Io, daughter of Inachus the River God, lived in Greece near the river that bore her father's name. Zeus, King of the Gods, was intrigued by tales of her comeliness. To satisfy his curiosity, he changed himself into a bull and spied on her. However, Iynx, daughter of Pan and Echo, caught Zeus in his hiding place. Amused by his voyeurism, she cast a mischievous spell, causing Zeus to fall in love with Io. Soon, word of the passionate coupling between Io and Zeus reached Hera, Zeus' wife. Zeus lied to conceal his activities and turned Io into a cow so that she could not betray him. He then set her free to roam the land, spreading the myth of bovine sanctity.

Io skirted the sea that was later named for her, and then passed through Europe, Asia Minor and India. She later turned back and visited Arabia and Ethiopia as well. Throughout her travels, Zeus visited Io in the form of a bull. At length, he impregnated her with a human child, which she birthed in Ethiopia and carried on her back to Egypt. Io named her son Epaphus, though he later became known as Apis, the divine bull, ruler of Egypt. Besides Epaphus, she also bore six other sons, sired by common bulls. Jealous Hera cursed both Io and her son. Epaphus was struck impotent — a disaster for a king — and Io was rendered barren. Furthermore, Hera ordered three of Io's calves shackled to the olive trees on Mount Olympus, where the flies would bite them. Io cried out to Demeter, who took pity on her. To appease Io's mother-grief, the goddess made each of her calves immortal, holding them over a fire to burn away their mortality. As white as their mother, they emerged from the flames as the first phobori and were set free.

DESCRIPTION

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Immortality has its price and its rewards. Sentient and undying, the white fear-bulls, or phobori, hone their mental abilities constantly. In their solitude, these forlorn creatures dwell in the house of memory. There they weep and their tears corrupt the land wherever they touch. Ages after the deaths of the Old Gods, when it is said Mount Olympus fell to the forces of Reason, the children of Io still nip and chew at their own forelegs, ever reminded of the shackles that bound them to the Mount. After hundreds of years, near the time of Jesus Christ, the phobori developed a rapport with the creatures around them, learning to experience the thoughts and emotions of others. This new ability frightened, saddened and angered the bulls. The thoughts they heard made the mood-weary creatures cry or laugh, or they sent them into fits of rage. In retribution, the people hunted and slaughtered phobori and other cattle. Three surviving bulls fled to safer territory: One went to India, one to Ethiopia and one to Spain. By the beginning of the Dark Ages, cattle herds had spread far and wide. E'toro, the phoboros who fled to Spain, used his talents to keep herders from trying to slaughter him. In their minds, he became a grand stud bull, too beautiful to kill and eat. E'toro became king of many herds, which suited him well, but he could never stifle the rages that came on him in the presence of farmers. Each time E'toro met a dishonorable man, he flew into a fury, killed the human and fled, leaving barren fields and strange white calves in his wake. He roamed Madrid hillsides and the Pyrennees for many centuries, spreading the legend of El Toro Blanco.

Legends were not all he spread — the immortal white bulls sired lesser, mortal calves. Although these offspring do not share their fathers' immortality, they display the same empathy, lusts and corrosive tears as their forebears, and live several human lifetimes. These "lesser" phobori are extremely rare, but they do sometimes appear. Unlike their sires, these white bulls cannot reproduce; Hera's curse on King Epaphus carries down through his distant relations. As early as the ninth century, Io's children changed their appetites. Lusty E'toro had always pursued cows with exuberance, but the dull animals meant nothing to him. Now he was attracted to mortal women with their sun-kissed, salty skin, their gleaming eyes, the smooth grace of their long limbs, and most of all, their kind and intelligent thoughts. He pursued them with teasing, erotic fantasies, sending images of himself into their minds as they went about their chores. He tempered guilt with visions of bygone gods and with thoughts of true love and kindness. From the fields, he wooed them with warm-eyed looks and soft, mewling cries. Not all women came to him, but those who did found him a remarkably gentle, if large, lover. Through his emotional bond with them, he made his pleasure theirs. By the 15th century, men have had enough. Daedalean scholars have traced the legends of El Toro Blanco to the wandering white bull and his offspring. Soldiers have been sent across the land to capture these diabolical beasts. The bulls are burned when caught. However, several accounts claim that one bull cannot be slain. He has been stabbed, hacked and even burned alive, but he has escaped to ravage both the countryside and the young ladies who live there. A plan has been made to ship this creature and his offspring to the fabled lands beyond the seas. There, perhaps, he can fulfill his lusts without violating daughters of Christ.

IMAGE

A phoboros resembles a small white bull. Many aspects of this creature link it symbolically to the moon, and thus to the waters of the world. Smooth ivory horns thrust out from its head in perfect symmetry reminiscent of a crescent. At night, its white hide captures and reflects moonlight. Large, wet eyes reveal intelligence and compassion. A white bull's moods change as quickly as the ocean currents, and flow just as strongly. At times, his emotions thunder like a stormy sea, while at others they run deep and calm, as regular as the tides. There is a sensuality to the phoboros, a physical strength barely contained. Just looking at him, a human observer senses the immortal power of the animal's body. The bull has always been a symbol of male virility. A white fear-bull — especially an immortal one — is masculinity personified, tempered by femininity's emotions.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You recall a thousand memories—your own, your lovers', the random thoughts and mental glimpses of passersby. Each year, it seems, thoughts grow louder, more violent and insistent. Although it

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hurts to listen to them, you're too fascinated—orsimply too bored — to shut them out. Sooner or later, you always dive back into the waters of other minds, or swim in the rivers of memory. To alleviate the pain and boredom that comes with your long life, you seek out companions with pure (or at least interesting) thoughts and emotions. Every so often an especially stimulating friend leads you out of depression; more often, a trusted companion betrays your empathy with a passion or deception so unworthy that you fly into a rage, destroying everything that reminds you of that person. Human minds are capricious, venomous things. Their stings are euphoria, but they leave you with the taste of ashes. Some day, no matter how safe you might feel, you'll be forced to wander off again, alone and weeping until some new companion comes along.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 4

Willpower: 1 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -3 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 3 dice, gore for 6 dice; Compulsion (seek solitude), Immunity, Information Font, Shared Knowledge, Soothing Voice, Venom (2 lethal Health Levels on contact)



Revenants

The angry dead have long had a habit of returning to the world of man and wreaking havoc. Reasons for their return range from unrequited love, revenge, unfinished business, or simple, unadulterated malice. Others still are brought back by foul acts after their death, be it desecration of their grave or a danger confronting their family line. Only those brought back to the living world by the most foul of magics can bear the sun. Most must limit their activities to the dark of night.

Raising the Dead

As long as there has been magic, there have been mages foul enough to consider those without magic to be their playthings, in life as well as in death. They become mere tools to be used, components to be exhausted, beasts to experiment upon. Mages with such proclivities commonly have a fascination with life and death, feeling no compunction about exploring their limits, using and reusing victims who do not survive their tests. The border of life is a perilously thin line. Those who stretch themselves across it unduly often find themselves trapped there. One must be careful in the realms of the dead. These dead are used by certain mages of questionable character as shock troops, guards, or sometimes merely servants. Fortunately, these madmen are more the province of legend than fact, one reason the world is not overrun by armies of the dead.

Animated Skeleton

Those without fresh materials to work with can still string together some bones and animate them anew. Animated skeletal warriors are a chilling sight.

Spells: As with the Restless Dead, above.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 1, Stamina 3, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 1, Intelligence 0, Wits 1

Abilities: Brawl 2, Melee 2

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 2, -5, Destroyed.

Armor: +2L (only half soak against bashing damage)

Attacks: As per weapon, or fist (Str)

Powers: Immune to Fire

Weaknesses: Bone Soldiers soak only half of bashing damage. When one reaches its -5 Health Level, it is broken into two or three large pieces. These pieces are still animate and are treated as fresh (i.e., undamaged) skeletons until the skull is destroyed, at which point the skeleton collapses into piles of bones.

Essence: None

Dragons' Teeth

Unable to fully depend on human lackeys, many a sorcerer has been able to carry his protectors with him, leaving them hidden in a bag until needed. A simple bag with a handful of Dragons teeth can contain an army of these unholy warriors — each tooth, once tossed to the earth, sprouts a full skeletal

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warrior, ready to rend, maim and kill at its master's bidding,

Spell: Creating Dragons' Teeth requires the incisors of 20 great warriors, all slain in battle. The teeth are simmered in specially prepared olive oil for seven days while the oil slowly boils away. The charm is cast over a week, with four rolls allowed each day; every five successes produces one Dragon's Teeth. A Dragon's Tooth warrior's Traits are the same as a Bone Soldier's (see above).

The Risen

Spirits unable to leave the world of flesh commonly find themselves bound to their earthly form. They rise from their graves each night to search for whomever or whatever holds sway over them so that they might go on to their final reward. Rarer are those who were born, lived, and died by evil, returning from the grave to harm those who ended their life and cast them into the fires of the damned. These creatures cannot be completely destroyed, only delayed until their task is complete. Should such a revenant's physical form be destroyed, it will reform within a month.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: They still possess the Abilities they had in life, in addition to at least: Brawl 2, Melee 2, Dodge 1.

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 5, - 1 x 4, -2 x 3, -3 x 2, -4 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: + I B / + I L

Attacks: By weapons or magic.

Weaknesses: The Risen cannot rest until the task that brought them from beyond the grave is complete. Those forced back into their mortal shells by evil magic cannot bear the sun, suffering one Health Level in wounds per minute of exposure until they are under cover.

Essence: If captured and bound with a holy object, a Risen's strength can be sapped. By invoking the names of those spirits responsible for the souls of the dead, the mage gains one point of Essence for one scene, and the Risen loses one point of Strength (which cannot be drained below one dot). If this point is not spent by the end of the scene, it dissipates into the Underworld. The avenging soul does not take kindly to its power being subverted and delivers a small revenge for each bit of itself sapped: The mage suffers one point of lethal damage (non soakable) per point of Essence taken from the Risen corpse.

ROC

None have traveled more of the Tellurian than I, except perhaps the rocs, but they're stingy with their tales. — Faruq al-Hadim, Batini Master

At high noon the world grew dark. The ship's crewmen, Sinbad among them, raised their gaze cautiously to the heavens. A pair of enormous white birds circled overhead, their wings blotting out the sun. Sinbad knew instinctively why they were there. At the last port, a tight inlet of some remote island, the men who had gone foraging for supplies had brought back three large, speckled eggs — each the size of a small child. The men had made a meal of them, ignoring Sinbad's admonitions that the feast would have its price. Now avian parents circled overhead, preparing to attack. At once, the birds dove at the ship, aiming for the great sails. The creatures' open beaks sliced through the heavy canvas like it was paper. Their heavy feathers turned spears and arrows aside; the birds seemed to have no care for the

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crew's assaults. The attackers broke off only when the sails were torn asunder, and the birds departed, leaving the ship helpless on a calm sea. The crew rejoiced for having been spared, but Sinbad suspected that the danger was not past. The great creatures found the ship again quickly, only a few wing beats from where they left it, the foam created by oars marking its course. As the sun grew dim again, the crew lamented their fate and pulled their hair for fear of becoming a meal themselves.

Again, Sinbad knew better. He dove over the rail as the creatures released two boulders carried from land. Both rocks smashed through the deck and straight through the hull. Twin geysers erupted through the gaping holes, catapulting men and supplies high and into the water. The birds descended again, in one last act of revenge. Sinbad watched in amazement as the creatures grasped the ends of the ship in viselike talons, lifted the boat high into the air and dropped it back into the sea. The broken hull cracked in half. Gushing water poured into the hulk as wood and dead men disappeared into the deep, the taste of their final meal still on their lips.

DESCRIPTION

Rocs are second only to djinn in the lore of the Ahl-I-Batin. The Subtle Ones, when they discuss such things at all, claim that rocs are the only beasts native to the slopes of Mount Qaf, and that they build nests nowhere else. Rocs themselves, being collectors, are concerned with theft, and haven't the slightest intention of telling others where their nests lie. A roc's life is dedicated to travel and acquisition. Like ravens and certain other birds, a roc prizes well-shaped or otherwise intriguing shiny objects. Of course, a "small" object to a roc can be the size of a camel. Shrewd and practical birds, rocs understand that baubles exist that they want, but which they cannot procure with their own abilities. In such cases they trade their traveling talents for help from others, most commonly magi. While a wise magus jumps at the opportunity to saddle up a roc that owes him a favor, careful bargaining is required first. Rocs are notoriously stingy with their favors, and many are adept at bargaining with a whole host of Umbrood. A mage with no experience at haggling can expect to be taken advantage of mercilessly. When physically threatened, a roc flies away; when one does fight, it's to eat or to protect a nest. They use their huge talons to devastating effect, either slashing their enemies to ribbons or dropping boulders on them from miles above.

A roc's environs are typically devoid of large animals. The giant birds eat tremendous quantities of meat, typically herd animals such as elephants, or buffalo, and they can depopulate a region quickly. A starving roc will even eat prey as scrawny as a human, as a few sorry magi have discovered. No one (alive) has ever found a roc's nest, so the Batini legend that rocs nest only in the crags of Mount Qaf must be believed for now. The Batini also claim to have learned much of the Arts of Connections and Spirit from studying these huge birds, who are able to soar across the spirit world. Yet the Batini have been telling — and embellishing on — tales of rocs for centuries. As usual with the Subtle Ones, it's difficult to determine what is real and what is image. Rocs' eggs, for example, are fabled to burn with mystickal flame, though some say they are just brilliantly colored and have various magickal properties. Magi are usually wise enough to not try to find out, since an enemy who can go anywhere is an enemy most would rather be without.

IMAGE

Rocs are gigantic birds resembling brilliant white or speckled golden hawks. A full-grown bird can grasp an elephant in each talon and fly away with its prey. Their feathers are, of course, tremendous, measuring no fewer than 10 paces long. Few things are as dreadful to see as a roc blotting out the sun as it swoops down from above.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You are aloof, intelligent and obsessive about material objects, a collector from a species of collectors. The things you collect are typically shiny, iridescent or magickal, and you pursue only the most beautiful of beautiful objects. Your patience with things that don't further your collection is limited, but on



the other claw, you'll put up with a great deal of annoyance to get an especially pretty bauble. Be inscrutable. Your reasons for collecting are no one's affair but your own, and if they want to know, perhaps they would care to bargain for the information.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 15, Dexterity 3, Stamina 12, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 8, Intelligence 3, Wits 6

Abilities: Acrobatics (Air) 5, Alertness 7, Bargain 6, Brawl 5, Cosmology 5, Culture 4, Dodge (Air) 4, Etiquette 4, Flying 5, Intimidation 7, Wild Hunting 5

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** OK x5,-1x5,-3x3,-5x3, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Beak for 15 dice, claw for 17 dice; Acute Senses, Compulsion (gather treasure), Extra Speed, Homing Instinct, Human Speech, Information Font, huge Size, Spirit Travel, Treasure Background (shiny babbles), Unaging, Wings, Weak Spot (Fragile skull)

SEABISHOP

The very deep did rot: O Christ! That ever this should be! Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
On the slimy sea. — Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

In the 12th century, a small group of fishermen discovered a strange being washed up on the shores of Italy. Disturbed by the sight of the humanoid creature with fins and a fishlike crest, they sought to slay it as an aberration — but were stayed when the bizarre entity spoke, reciting Scripture perfectly to the astonished seamen. Disturbed by the implications of the aquatic entity's existence, the fishermen decided to bring the creature to the attention of the local clergy. The being was quickly dubbed the "sea bishop" for both its extensive knowledge of Scripture and its appearance, which seemed reminiscent of a bishop's robes and miter. Unable to find fault with the sea bishop's interpretations of Scripture, the clergymen sent it to the Vatican to be judged by the pope. Although discomfited by the prospect of a lengthy overland journey, the sea bishop acceded to these requests. It traveled with one of the fishermen and several suspicious guards and priests, arriving at the Vatican to be questioned intensely by the pope (and, some say, by the Celestial Choristers who had secreted themselves in the Vatican). After two weeks of closed discussions, the sea bishop emerged. The pope himself could find no fault with its knowledge of

Scripture, and indeed praised its learning as exemplary. Though many desired to learn of the sea bishop's ways and uncover its secrets, it requested that it be allowed to return home. Surprisingly, the Vatican agreed to the request, and the sea bishop was taken back to the coast where it slipped into the waters, leaving only the strange tale of its existence behind.

DESCRIPTION

The elusive "sea bishop" is an enigma. Discovered when one was beached, these entities hide from humanity beneath the waves, shunning contact with the surface world. Only chance seems to draw any of them to human lands. Since the initial stunning meeting of a sea bishop with the pope, some sailors have reported encounters with other similar creatures, but such incidents are rare. Clearly, sea bishops are well-adapted to their watery homes. They can breathe underwater, and have no problems adjusting to various depths, diving further than the best-trained unprotected human. They swim with grace, using long patagia under their arms to glide on currents while kicking with their legs. Their nimble hands are capable of catching and skinning fish with amazing efficiency. They eschew use of tools, as their natural abilities are quite satisfactory for survival. Some people speculate that sea bishops must have a community of some sort under the sea, as they are clearly intelligent and communicative. The truth, it seems, is that they are individualists, rarely gathering in groups numbering greater than a half-dozen. They do not seem to possess any common goals or organization, instead finding their own ways across the oceans and living on the bounty of their endless home. They occasionally stop to communicate with each other, but there seem to be no meeting practices for the race. They are certainly gregarious creatures

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when they meet, trading stories eagerly with anyone, but they feel no need to seek out company, most likely a development of living in such a huge and varied realm as the ocean. From time to time, sea bishops observe and learn from human culture, typically by studying treasures and artworks from sunken vessels. It is thought that the sea bishop that visited the Vatican may have studied the Dead Sea Scrolls, though the true source of its knowledge remains unknown. It is recognized, though, that they have a deep and reverent respect for life, which is easily misinterpreted as piety among humans. Of course, some people point out darkly that even the Devil can quote Scripture.

Students of nature and the occult are puzzled by sea bishops. Cosmologically, the creatures occupy an uncertain niche. They do not seem to practice any sort of magic, nor do they possess technology or social trappings, even though they are otherwise intelligent and communicative. Indeed, they have little desire to impose themselves on their surroundings. Sea bishops show a complete disinterest in human technology and craftsmanship, yet they have an absolute fascination for intellectual and philosophical concepts. Religion to the sea bishops is not simply a way of justifying existence or forming social castes, it is an intellectual exercise; a lens through which to perceive existence. The methods of sea bishop mating and reproduction are a mystery. The creatures possess no discernible gender, though accounts of the one widely known sea bishop claim that they lay eggs in a fashion much like fish. Born intelligent and mobile, the young apparently fend for themselves, hiding from large predators while subsisting on what food they can catch. Sea bishops consider this a completely natural existence, and their world is one of ease. Scholars theorizes that sea bishops may be related to a mythical race called "tritons," but there is no real evidence of a connection. Ancient documentation of tritons is so sketchy that any observer would be hard pressed to determine whether descriptions of that race actually correspond to sea bishops. Whatever their origins, sea bishops seem content to remain nomadic, leaving humanity to its own devices and retreating before the incursion of human progress (and pollution).

IMAGE

Sea bishops have a vaguely humanoid appearance, leathery-green skin, gill slits on the neck, and wide eyes. A large crest travels up the back and flares out above their heads like a bishop's miter, and the large patagia under their arms give the impression of a flowing robe. The hands and feet of the creature are webbed. Long skinny arms and legs give the creature a light but wiry musculature. Its mouth is wide and thin-lipped, with sharp teeth and a black tongue. It has no ears, only small holes on the sides of its head. The nose is short, wide and flat. Although the sea bishop's hands do not have claws, they do have strong, sharp nails that can be used to scale fish and whittle wood. Despite their alien appearance, sea bishops have a seemingly regal carriage. Slender, with fluid motions and flowing crests and patagia, they are eerily compelling. They move with grace even on land. They do not have any obvious sexual characteristics, but humans of both sexes find the sea bishops' smooth, clean features alluring. Sea bishops only rarely adorn themselves with any sort of garb. One of the creatures may carry an interesting item of study, or a particularly challenging puzzle, but they seem to have no need for clothing or possessions.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Why do humans carry such things ? The world has all of the bounty one needs to survive. Is it not written that the Lord shall provide ? There is no need to despoil the environment — even such a simple creature as you, unused to the ways of the land, can understand this truth. The needs of the body are easily sated. Discuss the needs of learning, the hungers of the mind, instead.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

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Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics (Water) 4, Brawl 3, Culture 3, Dodge (Water) 3, Elusion (Water) 4, Enigmas 4, Etiquette 2, Foraging 5, Hiding 3, Survival (Water) 5

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Claw for 6 dice, Claws, Elemental Touch (water), Human Speech, Information Font, Water Breathing

SEA SERPENT

And now the storm-blast came, and he Was tyrannous and strong: He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased south along. —Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

There are many legends about great reptiles that cruise the sealanes. The old sailors who marked them on the maps were not mistaken, after all. Certainly the serpents lurk beneath uncharted waters, hunting those ships that stray beyond the bounds of mankind's rightful exploration. One legend tells of the ancient deities of the Prose Edda. It may be true or false — who can say in this age? There are many legends besides. This one is as true as any other. In the ancient days, when the gods still walked among men, it is said that Thor, the lord of storms, fought mightily against Loki and his offspring. Chief among Thor's rivals was the Midgard Orm, Jormungandr, which bound the Earth tightly in its coils. Spanning all the oceans of the world, the monstrous serpent rose from the depths to hunt, and on these occasions the god of lightning struck at it in fury with Mjolnir. Yet neither could ever defeat the other, for it was ordained that Thor would slay the serpent only at Ragnarok, the Doom of the Gods, and that he would drown in the serpent's poisons. But for a time, Thor and the serpent strove mightily against each other, battling at such times and places as their paths coincided. In one such contest, the serpent sank its fangs into the god and Thor smote it on the head with a telling blow. The serpent retreated to the depths, its blood and brains, thick and bilious, mingling with the deep sea waters. From this primal detritus, writhing bits grew slowly, feeding on the beings of the lightless depths. Like their parent, these vile embryos grew to monstrous size, becoming hideous and serpentine, poisonous and hungry. From the depths these foul offspring rose and bred, always watching from outside the realm of man, preying on those who crossed far-away waters or storm-tossed seas. Is this tale true? None can say with absolute certainty, but it is a truth of sorts, for, doubtless, these serpents came from the very depths of legend. They are a nuisance to ships that range far beyond the shorelines, even today, especially during great storms. Some even say that a scant few serpents have spread to other bodies of water, trading the ocean depths for mist-shrouded lakes and seas. I know this: The harpoons on my ship are not for whales....

DESCRIPTION

Haunting the deepest parts of the ocean and large seas and bays, sea serpents are the bane of far-traveling ships. With their monstrous appetites and powerful coils, they crush even the sturdiest ocean-going vessels into flinders, and devour the passengers and crew. Not even the most powerful weapons can slow the attacks of the largest of these serpents, and they are difficult to kill indeed, fleeing under the waves when sorely pressed. Though the origin of sea serpents is lost to antiquity, they have certainly existed since time immemorial. Old pictographs of Greek origin depict even Mediterranean sailors battling these creatures in the days long before Christ. Thankfully, sightings dwindle as the years pass. It is thought that the serpents are dying out slowly, vagaries of nature whose enormity cannot be sustained. The day may come when sea serpents are nothing more than old sailors' tales. Heralded by a rippling wake, the sea serpent attack is fearsome and devastating. Some varieties close with their heads above the water, but most are crafty enough to show themselves only once within striking distance. When a serpent closes, it typically lashes out at a ship's decks with its fanged maw, spilling crewmen and rigging, carrying off and swallowing anyone unfortunate enough to be bitten. Large serpents constrict entire ships in their massive coils. Worse still, a few varieties are known to secrete acidic venom, which

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drips from their jaws to bum through hulls and to score unlucky crew members.



Sea serpents tend to attack during heavy storms, though the reason for this behavior is a mystery. Some speculate that the wind-tossed seas awaken the giant creatures from their slumber beneath the waves. Others argue that the ocean depths at which sea serpents must reside would not be affected by surface currents. Still, heavy rains and crashing waves provide opportune cover for the vicious monsters, and the listing of a ship in a heavy storm may well result in capsizing once a serpent thrashes its bulk against the planks. Serpent procreation is unknown. Their numbers seem to dwindle with each passing decade — the creatures may simply be incapable of normal reproduction. No one ever reports sighting a sea serpent of minuscule size, but that, in itself isn't particularly telling (when was the last time you saw a baby pigeon?). The truth will probably remain submerged in the unexplored pits of the sea. Some of the monsters are purely instinctual and simply try to devour any who pass through their realms. Others are wily and may demand tribute of some kind before travelers are permitted to pass.

IMAGE

Picture an amphibious snake as long as a moderately sized ship. Twenty feet or longer, these scaled reptilian horrors boast terrifying fangs like daggers, and a gullet large enough to hold an entire launch. Some serpents boast spines or razor-sharp crests that offer telltale signs of their approach, but which pose threats of their own. With slick, flexible armored scales, sea serpents are nearly impervious to most conventional weapons, though firearms and artillery can harm them. Some reports describe serpents boasting multiple heads or great leathery wings, but these monsters are apparently even less common than their "mundane" brethren. Certainly fanciful tales of intelligent,

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speaking, malevolent serpents are too much to be believed.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You are the king of the waves! None outshines your magnificence in this domain, the waters of furthest Creation. Their pathetic vessels intrude on your kingdom. It is only right that you should destroy them for their presumption — tax them with their lives. The land-dweller sates your hunger.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 10-15, Dexterity 4, Stamina 12, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Intimidation 6, Stealth 3, Wild Hunting 5

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -3 x 3, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 4

Attacks/Powers: Constrict for 10 dice, bite for 12 dice; Acute Senses , Armor (4), Cast Iron Stomach, Extra Heads (optional), Fearlessness , Flexible, No Dexterous Limbs, Size (variable), Venom (optional), Wings (optional)

SHADHAVAR

When Kaiumers heard the news of mourning, he was bowed to the ground. For a year did he weep without ceasing, and his army wept with him; yea, even the savage beasts and the birds of the air joined in the weeping. And sorrow reigned in the land, and all the world was darkened until the Serosch bade the Shah lift his head and think on vengeance.

- Hakim Abol-Ghasem Ferdowsi Toosi, The Epic of Shaknameh Ferdowsi

In the beginning, the gods Ormuzd and Ahriman shared the world. Ormuzd dwelt in the light and Ahriman shifted through shadow and darkness. They had many conflicts at the border between, but evenly matched, neither could ever overcome the other. Ormuzd created the sky, the waters, the earth, the animals, man and fire. Jealous Ahriman sought to devise a creation of his own. Without inspiration, he chose instead to change Ormuzd's children. He started with the sky, bringing darkness for half the cycle. He threaded destructive forces throughout the waters and earth. The animals, including man, felt the touch of greed and other dark desires. To fire, the element that coursed through all things, he added smoke and ash. Ormuzd, on seeing his creation tarnished, grew angry. He gathered his creatures into a great army and went in search of Ahriman. The dark god, however, saw the approach of his enemy and had time to prepare. He gathered his own army of the creatures that he had swayed to the shadows. The ensuing clash shook the world. Neither lost and neither won. At last, after thousands of years, Ormuzd looked down to discover that many of his creatures were dead. He called an end to the war. Ahriman agreed. He too had lost many allies. They decided together that the world would stay as it was, balanced between light and dark. They chose a single creature to cry their compromise to the world. They chose the shadhavar. In his horns they carved orifices that would sing when the wind blew. The bittersweet, melancholy song carried the tale of how the world came to be shared between good and evil.

DESCRIPTION

As the messenger of the gods, the shadhavar bears a heavy burden. Her life is not her own, for she must deliver the weighty words of the heavens on the wind. What commands or dictums she cannot turn as light as song are hers to know, obey and carry across the unforgiving ground. The sound made by a shadhavar's horns has the uncanny ability to soothe other animals, even lulling them to sleep once they

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stop their hunting, flight or burrowing to listen. These are the messages of the gods made manifest. Without touching the ground, these unspoken lyrics bring peace of mind to those at ease enough to hear and understand them. Many creatures, especially birds, are drawn to the shadhavar and gather around her to immerse themselves in the creature's music. It is not uncommon to see a shadhavar with three or four birds perched on her back. The birds, many say, are jealous of the delicate tune and come to learn so that their own songs might carry divinity. Little do the birds or other creatures know that the shadhavar would gladly share her burden. The unsung words of the gods weigh heavily — indeed, they would plunge birds to the ground, never to fly again, as may have happened to the long-legged, land-bound birds of the plains. In truth, the shadhavar seeks to escape her burden. She eats very little in order to remain as light as possible, to run when the words of heaven approach. Flee though she might, the gods can never be denied, and she grows tired quickly. That is when the shadhavar lashes out in frustration, killing the very animals that she lulls to sleep with her song. Enraged, she slices off their heads and stomps their bodies into jelly. Many African myths tell of zebra, hyena and even lion heads found with no body, hidden amidst the grasses, perhaps left where the gods will not notice the shadhavar's crimes. The gods do not approve of the hunting of their heralds, though man is one of the last creatures to heed their will. A shadhavar horn demands a high price among humans. Musicians spend whole lifetimes trying to reproduce the creatures' tunes by blowing across the horns' holes. Little do they realize that divine breath plays those songs. Peri Saiamuk, bani Dreamspeaker, once played the shadhavar so purely that animals paused and slept, women ceased their clucking and men laid down their swords. Sadly, the magus awoke from his waking dream and realized that he could never achieve such perfection again until passing from this world.

IMAGE

An antelopelike creature, the shadhavar roams the plains where the wind blows freely. Graceful and a little melancholy, the animal stands approximately six feet tall at the shoulder, but is very thin. The shadhavar has strange hollow horns that grow to enormous size, often as long as three feet. Wind whistles through holes in these bones to create a beautiful and haunting tune that carries for miles. The color of harvest wheat, the shadhavar's fur grows close to its body, with tufts at the tail and just above its onyx hooves. Dark patches mark its face, dripping down from its eyes — the stains of perpetual tears.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

None can truly know the burden you carry. The words of the gods weigh heavily on your body and spirit; the heavens' crashing tones and gentle notes cannot all be sent aloft and must be heard by you alone. You wonder if the gods refuse to free you of your responsibility for your failure to sing their songs fully. There is only sorrow. Unleashing your wrath on those to whom you sing doesn't release you, but it is the only respite you can find. Perhaps liberation would come if someone were to finally kill the messenger.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Stealth 2

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Trample for 6 dice, gore for 8 dice; Death-Sense, Extra Speed, Musical Influence (lash out at any who is lulled by your song), Spirit Vision

SIMURGH

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If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

— I Corinthians 13:1-2

So old is the simurgh that it has seen the world destroyed three times. And three times it hid in the branches of the Tree of Knowledge on Mount Alberz in India, watching as the world was renewed. The simurgh knew all things past, present and future. It flew on the winds of change and ate the berries on the Bush of Wisdom. The simurgh rarely interfered with human trials unless a worthy petitioner came to its mountain for advice. Thus was the case with Feridoun of Iran. During the thousand-year reign of the evil Shah Zohak the Serpent, the people of Iran suffered. Their shah, seduced into darkness by his Deevs, caused vice to walk during the day and virtue to hide in the shadows of night. Ormuzd, the great god, saw this and took pity on his people. He sent them a hero. Feridoun of Persia, Jemshid's grandson and prophesied nemesis of Zohak the Serpent, had to hide for his life until strong enough in body and mind to fulfill his destiny. He ran to Ind and pleaded for the merciful simurgh to aid him. Bidden by Ormuzd, the simurgh agreed, taking Feridoun under its wing and into its nest. It kept him safe and taught him all he needed to know so that one day he could return to slay Zohak. But when Feridoun raised his sword to cut Zohak down once and for all, the simurgh descended on jeweled wings to stay Feridoun's hand.

Feridoun had won the crown of his grandfather. The people hated Zohak as much as they loved Feridoun; the prince had won. He set the fallen shah free to wander the land in loneliness and sorrow. Iran's most beloved leader had learned much from the simurgh.

DESCRIPTION

The oracle at Delphi, the old man on the mountain and the three Fates in a cave all exemplify the omniscient hermit who secludes him or herself from humankind. They await worthy seekers who survive the perilous journey, and share the secrets of the future with carefully measured words. The simurgh served this purpose for many cultures, including the ancient Persians. Some even believe the simurgh attended the Queen of Sheba's court. It is said to have had orange feathers like metallic scales, a small silver head with a human face, four wings, a vulture's talons and a long peacock's tail. In truth, it may be that each of the great fortunetellers (the oracle, the old man and the Fates) were all the simurgh. Different cultures attribute a variety of appearances to the being, including that of a crow, an owl, a crone, a crooked old man and a beautiful young woman. Steeped in symbolism, these accounts do little justice to the actual splendor of the simurgh. Many were created to frighten foolish seekers away from the omniscient entities.

The simurgh speaks all languages, including those that humankind forgot long ago. It resides in isolated, desolate places, such as mountain peaks and desert plains. Mortal desire to know the future sent the simurgh into hiding long ago. It learned that humans rarely left it satisfied. The simurgh has no desire to become a god, nor does it wish to awaken man before he is ready. Still, the simurgh has a kind heart. If a seeker manages to find its lair, the truth-speaker offers some aid. However, the simurgh limits the number of questions that can be asked — sometimes only one; sometimes three. No matter how many questions are answered, all come at a price, whether servitude, the sacrifice of an item that the seeker cherishes, or a quest that must be fulfilled in advance. Nor does the simurgh ever speak plainly — answers are twisted riddles or rhymes. The simurgh uses a seeker's knowledge or perspective as the key to the truths it reveals, but humanity must find its own answers in the end. A good heart understands what it is intended to; an evil heart more than likely arrives at the wrong solution — and ruin. Thus the simurgh seeks to tip the scales in favor of good. Unfortunately, the majority of those who pursue the simurgh for insight do so out of greed.

IMAGE

The simurgh has no single form or appearance. It is whatever a culture or individual expects it to

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be. Sometimes, however, the simurgh descends among humans to bring knowledge to the deserving. On these forays, it assumes forms that the beneficiary does not recognize as wise or conciliatory — a snake, a rat, a babe. Only the keenly insightful realize that truth has no form and can come from any source, no matter how unlikely.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You are an elemental force of the universe. You are what you are, though you may appear in many forms, depending on what seekers expect of you. Form is irrelevant, though. Truth is all that matters. If man only knew to look for it in his heart, he would realize that he does not need you. Until then, you do what you can to coax humanity to true understanding. It's your role in the scheme of things.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5, Perception 10, Intelligence 8, Wits 10

Abilities: Alertness 6, Animal Speech 4, Awareness 10, Cosmology 9, Culture 5, Empathy 8, Enigmas 8, Etiquette 4, Expression 5, Hiding 5, Lore (Any Kind) 6, Metaphysics 5, Occult 8

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** Unknown **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Fearlessness, Human Speech, Immunity, Information Font, Intangibility, Shapechanger, Soothing Voice, Soul-Sense, Spirit Vision, Unaging

Spirits

Spirits take a variety of forms and functions in the Dark Medieval world. No one set of beliefs about their natures proves any more true than, any other. To some, they are ancestors, advisors or enigmatic friends. To others, they are a raw force of divinity to be manipulated and controlled. From any view, they are a force of great potential power in the physical realms, should they wish to exert their "muscle."

Movement: Most spirits can fly or hover in the Umbra. Maximum movement per turn in the Penumbra is 20 + Willpower in yards. In the Umbra, distances can warp without warning in relation to the material world.

Pursuit: A fleeing spirit rolls Willpower (difficulty 6) and begins with three automatic successes (if in the Umbra). A pursuing mage rolls Dexterity + Enigmas (difficulty 8). If a spirit gains a 10-success lead, he escapes. A spirit with the Re-form Charm can simply use it to escape without a roll.

Communications: Spirits speak different languages than physical beings. Communication among spirits is not so much a language as it is mutual comprehension among all parties. Not all mages can understand spirits — a spirit of two levels is required to communicate with them, unless they speak familiar human languages.

Charms

Every spirit has special powers called Charms. These powers require a certain amount of Essence to use. Unless otherwise specified, each Charm lasts for one scene and combat-related Charms last for one turn per use.

- **Airt Sense:** Most spirits have a natural sense of the spirit world's airts (directions) and can travel without much difficulty. Simple navigation costs nothing; to locate a specific object or person in the Umbra costs one Essence.
- **Appear:** A spirit with this Charm can manifest to an Earthly observer without taking material form. While manifested in this manner, the spirit cannot affect (or be affected by) the physical world of the Umbra in any way. Demons often use this power to taunt their victims. Costs 10 Essence, due to the great difficulty in crossing the Gauntlet.
- **Armor:** A spirit can use this Charm to gain one soak die versus lethal and bashing damage per Essence point spent. Without this power, spirits may not soak damage (unless Materialized). This Charm may be used at any point in a combat turn before the attacker rolls damage.
- **Blast:** The spirit can project damaging energy at opponents. This Charm costs one Essence per bashing damage die, two per lethal and five per lethal. The blast can take any form appropriate to the spirit: fire elementals project fire, weather spirits project lightning, etc.
- **Blighted Touch:** A spirit can use this Charm to bring out the worst in its target. If the spirit attacks successfully, the victim must immediately make a Willpower roll (difficulty is the spirit's Rage). If he fails, his negative personality traits dominate for the next few hours. A botch causes the personality disorder to become permanent. This Charm costs two Essence points.
- **Call for Aid:** This Charm allows the spirit to call others for assistance. The spirit rolls Willpower versus a difficulty based on the likelihood of similar spirits being nearby (3 when spirits are within sight, 8 for common spirits within their habitat, 10 for rare spirits or spirits outside their habitat). This Charm costs five Essence points.

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- **Cling:** The spirit may attach itself to any target. Only successful grappling—reducing the spirit's Essence to zero, or forcing the spirit into Slumber—can remove the clinging spirit. To cling, the spirit must successfully attack the target. Once successful, the spirit is at +5 Willpower for grappling purposes. This charm costs one Essence per use, but lasts indefinitely or until the spirit is separated from the victim.
- **Corruption:** The spirit can whisper a suggestion into the victim's ear; the victim is inclined to act upon the suggestion, but may spend a Willpower point to negate the Charm. Costs one Essence.
- **Create Fires:** If the spirit succeeds in a Essence roll, it can create a fire. The difficulty varies (from 3 for small fires to 9 for a conflagration). Essence cost varies from one to five points, depending on the fire's size.
- **Create Wind:** This Charm creates wind effects. Essence cost varies from one for a light breeze to 20 for a tornado.
- **Death Fertility:** This Charm stimulates the rapid growth of whatever will kill a target, be it disease, infection, parasites or cancer. This requires a Rage roll, difficulty of the target's Willpower. Every success inflicts a level of lethal damage. This Charm costs five Essence points.
- **Disable:** This Charm can temporarily paralyze a single target. The spirit rolls Rage (difficulty is target's Stamina + 3, or Rage if a spirit). The Charm costs one point of Essence per remaining Health Level (or Essence point if the target is a spirit; minimum cost is 10 Essence points).
- **Dream Journey:** The spirit may use this Charm to intrude upon a sleeping target's dreams. Nothing the spirit does carries over when the victim awakens, but its actions will hurt, arouse or comfort for as long as the subject slumbers. Despite the vivid nature of such dreams, the sleeper will not necessarily remember the visitation in the morning. Each visitation costs 10 Essence, 15 if the spirit wants the subject to remember everything.
- **Ease Pain:** The spirit can ease a material creature's pain for a scene. The Charm soothes even the most terrible wounds (thus negating die pool penalties from injuries, but movement restrictions remain), but does not heal them. When the Charm fades, the spirit may use it again, spending one Essence point per hour. If the spirit departs, the pain returns. Cost is one Essence
- **Flee:** This Charm gives the spirit an effective 15 Willpower for the purpose of escape. This Charm includes any rolls that actively give the spirit a chance to avoid the presence of others through peaceful means. Cost is two Essence points per turn.
- **Influence:** The spirit may use this Charm to change the target's mood gradually. The spirit need not speak to the victim to use the Charm. This Charm costs three Essence points per die of effect; target's player makes an opposed roll against the victim's Willpower.
- **Insight:** Through this Charm, the spirit can gain insight into any one hidden aspect of the target's self. The Charm costs 10 Essence if used to gain a specific piece of information; it costs only five if the spirit reaches for the simplest insight.
- **Iron Will:** The spirit can lock its mind on certain goals from which it cannot stray (guard a location, hunt down a target or remain unpossessed). Upon activation, the spirit receives +5 to its Willpower to resist any attempt to sway it from its course. This Charm costs one Essence point per hour.
- **Materialize:** A spirit may use this Charm to materialize in the physical world, but doing so can be quite dangerous. The spirit's Essence must be at least two points higher than the Gauntlet for the area. When a spirit Materializes, it must spend Essence to create a physical shape and give itself Physical Attributes, but the spirit still uses Essence for Social and Mental Attributes. The Essence cost is five points plus the

following:

Essence Cost Trait

- 1 Per one Physical Attribute level
- 1 Per two Ability levels
- 1 Seven Health Levels (as a mortal)
- 1 Per additional Health Level (each extra Health Level also increases size)
- 1 Per Health Level healed (regenerate damage to physical form), three points per level of lethal damage healed -spirits take lethal damage from magic
- 1 Weaponry: Per die of lethal damage above and beyond Strength (bite or claws are one additional die, large talons are two, etc.)

Spirits have no Limit to Attribute or Ability purchases beyond available Essence. It is possible for them to form extremely strong or fast bodies if they spend enough Essence points. Most have a "prime form" to which they default when Materialized. Aside from the above restriction, a spirit can remain Materialized for as long as it desires, provided it does not enter an area with a Gauntlet higher than its Essence minus two. While Materialized, the spirit may not recharge Essence unless it has a Charm that allows it to do so. When a Materialized spirit is attacked, damage is applied to Health Levels. If Health Levels are reduced to zero, the spirit loses five Essence points and dissipates into the Umbra. It may not re-Materialize for [20 minus Essence] hours. Note that lethal damage inflicted upon a spirit is applied to both Health Levels *and* Essence,

• **Mind Speech:** A spirit can use this Charm to communicate directly into a subject's mind. Cost is three Essence points per die.

• **Possession:** Demons and evil spirits most often have this Charm. It allows the spirit to possess a living being or inanimate object. To use this Charm, the spirit must make a Essence roll (difficulty equal to victim's Willpower, or the Gauntlet rating if an inanimate object). The number of successes equals the speed with which possession occurs.

Successes Time Taken

- 1 six hours
- 2 three hours
- 3 one hour
- 4 15 minutes
- 5 five minutes
- 6+ instantaneous

Until the possession is complete, the spirit will find a dark, isolated part of the Umbra and remain there, concentrating on the Charm. The spirit may take no other action during this time; if it engages in spirit combat, the possessive link breaks. Other spirits usually guard the possessor to ensure that the process is undisturbed. Possession costs 10 Essence points.

• **Quake:** The spirit can cause the ground to shake in the area that corresponds to its current Penumbral location. The Essence cost is five per one-mile radius. In addition, the spirit can increase the quake's intensity by increasing the Essence per mile expenditure.

• **Re-form;** This Charm allows the spirit to dissipate and Re-form elsewhere in the Umbra, usually far away from enemies. Re-form costs 20 Essence.

• **Shapeshift:** The spirit may take any form it desires. It does not gain any powers or abilities unique to the new shape, only the form and visage. Essence cost is five.

• **Track:** The spirit may unerringly track down its prey. Essence cost is five.



- **Umbral Storm:** The spirit can cause a great downpour in the surrounding Umbra. Due to the Umbra's strange nature, water is not the only substance that might fall from the sky. Essence cost is five for a storm one mile in diameter, with 40 m.p.h. winds. The spirit may increase the storm's size by ten percent, or the wind speed by 10 m.p.h., for two additional Essence points spent. Storms created in this manner last until they naturally abate.

Ghosts

Not all who rise are bound to their bodies. Some are instead trapped in the place of their death, their lifelong home or a place that held great passion — love as often as enmity. Accounts of these poor souls place them both with the least and the most dangerous of the restless dead. Most haunt the place of their life, or their death, repeating there the actions from their fragmented memories until they are released to the afterlife. These beings are rarely disruptive and often are oblivious of the still living. Others, however, are displeased with their lot and vent their anger as best they can with noises, frightening visions or violent force. Having no bodies, they cannot be banned by physical weapons. Only the holy Word or similar magic can put them back into the grave.

The stats below are for just such an angry spirit.

Willpower 3, Rage 6, Essence 20

Charms: Appear, Blighted Touch or Influence; some ghosts have the Possession Charm (such creatures usually have at least 30 Essence)

Description: When ghosts affect the physical world, they appear as insubstantial versions of themselves at the moment of their deaths — torn and bloody from animal attack, thin and starved from deprivation, etc.

Weaknesses: Ghosts are often trapped by memories of their lifetime loves and hates.

Essence: Ghosts provide no measurable Quintessence.

Minor Spirit of Hunger

These spirits of hunger are not so much a form as they are a scent, drifting through the air currents of the material world until they can find a victim. Once the spirit chooses its victim, as much on whim as purpose, it subjects him to the full range of its powers to induce insatiable hunger. The spirit, in turn, feeds on the resulting eating frenzy until the victim dies or the spirit is discovered.

Willpower 3, Rage 3, Essence 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Corruption, Dream Journey, Influence, Possession

Image: A vague, smoky patch of mist floating around its victims.

Major Spirit of Magical Ambition

These mysterious spirits, often the deceased mages of a particular mystic Fellowship, use their Charms and knowledge to shepherd an adopted "student," regardless of that individual's willingness to listen. As with living teachers of the art, its methods vary greatly in tact, subtlety and methodology.

Willpower 6, Rage 5, Essence 40

Charms: Airt Sense, Appear, Annor, Dream Journey, Influence, Insight, Materialize, Mind Speech

Materialized Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Abilities: Cosmology 2, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Occult 4

Materialized Health Levels: 7 (as a human)

Image: This spirit takes the form of a wizened old master appearing to those with the talent to work magic, even if they do not yet know that they can. In some instances, it appears as, or even is, the former teacher of the mage it encounters.

Minor Djinn

These self-proclaimed servants of the Umbra puzzle mages. Their motivations and activities do not always fall in line with the mages understanding of magic, Do these spirits lie, or do their statements

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simply operate beyond the understanding of men? Do they come to aid, hinder, oppose or serve? Or worse, is an encountered Djinn in the service of another mage with undesirable motives? Djinn always bring more questions than answers.

Willpower 5, Rage 5, Essence 30

Charms: Airt Sense, Appear, Flee, Shapeshift

Image: A minor djinni's appearance is mercurial, for it can take on the appearance of anything it desires, even inanimate objects.

The Restless Dead

These ghosts forced back to the living world find themselves in familiar looking, solid forms — their own corpses. Enslaved by dark magic, they are unable to act except as commanded, existing in constant torment and waiting for the chance to return to the afterlife. Some of these enslaved souls were meant not for Heaven but for Hell. These monsters can prove to be too strong to compel, and they can rebel against their masters. Once the summoning mage is slain, his control over the ghost fails, leaving it free to pursue its bestial, destructive nature.

Spells: Many magics can raise the dead.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 1, Stamina 4, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 1, Intelligence 0, Wits 1

Abilities: Brawl 2, Melee 2

Willpower: 1 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2, -5, Destroyed. **Armor:** 0

Attacks: As per weapon.

Weaknesses: Highly flammable; suffers double damage from fire.

Essence: None

Troll

These massive beasts stand between 6 to 12 feet tall and weigh between 300 to 1000 pounds. Their skin is usually grey to puke green to dark brown with patches of hairy skin covering most of their body. They are cannibalistic and usually travel alone but it is not uncommon for them to gather into groups to raid on villages and small towns. They can usually speak a language of sorts but are not the sharpest tool in the shed.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Abilities: Brawl 4, Craft 2, Dodge 2, Melee 3, Survival 2

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, - 1 x 3, - 2 x 3, - 3, Incapacitated **Armor:** +1B

Attacks: Fist (Str +1B) or by weapon

Powers: Trolls have a very fast healing factor and magic resistance. All magic damage is halved and

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they regain health levels every turn (they roll their stamina against a difficulty number of 7 and how ever many successes they add back wound levels)

Weaknesses: They have a weakness fire and sun. If a troll is exposed to sunlight they will turn to stone. For every melee they are exposed they take 1 wound level lethal damage non soak able as they turn to stone.

UMKOVU

The wretched desert takes its form, the jackal proud and tight. In search of you, I feel my way through the slowest heaving night. -Peter Gabriel, "Come Talk to Me"

In the time before time, the first creatures crawled from the primordial ooze. Many struggled up the beach, slipping into the protective coverage of shivering ferns and yawning root caves. Others didn't have the strength to ride the wave of evolution ashore. They died and their bodies rotted in the mud, sinking slowly back into the cycle from which they came. They became fodder for the next generation. They nourished the Earth. Yet other creatures came and picked greedily at the bones of the dead as hungrily as the Earth sought to draw them in. Among these scavengers were the first spiders, clacking their mandibles around cartilage to reach the soft wet meat beyond. They survived. They evolved. And in time, with the division of the continents, they spread throughout the world.

DESCRIPTION

The aboriginal peoples of Eastern Africa first put a name to ancient spiders, calling them Umkovu, "Soul Eaters". Early witch doctors of the Bantu tribe discovered that Umkovu had special powers that could be directed by man. The lore was passed down through generations, from mentor to student. Only the witch doctors knew how to tame and use the spiders, and they guarded their knowledge greedily. It created their mystique and instilled fear in their fellow tribesmen. African witch doctors have long kept Umkovu as guardians in their homes. They know that paranoia and ignorance of the creatures keep thieves at bay. They have learned that as long as the spiders are well-fed, they do not attack living creatures. Only those foolish enough to neglect the feeding and care of their Umkovu become victims themselves. Umkovu feed on the bone marrow of the dead, preferably the recently dead. If they can't find dead bones, they create them. Their strong mandibles can crack even the largest remains, whether animal or human — the spiders aren't particular so long as the marrow has begun its slow decay. Umkovu lay their eggs in marrow, too, cracking a bone, implanting their seeds, and then sealing the fissure with thick, hard webbing. The eggs incubate for months, during which time the spiderlings are most vulnerable. Remarkably, only two spiders emerge from each hatching: a large, healthy female and a small, weak male. These two devour their siblings in the nest, the female selfishly hoarding most of the feast. Once emerged, she protects the male as they travel in search of territory of their own. The process then begins again. The male fertilizes the female's eggs, then is consumed by her, and she never procreates again. Umkovu killed through accident or injury cannot be replaced, and the spiders slowly dwindle in number. When feeding, the Umkovu displays bizarre behavior. It trembles and shakes as it sucks in marrow. Its legs clatter and its eyes glow with scarlet intensity. The spider is said to experience the emotions and thoughts of the victim at the moment of death. Sometimes it emits a piercing scream. Other times it sighs with unbearable sorrow. Pigments also shift and change on the broad plate of its carapace.

Many believe that the last image witnessed by the deceased can be seen in the spider's ink-blot designs. In some cases, this may be the face of a murderer. The Umkovu feeds until its convulsions become too intense to endure. The spider is most dangerous at this moment. Driven by the pain, fear and horror of the death moment, the creature thrashes and whirls, a dervish dancing to a tempestuous dirge. If cornered or trapped, it spews volatile venom. Finally sated and exhausted, the spider collapses into a ball, mandibles clacking reflexively. Umkovu gravitate toward war-torn areas, seeking territory that offers a constant food supply. Many live in the virgin rain forests of Africa and South America, where the natural



order remains closest to the spiders' primordial origins. Others find a more peaceful existence in slaughterhouses and meat factories. As long as they remain well-fed, they pose no danger to living beings. Hungry Umkovu, however, seek out a victim and use their venomous bite to create food where none existed before. Concentrated Umkovu poison is distilled within the creatures from marrow toxins. The spiders' venom has become more virulent with the advent of technology and its corrupt touch.

IMAGE

Terrifying to behold, the Umkovu evokes images of the dead. Its carapaced legs and body have the pallor of bone. Like a skeletal, eight-fingered hand, it crouches in dark corners and shadows, always ready to spring. Its furtive movements mingle with quick, racing bolts across open spaces. The Umkovu clatter-clacks as it moves across hard surfaces. Small sticky claws at the ends of its legs allow it to climb all but the most slick of surfaces. Its mandibles jut out from its mouth, curling in, ever-grasping, ever-smashing. Most disturbing of all are the Umkovu's eyes. Scarlet orbs like fresh blood watch everything and never close. They are crystallized into a billion individual blood cells that shine of their own accord. Something human lurks in those eyes, which makes the creature all the more disturbing. One must wonder what lingering hatred or desire for vengeance the Umkovu retains after its death-throes.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

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The meat that you feed on — the tall ones—think you eat to survive, that you need nourishment to live. You need sustenance, true, but not of any substance. It's the death moment that sustains you. You are the embodiment of other creatures' passing. Their fear, hatred, regret and even calm are yours to cherish. Those emotions sate you, but only for a time. They determine your nature, but only for a time. Revenge is sweet when it is achieved posthumously. Yet tranquillity quiets your spirit. Let's see what spirit your next meal will bring.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Cosmology 3, Culture 2, Dodge 4, Empathy 4, Hiding 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** OK, -2, -5, Crushed **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Mandibles for 3 dice, whirling attack for 4 dice; Bizarre Hunger, Cast Iron Stomach, Death- Sense (sees last image of victim), Extra Speed, Flexible, Immunity (industrial toxins), Loyalty, Nightsight, Offensive to Animals, Perfect Balance, Shadow-walking, Size, Venom , Wall Crawling, Webbing

UNICORN

One by one in the moonlight there, Neighing far off on the haunted air The unicorns come down to the sea. — Corbin Aiken, "Evening Song"

Shadow Tracker darted through the dense undergrowth, feet thudding on the forest floor, sweat running down his face. He wiped it away with a snarl, eyes set on the vague white form ahead of him, barely visible through a maze of trees. Shadow Tracker had trailed his unicorn for five days over hot, harsh terrain. Fatigue cramped his muscles, but he didn't care. Glory did not wait for tired bones. The unicorn had first appeared to Shadow Tracker over a month ago, after his pack had destroyed that Wyrms abomination. He hadn't been badly hurt in the fight — it was only a scrape — but no one believed what he saw. They said he must have been hallucinating after the Wyrms beast had wounded him. Those that would even listen to him warned that even if he had seen a unicorn it was an emissary from the spirit world and should be left alone. At first their words made sense, but as the weather became hot — unnaturally so — he knew the recurring image was taunting him. The only way he could prove what he had seen would be to stalk and kill it—just as he had that Wyrms creature. This was to be his greatest test. What other warrior could brag of taking down a unicorn? The glory would be unimaginable, and his stories would grace the fire-side for generations to come. Shadow Tracker growled, pushing his muscles to the limit in a last burst of speed. The white shape grew closer, closer — and then disappeared. Shadow Tracker stumbled into a clearing, clawing away branches furiously. His eyes darted around the wooded knoll. Leaves rustled and there it was, drinking from a narrow creek. Shadow Tracker tensed, breath ragged in his chest. Now. He raised his spear with a clawed hand, poised to strike a killing blow. At the moment the unicorn raised its head, the eyes of hunter and prey locked, and Shadow Tracker froze. A soft voice eased into his mind and images washed over him. He saw his tribe waiting as its best hunter selfishly pursued an unattainable waking dream. He saw himself— raving, filthy, mad — pursuing his foolish glory while they waited. It was then that his fever broke. The spear fell from his hand. The unicorn's obsidian hoof broke the dirt, and Shadow Tracker's head sunk. He knew he could not meet those dark, knowing eyes again, but, in a breath, the unicorn was gone. Shadow Tracker returned to his people a moon later, forever changed. He never spoke of the hunt, but devoted himself to serving his tribe. Shadow Tracker's people embraced the change in their great warrior and followed him to righteous glory.

Shadow Tracker finally died in battle, a legendary hero, and fire-side storytellers still speak his name today.

DESCRIPTION

Unicorns have embodied mystery since the birth of myth. The creatures represent the ultimate in the unattainable, always just out of reach, eternally elusive. In short, the horned beasts are the very stuff of legends. Unicorns are perhaps the most renowned of all mythical creatures, and for good reason — their famous spiraled horns are rumored to purify water, nullify poison and even cure the most vile illnesses. The horned stallion has represented many things over time, from virile ferocity and strength to passivity, purity and benevolence. Modern stories paint these creatures as pacifistic, the embodiments of love and light who shy away from human eyes. Ancient peoples had a different, more visceral perception of the unicorn. The beasts were believed to be warlike, ferocious protectors, the ideal of "male" virtues. They were treated with a mixture of fear and awe, and respected as defenders of the forests and all wild things. Masculine attributions to the unicorn may have inspired the idea that only a virgin could approach the beast

safely. With its phallic horn and fierce constitution, the unicorn could be counter-balanced only by its complete opposite — feminine innocence, the purity and meekness associated with virgins. Somehow this assumption evolved into "fact" and even altered peoples' perceptions of the beast. Unicorns thus became associated with virginal qualities like peacefulness and purity of heart. Medieval artwork even depicts the unicorn as a representation of Christ, the purifying capabilities of its horn emulating Christ's healing powers. Perhaps unicorns are all of these things. However, anyone fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to encounter one is likely to see the beast's ferocious aspect. As protector of its forest habitat, a unicorn is hostile to almost all interlopers. Unicorns are intimately bound to the land on which they live, and can sense danger when some area or creature is threatened there. Though unicorns may prize peace, it must be preserved or won through violence. Unicorns are suspicious of humans as a rule. Tales of being conquered by virgins are not altogether true — the creatures are not interested in the chastity of human girls. Rather, they are attracted to any being who possesses purity of heart, soul and mind; anyone who respects all other creatures and avoids harming living things. A unicorn is drawn irresistibly to such a person, whether it be a child or a middle-aged washerwoman with seven children.

The horned beasts are solitary, each claiming a wide expanse of forest on reaching maturity. They live most of their lives alone, meeting only to mate. The female drops a foal every two years and raises the offspring without the assistance of the male. The foal is vulnerable for its first several years, and the mother fights fearlessly to defend her child. She teaches it to forage and helps it control the magical abilities of its horn before it claims its own range. Unicorns are said to live for a century, barring natural disaster or spear point. Even when wounded, the animals heal quickly and have notoriously enduring constitutions. The magical properties of unicorn horns are legendary. They're attributed with detecting poison in food and drink and curing an array of ailments, including epilepsy. Kings and bishops, with their acute paranoia, go to great lengths to obtain a horn to ensure their own survival, as do alchemists and magi to unleash the inherent properties of the magical treasures. However, because unicorns are so elusive, many beguilers pass off antelope or goat horns as the real thing. Of course, these charlatans must move on quickly before the local lord falls dead at the dinner table.

IMAGE

Modern lore depicts the unicorn as a magnificent snowy white, long-maned horse with delicate features — with an ivory-colored horn rising from its forehead. In reality, unicorns have little in common with horses save their size. The horned beasts' build and features, particularly their large dark eyes, are similar to a deer's. Their tails are several feet in long and, like that of a lion, tipped with a furry tuft. Covered in soft, off-white hair, a unicorn's streamlined body is built for speed. A unicorn's talon-sharp hooves resemble those of a goat, and are formidable weapons. The much-fabled horn of an adult unicorn is a smaller than one might imagine — eight to 11 inches long — and typically colored in shades ranging from slate gray to black. The unicorn's horn is little more than a bony nub at birth, which grows slowly throughout the creature's life. The number of spirals along a horn indicate the creature's age. Unicorns

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communicate through a mixture of nickers, whinnies and rudimentary telepathic images. All horned beasts possess an innate psychic ability to share simple visions with others, whether intelligent or primal.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

You know your duty. You protect the wild lands, the untamed forests and all the creatures that live there. Humans cannot be trusted — greed rots their souls. They seek to harness the power of your horn for their own good, giving no thought to other living beings. Avoid such base creatures. Only the pure of heart are worth your gifts. You value serenity, but understand that action is necessary to protect yourself, your young and your home. If a human proves worthy, try to teach her; otherwise, remain as elusive and solitary as your instincts demand.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 5, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Speech 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Cosmology 3, Culture 2, Dodge 4, Elusion 4, Empathy 4, Enigmas 2, Hiding 4, Intimidation 4, Intuition 3, Occult 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Swimming 1, Tracking 4

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1B

Attacks/Powers: Trample for 6 dice, gore for 8 dice, bite for 4 dice; Acute Senses, Armor, Bond-Sharing, Extra Speed, Human Speech, Information Font, Mystick Shield, Shadowwalking, Shapechanger, Shared Knowledge, Shy, Soul-Sense, Spirit Travel, Spirit Vision

White Unicorn (Alternate)

Common bestiaries of the day describe the unicorn as a small white horse with a pure mane and tail, long forelocks, and — most importantly — a spiraled horn jutting straight from its forehead. These beasts go almost always unseen. They come out of hiding only upon encountering the aura of chastity, where after they move closer slowly and cautiously until they can catch a person's scent. As creatures of fertility given flesh, the scent of unfulfilled promise intoxicates those unicorns lucky enough to encounter a lone human female. This preference for the most pure of the fairer sex often leads to the beast's downfall; a virtuous maid can be bid to sit among the trees, perfumes covering the scent of hidden hunters. Properly perfumed, a chaste boy of marrying age can sometimes fool the poor eyesight of the unicorn. Those responsible for the death of a unicorn find themselves struck with a curse of infertility for seven years; Nature does not take the loss of her valued creatures lightly. Unicorns are rich in Essence, their blood yielding power even from the stain on an arrowhead.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 5, Animal Ken 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 4, Stealth 4

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -3, Incapacitated **Armor:** 0

Attacks: Gore (Str +4L), front kick (Str +2B), trample (Str +4B against prone targets)

Powers: Curse of Infertility (on any who slays a unicorn)

Weaknesses: A unicorn cannot resist the scent of a human female virgin. They have poor eyesight (-2 on vision-related rolls), but good hearing and sense of smell.



Essence: One point of Essence can be gained per wound level of spilled blood.

Red Unicorn

Some scholarly writings on the unicorn come to the conclusion that the unicorn is misunderstood as the monoceros, also called the rhinoceros. This is compounded by southern wise men who have never seen the unicorns roaming northern Europe. This is only partly correct, as a red unicorn is descended from the mating of roan stallions and female rhinoceros. The resulting creature is something like an ass in size, yet strong as an ox. Its thick, shaggy hide is capable of blunting spear tips, and the short, blunt bone horn on its forehead can easily punch through an iron shield. The fantastic properties of this beast do not end here. Blankets woven of the beast's fur are said to guarantee conception if coupling occurs upon them. The horn can neutralize any poison with just a touch, making these beasts a prized catch for any hunter. The meat is a treasure unto itself, for nothing else in the world is as flavorful and tender. Many have tried to breed them in captivity, but no one has yet succeeded.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Charisma 0, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 3

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 3, -2 x 3, -3 x 2, -5, Incapacitated

Armor: + 3 B / + 2 L

Attacks: Gore (Str +5L), trample (Str +4B against prone targets)

Powers: Cure Poison (with a touch of its horn)

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Weaknesses: The Red Unicorn is limited in its sense of hearing and its sense of sight; they suffer a -2 on Perception rolls in which these senses are involved.

Essence: The tail hair of a Red Unicorn may be mixed with hashish and smoked as the Turks do. The vapors emanating from this burning mixture grant one Essence point to all who inhale.

Re'em

One set of belief ties the origins of the unicorn to the Re'em of Jewish lore. These creatures haven't been seen commonly since the Jews' expulsion from Palestine. A sighting of a Re'em is sometimes considered a sign from God. In truth, these creatures are not unicorns. Wild blue-gray oxen of great strength and durability, they have a pair of horns that, when viewed from the side, appear as one horn in the middle of the creature's forehead. It is for this reason they were never caught. Most people leave the Re'em alone once it turns its head toward them, for they are embarrassed to have believed it a unicorn. Others find it puts up far too great a fight to be worth the trouble. The powdered bones of a Re'em, mixed with milk and honey, are said to settle a number of stomach ailments. The meat is inedible, making a Re'em a poor prize for hunting. The animal's belligerent attitude prevents most from trying to domesticate it, despite its strength and endurance. It would surely make a fine beast of burden for those who could control it.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 0, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Abilities: Brawl 2, Dodge 2

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 4, -2 x 3, -3 x 2, -4 x 2, Incapacitated

Armor: + 2 B / + 1 L

Attacks: Gore (Str +4L), kick (Str +2B)

Weaknesses: A Re'em can be struck unconscious by hitting it with a stone squarely between the eyes. Re'em fear moving water and will not cross it.

Essence: Re'em have no appreciable Essence; they are mundane creatures.

Vampire

Description

They are humanoid in appearance as they were once mortal skin usually pale.

Attribute: Strength 4 dexterity 4 stamina 4 charisma 3 manipulation 4 appearance 3 perception 3 intelligence 3 wits 3

Willpower 7 **Essence** 10 **Rage** 10

Health ok x5 -1 x2 -2 x2 -3 x2 -5 x2 incapacitated (health levels 14)

Armor whatever they happen to be wearing

Weapons claws str +1 lethal, fangs str +1 lethal, whatever weapon they are using

Powers: They take half damage from all damage except magic, faith, and fire. They can summon a swarm of local beasts on the swarm/pack rules with the expenditure of willpower point and the cost of 5 essence per hour. They can shape shift into a wolf or bat with the expenditure of 1 essence. Vampires can also mesmerize with a resisted willpower roll.

Weaknesses: Vampires cannot stand the light of day. They take 2 levels of unsoakable lethal damage for every melee they are exposed to sunlight. They are repelled by garlic(willpower roll), running water (willpower roll), and holy symbols (resisted willpower roll versus the wielders faith or willpower whichever is higher). They cast no reflection in any reflective surface.

VODAYANY

Where the stream runneth smoothest, the water is deepest. — John Lyly

One final, physical frontier on this planet Earth remains to be overcome: the waters. What hides down there, out of sight, out of reach of man's curious delvings? What lurks in the dark depths of the lakes and ponds, the seas and rivers? How is it that humankind has reached such a level of intelligence and enlightenment, yet has not discovered the answers to these questions? Creatures throughout the ages have crawled out from the gloomy surface of still lakes and left their marks on shore for mortals to ponder. They have stolen loved ones, drawing them down into the silt-fogged waters where no one dares to follow. These mysterious monsters do nothing to quell landlubber curiosity. They slip away when looked at directly and keep their secrets selfishly to themselves.

DESCRIPTION

Many myths surround the creatures of the deep, not all of them pleasant. To the Russians, one type of water creature is called "vodayany" (though it has many other names throughout the world). These are the undead trapped in water, just as the living are "trapped" in air. Some cultures relegate their dead to oceans, lakes or rivers with great ceremony and reverence. This ancient tradition has root in the belief that drowning victims never die, but live in secret cities deep in the water's bosom. Vodayany exist in cold deep lakes, river beds and seas. They build homes for themselves over the centuries, reconstructing their previous environs from the hulls of ships, rusty treasures salvaged from sunken boats, and from the bottles, effluvia and trinkets tossed into the water, forming a mockery of their lost lives. Vodayany aquatic civilizations involve all the complications and intricacies of the world above. They have nobles and slaves. They love, hate, create and destroy in passionate unlives paralleling their breathing days. Yet they have forgotten their former lives in the air. Vodayany have ceased to yearn for the sun's warmth. As the decades and centuries pass, the underwater world becomes their only true home. The moon imposes its will on vodayany, as it does on the waters themselves. The full moon saps the unliving creatures' strength. They rest during the waning time and arise refreshed as the lunar cycle begins again. Thus these beings measure time by the phases of the moon, by the rise and fall of the tides. True death comes to the vodayany only when their bodies are destroyed. Air and sun are anathema to them, resuming the normal process of their decay and barring them from the surface for long. Those stupid or stubborn enough to leave their watery "graves" to seek out friends or loved ones dry up and collapse within hours. Vodayany can emerge longer at night, safe from the sun's rays, but most dare not travel far, even in the shelter of darkness. Barring battle wounds and trips to the surface, these beings can exist eternally.

Ancient vodayany established their societal rules, and new arrivals must adapt to the old ways or be destroyed. Slavery to the nobility is common. A caste system as old as the vodayany themselves determines who rules and who serves. Rebellions occur, but rarely succeed, as most new arrivals find their indoctrination complete and thorough. Old vodayany take advantage of "newborn's" confusion to force those citizens to comply. Vodayany cannot reproduce by themselves, so they often recruit among mortals foolish enough to swim at night. Ancients in need of more slaves send hunters to retrieve air-breathers. Sometimes a vodayany becomes infatuated with a mortal spied ashore. If that mortal then

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enters the water for a swim, the vodayany seizes the moment to capture her love forever. Thus the vodayany renew their population through quiet kidnapping. As human travelers encroach further on the seas, the vodayany draw in greater numbers while simultaneously retreating to greater depths. Communication among these creatures has changed over time. Each vodayany culture, isolated from the others by great expanses of air and land, has a unique language based on gestures and touch. Each beautiful and expressive form of sign language has its own complicated "vocabulary," its own dialects and slang. These creatures draw their most common expressions from water-experiences, and they have unique words for things like metal, sunships and fire. The old language of the ancients mingles with concepts brought beneath the waves by the modern dead.

IMAGE

Imagine slipping beneath the surface of a murky lake. Imagine the water pulling you down, the grasping plants tugging at your legs, drawing you deeper into the somber depths. Imagine that moment when you can't hold your breath any longer and you open your mouth wide to suck in the cold. It fills your lungs, relieving the burning emptiness. Your eyes open and your world shifts. Suddenly the water caresses you, its pressure embraces you. The chill slows your racing heart. Everything is quiet. At first you don't understand why there's no pain, but perhaps it's better that way. Others — their hair flowing, skin oily, bodies bloated, eyes glimmering — come for you. They press swollen fingers to your body in hopes of catching its dying warmth. Perhaps they fight over you, pushing and shoving, tearing away chunks of reedy hair from each other. They move like the water itself, and you, newly conceived in this shadowy womb, start to forget the sun.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

There is a vast, secret world here, but you are not allowed to know it. Harvest fish and plants, you're told. Seek out the clearly defined shadows above, where the air-breathers lurk in their vessels, and report your findings to the hunters. Gather the shells that will become the ancients' palaces. These tasks are not for you. There is a world to explore, so much different from... something that you struggle to recall. Surely life among all this bounty should not be spent enslaved. You must find your own way, the ancients be damned.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Abilities: Athletics (Swimming) 4, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Elusion 3, Etiquette 2, Foraging 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 3

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -2 x 3, -5, Destroyed **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks/Powers: Hibernation (during waning moon), Loyalty, Nightsight, Unaging, Vulnerability (sunlight; air), Vulnerability (Strength reduced to 0 during waning of moon), Shadow-walking

WILDE BEAST

A faithful and good servant is a real godsend; but truly 'tis a rare bird in the land.
— Martin Luther

Illuminated manuscripts and tapestries from medieval Europe show many mythical beasts. Among these, the wilde beast romps across the most ancient pages and through the threads of tapestries retrieved from the halls of old. The creature — a lion and a dog combined, half and half — originated as an alchemical symbol for the synthesis of aqua regia ("royal water" — a mixture of nitric and hydrochloric acids) and matter, creating a volatile, solid substance that, when excited, would

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explode. Early alchemists struggled to translate the symbolic language of their predecessors, poring over the drawings that held the secrets of the ancient masters. One such delver into mysteries, a 12th-century Cosian named Feinelli, performed a dangerous experiment. A surgeon dabbling in the secrets of alchemy, Feinelli took the symbolism of alchemy literally and decided to create one of the creatures in the text. Through a blasphemous process of transmutation, he made a living wilde beast. When he tried to cage it, however, the creature disemboweled him, his wife and his children before disappearing into the forest. It did not remain a single beast for long. Some folk claim it mated with an ass, others, with a stag. Based on the creature's appearance, it seems to have found dogs to its liking. Now the wilde beast has several hundred descendants. Although Cosians swear the original creature is long dead, the legend of the wilde beast thrives.

DESCRIPTION

A wilde beast combines the best predatory skills of the lion with the docile, loyal personality traits of a spaniel. As one might guess, it makes an excellent pet or guardian when treated well. Fiercely proud, the "beest" preens constantly, licking her fur until it shines, and loves nothing more than to strut and perform tricks. Despite its colloquial nickname, the wilde beast seems to prefer domestication to the wilds. A simple creature, it sleeps nearly 18 hours a day, curled in a patch of sunlight or at the foot of a bed, since her awkward ancestry makes her susceptible to weariness and ill humors. Inclined toward the hunt, the wilde beast prefers to stalk and kill her own food, though a fresh carcass does in a pinch. Like spaniels, these creatures choose one master or family to whom they are perfectly loyal. Unlike spaniels, they can and do kill anyone who threatens those families. Despite domestication, wilde beasts, like their lion siblings, are clever and have a wild streak that can never be tamed completely. A bloodscent, the sight of a weak or injured animal or the aroma of bitch-heat turns these creatures into monsters. When hungry, they stalk their prey, kill it and eat it. If hungry enough, a beast attacks an adult human. Her favorite prey is small children — they're easy to kill, they don't fight back, and they taste delicious. A wilde beast also keeps her "owner's" yard free of birds, rabbits, squirrels, cats, dogs and nosy neighbors. Needless to say, anyone who owns a wilde beast must take special precautions to ensure that the animal doesn't escape.

IMAGE

Lean muscle ripples along the wilde beast's golden shanks as it prowls its habitat. It may pause by an oak tree to stretch and scratch lion-claws in the ragged bark, or it may chase a butterfly playfully across the grass. It may also sit and lean to one hip for a quick scratch behind the ear, its oversized spaniel paw digging with quick jerks at a flea or dry skin. With a long, lean stretch, it yawns, jaw dropping to reveal wicked teeth and a rough pink tongue. Big cat from the shoulders forward and big dog from there back, the wilde beast is smaller than a male lion and bigger than a spaniel. Its full mane halos a

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feline face and matches the hair on its feathery spaniel tail. Sharp eyes see every movement and alert ears hear the slightest whisper.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

With the keen senses of two great predators, you stand watch over the landscape before you. Hunting is a joy, but it demands energy that you rarely possess. Sleep often to maintain your strength.

TRAITS

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 4, Stealth 3, Wild Hunting 3

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1 B

Attacks/Powers: Bite for 6 dice, claw for 5 dice; Acute Smell, Armor (1), Cast Iron Stomach, Compulsion (attack the weak or injured), Extra Speed, Healing Lick, Homing Instinct, Loyalty, Nightsight, Soul- Sense, Spirit Vision

Common Animals

I am not ambitious to appear a man of letters: I could be content the world should think I had scarce looked on any other book than that of nature.
- *The Philosophical Works of Robert Boyle, vol. 1*

Unlike the scarce magical beasts, the common "lesser" animals of wood, stream and sky remain within the sight of the common man. Each day, normal farmers, merchants and other folk live with such beasts — the goats in their pens, the sparrows outside their windows, the cats at their feet, the horses beneath their saddles. Even so, it is said that even the lowest of beasts carries magic within it. These are our cousins — lesser things, in some philosophies, but touched by Divinity nonetheless. To shamans and pagans, even the "lesser animals" possess souls, intellect and insight. Just because an animal chooses not to share is no reason to believe she has

nothing worth sharing. Magi and their ilk spend far more time in the company of normal animals than in the presence of the greater beasts; as familiar as they are, it's terribly easy to overlook such creatures. Spend a moment to reflect on it, however, and the magical side of lesser beasts becomes clear. The musings of a cat, the play of a hawk, the fierce maternalism of a she-wolf — even the wisest magi find such behaviors enigmatic. Yet these mysteries walk beside us — as pets, as guardians, as food, occasionally and they are not to be discounted. From a player perspective, it's a challenge to enter an animal's skin. Beasts do not think as humans do, but glide on instinct, reaction and training. Animals exist in the here and now, not in the abstract realms of human pondering. The more intelligent ones might well contemplate "higher" issues, but they approach them with a much different perspective. If you choose to play an animal, set a clear distinction between your human viewpoint and that of your "host." Try to avoid being silly. Instead, think of yourself with the heightened senses and instinctive reactions of an animal, with the additional wisdom that comes with inner magic. That magic can be seen in the folklore that surrounds each living thing. For every animal, there are tales.... If you choose to "ride the beast," those tales become more than simple myths — they become your pedigree. The living world is too vast to encompass in one chapter — or even one book! The following animals, however, might play a major part

in your chronicle. The "truth" behind the folklore may be literal, or it might simply be inspired by human perceptions of "beastly" ways. No matter how simple they might seem, however, animals are never mere ciphers. Each one has goals, a personality, a temperament... And a touch of magic.

ALLIGATOR/CROCODILE

I do not make war against the dead. — Homer

Mythology: In the murky, stagnant dampness of the swamps, tree logs sink into slow decay. New life arises from this rottenness — all keen eyes, glittering teeth and long, patient hunger. He comes to devour the dead, this snap-jawed liar, pretending to weep for the souls he has consumed and hungry for the flesh of sinners. From the Nile currents to the brackish pools of the New World, this scaly horror epitomizes a primal fear of the water and the things beneath its surface. To many, he is a god — some regard him as the face of immortality, others as the devourer of souls. An eerie wisdom lurks behind his eyes, as if everything dark and hidden has welled up in the form of an all-seeing beast. His jaws shatter boats; his tail cracks bones; his skin deflects all but the sharpest weapons. Despite his intelligence, he's an alien thing — a creature far older than we can imagine.

Description:

With their long bodies and rough, barklike hide, alligators, caimans and crocodiles are easily mistaken for rotting logs — a fatal error. A crocodilian lies silent and unmoving in the water, submerged up to its eyes and nostrils, waiting for an unwary animal to approach. The creature's powerful jaws lie half-open, sometimes picked by the birds which drift down to perch in the crocodile's mouth. Despite its bulk, this predator is fast; on land or in the water, it can bolt to the chase with terrifying speed. Such beasts are swampland dragons, long and dense with muscle, sharp of tooth and incredibly strong of jaw. They lack only wings and flame. Although not terribly social, they don't seem to mind the presence of others like them. Crocodilians lurk in the steamy waters of swamplands, preying on fish, birds and the occasional hapless human.

Roleplaying Hints:

Let other predators scurry around after their prey! All you have to do is lie nearly hidden in the water and wait for dinner to drift right into your jaws. Reserve your strength and speed for the times you really need them. Like the body below the water's surface, these talents are best kept secret.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Stealth 3

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -3 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 2

Attacks: Bite for 6 dice; tail lash for 4.

Move: 5/26/10

Powers: Armor (2), Death-Sense, Mesmerism, Water-Breathing

APE/MONKEY

I asserted — and I repeat — that a man has no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. If there were an ancestor whom I should feel shame in recalling it would rather be

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a man. - T. H. Huxley

Mythology:

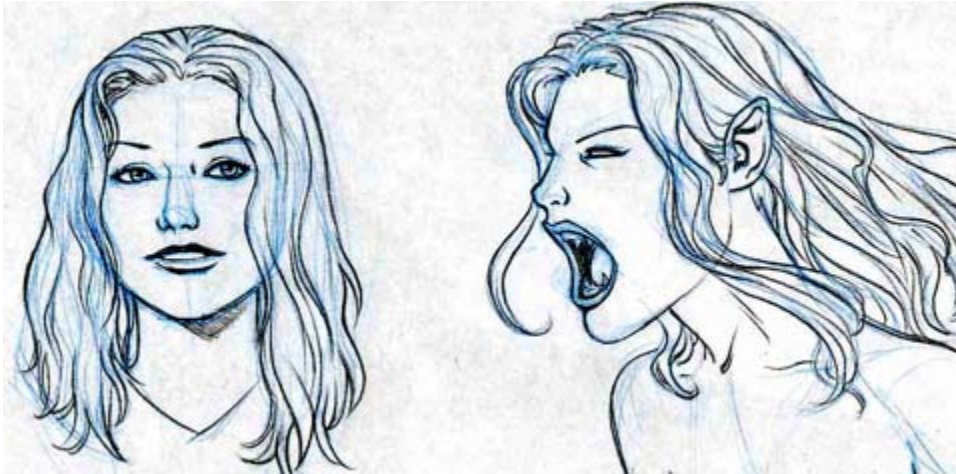
From the incarnation of the Egyptian Thoth (god of wisdom and learning) to the shackled baboon at Satan's right hand, the ape and his cousin the monkey have long ties to human legend. In Hindu lore, the noble yet fearsome Hanuman aided Rama on many vital quests. In Africa, the great ape is a dangerous friend — he taught humans how to eat certain plants, but can be wild in his rage. Mayan mysticks looked to the monkey as the teacher of mathematics and writing, and the Chinese considered the immortal Monkey King a sacrilegious but essential being — the vital spark of chaos in an ordered world, caged by the power of the Buddha, but never truly tamed. To the Christian, the ape is a sinner with a mirror in his hand, woefully regarding his fallen state. Lust, greed and anger have debased him, and he fiddles with himself as the world slides into Hell. Chained to a master's music-box, the dancing monkey capers to please the crowd, a clever and unruly slave. His resemblance to man raises many disturbing questions in the heads of philosophers and scientists, but no one can doubt the bonds between the human and the ape. If the sagacious simian can rise above his animal nature, the mystics say, surely any human can as well.

Description:

From the jungles of Africa and South America to the Asiatic mountains, simians cast a shadow disconcertingly similar to humankind. (On many levels, it may even be said that the apes have the better end of the comparison.) Endowed with powerful senses, physical might and a strong sense of community, simians possess many advantages over the average beast. Gathered into troops or foraging off alone, the apes and their smaller cousins mingle great strength with agility and a surprising degree of intelligence. In Africa and lower Asia, huge apes reach or exceed the height of a man. The more-widespread monkeys (found in jungles across the world) may be smaller, but can still outmuscle most human beings. In the years before gun technology, few people could hope to best a simian in combat; his combination of skill, dexterity, strength and large teeth make an ape a formidable, if reluctant, warrior. For the most part, simians choose to mind their own business. They're mischievous, true, and may be counted on to pick apart anything that interests them. With few exceptions, though, they avoid open violence, and live on a steady diet of insects, plants and fruits. Every so often, an ape will go cannibal; according to some legends, bloody-handed gorillas stalk the deepest forests, savaging whatever they happen to catch. Such tales aside, however, the average ape would rather flee than fight — unless his family or supremacy is threatened. Then he becomes a monster. Beating his chest and shaking small trees, he screams his defiance; if an opponent refuses to budge, the ape moves in with rending hands and slashing teeth. Agile monkeys are masters of the trees. Swinging, climbing and leaping their way through the jungles or forests, they banter and screech like children, tossing stones at their enemies or playing tag with each other. Even more than their larger kin, these beasts employ simple tools: Rocks become noisemakers or nut-crackers, sticks become levers or fishing tools. Either one can become a weapon, but monkeys rarely need them. Like the ape, the monkey prefers discretion to force. Often social, primates gather into loose bands of extended family groups. Under the benevolent dictatorship of a dominant male, they forage, groom each other, and practice elaborate social customs. Within the troop, simians take on the roles of scout, spokesman, nurse, entertainer or guardian. Games, challenges and occasional bribes keep the hierarchy within the troop flexible. To an ape, status comes more from what you do than who (or how big) you are. Simians belong to a diverse collection of families. An "ape" could be a massive gorilla, a wise mandrill, a bright and powerful orangutan, a thoughtful gibbon or a lascivious baboon; a monkey might be the cleverly temperamental chimpanzee, a nervous spider monkey, or any one of dozens of smaller tree-dwellers. Regardless, apes are smart, perceptive and curious, just as their human cousins are.

Roleplaying Hints:

Sniff the air and wonder what lies just out of sight. Although you may resemble a man, you're



quite different. From the tops of trees or the edges of cliffs, you see the world from above. Be patient, loyal and inquisitive, but remain on your guard. The forests are full of enemies.

Attributes: Strength 2-5, Dexterity 2-4, Stamina 3-6

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 2, Stealth 3 (Acrobatics 4, Dodge 3 for monkeys)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1 (great apes); 0 (monkeys)

Attacks: Bite for 3-5 dice; claw for 2 dice

Move: 7/20/10 (ape); 5/10/10 (monkey)

Powers: Bond-Sharing, Enhancement, Human Speech, Information Font, Shared Knowledge

BAT

For something is amiss or out of place When mice with wings can wear a human face.
- Theodore Roethke, "The Bat"

Mythology:

The Muskogee Indians speak of a lacrosse game long ago between the birds and the animals. "Which side shall I choose?" Bat wondered. "I fly, so I could play with the birds; but I have teeth, and my wings are featherless, so I could side with the animals." He offered himself to the birds and was rejected scornfully. The beasts would have turned him away as well for his tiny size, but in the end they took pity on him. The game lasted longer than expected, with no victory. Darkness fell, and the players could no longer see. But before a draw could be called, Bat seized the ball and scored the winning point.

Description:

Unearthly and forbidding, bats spend their days sleeping upside down in trees and caves, and their nights flying about in search of meals of insects, fruit and sometimes human blood. The only mammals who fly, bats find their way through the night with a high-pitched cry and the Devil's own senses. Although vigilant and affectionate (at least to his own kind), the bat is often thought to be Satan's kin and the enemy of light. A spy and consort of witches, this creature often unwillingly finds his way into magic brews. The skin between his fingers mocks the feathered wings

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of angels, and his grizzled fur recalls the rats who devour the dead. The naturalists may say that such a beast is harmless — an eater of insects and drinker of fruits — but to the common folk, he is surely a creature of Hell. To the Chinese, however, the night-flier has different connotations. His name, Fu, also reflects good fortune, and his flight mirrors the erratic upward course of the soul. A happy and prosperous creature, the Chinese bat represents the good life and those who live it. Shamans from the New Lands regard him with a skewed perspective. On one hand, he is honest and shy — a hard worker and a messenger — while on the other, he remains caught between worlds — a shapeshifter who falls between the cracks of Grandfather's plans.

Roleplaying Hints:

Yours is a world of echoes. Sight is a dim thing to you, but your ears are acute enough to hear a buzzing fly at great distances. Are you a pawn for darker powers, or a hungry soul on an unearthly mission? Perhaps that depends on the company you keep....

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 1, Dodge 3

Willpower: 1 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 1 die

Move: 1/10

Powers: Immunity (poisons), Nightsight, Soul- Sense/Death-Sense, Spirit Vision, Wall-Crawling, Wings

BEAR

The tracks disappeared as the bear walked out of the thin snow, as the new snow disappeared into open patches of sun. I thought of how the mild sun must feel on his thick coat... I thought of the sweeping length of his claws. How can the world still have such a wondrous beast in it —just on the edge of surviving, but still here!

— Rick Bass, *Mark of the Bear*

Mythology:

The bear, with her long winter's sleep, is a perfect symbol for the death and rebirth of the year, and of the sacrificed god whose rebirth heralds a new day. Like Dionysus or Jack o' the Green, she sinks into apparent death every winter, to rise again when life quickens the land. The constellations Ursa Major and Minor, the Great and Little Bear, circle the sky year 'round and never rest below the horizon as other constellations do. Ever-present, they provide the original source of life and watch over it even now. Bringing order out of chaos, the mother bear licks her newborn bundles into living creatures; hence, the bear becomes the guardian of Creation, a powerful totem of strength and protection. Yet she carries a double-edged sword in her massive paws, for, as the bear-sarkers (berserkers) knew, this beast is nearly impossible to kill. When riled, she can crush and rend a dozen men while suffering hardly a scratch. Satan rides in a secret corner of the ursine soul, and when he comes out to play, any sane man would run!

Description:

Rearing like a man on her stout legs, the bear dwells in cold, lonely places — heavily forested kingdoms with water (and fish) nearby. Her sweet tooth is rivaled only by the human taste for treats.

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When she can find them, berries, fruit and honey are her favorite foods. Under less pleasant circumstances, however, she could eat nearly anything — grubs, leaves, fish or sometimes even larger prey. For such a powerful creature, the bear is unusually shy; unless cornered, sick or annoyed, chances are she'll avoid a fight. Still, few beasts are more unpredictable than this "close cousin of man." Like a human being, she can wake up in a foul mood and turn on an apparent friend, or attack anything in her path. Although she seems to be a solitary sort, few beasts are as parental as the bear. Her loyalty to mate and cubs is so renowned that the tale-spinners often use bears as symbols of family. Shamans request the aid of spirit bears when healing must be done. Rolling a patient between their "paws," these bear-men call on the ursine gifts for strength and nurture. Clothed in a garment of thick fur, the bear commands

awesome strength and stamina. Although her eyesight is often poor, her sense of smell is strong enough to pick up the scent of a carcass several miles away. Her bulk makes her a bit ungainly, but disguises surprising speed. When pressed, a bear can run down a human being or lash a fish from running water.

Roleplaying Hints:

As ferocious as you seem, you'd really rather be left alone. Life is too precious to waste in needless fights. The rhythms of the earth course through you like a stream, and the power of healing nestles in your paws. Even so, let no man or beast disturb you! Those who refuse to be warned away by your size or ferocity will sleep in a scavenger's belly — or your own!

Attributes: Strength 5-7 (for large species), Dexterity 2, Stamina 5-7

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 2, Stealth 1

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** OK x 3, -1 x 3, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks: Claw for 7 to 9 dice; bite for 5 dice

Move: 5/20

Powers: Acute Smell, Armor (1), Enhancement, Healing, Hibernation

BOARS AND SWINE

"Even in ritual, the Goddess will have her joke," Morgaine said, "and one of her names is the Great Sow, and we are all her piglets." — Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Mists of Avalon*

Mythology:

The Druids of Ireland and Gaul used the wild boar as an image of intellectual and spiritual strength; many even called themselves "boars" to mirror their knowledge of the forest and its secrets.

Fierce and strong, the wild swine is a treasured hunting prize; you need courage, speed and a powerful arm to kill a boar. His head makes a fine trophy — his heart an invigorating meal.

In some lands, the pig stands as a symbol of maternity, since her huge litters and nourishing teats make for ideal fertility symbols. Yet her temper — and the ferocity of her wild cousins -- makes the swine a tool of devils, too. Scripture says the Savior sent demons into a herd of pigs, and the Old Laws forbid the eating of pork. Lust, sloth, greed and gluttony crowd at the swine's trough; one of the aspects of the Celtic goddess Ceridwen is a wild sow who devours her own young, and the Lord's own vineyards fall prey to rampaging pigs. Smart, aggressive and greedier than a banker in a house of gold, a swine digs the roots of humanity from the soil of divinity, then feasts on them.

Description:

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Larger (three to four feet at the shoulder), coarser, and far, far meaner than modern domestic pigs, the wild boar is ill-temper made flesh. Many a hunter has read his death in a boar's tiny, bloodshot eyes — these feral swine move with surprising speed for their bulk, and their tusks are as sharp and deadly as spears. The female of the species is no less deadly. A sow defending her litter or avenging a slain mate attacks with a savagery practically unmatched in the wild.

Even the domestic variety presents endless headaches for its herder. Filthy, aggressive and voracious, the swine would gladly chase the farmer from his own table! Snuffling low to the ground, the pig appears to be as grossly ignorant as any beast alive; yet there's intelligence behind those small eyes. Trained or befriended, a swine makes an excellent guard — if a disgusting one!

Roleplaying Hints:

Fiery and temperamental, you fight with a berserker's rage when cornered. Search the most innocent comments for insult, and charge your foes without stopping to question why. Protect those you consider kin and keep yourself well-fed. After all, the world is harsh and unforgiving. Who's to say what might soon befall you?

Attributes: Strength 3-4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3-4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Intimidation 2

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks: Bite for 4 dice; gore for 5 dice

Move: 7/20

Powers: Armor (1), Immunity (poisons),Rapid Healing

CAT

Aren't I kind to allow you to live in my house? Aren't I gracious to grant you the use of my chair?
— Mercedes Lackey, "Feline American Princess"

Mythology:

No beast marks the flows of magick and passion more clearly than the cat. Playful, ferocious, affectionate and observant, the feline soul defies mortality — to say nothing of gravity! — and spies on dark secrets. In ancient Egypt, cats were worshipped as personifications of the beloved fertility goddess Bast. Harming or killing a cat was a crime punishable by death, and the divine beasts were mummified with the same reverence and care given to humans. Wild cats gamboled with wine-mad Dionysus, hunted with wise Artemis and pulled the chariot of Freyja, goddess of fertility and lust. Cats have never forgotten this legacy; even the most serene of them seem to be half-flesh, half spirit. Loving yet sadistic. Affectionate yet aloof. Is it any wonder the cat is such a compelling companion — or so magical a beast?

Description:

The feline is a walking enigma, a bit of wildness that has accepted a place by the human hearth. Unlike a dog, she has no master, but remains calmly independent even as she eats our food and sleeps by our fire. For this reason, she is often disliked and distrusted. Cats have long been symbols of the feminine. Her purring throat and bodily caresses epitomize sensual pleasure; her bristling fur, as well as her slashing claws and teeth, remind one that a savage sleeps within the feline heart. A cat's watchful eyes peer through darkness; she possesses an affinity for secrets that makes most magi envious. Hence, they summon her to their tables and beds, making the cat a boon companion of the magical kind. Familiar spirits often take the form of cats; whether this is a tribute to the "mortal" cat's prowess or a reflection of

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some deeper similarity is a truth sorcerers would give a great deal to know.... Like witches, the cat exists outside of human law. She is said to suck the breath from sleeping babies, curse people with her unblinking, slit-pupiled stare, and commune with spirits and faeries. Yet her claws provide the doom of rats and serpents, and her warm affections give solace to lonely folk. The cat is queen of contradictions, and she likes it that way.

Roleplaying Hints:

You're cool, tough and independent. Move with calm assurance no matter where you are, and never be caught by surprise. If you are, wash yourself immediately. Be affectionate, but only when it suits you; and always sit on whatever a human may be reading. It can't possibly be as important as you. Life is a fascinating series of puzzles; explore it as much as possible. No beast can rival your senses, so enjoy the bouquet of sensations that are your birthright. Guard that which is yours with demonic ferocity. Uncover that which is hidden from your sight. Play often, but never give the game away. You are the vessel of divinity and companion to the gods.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Climbing 3, Stealth 4

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Claw or bite for 1 die (can rake for 2 dice when cornered)

Move: 5/20

Powers: Bond-Sharing, Elemental Touch, Mesmerism, Mystick Shield, Nightsight, Soul-Sense/Death-Sense, Spirit Vision

COW/BULL

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This is the seventh level of earth, named Rasatala, where Surabhi dwells, the mother of the cows who was born from the Elixir and is always flowing with milk, which is the source of all good things on earth....
- The Mahabharata

Mythology:

Surabhi was born of the churning of the Milk Sea. In the world's morning, demons tormented the Hindu gods, threatening to undo all Creation. Desperate, the gods begged the supreme Lord Brahma for a potion to help them defeat the demons. "If you churn the Milk Sea," Brahma told them, "you will gain the nectar you seek." The churning (using a giant snake, and tricking aid from the demons) did in fact produce this Elixir, but the Milk Sea also gave rise to many fabulous beings, including the spirit of the Ganges River, and Sri, goddess of beauty. But first to emerge from the seething milk was Surabhi, mother of cows. From that day, she and her kind were as sacred things, providers of the sacred elixir of life and the banes of corruption.

Description: Cattle have played a crucial role in the history of human civilization, and accordingly, in its mythology. The Egyptian goddess Hathor wore a bovine head. Wealth was measured by cattle in ancient Ireland and Mediterranean lands. Hebrews considered bulls to be the greatest of sacrifices, and the Celtic goddess Brigit kept two heifers whose milk filled a lake every day. According to Norse mythology, the first living thing was a cow, formed from the shifting mists above the ice-field that was earth. This cow licked at the ice until her tongue shaped it into the first Frost Giants, whom she then suckled; later these giants fought the Norse gods for control of the world. The Hindus consider bovines holy and are forbidden to harm them, while the Greeks sacrificed them to their gods, choosing only the fairest and most unblemished. Cows, with the milk they give, are symbols of domesticity; in the Old World, a home without its own cow is a poor home indeed. Bulls, on the other hand, represent virility, masculine brute strength and power. To honor the gods, dancer-acrobats leapt across the backs of charging bulls—a custom some magickal societies (notably the Euthanatoi and Ecstatic Seers) still practice. Despite the smell of her hide and the clumsiness of her gait, the cow is a welcome family companion; the bull, however, often finds himself gelded or sent to stud if he remains in human company for long; his aggressive temperament makes him too great a threat otherwise. In the wild, cattle of all kinds wander in groups, grazing from the open lands. Though their slow reflexes suggest stupidity, it could be that the kine are simply more at peace with the world than other, more frantic beasts — like man.

Roleplaying Hints:

You are generous, patient, and long-suffering. Let insults roll off your back, and keep your mind focused on your task — up to a point. If harassed, you're perfectly capable of trampling most annoying creatures underfoot, or goring them with long, sturdy horns.

Attributes: Strength 3/5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3/5

Abilities: Alertness 2 (Brawl 2, Intimidation 3 for bull)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -3 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 3 dice (bulls gore for 4 or 6 dice)

Move: 10/25

Powers: Healing Lick, Immunity (snake venom), Mystick Shield, Rapid Healing, Soul-Sense

CROW/RAVEN

It is very wrong to believe that God entrusts His secrets to crows.
- T. H. White, The Bestiary

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Mythology:

With their black wings, harsh voices and voracious hunger, these birds carry deep, traditional connections to death. To the people of the Cross, crows and their ilk are omens of battle and ill fortune. In Celtic folklore, they're minions of the Morrigan, a triune goddess whose screams froze soldiers' blood. Picking at the corpses of slain men, these eerie creatures gossip back and forth about coming feasts. People who can understand their cackled speech are often said to be a little mad. How could one hear such terrible news and stay sane? Yet the raven and his brother carry important tidings. To the shamans of the far north, Raven came from the primeval darkness and remain behind to teach humans how to survive. To the spirit-magi of the Americas, Raven is a lusty trickster, clever enough to outwit his enemies yet proud enough to tangle himself in his own lies. In the far east, crows and ravens are said to have fallen from the sun. Their blackened feathers bear testimony to the heat of their original home. In all lands, however, men speak of the prophetic powers and uncanny intelligence of crows and ravens. Perhaps, from their vantage point in the sky, these birds see the horizon between life and death.

Description:

Much of the crow's bad reputation stems from circular logic — because he's a carrion-eater, he flies to scenes of battle and death, and is therefore associated with suffering and death — yet no one can deny the uncanny power of the crow or his raven cousins. The larger bird, the raven, spreads his wings like a graceful yet ominous cloak. His unwavering stare picks apart whatever he happens to gaze on. Many Seers believe he can see the near future, and they take his kind as familiar companions. Such insight may explain the raven's selfishness. Knowing what the future holds, he takes what he can while the taking's good.

The crow is smaller and sleeker than her dark cousin, and more prone to travel in "murders" with others of her kind. Her voice grates like rust, and her feathers shine a glossy black. Death provides her feasting table, and so she follows him everywhere — to the cold northlands, to the deserts, to the forests and fields, even to the cities. Like the raven, the crow is a prophet, gifted (or cursed) with the talent to see impending destruction. Whether she chooses to warn the victims or to feast on them depends on her inclinations. She is, however, an animal, and prone to act in her best interests. So long as things die, crows and ravens will always stay fed. Naturally, ravens have good reason to be associated with death, given the Corax's role in choosing the slain.

Roleplaying Hints:

You live with death, and are very comfortable with it. A sense of humor — grim by human standards, but funny nonetheless -- helps stave off the specter of your own demise. Unlike many beasts, you have a sense of mortality and an affinity for the past and future. This marks you as a bird of ill-omen, even among other animals. No one likes someone who can sense things that they cannot. By some gift of fate or the gods, you possess a "death sight": If something near you is bound to die in the next several hours, you can see death hovering nearby, biding its time. In some cases, you can see a doomed creature covered by a pallor or shroud, or smell the decay that waits just below the surface. Such fatalism colors your relationships with other creatures. Sometimes it's best to stick with your own kind — they at least understand. Practical to a fault, you can eat almost anything. Eyes, however, are your favorite treat — they taste of the experiences they have beheld. The older the prey, the sweeter its eyes. Sometimes, just for a moment, you can almost see your prey's life flash through your mind as you gobble down his eyes....

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 2

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -2, -5, Dead **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Claw for 2 dice (bite for 1 die in desperation)

Move: 1/2/20

Powers:, Human Speech, Information Font, Nightsight, Shared Knowledge, Soul- Sense/Death-Sense, Wings

DEER/STAG

Into a tiny green clearing before them stepped the Golden Hind. She was a color to make wealthy men weep, and misers drown themselves for very heartsickness Her delicate hoofs touched the earth without a sound; she turned her small graceful head toward the little group of hunters. Her eyes were brown, and for a moment the Princess's eyes met those of this creature of wonder....

— Robin McKinley, "The Hunting of the Hind"

Mythology:

For deer, the barrier between this world and the spirit lands has ever been thin. Following a white deer could lead you into the Celtic Otherworld — and then back out, 100 or 1000 years later. Guides of the soul and walkers between the realms of life and death, deer have trotted at the heels of gods since the dawn of Creation. One glimpse of the legendary Golden Hind struck a man blind or mad, and no arrow could pierce her hide. Cernunnos the Horned God wears the antlers of a great stag, and often rides with the great deer — or chases them with his deadly hounds. With her shy disposition, the deer is the ideal symbol of meditation and peace. The stag, by contrast, is aggressive yet just. His antlers fall and grow again with each passing of the year, symbolizing the immortality of the soul. Fleet and sure-footed, the deer and her kin (impala, gazelles, reindeer, etc.) race between mortality and divinity. Like the trees which they resemble, deer antlers join earth with sky. Gentle yet powerful, these beasts epitomize femininity or masculinity in their purest aspects.

Description:

With their slender limbs, improbably small hooves, and large, liquid eyes, it's easy to see how deer got their fey reputation. Hunted by wolves and wildcats for their flesh, and by humans for their meat, hides and antlers, deer move swiftly and silently through their forest homes. Cousins to elk, reindeer and gazelles, these often-peaceful creatures avoid trouble unless backed into a corner. Then, like most beasts, they can turn and remind the hunter just how dangerous his game can still be. For all her apparent fragility, the deer is heavy and muscular. Her keen senses of smell, taste and hearing keep her one step ahead of the hunters. Her stag mate is far more irritable, and might charge a trespasser simply out of principle. Under most conditions, however, both animals prefer affection to violence. On the whole, deer make good parents; while stags prefer solitude, does nurture their children in ways that would make the Great Mother proud. Divinities keep deer close at hand. Ancient gods, such as the British Lord of the Hunt, often wore crowns of antlers. Gold-homed stags draw the carriage of Artemis, or carry the body of Christ in their antlers. An Orphic hymn to Dionysus names the stag "Prince of the Mysteries of Night." The touch of his antlers heals any wound, and can even raise the dead. Even so, such beasts are considered great sacrifices. In all cultures, deer are the subjects of sacred and ritual hunts, and their pelts and antlers serve as powerful ritual objects.

Roleplaying Hints:

This world is a simple glaze across the truer worlds of spirit, and you can see both worlds through the overlapping colors and sensations that join them together. You know the smell of ghosts, the caress of elementals and the flash of evil spirits — it's said that you can even see the spiritcolor auras that surround all living things. This awareness of the elements (earthly and otherwise) makes you seem skittish around strangers, but such insight gives you a respect for the creatures on each side of the

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divide. While it's true you can be fierce, you would rather respect all living things.

Attributes: Strength 2/3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2/3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Stealth 2

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Trample for 3 to 4 dice (gore for 3 to 5 dice for stags)

Move: 7/30

Powers: Awareness 4, Elemental Touch (7), Soul-Sense, Spirit Travel (10), Spirit Vision

DOG

The Wart's own special hound was called Cavall, and he happened to be licking Cavalls nose — not the other way about — when Merlyn came in and found him. "That will come to be regarded as an insanitary habit," said Merlyn, "though I cannot see it myself. After all, God made the creature's nose just as well as he made your tongue."

- T. H. White, *The Once And Future King*

Mythology:

Wild yet faithful, ferocious yet loving—man's oldest companion bears a mixed burden of affection and fear. According to old tales, Dog carried fire in his jaws and gave it to humanity, then laid nearby to ambush demons and evil spirits. Even so, hounds' carnal appetites, unclean habits and slobbering gluttony led saints to brand them as filthy boors. Like his lupine cousins, the dog is social but retains a flush of wildness even in his most tranquil moments. Loyal as he might be, a hound is ultimately his own master. Canines are the epitome of loyalty — the perfect faithful servants. It is said that a hound, on his master's death, will either slay himself or lie inconsolably on the grave, refusing food or comfort. The gods recognized this loyalty; many of them, from Anubis to Xoltil to Epona, kept canine servants close at hand. Yet the prophets and priests could not overcome a stubborn disdain for the ways of the hound, and despite his loyalty, the dog has been regarded as a symbol of lust and lowliness. Even his detractors, however, must admit that no beast carries a greater love for humanity. Steadfast to a fault, the dog remains sprawled at the hearth of man and god alike.

Description:

Dogs come in a bewildering variety of sizes and shapes, from pooches the size of small cats, to hounds the size of small horses. Bred to perform a staggering variety of tasks — from guarding property and hunting, to herding sheep and leading the blind—each dog's appearance generally reflects the task for which he was raised. The first tamed wolves were hunting companions and retrievers; their later cousins became herders, ghost-sniffers, house wardens, pack animals and even corpse-eaters. No beast is as honest as the hound. His nose sniffs out lies with almost magical acuity, and he could never deceive another creature, even if his life depended on it. This honesty makes the poor beast gullible enough to serve even the cruelest masters. Simple and direct, the dog approaches all things openly. Though he can be stealthy, trickery does not become him. The dog prefers company to solitude, and considers any creature who will have him to be his pack-mate. Once he has chosen a pack (canine or otherwise), the hound will often defend them unto death. On his own, the dog is intelligent (if easily distracted), confident and usually playful. A carnivore by nature, this beast loves to hunt and chase. Even the smallest, tamest dog harries a ball or chews a stick with the ferocity of a wild hound.

Roleplaying Hints:

The world is just so exciting! Every sense is a treat, every sensation a delicacy! Never walk when you can run, sniff everything and treat every stranger like your new best friend. Be loyal to those who treat you well, and use your teeth on those who don't. And always remember — even the most coddled lapdog is two meals away from becoming a wolf.

Attributes: Strength 1-3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2-3

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Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 1-3, Empathy 2 (Intimidation 2, Stealth 2 for guard and hunting dogs)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 2 to 5 dice; claw for 2 to 4 dice

Move: 7/25

Legendary Powers: Acute Smell, Healing Lick, Soul-Sense, Spirit Vision

DOLPHIN

...I thought of the dolphins returning to the sea, and losing fingers and thumb and the ability to grasp, and ...they seemed to me to be bathed in a deep but dazzling darkness.
— Madeleine L'Engle, *A Ring of Endless Light*

Mythology:

Born in the elemental juncture between Water and Air, dolphins ride the seas between worlds. Spirit couriers and guides for lost souls, these enigmatic, intelligent beings have been friends of man since the earliest days. Christ Himself is often depicted as a dolphin navigating the seas of death, and ancient gods such as Oceanis, Poseidon and Aphrodite made these "singers of song" their harbingers. Rising from the skyless depths, dolphins are often seen as resurrected souls, joyful in rebirth. Sailors' tales speak of dolphins who rescue drowning men, while fisher-women whisper of lovers who greet them in the moonlit seas. Like children, these playful creatures revel in life's embrace; like adults, they recognize good and evil, and seek to drive away the latter with powerful strikes and keen senses.

Description:

No one doubts the intelligence of dolphins no one who has encountered them, at any rate. Silvery and sleek, these sea mammals can be found in almost any ocean. They travel in groups called pods, and can fling themselves out of the water in dazzling acrobatic displays. Like a whale, a dolphin breathes air through a blowhole on the top of her head; while she can dive to amazing depths without air, she must eventually surface or drown. Like a bat, the dolphin employs sound and keen hearing to find her way through the sunless ocean depths. Her world, therefore, is a dazzling picture of dancing sounds and deep echoes, forming a living picture few humans could understand. Deep below the seas, the mundane world gives way to the magical one. The dolphin, therefore, is confidante to a vast kingdom of strange creatures, lost treasures and eerie spirit realms. Occasionally, she'll take some favored human with her on a deep dive, sharing her breath with him through magical powers. In her world, all things are possible. Solitude, gravity, silence, solid ground—such things are illusions. Creation is constantly in motion. This realization breeds a wariness — dolphins are not as reckless as they seem! — and a devotion to the moment. Few creatures are as affectionate or sexual as these "lovers of the sea," and they don't hesitate to make their passions known. As placid as they seem, these creatures are not to be trifled with. When angered, the dolphin can be amazingly strong, quick and stubborn. Sharks learned long ago to fear these living battering rams, and many a malicious sailor has been dragged to his death by a dolphin whose patience had reached an end....

Roleplaying Hints:

Intelligence carries its price: You may live in freedom, but the misery of the less fortunate washes over you like ocean waves. Look with sympathy at the poor, land-bound humans, with their

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frantic, scurrying lives, and try to teach them what they are missing. Keep your distance. Most of them simply aren't ready to learn and can be more dangerous than a frenzied shark. Your world is carved from sound; you can see and smell well enough, but your echoing cries shape a far more vivid picture than those senses can offer. Sensitive as you are, you're rarely fooled by impressions or deceit. Your kindness or wrath depends on what you read from others. To honest creatures, you're helpful and happy; to malicious or cruel trespassers, you're a scourge. In a constantly changing realm, you understand that nothing is permanent. Like the sea, you never rest. To stop moving is to die.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, All Mental Traits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Ram for 3 dice

Move: 0/0/30

Powers: Healing Lick , Human Speech, Musical Influence, Soul-Sense, Water-Breathing

FOX

The prince must be a lion, but he must also know how to play the fox.
— Niccolo Macchiavelli, *The Prince*

Mythology:

With his fiery fur, sly cunning and lascivious ways, the fox has always stood for the crafty cheat. A trickster rather than a bully, he is the hen-coop thief, the "Jack" figure who bamboozles and steals from those much more powerful than himself, then bounds away, laughing. In China and Japan, he wraps himself in human guise or conducts elaborate rituals to appease his lying gods. A shapeshifter, a prankster, a braggart and a thief, Fox is a wily target and a treacherous friend. Yet, as many rogues recognize, such traits are not always vices. When stirred to a noble cause, Fox can outwit demons, trick monsters and make fools of evil men. With his blazing coat and narrow face, he's a handsome devil. In some lands, Fox is a "she" instead. Tales portray her as a cunning and dangerous woman, too wild to be held but too refined to be truly bestial. Regardless of gender, Fox is always somewhat admirable, if only for cleverness. So long as one does not trust overmuch in her lies or rely too heavily on his honor, Fox might make a boon companion. Just watch your valuables—

Description:

Foxes are cunning creatures. They get their way not by menace or physical violence, but rather by cunning and quick thinking. Smaller and more solitary than wolves, foxes are nevertheless related to them. Dashing predators, these small cousins make up for what they lack in strength and numbers with cunning and speed. Families notwithstanding, the fox prefers solitude to company. Perhaps this comes from the mistrust with which other creatures regard him. Even in their small packs, fox and his brood consider their best interests first. When threatened, a fox will abandon mates or children — sometimes for good. Skilled in camouflage and misdirection, this creature seems like a natural shapeshifter. Although "normal" vulpines cannot change their skins as readily as legends suggest they might, one cannot help but wonder what one might do if left alone for a moment.... \

Roleplaying Hints:

You, a liar and a thief? Nonsense! You're simply making your way in a hostile world. If that entails a bit of

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snipery, who are other, larger creatures to judge you? Cover your tracks. If caught, protest your innocence loudly, then blame whoever's handy.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 4, Elusion 3, Stealth 3

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 3 dice

Move: 7/25

Powers: Acute Smell, Hibernation, Mesmerism, Shapechanger, Soul-Sense

FROG/TOAD

The toad looked at her expectantly, its buggy little eyes watchful. "Wait a minute," Cindy said to it. "Fairy godmother — magic shoe — you're in the wrong fairy tale, bud, and I am not about to kiss you." — Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, *The Godmother*

Mythology:

Rising from the primordial ooze, the frog croaks the song of creation. Aligned with the moon, this tiny shape changer awakens from death each season, shifting his form throughout the hot days of summer until at last he retreats to the cool mud to be reborn. In the far east, frogs and toads are lucky animals, blessed with secrets of immortality and balanced chi. Europeans see them differently. Decried in the Bible as unclean, these pestilential creatures secrete poison in their warty hides, eagerly passing it along to anyone filthy enough to touch them. Witches, recognizing the toads' link to longevity and rebirth, boil them in stews or use frog limbs in magickal charms. Poisoners in both east and west boil the venom from the skin of toxic toads, then oil their arrowheads and blades with the stuff. If he's lucky enough to escape human hands, the toad rests in cool, damp places, feasting on the insects that infest the wilds. Perhaps he recalls the kiss of Aphrodite, who once considered him a consort despite his ugliness. When he eats his fill, it is said, he will steal away into the ooze, die, travel to Hell and rise to mortal realms once again.

Description:

Frogs and toads were once believed to grow spontaneously out of mud. Their true life cycle, from water-bound tadpole to amphibious adult, is no less magical. From a sac of milky droplets to a squat but limber beast, the frog and his cousin undergo a host of changes in their short but interesting lives. Humble though he may be, the frog is clever — and occasionally poisonous to the touch. As amphibians, frogs and toads breathe through their skins; thus, they must remain damp, though the thick, bumpy hide of a toad allows him to stay on dry land longer than his aquatic cousin can. Both creatures share long associations with witchcraft and fairy tales. Small and unassuming — even ugly — in appearance, frogs and toads watch over hidden treasures that (according to folklore) can counter poison or make treasure multiply. The familiar tale of the frog prince reminds us to look beyond appearances. Still, a woman who goes from frog to frog hoping to find a prince is going to be kissing a lot of warty hides before she ends her quest!

Roleplaying Hints:

Stay wet. Eat flies and listen carefully to the world around you. Hearing is by far your keenest sense, and most creatures are far larger than you. Remain hidden and pay attention.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Dodge 3, Stealth 3

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK, 4, Squished **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: None. (Some have poison that can paralyze a person who fails a Stamina roll [difficulty 7]. To be affected, the victim must either eat the frog or suffer a wound treated with the frog's poison glands.)

Move: 1/1/2

Legendary Powers: Chameleon Coloration, Deadly Demise, Human Speech, Regrowth, Venom, Water Breathing

GOAT

What was he doing, the great god Pan, Down in the reeds by the river?
— Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "A Musical Instrument"

Mythology:

A lusty creature of darkness, the goat epitomizes the horned devil dancing in the heads of Infernalists and Inquisitors alike. Supposedly, fallen angels crafted the first goats out of earth, urine and their own hair and horns. Although useful in his own way, this ugly beast is not trustworthy. He eats his way through almost anything, chases virgins and butts anyone who resists his stubborn whims. Once, the goat was revered. A she-goat suckled the infant Zeus, the transsexual Pales nurtured the people of Palestine (named for that divinity) and the fertility god Pan consorted with his goat-like kin, the fauns and satyrs. Unfortunately, these pagan nature gods were demoted to Christian devils, and goats' reputations have suffered accordingly. Early Hebrews heaped their community's sins on the head of a scapegoat, who was then driven out into the wilderness. Infernalists take on the hooves and horns of the goat in crude mockery of Pan. While faeries and pagan magi still remember the deities whose curving horns and generous udders bespoke fertility, people of God shun this shameless beast. He may have his uses, true, but no good man dares stare him in the eye....

Description:

Leaner and shaggier than wild sheep, goats are incredibly agile. They can bound through treacherous cliffs and rock-strewn gorges with little trouble. Their eyes, which feature disturbing horizontal bars for pupils, reinforce the beasts' demonic reputation. There's no debating that the goat is a stubborn creature — he goes where he will, when he will. Rank and coarse, this hairy beast can devour almost anything from wooden splinters to rotting meat without getting sick. When roused, he'll butt whatever aggravates him. Although his eyesight is adequate, his keenest sense is — surprisingly enough — smell. Sure-footed as he is, the goat makes an obnoxious but sturdy mount for anyone mad enough to ride him. Gods like Dionysus, Pan and Aphrodite did so once, but mortal humans had best be careful....

Roleplaying Hints:

You are a creature of passion, temperamental and hard-headed. Your appetite is endless and your lusts unmannered. To hell with anyone who cannot bear your presence— in your heart, you remember the days when your kind were divine!

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 2

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK, - 1 x 2 , -2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 3 dice; gore for 4+ dice

Move: 10/25

Legendary Powers: Immunity (5; poisons), Mesmerism (3)

GOOSE/SWAN

It doesn't matter if one is born in a duck yard, when one has lain in a swan's egg.
— Hans Christian Anderson, "The Ugly Duckling"

Mythology:

On spirit wings, the swan and its cousin the goose fly from the Otherworlds into the mortal one. Properly approached and respected, a swan might guide a shaman on an Umbral quest, or walk beside him as a familiar spirit. The goose, meanwhile, chatters to himself, setting off a clamor if someone should happen to intrude on his territory. Like the swan, he frequently flies between worlds and can occasionally be prodded for advice about them. To humanity, swans represent innocence, purity and grace — or in the case of black swans, innocence twisted into corruption. The early Scandinavians saw swans as an image of the sun, and often drew them carrying it across the sky on their wings. When touched by magic, virtuous people often transform into swans, like the Irish Children of Lir or Anderson's seven swan princes. Sometimes the gods employ the same beautiful form for less virtuous purposes. Zeus seduced Leda while in the shape of a swan, and the twins borne of that union, Clytemnestra and Helen of Troy, hatched from a giant egg. Some old tales say the world itself hatched from the egg of a goose or swan. Alchemists mirror those stories in their texts, treating this graceful bird as a progenitive creature and a metaphor for the creative process. According to the Greeks, the swan sings a farewell song as it perishes, hence, it becomes a symbol for martyrs and doomed lovers everywhere. In a more positive light, the goose and swan are vigilant creatures, tenders of their children and guides to the wandering soul. Perhaps, as some legends say, these birds are souls themselves — dead people on their way to eternity's reward or returning from some resting place before resuming a mortal incarnation.

Description:

In the air or gliding on the water, the swan is the epitome of beauty and grace. On land, however, this waterfowl moves with a clumsy waddle, displaying scrawny legs and large, unattractive feet. Furthermore, with a few exceptions like trumpeter swans, the bird's long, graceful throat produces a harsh, ugly cry. When she lays dying, however she pours forth a song of heartbreaking beauty that reduces all listeners to tears. As "The Ugly Duckling" suggests, young swans (called "cygnets") are ungainly and awkward. Even when grown to their full size, cygnets sport dirty-gray feathers for their first year. When those feathers molt away, a dazzling white coat grows in its place. Despite its delicate appearance, an adult swan is no weakling. A blow from its wings can break a grown man's leg, and its bite can rip through heavy clothing. The goose is somewhat more temperate; squawking out her horse cry, she wanders around her pond. Vigilant and maternal, the goose mates for life and tends an orderly home among the rushes. When winter comes, she gathers up her brood and mate and returns to the spirit worlds until the next spring dawns.

Roleplaying Hints:

With keen sight and hearing, you watch the hazardous world around you. As a denizen of two worlds, you know that surprises are often lurking nearby! When all is well, you're a generous and graceful creature, a loyal mate and doting parent. When danger arises, you call your family together, defending them with your life if necessary. Loved ones — avian and otherwise — are your anchors in a vast, uncertain world. You form bonds easily and treasure each one. Places are ephemeral, but love is eternal.

Attributes: Strength 1/2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 1

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated (goose); OK, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated (swan) **Armor Rating:** 0



Attacks: Bite for 2 dice (wing buffet for 3 dice for swans)

Move: 3/20

Legendary Powers: Musical Influence, Shapechanger , Spirit Travel, Wings

HORSE

I rode a grey horse 'Twas called a grey mare Grey mane and grey tail Green stripe down her back
Grey mane and grey tail Green stripe down her back And not a hair on her that wasn't coal black
- "Nottamun Town" (traditional)

Mythology:

According to the ancient Greeks, the wind gods made love to the Furies. From that union sprang the divine horses who pull the chariot of the sun. Aligned with Water and Fire (and occasionally Earth as well), the horse symbolizes the harnessed power of passion and the elements—useful to he who understands it but fatal to he who presumes to master it. Tales about magical steeds have existed since the creature's domestication: horses that fly, speak — sometimes even when dead and decapitated — breathe flame, or devour human flesh. In his lighter aspects, a horse is the soul-guide, the steed to gods and men alike who calls to water with a striking of his hoofs. The Greek sea-god Poseidon was associated with horses, as was the Celtic goddess Rhiannon, who could transform herself into a pure white mare. Horses are considered lucky, and their iron shoes hang above doorways to keep ill fortune

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(and meddling faeries) away. In his negative aspects, the horse tramples good men beneath his powerful feet, seduces maidens and drags children to their deaths. Water-steeds, called kelpies, lure unsuspecting humans onto their backs, then race into the water to drown their passengers. The demonic Gytrash sometimes takes equine form, and Death is said to "ride a pale horse." Demons and witches sit astride nightmares, hellish horses which breathe fire and smoke, while other beasts of that name take sleeping riders from their beds and gallop away into insane dreamscapes. The horse, therefore, stands on both sides of darkness and light. Guided by reason and foresight, he is a beast of honor and perseverance; unharnessed, he becomes the crashing force of chaos.

Description:

No one can deny that horses are truly noble looking animals. Tall and muscular, with long, arched necks, intelligent eyes, and flowing manes and tails, these beasts truly seem like the elements in living form. The barely contained power within them is nearly overwhelming in its sexuality, and both mares and stallions carry potent carnal symbolism. The ultimate beast of burden, the average horse prefers company to solitude. Although she eats a great deal, her needs are simple — grasses, fruits, leaves, the occasional treat and, of course, water. Affectionate and insightful, the horse is very much her own beast, and possesses an almost-human range of personalities. Some are nurturing and kind, others wild and spiteful. A good range of keen senses, excellent balance and a high view of the world give the horse a majestic perception. As might be expected, she'd rather run free in an endless field or forest than be penned in stables or hemmed in by cliffs. As sensitive as she is, the horse spooks easily. She may be trained for shocks and excitement, but such a steed retains a nervous edge, as if expecting a surprise assault. Left to her own devices, a horse will run, graze, then run again. Creation, to her, is as wide and open as her stride can make it. Horses are integral to transportation in the Dark Medieval world; if you don't have a horse or access to one, you can't go anywhere. With that in mind, the ingrained fear of the undead that is natural to all equines makes travel by horseback problematic for many Cainites. Normal horses snort and roll their eyes in fear whenever a vampire comes too close, and some may throw their riders and bolt, making mounting and riding a steed a difficult proposition. Furthermore, there are mortals who keep an eye on their horses' reactions as a method of recognizing Cainites. An unwary vampire can be undone by the fear of a dumb beast. Several Cainites breed what can best be described as revenant steeds, horses which have vitae in their veins and don't spook in the presence of vampires. Such horses are stronger and faster (an extra dot in all Physical Attributes) than normal, and are handsome steeds of almost pure Arabian stock. Contrary to popular belief, not all are black — cautious Cainites are well aware of the stories of "devil's steeds" and are just as happy to avoid attracting undue attention by virtue of their horses. There is a tradeoff involved in the breeding of revenant steeds, however. The horses are ill-tempered at best (except when being handled by their owners), vicious, inclined to spit or bite and likely to kick whatever poor stableboy is assigned to them. Cainite steeds also make a point of asserting dominance whenever they can, which leads to some brutal combats if two are stabled together.

Roleplaying Hints:

Like yourself, life is too large to be contained. Keep your nose to the breeze and your wits about you. If caught and domesticated, you may be bent to the plow or bridle, but even then, the spirit of the wind lives within you. Always be aware that the smaller, weaker creature on your back rides there only by your consent. If the human who claims to have "broken" you doesn't treat you well, he'll feel the strength of your legs and heavy hooves. Then you'll reclaim your freedom and run like never before.

Attributes: Strength 4-5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 1 (Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 3 for a trained war-horse)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 4, -1, -3 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Trample or kick for 5 to 6 dice; bite for 3 dice

Move: 10/35

Legendary Powers: Extra Speed, Human Speech, Soul-Sense

LION

When the lion sleeps, his eye watches; In sleep his eyes are open, Clear and gleaming and awake. -
William of Normandy, Divine Bestiary

Mythology:

Lions have been the aristocracy of the forest and savanna since the dawn of civilization, and they have faced humanity's greatest heroes since the days of Gilgamesh. The embodiment of justice, courage and nobility, Lion evokes the sun. For good reason, he has stood at the center of mythologies without number. Even caged, he carries a power beyond human understanding. Steed of some gods (Durga, Venus), incarnation of others (Christ, Sekhmet, Nergal), this beast traps life and death in his great paws. The first lion descended from the sun, and was captured in flesh by the Mother Goddess. From the day of his creation, he has been appointed the king of beasts, and nearly all animals respect that honor. Born dead, a cub is licked to life by its mother; thus, he symbolizes resurrection in many cultures. In the oldest days, it is said, humans and lions lived in harmony. Each species presented sacrifices to the other, and both guarded each other throughout the demon-infested night. The truce was broken, however, by the arrogance of humanity and the overbearing egos of the lions. When men attempted to usurp the rightful crown of leadership, the offended lions declared war. Although some humans manage to live in peace with their old friends, a river of blood has flowed between the rival kings ever since.

Description:

With their golden coats and the long, full manes of the males, lions are magnificent creatures. For all their splendor, though, males rarely hunt. It's the lionesses who bring down prey and keep the pride fed while the males defend their prides and watch the cubs. Despite their ferocious reputation, most lions avoid violence unless they're hungry or provoked. It is, however, a dangerous thing to presume on an animal's good nature. A "rogue" lion may emerge from the brush every so often, killing everything in its wake for sheer sport. And nothing is deadlier than a wounded lion. Any creature that presumes to battle the king of beasts had best be prepared to kill him quickly or die trying! As can be imagined, the lion consumes huge amounts of meat — newly dead or carrion, it isn't important. Unlike most big cats, the lion prefers company, although a mature male must seek out a new family when he reaches adulthood. Both sexes represent the pinnacle of strength and nobility. While the kingly male embodies all that is grand and potent in masculinity, the lioness incarnates feminine power, compassion and rage. Like all cats, the lion is limber, fast and remarkably perceptive — his eyesight is adapted to night hunting, and his reflexes belie his bulk. For strength and prowess, he's rivaled only by the tiger; for sheer majesty and presence, no creature is his equal.

Roleplaying Hints:

No other beast — not even man! — can approach you without a feeling of awe. Through a rainbow of senses, you see the world in all its splendor. Remember your part in that splendor, and defend your kin and territory with the ferocity of gods. Pride is literally part of your name and nature. Let no beast sully your reputation, or challenge it without a fight.

Attributes: Strength 4-5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3-4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 5, Stealth 3

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Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 3, -2 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks: Claw for 5 to 6 dice; bite for 6 to 7 dice

Move: 10/30

Legendary Powers: Acute Smell, Armor (1), Healing
Lick, Human Speech, Mystick Shield, Nightsight, Soul- Sense, Spirit Vision

OWL

The owl's eye shines in the darkness like the glory of a wise man in the midst of the foolish crowd.
— Anonymous, Greek text

Mythology:

She comes from the night bearing both wisdom and a threat. To the Hebrews, she is the incarnation of Lilith, the first woman and the mother of demons. To the Greeks, she bespoke Athena, goddess of war and wisdom, and to the shamans of the New World, she represents vigilant darkness. While the intelligence in her huge eyes is undeniable, no true creature of goodness could thrive in the night as the owl does. Her cry is the shout of demons and the howl of ghosts. To hear it is to court death. Like lightning, the owl illuminates the night. Like a candle, she pierces the gloom of ignorance and strikes at the fleeing mice of cowardice and deceit. In ancient tales, she rises from the carcasses of dead things or plucks her own mother's eyes out to feed her hunger. This connection to death serves her well. The owl is an undisputed prophet, the seeker whose head can look forward and behind with equal ease. For this reason, she is the valued familiar of seers, witches, wizards and academics. As they dwell in night but penetrate darkness, so does the owl hunt by night but see with the clarity of day.

Description:

With their soft feathers, which let them fly noiselessly, and huge, sensitive eyes, which allow them to see in almost perfect darkness, owls are masters of the night sky. The downside, of course, is that daylight is painful to them. Thus, owls dare not venture out before dusk, and hide from the rays of the sun. Owls range in size, from tiny handfuls of down to intimidating spectres with wingspans several feet wide. Often solitary, they lair in tree hollows, rafters and occasionally caves. Though their sight is keen, their hearing is sharper still. Like their raptor kin, owls have cruel beaks and talons, and make the night as terrifying to small creatures as hawks make the day. So swift and noiseless is an owl's attack that her prey has no hint of danger. Suddenly talons come slashing out of the shadows, and all is pain, blood and silence. The owl represents wisdom and mystery, the dark and secret knowledge of night. Sometimes, she screeches like a banshee torn from Hell; other times, she hoots with a plaintive, haunting cry. Neither call (actually sent out by two different types of owl) is comforting to human ears, for to hear an owl call your name signals the approach of death.

Roleplaying Hints:

Keep your own council. Shelter yourself from daylight but hop and fly in the softness of the dark. Listen more than you speak, and when you do speak, make every word important and meaningful. Do not offer simple answers, and give nothing without reward. You have struggled in your life, and other creatures deserve no better.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Abilities: Alertness 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2



Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, 4 x 2, -5, Dead **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Claw for 2 dice, bite for 1 die

Move: 1/2/20

Legendary Powers: Hibernation, Human Speech, Information Font, Mesmerism, Musical Influence, Nightsight, Soul-Sense/Death-Sense

RAPTOR (EAGLE, FALCON, HAWK)

How can I do other than thrill to the fact that this creature — this magnificent bundle of fire bound up in wings and talons — will fly away from my hand, and then return?

— Sir Gwalchmai, House Liam, falconer to Queen Mary Elizabeth

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Mythology:

Falcon-headed Horus, the Egyptian god of life and rebirth, gazes unflinchingly into death even as his living cousins gaze into the sun. He sits in bird-shape on the shoulder of the god-kings, and guides souls through their ordeal of rebirth. Defender of honor and slayer of unclean things, the raptor represents strength and ferocity. It is said that such birds emerged from the sun, since, like the sun, they see everything that transpires in the light. The falcon's keen vision and keener talons assure the success of his hunt; the eagle's majestic bearing and great strength makes him a banner of kingship. Whether perched on the shoulders of a god or hooded for a noble's chase, the raptor pierces evil with his claws and darkness with his vigilance.

Description:

Raptors — hawks, falcons, eagles — are to the birds what lions and tigers are to the beasts. Fierce, regal and just barely tamed, hawks must be handled by people with special training, and even then skilled falconers wear heavy leather gloves to protect themselves from the sharp talons and beaks of "their" birds. Eagles tolerate no such nonsense — a human might claim one as a companion, but never as a "pet!" In humanity's courts, raptors are marks of status: Only an emperor may hunt with an eagle, a king with a gyrfalcon, an earl with a peregrine, and a lady with a merlin hawk. Across the world, eagles define rulership and power. In the wild, raptors of all kind live high in trees and on mountains. The eagle is one of the largest and strongest of the "lesser" birds; to claim or kill one, a hunter must be brave and quick. A hawk's eyesight is incredibly keen — she can spot her prey from high in the clouds where she circles and glides — and her flight is swift and sure. A diet of other birds and small beasts keep her taste for blood alive. We may assume that her mind is as sharp as her weaponry; of all birds, the raptors are known for their intelligence and almost-human temperament. Although fairly solitary, raptors occasionally hunt in flocks. Even then, however, rivalry is common and bonds are short-lived. Like the monarchs who idolize them, raptors ultimately stand — or, more properly, fly — alone.

Roleplaying Hints:

You are an explosion of energy constantly held in check. Whatever you do, you do with total commitment and without hesitation. If you live in the wild, that energy carries you soaring above the wind; if "tame," you exist in an uneasy truce with your keepers. There's nothing soft or compassionate about a raptor — you're kept in jesses and hood for a reason!

Attributes: Strength 2 (3 for eagles), Dexterity 3, Stamina 2 (Perception 5 for falcons and hawks)

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2 (3 for eagles) (Brawl 3, Empathy 4, Intimidation 4, Wild Hunting 4 for trained birds)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -2, -5, Dead **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Claw for 3 to 4 dice; bite for 1 to 2 dice in desperation

Move: 1/2/25 (falcon); 1/2/20 (eagle)

Legendary Powers: Human Speech, Information Font, Nightsight, Soul-Sense, Wings

SHEEP/RAM

Now, it's easy to fall into the trap of looking at the Sleepers and seeing sheep. But if we do that, then we're no better than any other monster preying on humanity. Besides, even sheep have their uses. — Professor Emily Hartman, Hermetic Adept

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Mythology:

Blessed is the lamb; even as he's fed to the gods, he remains passive and docile. Under the direction of a good shepherd, he contentedly grazes until the final day dawns. Held up as a symbol of meekness and piety, a sheep represents the perfect Christian — an interesting extension of his older role as sacrificial victim. As Christianity moves from a militant sect to an established religion, the Lamb replace the Lion as symbol of God. Christ becomes both shepherd and lamb, guiding his flock while offering himself on the altar for the sake of the world. In older days, the sheep and ram were far less placid. The wool on their backs symbolized wealth and prosperity, and the hard horns of the ram were seen as epitomes of masculine passion and strength. Even now, the horn-headed ram embodies aggression, lust and dull ferocity. As the ram crashes his head against the horns of others like himself, so the sinner butts against the heads of his kind, battering at the truth of God until the skinner — or the slaughterer — comes calling.

Description:

Bland-faced and curly-coated creatures, sheep live wherever they can graze. Perhaps the most domestic of herd animals, sheep are not terribly bright — they're easily led and must be constantly watched to prevent them from wandering away. For this reason, the sheep has always been the perfect symbol of mild and unquestioning sacrifice, from the Paschal lamb to the drowsy human masses. Rams are another matter. While the male of the species tends to be as dull-witted and social as his ewes, he's far more irritable and randy. During mating season, he challenges everything in sight to butting contests, sometimes going so far as to attack rocks, posts or fences. His curving horns lend the ram a sinister aspect, too — many demons are pictured with the thick, bony ridges that characterize the ram's head. Both male and female sheep feature the luxurious coats that humans use to spin wool. In the wild, this fleece protects the sheep from harsh weather and underbrush. In their native mountains, wild sheep fend off the elements with their thick fur. As they graze the land around them, these beasts keep their eyes at head-level and bleat plaintively. Social animals, they gather into flocks for protection from predators. Guarded by the rams, the ewes contentedly feed, breed and perish, rarely asking for much more than simple sustenance. No wonder they often look to a shepherd for guidance and protection. Perhaps sheep and humans are not so very different after all.

Roleplaying Hints:

Never ask questions, never look beyond your peaceful green meadow. The world outside is big and terrifying, and there are lots of things out there that want to eat you. Your keepers know what's best. Follow the others in your flock, and do what they do. They can't all be wrong, can they?

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Abilities: Alertness 2 (Athletics 3, Brawl 2 for wild rams and mountain sheep)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: None/Gore for 4 dice

Move: 8/15

Legendary Powers: None

SNAKE

Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

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— Matthew 10:16

Mythology:

A tempter, a deceiver, an opener of doors and a poisoner of unwary souls, the serpent coils, slithers and bites her way into the human imagination. To some, she's a personification of wisdom, prophecy and immortality. (Serpents guarded the temples of Greece, Minoa and India, vomited the peoples of Rio onto dry land, provided a bed for Vishnu, and taught secrets of longevity to African wise folk.) According to the Old Testament and Jewish lore, however, the Great Serpent (sometimes seen as the male Satan, other times as the female Lilith) seduced Eve in the garden of Eden, incurring the hatred of God and man. Snakes stole the plant of immortality from Gilgamesh, attacked the infant Herakles and coiled at the roots of the World Tree. Seen as ancestor spirits by many people, the serpent glides between earth and the Underworld, sometimes as a guide, others as a devourer of souls. Born of earth and fire, the serpent winds her way through human symbolism. Snakes twine around Hermes' caduceus wand (the symbol of medicine); the ouroboros, a snake swallowing her own tail, makes up the sign of infinity. Like dragons, snakes possess the power of hypnosis, and only the foolhardy dare look a snake in the eye. From one side of her forked tongue, the serpent speaks lies; from the other, she speaks the truth.

Description:

Few animals share the serpent's dark reputation. In human folklore, the snake is considered evil, sneaky, treacherous — the embodiment of male deceit and feminine guile. With her lidless, unblinking stare, forked tongue, disconcerting slither and occasional poison, the serpent is an unnerving, alien presence in the "safe" world humans try to build for themselves. Cold-blooded, this creature prefers temperate habitats, often sunning herself or hiding in bed rolls or corners to keep warm. Through a sharp sense of smell, she tastes the world with her flickering tongue. Some serpents prefer fields or forests; others live in deserts or tropical swamps. Formidable predators, they devour eggs or stalk small animals and insects. Despite the horrific image of man-eating snakes, most varieties are far too small to do anything but slither away when confronted by large prey. The huge constrictors of tropical rainforests, however, live up to every horror story ever told.... Although most snakes inflict painful bites, comparatively few are poisonous. Those which are venomous inject (or sometimes spit) paralyzing toxins, bringing their victims down with seizures, swelling, respiratory failure and intense pain. Larger snakes wrap themselves into crushing coils, breaking the bones of their prey before engulfing them with wide-open jaws and swallowing them whole. Serpents never seem to sleep. Their thin-lidded eyes watch constantly, even when at rest. Those flat, emotionless slits bespeak a wisdom far older than humanity. Perhaps the tales are right — the snake does see the future. Knowing her place in it is secure, she observes the mortal world skittering by in its haphazard pace. As it dies, she simply sheds her skin and goes off alone.

Roleplaying Hints:

Be watchful. Taste the air constantly with your tongue. Speak in riddles and half truths. Do not grant your wisdom easily - those who would learn from you must earn the privilege. Haste, to you, is a waste of energy. Patience and a good, quick strike are far more worthwhile than endless rushing and worry.

Attributes: Strength 0 (3-4 for constrictors), Dexterity 3, Stamina 1(2-4 for large serpents)

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 1-2

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** OK, -1, Squished (viper); OK, -1, -2, -3, Dead (large snake); OK x 3, -1 x 3, -2, -3, -5, Incapacitated (constrictor) **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks: Bite for 1 to 2 dice*, or constrict for 4 to 6 dice per turn



Move: 2/5 (viper); 5/10 (constrictor)

Legendary Powers: Acute Smell, Armor (2), Extra Heads, Flexible, Hazardous Breath, hibernation, Human Speech, Immunity (death), Information Font, Mesmerism, Musical Influence, Night sight, Regrowth, Soul-Sense/Death-Sense, Unaging, Venom, Water-Breathing

* Poisonous snakes may inject a toxin into the wound when they bite, causing damage to accumulate at one Health Level per turn or per hour, depending on the snake. Mildly poisonous serpents might inflict only a Health Level or two, while truly deadly ones might do as many as 10. A Stamina roll (difficulty 6 for mild venoms, 7 for strong ones, 8 for powerful ones and 9 for virulent ones) may reduce the damage, but any human 'Sized victim should still suffer a fair amount of pain even if she resists the worst effects. Most forms of magical healing will purge the venom ,but a separate spell is necessary to cure the damage already inflicted.

TIGER

A great, feline, tawny shape whose pelt was barred with a savage geometry of bars the colour of

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burned wood. His domed, heavy head, so terrible he must hide it. How subtle the muscles, how profound the tread. The annihilating vehemence of his eyes, like twin suns. I felt my breast ripped apart as if I suffered a marvelous wound. — Angela Carter, "The Tiger's Bride"

Mythology:

Four sages were walking through the Indian jungle when they came on a scattering of white bones. "These are the bones of a tiger," said one sage. "With my knowledge of science, I can reassemble them." And he did so. "Impressive," said the second sage, "but still only bones. With my skills of magic, I can restore the beast's flesh and hide." And he did so. "Most impressive," said the third sage, "but the tiger is still dead. By calling on my faith, I can bring it back to life." "Before you do that," said the fourth sage, "let me climb this tree." And he did, to the scoffing of the others. The third sage then began chanting and praying, dancing around the body of the tiger. Suddenly the glowing eyes snapped open. The tiger leaped to his feet, devoured all three sages, then streaked away into the jungle. "Alas," the fourth sage said, climbing down from his tree and shaking his head sadly. "They forgot to provide him with a full belly."

Description:

Huge, sleek and lithe, these beautiful animals move swiftly through the jungle shadows, camouflaged by their striped coats. If the lion is king of the beasts, the tiger is the king's blade. Like the Tigris River, he takes his name from the Greek and Persian word for "arrow," and is every bit as deadly. Like the glowing coals his eyes resemble, he exists to devour. These smoldering creatures stalk from Siberia to the jungles of the Asian subcontinent. Unlike most cats — large or small— tigers enjoy water, and often soak in streams and ponds to cool off on hot days. With the exception of their cubs, tigers avoid long-term companionship. While certain talented humans have managed to befriend a tiger, such relationships are always a bit strained by the cat's independence and raw power. A voracious eater, the average tiger consumes whole antelopes in one sitting, knowing that the next meal might be long in coming. Despite their deadly reputation, most tigers avoid humans, but a tiger turned man-eater is fearsome indeed. So great a beast throws a long shadow on folklore, symbolism and magic. The Hindu goddess Durga rode a tiger into battle against the buffalo demon. Raja Yah, the tiger king, is said to inhabit the central pillar of the world. Siberian shamans and Chinese wizards call Tiger's power into themselves, and martial artists copy his staggering blows. Puzzling his way through the dark jungle, the tiger symbolizes the struggle of the questing soul. Ground into powder, his bones give a man incredible sexual potency. In the spirit world, Tiger opposes Dragon, sometimes for good, others for ill. Although he's seen as a devourer of evil men, this beast can endanger even the purest children. Unpredictable, majestic and as deadly as anything on earth, the tiger bums his way through the night. Darkness is no obstacle to his sight, and few beasts dare stand against him.

Roleplaying Hints:

You are the jungle's pulse, the living flame at its heart. Intelligent and perceptive, you understand the vagaries of human thought far better than most animals do. Nothing presents much of a threat to you, so relax and enjoy the shade. Your almost preternatural senses will warn you if something important comes around. Thanks to such perceptions, you're keenly aware of your surroundings. Even ghosts know enough to walk carefully around you.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 3

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK x 2, -1 x 2, -2 x 2, -5 x 2, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 1

Attacks: Claw for 6 dice, bite for 7 dice

Move: 10/35

Legendary Powers: Acute Smell, Extra Speed, Healing Lick, Human Speech, Mesmerism, Mystick Shield, Nightsight, Soul-Sense, Spirit Travel, Spirit Vision

WOLF

He's mad that trusts in the lameness of a wolf
— Shakespeare, King Lear

Mythology:

A teacher and a murderer, the wolf can be both sun and shadow. In his kinder guises, he's associated with the Greek sun-god, Apollo Lyceus; to the Romans, he is the emblem of wise ferocity and mate to the mother of Rome. To New Worlders, he teaches essential (if often cruel) lessons in life. The Lyceum where Aristotle taught takes its name from the word "wolf-skin." Yet even the wolf's defenders concede the danger he presents. Barbarians the world over have idolized but feared this pack-bound predator. In his darker aspects, the wolf represents the worst of Christian vices: greed, anger, gluttony and rapacity. In a faith where the lamb symbolizes God, how can the wolf be seen as anything but an enemy? Old tales are full of wolves — wolves in disguise, wolves at the door, wolves guiding the soul from death to the Underworld, and wolves which become men (or vice versa). According to the Norse, the voracious Fenris will be loosed at the end of the world. Until then, his smaller cousins continue to evoke fear around the fire.

Description:

Few sounds in nature are more chilling than a wolf's howl. Somehow it encompasses everything humanity fears about the wilderness, as well as everything we ache for. The wolf is everything we have cast aside. When we hear him, we might shiver and huddle around our fires, but not entirely in terror. Nor is the lupine always cast as a wicked beast — to many Native American tribes, he is a wise and compassionate totem creature. The twin founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus, were suckled by a she-wolf, and her keen sight and stoicism earned praise from medieval philosophers. Despite the ominous "lone wolf stalkers of legend, most lupines live together, united by an intricate pack society. This extended family hunts, plays, wanders and rests together. Two leaders dominate the other members through a complex system of postures, glances and vocalizations that convey elaborate messages. A wolf's obvious intelligence and sharp senses make him an obvious teacher; his strong jaws, endurance and ferocious snarls mark him as a deadly opponent. A wolf exists in a rich world of smells, sights and sounds. Far more perceptive than men (or most other animals, for that matter), he can track prey for miles under very poor conditions. Like dogs and cats, he seems to revel in his surroundings. He'll roll around or play on a sudden whim, and often sniffs or stares at new things for the sheer pleasure of it. Despite his social nature, though, no wolf is ever truly tamed. When well-fed and confident, he's an energetic companion; when threatened, hurt or hungry, he becomes a danger to everything within reach.

Roleplaying Hints:

Life is a banquet of sensations, a fresh run through the woods. Each day offers a wealth of new games and chases. (Remember that you're not playing a werewolf, but a wholly wild animal.) Unless you're a rare renegade, the pack is all important to you. Obey your alphas, find your niche in the pack, and know that everyone must work together to survive. Although affectionate and playful, you're still a predator. Don't be too serious, though — the thrill of the hunt is the keenest joy there is.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Stealth 2

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Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** OK, -1 x 2, -3, -5, Incapacitated **Armor Rating:** 0

Attacks: Bite for 4 dice; claw for 2 dice

Move: 7/28

Powers: Acute Smell, Healing Lick, Human Speech, Information Font, Mesmerism, Nightsight, Soul-Sense, Spirit Vision

Packs and swarms rules

Although the traits listed above detail individual creatures a lot of the time a character may run into a swarm or a pack. If a swarm of bees or a pack of rats attack the characters use these rules below.

Instead of trying to determine what each of the members of the pack or swarm are doing simply roll to see if the pack or swarm itself harms the characters. narrate the results from there. Each beast type is given a listing in the small chart below simply roll the damage dice pool listed once per turn against difficulty 6 and allow the characters to evade soak the result. The damage is lethal or bashing determined upon the animals attacking. Packs attack once per turn and act on the initiative listed on the chart, if the character dodges he can move normally for the remainder of his turn however if he cannot evade the attacks than his attackers slows him down to half his usual movement. If the swarm score more than 3 health levels of damage in one turn after the character soaks it than the character is overran and knocked down. He can only move a yard or two per turn and the swarms difficulty number goes down to 5. Efforts to get back up and continue moving have higher than normal difficulties usually 7 or 8. The health levels listed reflect the amount of damage it takes to disperse a pack or swarm. An additional 2 health levels of damage destroys the attackers completely.

<i>Animal</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Health levels</i>	<i>Initiative</i>
Small bugs	1	5	2
Large bugs	2	7	3
Flying bugs	2	5	4
Birds/bats	4	9	5
Rats	3	7	3
Large rats	4	9	3
Feral cats	4	6	6
Wild dogs	6	15	4



SIEGE WEAPONS

By Bill Coffin

Siege warfare -- no fantasy world is truly complete without it. Sure, you can have all the daring sword fights and magical battles you want, but as long as there will be castles and armies in the Fantasy Role-Playing Game world, there will be siege combat. Attacking a castle in this setting isn't quite like it was in real-life medieval Europe because there was no magic to help you out. I mean, why bother besieging a castle when an earth mage can shatter its walls with a snap of her fingers? Or when a priest can call in a god's avatar to do the same? Or when a fighter wielding the magical sword can simply crumble the mightiest defenses?

But for those armies without magic (or a god) on their side, the next best thing is to roll out the fantasy equivalent of heavy artillery -- siege weapons.

These devices probably would probably enter most campaigns during times of war or siege, both of which are more the province of war gaming than role-playing. But for those of you who've always wanted to know how hard a trebuchet hits, or how far a ballista shoots, or would like an expanded description of siege weaponry then this article is for you. After reading this article you want more information on the nature and workings of siege weaponry, check out Palladium's Compendium of Weapons, Armour and Castles. Not only does it have fine descriptions of all major siege weapons, but it also has one of the best descriptions that I have ever read of how siege warfare was conducted.

Siege Weapon Training

All of the weapons described in this section require the Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons skill to effectively operate and maintain. While most adventurers never encounter or operate siege weapons, professional soldiers do. For example, a kingdom's frequent civil wars encourages many of that realm's mercenaries and soldiers to take the Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons skill. And in some Kingdoms, siege weapons are an essential part of that country's border defenses against bands of marauding ogres.

For many warriors, operating siege weapons is a coveted assignment -- how else does a simple fighter get the chance to knock down an entire castle wall? Plus, mercenaries and soldiers trained in siege weapons are specialists who get two or three times the going rate, too. And they usually aren't even on the first lines of combat! In general, knights and paladins disdain heavy weaponry as "grunt work," and tend to stick with their cavalry charges and hand-to-hand combat. As a result, knight or paladin characters aren't likely to take Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons unless they've had a lowlier background before they chose their current line of work.

If a siege weapon's crew is less than entirely skilled in Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons, then the following modifiers apply:

If 75% of a crew has Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons, then the weapon will fire at -4 dice, the damage inflicted by the weapon will be reduced by 4 dice, and the rate of fire will be halved.

If only 50% of the crew has Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons, the weapon fires at -6 dice to hit, its damage is halved, and takes four times as long to operate. That is, if a weapon shot once a melee round, it now fires once every four melee rounds.

If only 25% of the crew has Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons, the weapon fires at -8

dice to hit, has its damage reduced by 75%, and takes eight times as long to operate.

If less than 25% of the crew has Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons, the weapon is at -10 dice to hit, and will only do 10% of its normal damage. Moreover, crews this unskilled are very likely to hit somebody by else accidentally if they miss. When operating indirect-fire weapons, such unskilled crews might accidentally fire their projectile straight up in the event of a miss, in which case, damage to the weapon or its operators might result. Better warm up those dodge modifiers, boys! Also, operation takes sixteen times as long.

In case players ask, the reduction in damage accounts for the crew not knowing where to hit their target -- this is especially applicable to castles and other reinforced structures. In addition, unskilled shots tend not to hit dead-center, causing only a glancing blow. Hence, less damage.

Other Modifiers

With the exception of arbalests, siege weapons are designed to hit large, stationary objects. But now and then, gunners might feel the need to hit a moving target -- say, a dragon or other large nasty. For hitting moving targets with large siege weapons, the following modifiers apply:

Ballistas (all types), light springals, light catapults, light onagers: -6 dice to strike small (man-sized or smaller) moving targets, -4 dice to strike large (giant-sized and larger) targets.

Medium springals: -4 dice to strike small moving targets, -3 dice to strike large moving targets.

Heavy springals: -3 dice to strike small moving targets, -2 dice to strike large moving targets.

Medium and heavy catapults: -8 dice to strike small moving targets, -6 dice to strike large moving targets

Trebuchets cannot be aimed at moving targets. Period.

Siege Weapons

For the purposes of Fantasy Role-Playing Games, there are six basic types of siege weaponry: arbalests, ballistas, springals, catapults, onagers and trebuchets. Each of these weapons falls into one of two categories: direct-fire weapons and indirect-fire weapons.

Direct-fire Weapons

Arbalests, ballistas and springals are direct-fire weapons, that is they fire their projectiles in a straight line. The advantage to direct-fire weapons is that they have no minimum range. The drawback is that they tend to have shorter ranges than indirect-fire weapons.

Arbalests essentially are very heavy crossbows with greater range and hitting power than conventional crossbows. Since these things are so powerful, they are cocked by a crank, winch, or other hand-held mechanism. Sometimes these cocking devices are built into the arbalest, as is the case with cranks and winches. Otherwise, cranking devices such as cocking hooks are separate tools that the operator must keep around for reloading. (A common tool was a pair of hooks worn on the gunner's belt.) Although they resemble normal crossbows, Weapon Proficiency Archery DOES NOT give one bonuses when using an arbalest. These are Weapon Proficiency Siege Weapons devices ONLY. G.M.s, don't let your players get away with cranking off 4 or 5 arbalest shots a round -- the increased power of these weapons requires a lengthy reloading time, so the maximum rate of fire for all arbalests is two shots per melee round. No

exceptions. Giant-sized arbalests do inflict an extra 6 dice damage, however. (Arbalests are the one and only type of siege weapon that has a giant-sized damage bonuses. All other siege weapons do the same damage whether they are giant-sized or not.)

Light arbalests cost 100 gold,

Medium arbalests cost 110 gold, and

Heavy arbalests cost 120 gold.

Arbalest bolts cost 30 gold per dozen.

Light arbalest: Damage: 10 dice; Range: 740 ft./225m; Weight: 7.5 lbs./3.4 kg

Medium arbalest: Damage: 15 dice; Range: 1,090 ft./330m; Weight: 12 lbs./6.0 kg

Heavy arbalest: Damage: 30 dice; Range: 1,400 ft./425m; Weight: 18 lbs./8.0 kg

Ballistas resemble wagon-sized arbalests that fire javelin- or spear-sized projectiles. Typically, they are crewed by two or three gunners. Although ballistas cause much less damage than the heavier indirect-fire weapons, they remain a popular and effective battlefield device -- probably because they are light, easy to transport, and use cheap ammunition. Ballistas also are commonly used on warships (including well-equipped pirates and merchants) as an anti-personnel weapon and as an anti-ship weapon. Small vessels, such as corsairs, lighters, and trimarans aren't large enough to support a ballista. Medium-sized vessels such as barks, caravels, merchantmen and Viking longboats can support one or two ballistas. Large vessels such as war galleys, behemoths, destroyers and frigates can support up to four ballistas. The maximum rate of fire for ballistas is once every five minutes (20 melees rounds).

Light ballistas cost 2,000 gold

Heavy ballistas cost 5,000 gold.

Ballista arrows cost 40 gold each (480 gold per dozen).

Light ballista: Damage: 20 dice; Range: 1,155 ft./350m

Heavy ballista: Damage: 40 dice; Range 1,320 ft./400m

NOTE: The aforementioned damage is for ballista arrows. Flaming arrows will do an extra 5 dice per melee round until extinguished, and will have a chance of igniting what they hit (if it is combustible). Ballistas can also fire small rocks (@ 10 lbs./4.5 kg). The range is the same, but the damage for these is only 20 dice.

Springals are another type of javelin-projecting weapon in which missiles are placed on a frame and a wooden arm, or springer, is drawn back and released. The springer hits the butt of the missile, firing it. Springers are made of several layers of glued wood, similar to a compound bow. Springals are roughly the same size as ballistas, but they fire much smaller projectiles, about the size of a normal javelin. The real advantage to springals is that they can be built to fire more than one projectile at once, making them an effective anti-personnel weapon. Like ballistas, springals also can be used as shipboard weapons (and, it is rumored, are very popular among the pirates of several coastlines). Light springals fire a single projectile, like a cross between a ballista and an arbalest. Medium springals typically fire 8 projectiles upon a 20 square foot target area that can accommodate up to 5 man-sized humanoids, 3 giant-sized humanoids, and 7 small (dwarf-sized or smaller) humanoids. When hit by a big cluster shot like this, all targets within the

target area must successfully dodge the shot or get hit by multiple projectiles. Large springals typically fire 16 projectiles upon a 40 square foot area that can accommodate up to 10 man-sized humanoids, 6 giant-sized humanoids or 15 small humanoids. Like with a medium springal, all targets in the target area for a heavy springal must dodge to avoid getting hit. Of course, if a medium or large springal is fired against a large object like a building or ship, then the damage is just to the structure. The maximum rate of fire for a springal is once every five minutes (20 melee rounds). Springals require a four-man crew to operate.

Light springals cost 2,000 gold

Medium springals cost 3,500 gold

Heavy springals cost 5,000 gold

Springal ammunition costs 30 gold each

Needles to say, a heavy springal can rack up quite an ammunition tab.

Light springal: Damage: (1 projectile) 20 dice; Range: 825 ft./250m

Medium springal: Damage: (8 projectiles) 30 dice; Range: 825 ft./250m

Heavy springal: Damage: (16 projectiles) 50 dice; Range: 990 ft./300m

NOTE: Springals can fire flaming projectiles. The extra damage and chance of causing a fire is the same for ballistas.

Indirect-fire Weapons

Catapults, onagers and trebuchets are indirect-fire weapons, which means they fire their projectiles in an arcing trajectory. While this affords them better range than direct-fire weapons, they have the disadvantage of requiring their targets to be a certain distance away, or else the projectiles will simply shoot over the target. Having a minimum range is especially troublesome when firing on moving targets, because if they're quick enough, they can move to within the weapon's minimum range, effectively rendering the weapon useless, and attack the crew. Catapults consist of a 3.5m x 1.5m frame with a heavy crossbeam mounted and braced perpendicular to it. Behind the cross beam, a large system of cords called a skein holds the arm of the machine. A winch-like apparatus is used to tighten the skein and crank back the catapult's arm. Once cranked back, the arm was locked into place, usually with a metal loop and hook. A heavy rock or flaming bundle is loaded into a basket at the end of the arm, then the catch holding the arm in place is released. The arm snaps forward and hits the crossbeam, hurling the rock. Light catapults require 4-man crews, medium catapults require 6-man crews and heavy catapults require 8-man crews. The difference in crew size is because heavier catapults require more brute strength to ratchet the arm back into firing position.

Like ballistas, catapults are used as shipboard weapons - medium ships can accommodate one catapult, heavy ships can accommodate two. (Ships can hold more ballistas than catapults because their ammunition is smaller and weighs less.) Catapults often are built with wheels so they can be towed to and from the battlefield. The maximum rate of fire for a catapult is once every five minutes (20 melee rounds).

Light catapults cost 5,000 gold

Medium catapults cost 7,500 gold

Heavy catapults cost 10,000 gold.

Ammunition is free where you can find it. otherwise, specially carved stones typically cost 25-50 gold each. Specially prepared flaming bundles cost 50 gold each. Crews tend to buy specially prepared bundles rather than make their own (the specially prepared ones almost always burn better and have better explosive dispersal).

Light catapult: Damage (10 lbs./4.5 kg): 20 dice; Minimum range: 100 ft./30m; Maximum range: 900ft./275m

Medium catapult: Damage (20-30 lbs/9-13 kg): 50 dice; Minimum range: 100 ft./30m; Maximum range: 1,070 ft./325m

Heavy catapult: Damage (40-80 lbs./18-36 kg): 75 dice; Minimum range: 100 ft..30m; Maximum range: 1,240 ft./375m

Flaming bundle: 20 dice damage + 10 dice damage per melee until extinguished to all targets within a 10 ft./3m target area. Anything inside the area of affect has a chance of starting a fire if it is something combustible. This can be especially devastating if it hits straw-roofed buildings or other flammable objects. The resulting fire will cause 20 dice the first melee round after the initial hit, then will double in damage each subsequent round as the fire spreads. Keep in mind, however, that a stone building with a thatched roof will only lose the roof this way, while a wooden building will be consumed. Use common sense when determining the spread of fire -- a stone castle isn't going to burn to the ground, period.

Onagers are identical to catapults except they use a sling to hold their missiles instead of a basket. While this gives onagers a slightly better range, they cannot be used to fire flaming projectiles. The crew requirements and rate of fire for onagers is the same as for ballistas.

Light onagers cost 5,000 gold

Medium onagers cost 7,50 gold

Heavy onagers cost 10,000 gold

Ammunition is free where you can find it. otherwise, specially carved stones typically cost 25-50 gold each.

Light onager: Damage (10 lbs./4.5 kg): 5D6; Minimum range: 100 ft./30m; Maximum range: 990 ft./300m; 250 S.D.C.

Medium onager: Damage (20-30 lbs/9-13 kg): 1D6x10; Minimum range: 100 ft./30m; Maximum range: 1,155 ft./350m; 300 S.D.C.

Heavy onager: Damage (40-80 lbs./18-36 kg): 2D4x10+10; Minimum range: 100 ft..30m; Maximum range: 1,320 ft./400m; 350 S.D.C.

Trebuchets are the grand-daddy of all siege weapons. These monstrosities hurl large stones like catapults and onagers, but instead of using torsion to fling their projectiles, a trebuchet arm is attached to a counterweight . When a trebuchet is fired, this counterweight rotates downward due to gravity, seesawing the firing end high in the air, where it fired its missiles. Trebuchets were favorite siege weapons because they hurled massive (250 kg and heavier!) stones at their target. One hit from a trebuchet will shake all but the stoutest of fortresses, and a sustained bombardment will eventually destroy whatever it is shooting at. The downside? Trebuchets are about the size of a large house, and typically must be constructed at the siege spot. Moreover, a

trebuchet counterweight could weigh up to 10,000 kg, and the ammunition isn't light either, so there better be a ready supply of stone nearby. (This is one of the reasons why the many armies prefers to employ mages to wreck castles instead of using such large and cumbersome machinery). Also, a trebuchet's large size makes it an easy target for other siege weapons and magical defenses. But if you're in the market for a super-massive engine of destruction, look no farther.

Trebuchets have no easily defined market value because they are built at a siege site. And even if you could buy these on the open market, it is highly doubtful the local authorities would allow it. Light trebuchets require 12-man firing crews. Medium trebuchets require 16-man crews. Heavy trebuchets require 20-man crews. The maximum rate of fire for a trebuchet is once every 15 minutes (60 melee rounds).

Light trebuchet (an oxymoron): Damage (550 lbs/250 kg): 200 dice; Minimum range: 100 ft./30m; Maximum range: 900 ft./275 m

Medium trebuchet: Damage (825 lbs./375 kg): 400 dice; Minimum range: 150 ft./45m; maximum range: 990ft./300m

Heavy trebuchet: Damage (1,100 lbs./500 kg): 800 dice; Minimum range: 200 ft./60m; maximum range: 1,155 ft./350m

Note: Siege weapons cannot be used to perform a sneak attack, a backstab, or any other such hidden attack that would enable damage bonuses. I repeat they **CANNOT** be used for a backstab or sneak attack or any other form of attack that gives your character a bonus to damage.

DAWN

Initiative :

Willpower ○○○○○○○○ **Temp Willpower** ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

Wits

ABILITIES

_____OOOO Science_____OOOO

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☐ Incapacitated

Temp Infamy ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Temp Fame** ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Attributes 5/4/3/ Abilities 11/9/5 (elf 13/11/9) Initiative = Alertness + Perception Speed = Strength + Athletics Freebie Points 15

Dawn

Men of Magic

Merits (10 point's total)

Flaws (must equal merits)

[illegible]

Arete

● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Spheres

Earth	0	0	0	0	0	0	Air	0	0	0	0	0	0	Body	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	Time	0	0	0	0	0	0	Physical	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire	0	0	0	0	0	0	Weather	0	0	0	0	0	0	Mind	0	0	0	0	0	0

Essence

O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O

Scourge

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Perm Scourge 0 0 0 0 0

(7 scourge points equal 1 permanent scourge point after gaining 6 permanent scourge your mage is destroyed)

Sample Spells and Tools

[illegible]

Character Description and History

Essence is equal to your starting willpower and you start out with 1 points in any sphere

DAWN

Men at Arms

Merits (10 point's total)

Flaws (must equal merits)

RAGE 0

Weapons

Name	Damage	Weight	Range	Conceal	Notes
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Armour

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Notes and Penalties
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Helm

Name	Soak Type	Weight	Conceal	Notes and Penalties
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Shield and Parry	Parry or Block Difficulty	vs. Melee	vs. Rnged	Notes
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Small Shield	7	+1 die	0	can be used on horseback
Medium Shield	6	+1 die	+1 die	can be used on horseback
Large Shield	6	+2 die	+2 die	cannot be used mounted
Knife	7	-2 die	-4 die	
Any Weapon	6	+1 die	-3 die	

Character Description and History

The plus versus ranged and melee is added to the attackers difficulty number when facing an opponents using a shield for blocking

Dawn

Men of Faith

Merits (10 point's max)

Flaws (must equal merits)

[illegible][illegible]

Faith

● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Spheres

Earth	0	0	0	0	0	0	Air	0	0	0	0	0	0	Spirit	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	Physical	0	0	0	0	0	0	Body	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire	0	0	0	0	0	0	Weather	0	0	0	0	0	0	Mind	0	0	0	0	0	0

Essence

[illegible]

Sample Prayers and Tools

[illegible]

Character Description and History and God

[illegible]

Essence is equal to your starting willpower and You start out with 1 point in Spirit Body or Mind

Dawn Beastuary Sheets

Npc or Animal Name _____

Specific Attributes _____

Specific Abilities _____

Defense and Offense _____

Notes such as habitat and description

Dawn Beastuary Sheets

Npc or Animal Name _____

Specific Attributes _____

Specific Abilities _____

Defense and Offense _____

Notes such as habitat and description

Dawn Spell or Faith Sheet

Spell or Prayer Name _____

Spheres Required _____

Essence Required _____

Tools Required _____

Spell or Prayer Effect _____

Spell or Prayer Name _____

Spheres Required _____

Essence Required _____

Tools Required _____

Spell or Prayer Effect _____

Spell or Prayer Name _____

Spheres Required _____

Essence Required _____

Tools Required _____

Spell or Prayer Effect _____

Spell or Prayer Name _____

Spheres Required _____

Essence Required _____

Tools Required _____

Spell or Prayer Effect _____

الحشوة

No Beast so Fierce
but knows some touch of pity,
I know none...
and therefore am no beast.

Richard III
William Shakespeare



Dawn A Fantasy Role Playing Game

